

Karl Heinz Ohlig, "The Theological Objectives of Church Reform"

p 50 'Men's dissatisfaction with the Church, which leads them to demand its reform, has chiefly theological grounds: the discrepancy between what the Church, beginning in Jesus of Nazareth, was meant to be, and what it has in the course of centuries become.'

p53 'The "faith of the fathers" on which the Church bases itself is not -- and this must not be forgotten -- the faith of conformers and traditionalists, but of people who were in conflict with the religious and social systems of their time, who abandoned them in the name of God, and went forward to new frontiers. From Abraham on, who left the land of his fathers and his gods at the word of God, believing in a far-off promise, the "exodus", the departure from the old and the traditional, and the "desert," the total poverty and indefinable hidden experience of God, have become the type of Israel's religious life. In the name of this true tradition of faith in Yahweh, the prophets attempted over and over again to make present this Yahweh in worship, law, and institution. In this tradition stands Jesus of Nazareth with his condemnation of received late-Jewish practice, and his preaching of the God who is so totally different from the image that has been handed down of him. The key to his preaching, following close on prophetic tradition, is the conversion of man, his re-thinking, and that means a departure from traditional forms of life and thought, and a readiness to enter upon the new.'

p 53 'The Christian faith, therefore, rests on a tradition of the non-traditional.'

p54 'Criticism and reform must find a place for themselves within the structure of the Church. Institutions must be created which will make continued development possible. This is necessary not only -- by contrast with earlier times -- because of the speed-up of changes within society (including that of the Church), but above all by reason of the increased socialization and the enormous possibilities of manipulation on the part of established authority. In the face of this unforeseen increase in power (which also includes the power of the Church), the critical and reforming methods used up to now (for example, the selfless involvement of exceptional individuals from the Orders and theological schools) will be useless. In view of this, the demand for the institutionalization of criticism and reform seems to be (also) a theological necessity.'

p 56 'And every reform must strive to make the preaching of Jesus as Lord more effective and more credible. This must be its only theological goal. The reform of the Church must turn it more and more into the Church of Jesus Christ. The reform of the Church has from the very beginning a Christological objective.'

p 57 'The principal criticism of ~~the~~ the Church on the part of committed Christians starts from the fact that it puts too much weight on itself, <sup>its understanding of itself,</sup> its structures, and its traditions. Much of what it says concerns the definition of its own rights, the defence of ecclesiastical structures and practices, the preservation of the status quo.... The ordinary Christian simply cannot any longer understand what all these things have to do with the message of Christ, and how his hope, grounded in Jesus, can be fulfilled by them. The Church seems like a powerful, self-mirroring and self-sufficient machine that is no longer capable of orientating itself on Jesus and letting itself be questioned by him.'

'... The Church speaks with authority from the Lord only if and to the extent that it preaches the Lord.'

'... But if ~~the~~ the Church thinks in ~~the~~ "human" terms, ~~and~~ and puts the preservation of its own existence before everything else, then it becomes an enemy. This dialectical tension (as expressed in Mt 16 18 and 16 23) cannot be resolved.'

#### Alois Müller, "Practical Theology of Church Reform"

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II, A: 'The word of God was formerly apprehended in the objective actuality of stories, laws, and prophecies; and that objectivity was itself often confused with the word of God. Today we have been made wise to this confusion, and have to do without so easy an identification of the word.'

p 71 'This new understanding of the message of faith of the Church means that the question of the identification and comparison of faith is posed differently. Who (still) has the Catholic faith? Is this other faith compatible with the Catholic faith? and so on. These questions remain but ~~are~~ are posed in another way. It is no longer possible to apply criteria for the verification of belief, when they have become non-objective and pointless with regard to belief itself. There are ~~are~~ those that are convinced that there are vast numbers of heretics in the <sup>Catholic</sup> church today, and that there just ~~isn't~~ isn't anyone any longer with the courage to tell them what they are. This kind of thinking is conceived wholly in terms of the past. The question of the "correctness" of an understanding of ~~faith~~ the faith has itself to be researched anew together with that of the essential nature of the understanding of faith.'

p 71 'The new understanding of faith is bound up with a wholly new relationship between faith and the Beyond. In the old understanding faith was by and large oriented to the Beyond, and morality to the here ~~is~~ and now.

