

RELIGION AND ANTI-COMMUNISM: THE CASE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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In view of the phenomenon of a bipolar division between a 'free world' and a 'socialist world', it seems appropriate to examine the role played by religion in general and by Christianity in particular. This is of course a vast question and cannot be dealt with exhaustively here, circumstances vary considerably and the positions of those involved are often contradictory. All we can do here is to make some general theoretical comments and then look at a number of concrete examples, all of which concern the Roman Catholic Church.

Theoretical Considerations

A Marxist analysis of the phenomenon of religion brings out the ambivalence of its social functions. It is at once an expression of the protests of the lower classes and a sublimation of an order which sanctions social inequality. It offers an illusory solution to certain emancipation movements and is, at the same time, a source of commitment to liberation. As an institution, it is connected with oppressive powers, but it can also give rise to a vigorous and prophetic denunciation of injustice. It is at times difficult to say precisely what we are dealing with when we talk about religion, and we therefore need to make an historical and dialectical analysis.

In the current situation, the Church has no one line, even though certain tendencies seem to be dominant. In so far as it comprises a number of different representations of the world, religion itself is 'an ideal part of the real'. It is, in other words, one of the elements which enter into the construction of social relations, classes and, therefore, the class struggle. This applies at the level of belief, that of symbolic expressions and ethics, and at the organizational level: at the level of the churches themselves.

The context, of course, varies considerably. In some countries on the periphery of Western capitalism, social relations are still read in terms of religious codes, though this is becoming increasingly rare. On the other hand, almost all predominantly agrarian societies live their relationship with nature in terms of the religious representations and practices which provide them with their main form of protection. Religious beliefs can also be found in industrialized capitalist countries, but here they are no longer bound up with representations of man's relationship with nature or

of social relations. They are in fact convictions as to the origins and destiny of man and the universe, and have a wide range of different connotations, both for sections of the bourgeoisie, for the intellectuals, for the working class and for the so-called middle classes.

All this suggests that the religious factor may play a more important role in the dynamics of society than some people are prepared to admit. In itself, the religious factor is ambivalent. We readily associate religion with right-wing regimes: the Catholicism of Marcos or Pinochet and Reagan's Christianity immediately come to mind. Certain religious values can be used to sanction repressive or imperialist policies. On the other hand, many revolutionaries in Central America, the Philippines and Southern Africa find their Christianity a source of commitment to the liberation struggle.

In terms of anti-Communism, it is not, then, surprising to find that religion has more than one function. This is certainly true of Catholicism. In order to gain a better understanding of what is at stake, we will first look at differences on the theoretical level, concentrating upon the religious and the materialist conceptions of history. We will then examine the question of social ethics and, finally, the problem of the religious institution and its autonomous space. The second section of this study will look at a number of concrete practices.

1. Oppositions at the theoretical level

Historically speaking, socialism developed within the framework of a philosophy and is therefore incompatible with religion at the theoretical level. That incompatibility is a constant source of hostility.

A. Religion and Historical Materialism

The assertion that any practice is rooted in a philosophical position, which is in itself an idealist position, means that the divide between historical materialism and religious belief is total. Within the framework of historical materialism it is obviously easy to argue for the rejection of any given praxis or analysis. The argument goes as follows: a class analysis means a Marxist analysis and as such is obviously bound up with Marxist philosophy, which is based upon atheism. It is on this basis that Latin American liberation theology, which is based—explicitly or implicitly—upon a Marxist analysis of Latin American society has been challenged and even condemned. This also explains why it is that Christians who join Marxist-influenced social, political and revolutionary organizations find themselves marginalized. Whilst such analyses and such commitments are not unproblematic, the attitude described above does imply starting out from an idea or a philosophy rather than from social relations. The question of what is understood by social reality and of whether a reading of social reality in terms of conflict is, in fact, the most adequate means

to represent it, simply does not arise. The result is a polarization which goes far beyond the philosophical level and which has effects at the level of practice.

This tendency becomes even more marked when a political party or regime adopts historical materialism as a reference or platform. In such cases, the opposition between religion and historical materialism becomes a balance of power which finds expression in institutional policies and in the mobilization of the social base in support of those policies.

Marxist-influenced political formations and social movements often take this attitude. In theory, the religious problem is a conclusion and not a starting point for a praxis or an analysis, but when the terms of the equation are inverted, the struggle against religion and the marginalization of believers becomes a political object which produces the same reactions and the same divisions as before.

