

# Concordia Theological Monthly



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ARCHIVES

## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### 1 COR. 11:10 IN THE LIGHT OF QUMRAN ANGELOLOGY

Under this heading Dr. J. A. Fitzmyer (Jerusalem) in *New Testament Studies* (October 1957) discusses 1 Cor. 11:10: "That is why a woman ought to have a veil on her head, because of the angels" (RSV), in the light of two passages in the Qumran literature which mention the presence of angels in sacred gatherings. The first refers to men who would take part in God's war, and these had to be "perfect both in spirit and body" . . . "for holy angels accompany their armies" (1 QM VII. 4—6). The second pertains to the exclusion of the physically unfit from assemblies of the congregation "for holy angels are (present) in their [congre]gation" (1 QS*a* ii. 3—11). He infers from these passages: "In such an assembly, Paul says, the woman is to wear upon her head a veil διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους. We are invited by the evidence from Qumran to understand that the unveiled head of a woman is like a bodily defect which should be excluded from such an assembly, 'because holy angels are present in their congregation.'" Dr. Fitzmyer rejects the suggestion that the apostle here refers to evil angels. The reference is evidently to good angels. The writer's explanation comes quite close to the old interpretation: The woman was to wear a veil "because the holy angels were present in the Christian assemblies and witnessed the propriety or impropriety of their conduct, as reflecting honor or dishonor on Christ and his cause." While the Qumran scrolls throw no special light on Paul's use of ἔξουσίαν, Dr. Fitzmyer follows Kittel in assuming that the word was understood in the sense of veil by the Jewish members of the Corinthian church.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

### THE SOVIETS AND THE SAVIOR

*Mlada Fronta* ("Young Front") is the name of a Prague newspaper. Some months ago the editors published the letter of a member of the Communist Youth League, Peter Lippert of Sokolov.

In his letter Peter swung out against the phony "peace campaign" conducted by the League. Everybody wants peace, he observed. But is peace possible without God? From his own reading of the Bible, he said, he had learned that God "laughs in His heavens" at those who think that man is able to accomplish anything on his own. Peace, he wrote, can be found "only in our Savior and in His firm promises."

Peter had more to say. He raised the question of the creation of

mankind. The earth, he argued, cannot be explained as the product of some administrative procedure. Did the 92 chemical elements simply decide to come together on their own? Did the Party order them to do so? Young Peter then recalled how the early Christian martyrs had died for their faith. They could have saved their lives, he pointed out, by renouncing their faith. Instead, they prayed for that eternal life which God had promised them and which is a free gift to men.

In conclusion, the writer begged the editors not to throw his letter away. He was willing, he said, to pay his whole week's wages to have the letter printed. The editors were persuaded and published the letter, saying that the communication raised "a number of interesting and very important questions, whose clarification we consider indispensable."

So heavy was the response to this letter that the editors said it would have had to enlarge the paper from 6 to 20 pages to print all the replies. Within a month some 220 letters had come in. Of these 102 "defended" religion, as the editors put it; 115 expressed themselves against the sentiments of Peter Lippert. Among the opponents were 87 young people.

What shall one say about this situation? For one thing, young Lippert's confession of faith is enough to touch the heart. At the same time, the nature of the responses contained in the letters to the editor reveals to what extent atheistic Communism is successful in its opposition to the Christian religion, by fair means or foul. When all is said and done, it is unmistakably clear that the Soviets have no room in their system for our Savior. Yet they will never quite extinguish the Christian faith. God has His elect also behind the Iron Curtain. Peter Lippert is surely one of them.

MARTIN H. SCHARLEMANN

#### SEARS ROEBUCK AND SYNOD

Our title is not intended to suggest that our church is for sale. Nor do we want to imply that any portion of the millions of dollars worth of property owned by our church can be purchased at Sears Roebuck prices. The big mail-order firm is introduced here only as the one industry in which the pension trust fund has undertaken to buy company stock and now seems to have controlling interest in the company. So far no other corporation has taken this step, which could involve a complete shift in economic power over the institutions of what is euphemistically labeled "free enterprise." As a result Sears Roebuck is socializing itself by way of its own trust fund. As a consequence

the management of this vast enterprise finds itself responsible only to itself. Stockholders have only such rights as the trustees condescend to grant.

A recent pamphlet made available by the Fund for the Republic and entitled *Economic Power and the Free Society* discusses the power potential of the many pension funds established by industry, which, in the years ahead, will probably level out at somewhere between seventy and eighty billion dollars. Here is a naked power vehicle that could create a kind of slavery which the world has not witnessed so far. In point of fact, a small group of men, with the power of decision over pension funds, have in their hands a power over our economy "which makes the medieval feudal system look like a Sunday School party" (p. 14). Five hundred corporations control two thirds of our nonfarm economy, and that represents almost one half of the manufacturing production of the entire world.