'... What is really new today is that the promise of faith itself is understood as applying primarily to existence pure and simple, hence first of all to earthly life, so that the eternal completion, as the "absolute future of God", is carefully recorded and indeed subscribed to, but does not stand in the foreground and does not invite us to transcend the present. Salvation for this life is to love one's brother together with Christ; to remain good under suffering; and so to stay truly free from all "powers" (from all "alienation") because Christ <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> proclaimed God to us as the absolute horizon of ~~our~~ hope.'

'... This quite new understanding of faith appears to be indispensable for any real advance and fruitfulness in the Church. When it is appreciated, and for both a "friend and foe" is strong enough to banish suspicion of a mere warmed-up rationalistic liberalism, it is the fundamental reform which the Church ~~needs~~ needs at present. [Underlined by BL]

p 73 'The tendencies connected with the slogans of "desacralization" "religionless Christianity," and "secularization" have brought an important consideration under discussion: The message of Christ is the message of the "Humanization" of God. God's Son wants to meet <sup>us</sup> <sub>in</sub> every man, in the least of our brothers; and what God requires of us, and what honors him, is our loving orientation

to our fellow man. Instead of the circle apart ~~from~~ in which God was honored by cultic actions, the whole of life is for the Christian the location in which God is honored by love for man. The Lord's supper is no longer valuable because here and nowhere else God is "sacrificed to", but because it is (in the community of brothers) the lasting re-constitution of the Church in its unity with Christ and its mission, on the basis of his suffering and by way of <sup>his</sup> ~~the~~ sacrifice on the cross.'

p 73 'Our solemn offices, ordinary and festive celebrations.... were structurally powered essentially by the idea of the public cultic action, which was also to a considerable extent objectified and independent of the individuals celebrating. The reform of the liturgy, ~~however~~ however, had co-celebration by the individual as its guiding idea. This has led to the now sidespread feeling of schizophrenia: In larger eucharistic assemblies one feels that the personal elements (the kiss of peace, etc.) fall flat, whereas in smaller assemblies the rubricistic rules are always /74/ experienced as obstacles and sources of distance.'

III C

p 74 '.. in the magisterium -- the hierarchy -- absolutist and paternalistic behavior patterns in regard to the community must /75/ be replaced by democratic and cooperative modes. "Absolutist" means a decision and form of government without communication with those concerned. One is (or thinks one is) "informed", but there is no dialogue. Petitions are received and rescripts are issued. This "one-way communication" prevents any actual community between hierarchy and community. "Paternalistic" is more apoular psychological expression and denotes a relationship in which the other is not treated as an adult, equal, fellow human being.

p 75 'These are the behavior patterns which as a result of the <sup>social</sup> maturation process are no longer acceptable in the Church. I have already shown that the theology of the magisterium is not affected by this consideration, and cannot therefore be used as an alibi. A form of government in the Church in which those affected cannot make <sup>the</sup> contribution proper to their abilities is futureless. In this regard the situation is alarming. During the argumentation over the draft "fundamental law" of the Church one heard, for example: "What on earth are you worried about? No reasonable man any longer takes any notice of what comes from Rome

e!" The will to absolute government is certainly largely ineffective today, but it also is destructive of the church community.'

p 75 'It is a fact that for many men in situations of extreme unfreedom, the Church represents the hope of freedom and humanity, but it is also a fact that it far too often features that which contradicts these values as they are understood today. But so long as "freedom" and "humanity" are not associated with the word "Church", the Church not only has no missionary future but falls under the judgement of very Gospel of Jesus Christ that it preaches.'

Adolf Exeler, "Change of Consciousness and Church Reform"

p 78 'An effective reform cannot be carried out without the formation of an appropriate consciousness among all those involved... Reforms imposed by decree and not made intelligible are rarely effective. Recognition of this general truth allows us to see the immense importance of adult education in theology for the life of the Church.' [Example from slum clearance; unsuccessful until authorities informed slum dwellers from early stage and involved them in planning down to details]

p 79 '.. only an openness to the basic idea that in any community worthy of the name all the members are in principle called to take an active part in the work of the community.'

p 79 'The importance of the mass media for the transformation of consciousness has been overestimated for a considerable time... .. recent research... has shown that it is rarely possible to get people to change their attitudes through the use of the mass media alone. Closer investigation has indicated that for the process of consciousness and opinion formation the interpersonal network of communication is much more important.... Small groups have a tendency to impose a screen between themselves and public opinion and its institutions.... It seems that this attitude is stronger now than in the past, and that a defence mechanism is operating in response to the excessive demands/put forward in public discussion. [of the wide range of views]/

p 81 '... most of our contemporaries have become accustomed to the idea that constant changes are unavoidable in the sphere of technology, but there is no automatic transfer from this experience to religious life. On the contrary, it makes many people all the anxious to be left in peace in this one sphere of religion.'