B. Social Ethics

All religions, and particularly Christianity, have elaborated a system of social ethics based upon religious convictions. The evangelical basis of Christianity can, for example, lead to a demand for justice for the poor and hence to a condemnation of oppression. Any ethical construct is, however, mediated through a representation of the social. In certain precapitalist societies, social relations were explained and legitimized in religious terms, and their concept of ethics derived from the notion of a divinely ordained social order. With the development of market-based societies and the capitalist mode of production, this kind of representation became obsolete, and more elaborate social doctrines were developed, notably by the Catholic Church.

The Church's social doctrine is determined by a reading of the most immediate aspects of social reality, namely inter-human social relations. Society is seen as a sum of interpersonal relations. Marxist thought, however, marks a qualitative leap in social analysis. This new reading takes in social structures as well as interpersonal relations and insists that structures are more than the sum total of relations. It concentrates upon the significant links between the elements that make up social relations. In a class structure, those elements are necessarily antagonistic.

In terms of the first reading of social reality, which has traditionally provided the basis for the Church's social doctrine, the immediate responsibility of the individual is quite obvious. This leads almost automatically to a call to change reality. Reality is perceived as being unjust and oppressive, and an appeal is therefore addressed to the individual consciences of social actors. The rich and powerful are urged to be generous, and the poor and the oppressed are urged to be more patient in their attempts to change society.

All this is very logical, as the starting point is a refusal to read social

reality in terms of class antagonisms and class struggle. Given that this reading itself is based upon interpersonal relations, all struggles and antagonisms are immediately transposed to that register and therefore become unacceptable to those who preach fraternity and love of one's fellow man in the name of religious values. The same starting point can also lead to a confusion between means and ends. The end is the construction of a just, fraternal society, and class collaboration becomes the means to obtain that end, which is defined as the common good. The vast majority of religious groups take this view. It is found in a highly developed form in the social doctrine of the Catholic Church, but it also forms the basis of, say, Greek Orthodox thought. In addition, it forms the ethical basis of the major religions' views on peace.²

The result is, then, a theoretical basis for opposition to any form of social ethics which is elaborated in terms of a structural analysis of classes.

One of the most typical of these ethical constructs is John Paul II's encyclical *Laborem Exercens* (on labour). Social reality is read in terms of a stratification and not a structure, and the encyclical therefore remains at the level of description rather than analysis. The notion of a fair wage is, for instance, invoked without any reference to surplus value, surplus labour or socially necessary labour. Capitalism and socialism are described primarily as reflections of economic ideas and as reducing man either to a commodity or to a mere object of economic relations. As a result, both systems are criticised in terms of the ideas and ideologies on which they are based. In terms of an ethics based upon interpersonal relations, socialism is unacceptable because it is based upon the idea of class struggle, whereas capitalism is amenable to improvements.³

C. *The Place of the Religious Institution*

The importance of organization varies from religion to religion. As befits a Church which developed under the Roman Empire and which was strengthened by feudal society, Catholicism is, from a juridical point of view, the most highly developed form of religion. The Second Vatican Council modified its organization to some extent, but it is still a very hierarchical system. Its mode of institutionalization requires considerable material resources for the training of personnel and for the upkeep of places of worship, religious education and regional and international communications.

Since the fragmentation of Christendom and the development of the capitalist system, Catholicism has done more than any other branch of the Christian Church to develop a network of institutions in the fields of education, culture and health. Despite the power struggles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these institutions did develop within the framework of liberal capitalist society. Catholicism was only a threat to the emergent bourgeoisie in so far as it was bound up with the ideo-

logical position of the landed aristocracy. With the birth of a new class enemy and the emergence of a new structure of social relations, religious institutions were able to become the allies of the bourgeoisie, even if they were at times critical allies.

The fact that it is the capitalist system that gives religious institutions most space can be explained in terms of theory: religious beliefs and their expressions are no longer essential to the reproduction of social relations. They are still useful, but the new relations of production are explained and legitimized in terms of a socially-based ideology rather than by recourse to the supernatural (a divinely ordained order), as they were in feudal society.

During the transition to socialism, however, the institutional space allotted to the churches is reduced for a variety of reasons. On the one hand, the state takes over the organization of health, educational and cultural networks in order to extend them to the whole population. On the other, the transition is a difficult period in which ideological mobilization may take the form of constraint. Finally, the social space required for the autonomy of religious institutions is defined both by the specific religious model in question and by the degree of social rigidity deemed necessary for the transition to socialism.