We have a twofold purpose for involving our Synod in this description of unparalleled economic power. For one thing, our denomination is part of the society where such power is concentrated in a few men. Let us suppose this handful of people decided to misdirect this power. A situation could develop which would make it even more difficult for the church to carry on its work here in America than other churches have found it to be under Soviet rule. All this makes it particularly imperative for any church, especially our own, to help inform public opinion in such a way as to prevent the use of this new economic power toward tyrannical ends.

Moreover, all this should help us to appreciate the fact that our own Board for Support and Pensions has consistently and vigorously resisted all attempts to invest its funds in the work of the church. In other words, it has refused to buy into the church program. If it were to yield on this point, it could gather enough power into the hands of the members of this board to have the deciding vote on every major issue confronting the church in terms of financial requirements. The final step in this process might well be that the management of the church would really be responsible only to itself.

Church autocracy is fearful enough, as history and experience have shown. Add to this the possibility of almost total control through pension funds, and you get the outlines of an ecclesiastical control over individual lives great enough "to make your hair curl," to borrow a phrase from a former Secretary of the Treasury of the United States.

MARTIN H. SCHARLEMANN

## THE CHURCH IN THE INNER CITY

For years the Lutheran Human Relations Association has been trying to alert the proper authorities of our Synod to the short-sightedness shown by congregations that move out of changing communities. Its thesis has been that these churches ought to stay and be supported, where necessary, by the respective Districts until such a time as renewed interest would develop in the needs of the inner city. That time is now almost at hand. Supported by a vast outlay of federal funds, many metropolitan communities are beginning to concentrate on rehabilitating these inner areas. This change will open even wider the door of opportunity for the Lutheran Church. For even now, before the program has got fully under way, the people that are moving into the inner city are predominantly Protestant.

"To the inner city come the newest arrivals in the metropolis," says a recent report by the Bureau of Social and Religious Research of the Garrett Biblical Institute. "Here they live until they become established and can move to a more desirable part of town. A quarter of a century ago the major group of newcomers was the European immigrant; now the newcomers are Southerners, both white and Negro. The older residents of the inner city area are predominantly Roman Catholic, but the new are predominantly Protestant; hence the opportunity for . . . evangelism."

Possibly this is enough of a *nota bene* for the mission boards of our church and for our metropolitan planning councils. So far no strategy exists to reckon with these developments.

MARTIN H. SCHARLEMANN

## A REVEALING BALANCE

One of the sprightliest journals on the American scene is a national Roman Catholic weekly known as *America*. Once a year its editors balance the best religious books that were written during the previous twelve months by Roman Catholic authors. In the compilation for 1957 four books on Mary and two on the Bible (one on the prolog of St. John and one on The Acts) are listed and described. This clearly reveals where the greater interest is to be found within that church body.

This is one of many items that have made church leaders in other denominations wonder out loud at times whether Roman Catholicism is really Christian, as it claims to be. Few developments have had more tragic consequences for Christendom than Rome's overemphasis on devotions to Mary. Our strongest hope for preventing the Roman Catholic Church from sinking even farther down into the quagmire

of superstition can be found in the renewed vigor with which the Scriptures are being studied by the scholars of that sadly misguided denomination.

MARTIN H. SCHARLEMANN

ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

*Omaha, Nebr.*—Weekday religious classes give children "a better solid religious education" than do Sunday schools, Dr. Minor C. Miller, executive secretary of the Virginia Council of Churches, said here.

In his state, he told a gathering of weekday religious education specialists, less than half the children aged 6 to 16 are enrolled in Sunday schools, "after three centuries of separate denominational effort."

This is in contrast to weekday classes, he said, noting that "95 per cent of the pupils who have the opportunity to participate have enrolled."

*Sacramento, Calif.*—A group of California Democratic leaders scored a proposal to tax nonprofit parochial and private schools as "sheer economic folly."

In a joint statement they defended the tax-exempt status of the schools as "morally right, legally justified, and economically sensible."

*Washington, D. C.*—Mixed marriages are much more common among Roman Catholics than among Protestants and Jews, but 94 per cent of American married couples are of the same religious faith, the Census Bureau reported here.

The bureau estimated that in the country as a whole there are 26,916,000 marriages where both partners are Protestant; 8,361,000, Catholic; and 1,258,000 Jewish. In mixed marriages, there are 2,255,000 marriages between Protestants and Catholics; 57,000 between Protestants and Jews; and 41,000 between Catholics and Jews.