p 81 'Many adults are amazed when, on investigation, they discover how far and /82/ and how radically their views in a number of areas have altered within a few years.'

p 82 '... the change in consciousness brought about by environment is more noticeable at the base than among the leadership of [the] professional theologians.'

p 83 'When a difference appears between the official faith of the Church and the actual faith of the faithful, this should not automatically be regarded as a reason for blaming the faithful. We should at least allow for the possibility that these are not simply symptoms of decline but new impulses containing the promise of valid innovations.'

'Where a change of consciousness leads to a critical judgement on what was previously accepted as valid but does not go on to produce the change recognized as necessary, tensions and frustrations are inevitable. These can become so strong that interest in reform turns into a complete abandonment of participation.'

p 83 'The great objection to a properly prepared effort to bring about a change of consciousness is the demand that one must take care of the "weak." We may well ask, however, whether possibly the widespread confusion among the "simple faithful" /84/ is not rather the result of a lack of explanation and information than of an excess.'

p 84 'In the diocese of Münster a "structural plan" was presented from above in 1969. After <sup>vigorous</sup> ~~XXXXXXXX~~ discussions at the base it had to be shelved because it was not accepted. On the other hand in the diocese of Freiburg a different approach was chosen. All that came "from above" were some general ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ suggestions for the discussion of the subject, with the request that suggestions for the reorganization of the Church's territorial structures should be worked out "from below." /85/ The suggestions this method produced were criticized and developed

by experts, with the result that within two years such a change of consciousness had taken place among both priests and parish councils that the necessary forms were not merely requested but asked for.'

p 85 'When a Christian begins to think that he has already reached fullmaturity in his faith, his intellectual powers are getting slack.'

p 86 'The goal of a concern with questions of faith is not an orthodoxy without questions, but a permanent intellectual openness. What some people regard as orthodoxy is simply the result of mental laziness, while what some people regard as vacillation is simply a constant readiness to change.'

Adrian Hastings, "Should Church Reform start from the Top or X  
from the Ground Level'

p 87 Reform had to be permitted from the top because it possesses enormous power to block, to veto. The Top is far less effective in bringing reform about.

Implemented largely because of the contagion of example spreading from one local church to another.

p 88 'A widespread sympathy for aggiornamento, fostered by Pope John himself, was gradually transformed through the advocacy of a minority into an overwhelming ecclesial consensus.'

'... This dynamic group, a relatively small number of bishops and their supporting theologians, came principally from a rather limited number of local churches.'

'The vision had not come from the top but it needed the top as a channel for effective communication.'

p 89 'The Council itself... was progressively constrained to discard the preconception that a uniform solution could be offered to problems in almost any field. The diversity of situation between local churches and socio-economic areas made the attempt at <sup>monolithic</sup> reform self-contradictory.'

'It is becoming ever clearer that reform can only be valid and effective when it is a response to the needs and opportunities of a local church [true of koinonia kerygma diakonia leiturgia].'

p 89 '... there is within a movement of reform an ideal moment when men are /X90/ ready for much, but which, if it is not seized, can quickly pass and obstinately fail to return. Such a moment is often proper to a local situation. This is particularly true in the area of ecumenism and any system insisting upon a more or less uniform speed of advance at world level will effectively prevent response to it.'

p 90 'Neverthe\_less, to a very considerable extent, the liturgical reforms of the last few years can be seen as an imposition of a pattern of worship judged suitable for modern Western Europe and North America upon the whole world regardless of a real impoverishment in worshipping life that this has entailed for people whose social and cultural ~~life~~ attitudes are strongly different from those of the West.' [points made in detail pp 90 f.]

pp 92 f Ecumenism controlled from center is largely blocked. &c.

Ingo Hermann "Conflicts and Conflict Resolution in the Church"

p 107 '... the intensity and bitterness of conflict in the Roman Catholic Church have increased steadily since the convocation of the Second Vatican Council.'