The religious sources of anti-Communism have, then, deep theoretical roots and are not simply a matter of tactics. But it would be a mistake to conclude that the attitudes of the churches and institutionalized religions are absolutely monolithic. On the contrary, large numbers of Christians and even certain members of the clergy accept the social analysis developed by Marxism and use it as a means to formulate an ethic. This is true both of the liberation theology which has emerged in certain Third World countries and of those intellectuals or believers who are involved in social, labour or revolutionary struggles. Even within the institutional church itself, there are those who argue for a less hierarchical view of evangelization and for a new definition of social space. The 'Basic Communities' of Latin America, the Philippines and Southern Africa are one such example.

2. *The Influence of Church Practices*

What, in the present conjuncture, can the practices of the Christian churches and of the Catholic Church in particular do to further the confrontation between the Western world and the socialist world or, on the other hand, to help to demystify the tendency to present it as a conflict between good and evil? In order to answer this question, we will look at a number of ecclesiastical practices within the Roman Catholic Church.

If we wish to reach any conclusions about the practices of the Church, we have first to make a distinction between a number of different sectors. We will look first at the production of values, which in both the Catholic Church and every other religious institution, are defined in terms of a

reference to the supernatural. We will, then, consider the institutional practices which reproduce either the institution itself or its relations with other institutions in society, notably the state and social movements. Finally, we will look at the constitution of the church. Its constituents are socially diverse and, to some extent, have their own base in religiously-based social movements and religious movements. We will use these criteria to identify a number of different practices.

A. The Production of Values

This is obviously a vast topic and has to be approached selectively. We will look first at how church documents represent Marxism and then at a very specific issue in social ethics: nuclear weapons. Finally, we will examine the Church authorities' attitude towards liberation theology, which is itself productive of certain values.

(i) The Image of Marxism

The majority of Church documents begin their discussion of Marxism by describing its philosophy and its critique of religion, but the description itself is often simplistic or even caricatural. Official documents rarely give a succinct account of the various positions Marx and Engels adopted with regard to religion and they do not situate those positions in terms of the historicity of their production. It is of course true that the same failing is apparent in a lot of Marxist readings. Church documents, however, tend to caricature Marxist positions in order to criticise them more easily. The French bishops, for instance, outlined their views of relations between Christians and Marxists in a document published on June 30th 1977. They note the fact that many Christians share with Marxists a critical view of society and of social commitment. But they then argue that Marxism wants to have a monopoly on social change and therefore leads to totalitarianism and to the rejection of pluralism. They also claim that it excludes all classes other than the proletariat. This, according to the bishops, means that man is reduced to being a reflection of relations of economic production. Man is, that is, subordinated to a new ruling group and the road to totalitarianism lies open.

The French bishops accuse Marxism of defining individual consciousness simply as 'the ephemeral appearance of a moment in a collective consciousness'. As for the Marxist view of religion, they recall that in Marxist terms, religion is destined to disappear and that any believer who works with Marxists is therefore working for his own destruction. Finally, historical materialism's claim to scientificity is severely criticised and rejected as unacceptable.

The bishops' presentation of Marxism's conception of man, its explanation of society and its attitude to religion is extremely reductive and confuses theoretical positions with the political positions of Marxist-

based movements.

In contrast, the document extols the values of Christianity without ever making any allusion to the actual practices of the Church in specific historical circumstances or to those of Christians who hold power. Even though the moderate tone of the document marks a departure from earlier condemnations of Marxism it still relies upon facile comparisons which inevitably sing the praises of Christianity and condemn Marxism as intrinsically evil.

In most of the documents published by the Episcopal Council of Latin America (CELAM), Marxism is usually discussed in terms of 'ideology'. In his inaugural address to CELAM's eighteenth Ordinary General Meeting in 1981, Mgr. Lopez Trujillo denounced 'the ideological use of the tools of Marxist analysis, which goes against the authority of the Church' and then added, 'How can CELAM remain silent? . . . the structure of the Church is being threatened by the indiscriminate—I would even go so far as to say unscientific—use of an analysis which is now one hundred and fifty years old, even though it is presented as something new.' In his report to the CELAM meeting held in Port-au-Prince, the Council's new president, Mgr. Quarracino, described the use of Marxism as an 'ideological manipulation'.