*Portland, Oreg.*—A suit to determine whether Salem, Oreg., school children should be dismissed from classes to receive religious instruction was filed in Marion County circuit court by the father of two children.

Felix L. Dilger, who filed the action against the school district alleged that the request to have his children dismissed from classes at West Salem grade school for not more than two hours a week was denied.

The father contended he has a "natural and moral duty to provide such spiritual or religious education for his children."

*Harrisburg, Pa.*—Bus transportation provided Catholic parochial school pupils by a Pennsylvania public school district was illegal, the state Justice Department ruled here.

*Washington, D. C.*—Two out of three persons over 14 years of age in the United States regard themselves as Protestants and one in four as Roman Catholic, the Census Bureau reported here.

These statistics were based on a sample survey made last March by the bureau among 35,000 households in 330 areas across the country. In the survey answers to the question "What is your religion?" were obtained on a voluntary basis.

The census takers learned that 96 per cent of the people surveyed considered themselves as having a specific denominational preference. Only 3 per cent said they had "no religion," and 1 per cent refused to answer the question.

If the results of the survey are projected to the country's population as a whole, 79,000,000 above the age of 14 are Protestants, 30,700,000 are Catholics, 3,900,000 Jews; and 1,500,000 are members of some other religious group. There would be some 3,200,000 with no religion.

*Washington, D. C.*—Total membership in Baptist churches in 105 countries has increased to 22,068,058, a rise of 1,014,165 in a year. The bulk of Baptists—19,447,899—are members of 17 U. S. Baptist bodies.

*St. Louis, Mo.*—Although the government of India has restricted the number of missionaries allowed to enter the country, it is "not unfriendly to the church," a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod official said here.

Dr. Arnold H. Grumm, Synod's First Vice-President, said India is "trying to play fair with all religions," even though "they want Indians to handle things."

On his return from a six-week visit to Missouri Synod missionaries, lay members, and national pastors in India, Dr. Grumm said that growing urbanization and industrialization, combined with the efforts of the churches, are working toward the breakdown of the caste system.

The resurgence of Hinduism, he said, may contribute to the strength of the Christian Church in India. "If anyone joins the church now," he said, "he has to give up something. Membership under those circumstances means something."

*Miami, Fla.*—The right of the University of Miami and the Dade County School Board to deny a 37-year-old self-professed atheist the opportunity to intern for a teaching position in the county's school system was upheld here by the Third District Court of Appeals.

The appellate court's decision declared that the university had a duty to safeguard its young, impressionable minds from new teachers "having attitudes or fanatical ideas such . . . as atheism."

*Atlantic City, N. J.*—Plans have been set in motion for an exploratory meeting to examine present co-operative activities in American Lutheranism and the possibility of extending such joint efforts.

At its 40th annual meeting here the National Lutheran Council voted to ask its member churches to approve a meeting of its executive committee with representatives of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and other Lutheran bodies in the United States.

*Atlantic City, N. J.*—Relief shipments into Hungary by the Lutheran World Federation were suspended last summer, it was disclosed here, when the Hungarian Government refused to renew its agreement for duty-free entry of supplies.

Hungary's ban on material aid from church agencies, the National Lutheran Council was told at its 40th annual meeting, presaged the development of the crisis between the state and the Hungarian Lutheran Church which flared into the open a few months later.

*Minneapolis, Minn.*—The first annual conference of the newly formed Lutheran Society for Worship, Music, and the Arts will be conducted here, June 18—21, on the campus of the University of Minnesota.

Plans for the conference, which is open to Lutheran musicians, artists, dramatists, and writers, were revealed by Gerhard Cartford, music director at Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.

*New York.*—A pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and three of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod were among 18 student work leaders of various denominations to receive the 1959 Campus Christian Workers grant of the Danforth Foundation of Chicago.

One of the recipients of the award was the Rev. Clifford Swanson, pastor of the student congregation at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., since 1954.

Members of the Missouri Synod who received the Danforth grant were the Rev. Ralph L. Moellering, pastor at Chicago Medical Center since 1953; the Rev. Frederick A. Bartling of Pullman, Wash., campus pastor for Washington State College and the University of Idaho; and the Rev. Normand J. Widiger, former University of Alabama campus pastor, now a graduate student at the University of Chicago.

*New York.*—After a lapse of nearly seven years, Lutheran World Relief will resume shipments of relief supplies to Poland.

Plans to send in an initial shipment of 25 tons of clothing and 150 infant layettes late in February for distribution through Polish Lutheran churches were announced after the annual meeting of the agency's board of directors here.