¶ Conflict - the state of a system within which there exist mutually irreconcilable concepts of the goal of the system, such that the achievement of one goal would exclude the achievement of the goal of the other.

p 108 .. norms and attitudes designed to resolve tensions (unity conceived as uniformity, Rome's claim to authority, demands for obedience, absorptive capacity of church organization, religious humility) have proved quite unsuited to resolving conflicts

'The structural inability to adopt a rational attitude towards conflicts is the result of a paxternalistic structure, a legal structure biased in favor of the institution and authority, and a hierarchical organizational structure. coordinates in terms of which conflicts can only be seen as asymmetrical, ie as disputes between unequal partners.

p 109x 'The personal inadequacy for a rational attitude towards conflict results from the fact that neither the leadership elites nor the communities possess a theory which allows them to adopt an autonomous attitude to conflict, and so to create a symmetrical conflict situation with equal partners.'

p 110 'The incorrect interpretation of "unity" as conformity and uniformity contributed to an oversimplified view of conflicts as schisms, and thereby also avoided the need for a serious discussion of the workings of the system. The history of dogmas and the history of the Church will certainly require far-reaching revision in the light of the sociology of conflict, and this demand cannot be dismissed by warnings against "reducing the Church to a sociological concept." Like history in ~~general~~ general, Church history is written by the winners, and in each case it is essential to the winners to portray the other side exclusively as a pathological element and a cause of the instability!

p 111 'It is not conflict and change which are pathological deviations from the norm, but much more rigidity and inability to change which are symptoms of the weakness of a system.'

'Those who formulate or make conflicts in the Church conscious can no longer be written off as quasi-criminal or psychologically unstable rebels. Conflicts can no longer be seen as dysfunctional disturbances, but must be understood as a normal part of Church life.'

'There are three discoveries which the Roman Catholic Church needs to make in the second half of the twentieth century: it needs to discover communication, emancipation, and the Church as a group.'

p 112 '[Norbert] Wiener stated in 1955: "Communication is the cement which holds organizations together. Only communication enables a group to think, see, and act in common,"

"Communication" will be understood here as "the ability to transmit messages and respond to them." Seen in these terms, communication is a problem of information, of the flow of information within a system and between a system and its surroundings.'

'.. in the Church. Information flows in one direction, from above to below, there is no feed-back, and the declining level

### Communication

of information finally leads to a shortage of reliable information "at the /113/ base", i.e. in the local community... Communication as an exchange of opinions, completely open argument and decision, a two-way flow of information is at present neither possible nor desired. In relation to the hierarchy, members of the Church are entitled to indoctrination but not information.'

p 113 '... a parahierarchical structure has become established in the course of time, centred on the... curia Rome. For curial organizations, even local hierarchies are no more than regional representatives. The flow of information (... from the centre to the periphery) transmits information not as information but as administrative instructions. Feed-back is not provided for, but can occasionally be forced out of the administration by protests (as in the case of the so-called lex fundamentalis). Feed-back set up in response to pressure frequently leads, however, to "expulsion trials" in important cases, e.g., Vatican I, in which the opposition is first forced into isolation and then labelled a schism.'

p 113 'If we ask whether and in what form the Church is present at any particular time in its host society, our answer today must be that the Church is present to the extent that it constitutes a political force. The mass media and the public only notice the Church in so far as it is politically relevant. The looser the connection between the Church and political power, the weaker is its cybernetic presence. [Whence church either intensifies its political activity or else sets about acquiring democratic presence through information media].'

### Emancipation

p 114 'Peace and conflict research has its own educational theory. Any educational theory today must be regarded as a contribution to the emancipation of man. The way to this goal is called enlightenment. .... any practice for coping with conflict.... must depend to a great extent on enlightenment and a desire for emancipation in the groups involved.... If peace is to be more than harmonization and a smoothing over of differences, a total dedication of human intelligence will be required in all areas of society. For a religious group this implies unconditional support for more education, more rationality, and more enlightenment. Unfortunately, for two hundred years the Catholic -- and

to a large extent also the Protestant -- leadership élite has tried to avoid the intellectual ~~challenge~~ and political challenge of secular enlightenment. This opposition, and the dismissal of a phenomenon in Western intellectual history as "rationalism", is understandable, /115/ since enlightenment is always total, and challenges taboos and claims to domination. But this opposition cannot be justified if we remember the impulses to enlightenment and emancipation in the prophetic element in the OT and NT, and if we realize that any concept of humanity must involve maturity -- and it was Kant who defined enlightenment as "man's emergence from his culpable immaturity." There can be no resolution of conflict without rationality, no rationality without enlightenment, and no enlightenment which does not lead to the emancipation of man. This is why the Church must learn to release man from its tutelage and to permit and promote education for emancipation, even in theology.'