The documents issued by the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith (formerly known as the Holy Office) are no more explicit. We have already referred to certain papal statements. If we now look at some of the speeches made by John Paul II during his travels, we find allusions not only to Marxism's atheist philosophy, but also to its reduction of man to labour power, to a theory of class struggle which is incompatible with the Christian concept of loving one's fellow man and which is simply an expression of collective egotism. (Speech to the peasants of Panama, 1983.) We are, then, dealing with an ideological struggle in which each side takes a reductive view of its opponent's views. The object is to assert the superiority of a religious view of the meaning of life, man and the universe that is denied by Marxism.

Such positions are not, however, universally accepted by all religious groups or, indeed, within the Catholic Church itself. Although most senior churchmen speak to their congregations in very simplistic terms, some do make certain distinctions. Thus, Cardinal Aloisio Lorscheider, Archbishop of Fortaleza (Brazil) and President of the Brazilian Conference of Bishops, has no hesitations about taking a somewhat different view. In an interview published in his diocesan newsletter he remarks: 'When I hear people claiming that the Church is being infiltrated by Marxism, I ask them what they understand by Marxism. Usually, I get no answer. . . . Many people who talk about Marxism do not mean Marxist philosophy, but Marxist analysis [which is] an attempt to understand the society in which we live.' The distinction between philosophy and analysis, which some Marxists

would reject, means that Christians do not have to reject Marxism's social analysis and its political project along with its atheism.

It has to be remembered that in his encyclical *Pacem in terris*, John XXIII takes a very novel position. Although he insists that no Christian can accept an atheist philosophy, he also makes a distinction between theories on the one hand and the groups and movements which convey those theories on the other. He thus establishes a basis for a dialogue by opening up new possibilities. Although a number of doors have been closed since the pontificate of John XXIII, similar views can still be found among those who work seriously at systematizing religious values. This is particularly true of Latin American Catholics and African Protestants who are involved in liberation theology. Liberation theology begins by analysing oppression and the liberating message of the gospel. Because it makes a scientific analysis of society and of the practices of the struggles of the oppressed, it sees Marxism as part of an attempt to emancipate mankind. The Christians concerned are involved in the struggles of the oppressed and base their theological reflections upon them.

(ii) The Ethics of Nuclear Weapons

The American bishops' views on nuclear war are expressed in their collective letter of 1983. Given the nature of the East-West confrontation, it is of considerable interest to look at the views of the bishops of one of the superpowers. Their position is very clear. They unequivocally condemn both nuclear war and any deliberate decision to make a first strike, even on a limited scale. They are, however, rather less clear when it comes to the question of deterrence, but they do state that deterrence must not be used as a means to gain superiority. The bishops' position is, then, in conflict with US nuclear policy, particularly as they do not portray the enemy as 'absolutely evil'. President Reagan's views on the matter are well known.

Some of the bishops take their criticisms of Reagan's arms policy even further. Two bishops in the state of Montana have stated their opposition to the MX programme. The bishop of Amarillo, Texas has condemned Pantex, the firm building the neutron bomb, and has asked Catholics to look elsewhere for work. Mgr. Flanagan, the bishop of Worcester (Mass.), is in favour of unilateral disarmament, and Mgr. Hunthausen, the bishop of Seattle, has stated that he will withhold part of his taxes as a protest against the increase in nuclear weapons.

The American bishops have thus taken a qualified view of the nuclear weapons issue, but their counterparts in France do not appear to be taking the same line. In their statement of 8th November 1983, they condemn the use of nuclear weapons, but they also ask: 'Does the fact that their use is immoral imply that the nuclear threat itself is immoral? The answer is not self-evident.' The document implies that the Soviet bloc is obviously

aggressive and that the existence of the nuclear threat is therefore justified. The bishops claim that their attitude is logical because 'A dialogue is blocked and sterile. . . superficial and false. . . when certain of the parties involved are nurtured upon ideologies which deny the dignity of human beings.' They even go so far as to claim that an increased level of deterrence is justified by 'the domineering and aggressive nature of Marxist-Leninist ideology'. They add, finally, that 'theoretical materialism is using people's desire for peace. . . to conquer the world.'

It is, then, quite clear that the French bishops are helping to promote anti-Communist and anti-Soviet views and that, in the present conjuncture, they are objectively making a contribution to Western policy. The point has not gone unnoticed in NATO circles. In an article published in the *NATO Review*, Portugal's representative to NATO states that there is no contradiction between NATO policies and the Church's position on nuclear deterrence: 'It is impossible to condemn nuclear deterrence in the same moral terms that one would use to condemn the possible use of nuclear weapons.' In a reference to the position of certain churches he adds, 'Morally, the emphasis is strongly on deterrence.'

(iii) Disapproval of progressive views within the Church

In recent months, progressive views within the Church have come under fairly systematic attack. The main targets have been liberation theology and what has been termed the Popular Church in Latin America. As we have already noted, liberation theology is an attempt to re-think theology and to go beyond social ethics. It begins with the position of the oppressed and re-reads the Gospel from the point of view of the poor. Their situation is not simply described in terms of its effects, but analysed in terms of its causes. Liberation theology therefore touches upon our conception of the role of Christ in human history, the salvation of mankind, our conception of the Church and its role, and evangelization itself. It has much in common with many liberation movements and with the views of the many Christians who are personally involved in social struggles.

In Latin America, the Philippines and certain parts of Africa the Church has developed into a new community of believers. In Brazil, over one hundred thousand people now belong to 'basic communities', and similar communities have played an important role in establishing the social bases for revolutionary movements in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. New religious roles have been developed (community leaders, spokesmen), and laymen and laywomen, peasants and workers have become directly involved in evangelical and pastoral work. Some sections of the Catholic hierarchy—certainly John Paul II himself—regard this development, which means much more than decentralization, as a threat to the unity of the Church.

Warnings have been issued and administrative measures have been taken

against the basic communities, and some of their positions have been condemned.

Liberation theology has been accused of using Marxist methods of analysis. In his inaugural address to the CELAM Conference in Puebla, John Paul II stated that a distinction has to be made between 'Christian liberation' and 'forms of liberation based upon ideologies which destroy the evangelical vision of man, the world and history'. In his letter of 29th June 1982 to the bishops of Nicaragua and in his sermon of 4th March 1983, he strongly condemns all forms of Church organization which are not subject to the authority of the bishops.

Although these declarations and measures do not refer directly to the confrontation between the socio-economic systems represented by the two superpowers, powers, their implications can only increase the distance between them and thereby escalate the confrontation.

Institutional Practices

In terms of institutional practices, a distinction has to be made between institutional reproduction and relations with other institutions in society.

(a) Institutional Reproduction

The Italian bishops' statement of 15th December 1975 provides a clear illustration of what is at stake in institutional reproduction. They firmly reject the possibility of any alliance with the Communist Party, not only because the Party is atheist, but because any such alliance would threaten the Vatican's concordat with the Italian government as well as Christian institutions in the fields of health, education and culture. They are, in other words, concerned to defend the Church's institutions and are afraid that the social space allotted to those institutions might be restricted,

The document even goes so far as to condemn those Christians who ally themselves with Marxists on the grounds that they are damaging 'the hierarchical and organic community of the Church'. It then refers to the internal reforms taking place within the Christian Democratic Party and argues against any political collaboration with the Communist Party. This was of course the period when the PCI was proposing its 'historic compromise'.

What is at stake is the problem of institutional reproduction. In order to safeguard that reproduction, the bishops ally themselves with a political system which is intrinsically bound up with the capitalist organization of society, with its integration into the economy of the West and with policies which are quite clearly dominated by the United States.

The very explicit position taken by the Italian bishops is not, of course, shared by all their colleagues. The vast majority of the world's bishops do, however, hold broadly similar views. In that sense, the Belgian bishops' positions on the economic crisis, immigrant workers and nuclear weapons

are typical. In all three cases, they stress the seriousness of the problem, the unacceptability of certain inequalities and the injustice that does exist in society, but they end up by taking inter-class reformist positions that pose little threat to the structure of the capitalist system.

(b) Relations with Socialist States and Revolutionary Movements

The question of relations with the socialist states and with revolutionary movements is extremely complex. We will therefore restrict our discussion to the main issues, to John Paul II's views and to a brief examination of what might be termed the Vatican's *Ostpolitik*.