#### The Church as a Group

p 115 '... the Church and society are not identical and that churches as institutions seen by sociology form parts of the wider society. These two facts (many churches and <sup>French revolution</sup> ~~many churches and~~) make it clear that in sociological terms the Christian churches must be regarded as groups.

p 116 'From the point of view of an approach to conflict, the group character of the Church is particularly important in its internal structure. In this case it is not self-understanding which constitutes the group; the Church is structurally a group, whether or not this recognized and accepted. All the features which characterize a group can be found in the Christian churches: élite formation and leadership structure, authority pyramid, pecking order, Parkinson's law, Peter Principle, in-group and out-group attitudes, the tendency to eliminate nonconformist or critical elements. All these are laws and behavioral models which are as applicable to the Church as to parishes, bureaucracies, regimes, and businesses. They are the structural laws of large and small groups, from which religious groups are not exempt. Only when this is realized will it be possible to analyze the conflict formations within the church, to distinguish between the legitimate and illegitimate claims of hierarchy and laity, and even eventually to go beyond this dichotomy and replace new and existing patterns of friends and enemies by a genuine awareness

of conflict. This development would mean the end of ill-considered group egoism at the expense of those outside and of group-centered models of behavior within the group; it would make it possible to replace terror by tolerance and to establish the rational resolution of conflicts.'

'These conditions for a new attitude to conflict, which I have done no more than outline, imply not only a radical change of consciousness but corresponding structural ~~change~~ reforms. Indeed, /117/ ~~x~~ this connection between a change of consciousness and reform jighlights the limitations and possibilities in the Roman Catholic Church for a new theory and practice with regard to conflict, based on an equality of rights between all parties.' p 117 '... demands, over attitudes to minorities, critical intellectuals, nonconformists, and opposition groups.

[cf I Hermann, K D Ulke, Die ~~Neu~~ unerwünschten Aufklärer, Die Intellektuellen und die Kirche, Düsseldorf 1970]

These situations take on a special importance in any analysis of the conflicts facing the traditional structure of ~~the~~ the Church as a result of the revolutionary [it. BL] change in theological and sociological self-understanding which is at present taking place among the clergy, the system's leadership élite.'

'An associative attitude would only be possible if the conflict could be made symmetrical by fairness and self-restraint on the part of the system. There is, however, little likelihood of such a change at present. The official Roman Church's attitude is still based almost entirely on group-centered defence mechanisms; anyone whose attitude does not tend to support the stability of the system and the status quo is dismissed as ill or amoral and neutralized by the use of pejorative labels.'

'Nevertheless, there are some hopes for the twofold requirement of a change of consciousness and structural reform. Changes /118/ in a community which derives from Jesus of Nazareth can only take place through a return to that source. In other words, reform and advance in consciousness are only possible through a reinstatement of an evangelical attitude in the churches. If this took place the power of Jesus' evangelical attitude would be released and would lead, among other things, to humane attitudes to conflict. The New testament understanding of dynamic freedom and plurality, of love and humanity, could provide a vigorous stimulus to the introduction of adequate attitudes to conflict.'

p 118 'Progress in this direction can be made only through the official adoption of techniques for dealing with conflicts. Here, finally, I shall refer only to the two most important of these: open confrontation and institutional guarantees for discussion.' Ingo Hermann, Kyrios und Pneuma, München 1961 (?)

The Concrete Christian Life C 69 1971

Fergus Kerr OP, "The Latent Spirituality of the Counter Culture"

p 72 'By way of a conclusion, then, perhaps there are three points which one can make. In the first place, it is important for the theologian to recognize how deeply critical of the secular society many of the most influential non-believing thinkers among us are. What the theologian has to say will not become any more convincing and credible if he joins the chorus of the blind enthusiasts who continue unreservedly to celebrate the achievements of our society. In the view of the most sensitive critics our society seems very sick, and it is certainly no betrayal of his function for the theologian to attend to what they are saying.

Secondly, the approach of Leavisian literary criticism clearly contains an inherent discipline of self-effacement before the other, whether person or poem, and this is surely a retrieval of the most fundamental posture in Christian spirituality: humanity, waiting on the other, letting things be as they are. And thirdly and lastly, the appeal in Lacanian psychoanalysis is plainly a call to conversion, to metanoia, to a loss of <sup>the</sup> self so complacently adjusted to the society of Vietnam and urban chaos in order to discover the new man -- a new way of being human in a humane world.'