(i) The Position of John Paul II

Certain commentators stress the fact that John Paul II appears to have taken very different positions when speaking in Latin America and when speaking in Poland. There is in fact a very logical connection between the two. Although the style is somewhat restrained, it transpires quite clearly from his writings that in terms of both their philosophical positions and their political practice, Marxism and the Communist regimes are the main enemies of the Catholic Church. Where, however, Marxist regimes are in power, as in Poland, he recommends that they be given *de facto* recognition, despite their differences with the Church. John Paul II's aim appears to be to arrive at a *modus vivendi* which will give the Church the greatest possible institutional power in any given society. In institutional terms his logic is eminently coherent.

This is why the Church in Poland may well be opposed to the regime in power but is still willing to tone down its opposition and refuses to support Solidarity's more advanced positions. It also explains why the Pope urged Vietnamese Catholics to take part in the reconstruction of their country in the message he sent them when he visited the Far East in April 1984.

But where ongoing social and political struggles might bring a Marxist regime to power, the entire institutional strength of the Church is mobilized to prevent that eventuality becoming a reality. This is the real meaning of the difference between the message John Paul II took to Nicaragua and that contained in the speeches he made during his visits to various Third World countries. He cannot be criticised for not denouncing injustice—he clearly does so at every possible opportunity—but his denunciations are always tempered by a very severe warning as to the dangers of Marxist alternatives.

The Church has to display great institutional, doctrinal, ethical and organizational unity in its dealings with both Socialist states and revolutionary movements. That is why the Pope stresses these different points and translates them into Church policy. He does so firmly but with sufficient subtlety not to have caused any spectacular rifts in Catholic

ranks. It should be remembered that it is because of his intervention at the Second Vatican Council that *Gaudium et Spes*, which deals with the Church in the world, contains no direct condemnation of Communism.

In the present circumstances, such an attitude could of course easily be translated into the terms of an East-West confrontation. This is obvious from Reagan's eagerness to establish diplomatic relations with the Vatican and to meet John Paul II in Alaska; from the contacts established between the Vice-President and other senior US officials and Rome in the period leading up to the Pope's visit to Latin America; and from Foreign Minister Leo Tinderman's exploitation of incidents that occurred during the papal visit to Managua to justify Belgium's refusal to cooperate with Nicaragua. There are many other similar examples. It cannot be denied that a number of churchmen and even senior figures in the Vatican sometimes have a direct hand in this subtle diplomacy. But it also has to be accepted that they have for the most part refused to become involved in a theological argument and, unlike Reagan, have not described the Soviet enemy as 'satanic'.

(ii) *The Vatican's Ostpolitik*

An excellent summary of the Vatican's Ostpolitik will be found in Dennis J. Dunn's recent article.³ Dunn describes the history of the Vatican's relations with the socialist countries since the 1917 Revolution. He points out that the Vatican organized relief for the population of the Soviet Union during the great famine and that, whilst Pius XII's encyclical does condemn Communism and its international expansion in strong terms, the Pope also condemned fascism shortly before it was written.

It was, however, only after the Second World War that a coherent policy towards the socialist countries developed. The history of the last forty years reveals both a definite continuity in terms of underlying attitudes and a number of changes at the practical level.

The emergence of more socialist countries in Europe was perceived as a direct threat to the institution of the Church. The Church adopted a hostile attitude and the socialist countries took measures against the Church and sometimes against religion itself. Outside Europe, the Vatican saw the process of decolonization and the increase in Marxist-inspired revolutionary movements—not to mention the fact that whole countries like China were going over to Communism—as a basic threat to the Church and its mission work. It was in this context that new Western alliances culminated in the formation of NATO, that a series of religious conflicts broke out in the East, and that Pius XII adopted a hard line towards Communism and the socialist countries. The dialectic of confrontation was present at every level, both theoretical and practical.

The pontificate of John XXIII marked a very definite change at the level of practice. The Pope wanted to build a bridge, both in order to

arrive at a modus vivendi between Church and State in the East and to try to open up a dialogue at the personal level by, for instance, receiving Khrushchev's son-in-law. He thus made a certain contribution to the development of detente. It will be recalled that he offered to act as a mediator in the Cuban crisis. He also tried to contribute to the institutional reconstruction of the Church in the social countries.

Paul VI followed a similar policy and, although he took a harder line at the theoretical level, he did accept that a modus vivendi was the best way to promote peace and stability in Europe.

The problem of episcopal appointments in the various Eastern bloc countries was resolved; bishops were appointed in Hungary in 1964, in Yugoslavia in 1966 and in Czechoslovakia in 1972. Monsignor Casaroli was the architect behind these successes. Diplomatic relations between Cuba and the Vatican were never broken off and for many years the Cuban ambassador was the doyen of the Vatican diplomatic corps. Relations with Yugoslavia were re-established at the beginning of the seventies.

The Soviet Union has displayed a certain moderation in its attitude towards the Vatican, not least because it is well aware of the influence that the Catholic Church can bring to bear over the question of peace. It has accepted the need for a modus vivendi with Catholics living in Soviet territory, especially in Lithuania. The Vatican's Ostpolitik has often been harshly attacked by conservative religious groups and by right-wing political parties alike. They claim that the Vatican has made too many concessions in exchange for minimal institutional advantages and for the appointment of bishops who take an ambivalent view of Communist regimes.

The election of John Paul II did nothing to change the overall line of the Vatican's policies, even though he himself came from a socialist country. He has insisted on negotiating from a position of strength, but he has kept the dialogue going. And, as Dunn, points out, it is not a naive dialogue.

(iii) Social Movements Based upon Religion and Anti-Communist Religious Movements

There are, within both the Catholic and the Protestant churches, a number of groups and organizations which see anti-Communism as an important part of their doctrine or even as their doctrinal basis. It would be pointless to list them all, and to do so would probably exaggerate their importance. Some of the movements which provide support for the Church in socialist countries come into this category. There have been reviews and other publications, but most of these movements have lost what strength they once had. It is more important to note that organizations like Opus Dei, which combine religious fundamentalism with right-wing, or even extreme right-wing political views, still receive encouragement and institutional

support from the Vatican. Such organizations naturally promote confrontational ideas and practices and may even be showing the way for the policies of the future.

There are of course also movements like Pax Christi, whose position on the arms race and East-West relations reflect those of the modern peace movement; and the Catholic development and cooperative organizations which, despite the policies of their respective governments, continue to finance projects in countries such as Vietnam, Mozambique, Angola, Cambodia and Nicaragua.

All this only goes to show that the Catholic Church is not a monolith and that the line taken by its leaders is not always followed by its members.

Conclusions

As an institution, the Catholic Church is, then, opposed to Marxism. That is only to be expected in that it is a religious institution which is founded upon faith in God. When, however, its anti-Marxism is used as a political argument, the Church itself takes on a political complexion. As in many other areas, the only way forward is for believers and unbelievers alike to adopt the same social analysis and to leave the philosophical question open. The inflexibility of official positions in the field of social analysis and political projects is an expression of the amalgam we have been discussing. The positions adopted by many religious authorities are inflexible and, to put it mildly, unscientific, and they can lead directly to the use or even the manipulation of religion to worsen the conflict between East and West.

In terms of its concrete practices, however, the Church has not become involved in the logic of confrontation to any great extent. That it has not done so is a reflection of its institutional interests; after all, the Church is also present in socialist countries. From that point of view, it can to a certain extent become a source of moderation.

In terms of the emancipation of exploited classes and of the peoples of the Third World, it is far from certain that the Catholic Church's attitude, which is closely bound up with both an idealist definition of theological orthodoxy and the defence of its own institutional interests, does correspond to the dynamics of the Gospel, which calls for the defence and liberation of the poor. Any real fidelity to those objectives would obviously imply a fundamental revision of both the Church's thinking and its practice. Indeed, it implies such a fundamental revision that certain parties are not prepared to take the risks involved.

NOTES

1. The expression is used by Maurice Godelier in his *L'Ideel et le materiel*, (Fayard: Paris, 1984).
2. This also applies to the World Conference for Religions and Peace. Cf. F. Houtart and G. Lemercinier, *Religions and Peace-Analysis of the Statements and of the Members' Opinions of the World Conference for Religions and Peace*, CRSR, Universite Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-La-Neuve, 1984.
3. F. Houtart, *Laborem Exercens. Reflexions sur ses logiques theoriques et concretes*, paper read to the Marx Colloquium, Vrije Universiteit van Brussel, 1983.
4. Jose Manuel P. de Villas-Boas, 'Les Perceptions publiques et la moralite nucleaire', *Revue de l'OTAN*, Vol. 32, no. 2, April 1984, p. 18.
5. Dennis J. Dunn, 'The Vatican Ostpolitik', *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 36, no. 2, Fall-Winter 1982/83.

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