



# FAITH & REASON

THE JOURNAL OF CHRISTENDOM COLLEGE

1985 | Vol. XI, No. 1, 2

---

## LIBERATION (LIBERAL) THEOLOGY OPEN TO MARXIST SEDUCTION

*Edward J. Berbusse, S.J.*

---

*Fr. Edward Berbusse, S.J. has made many timely contributions over the years on the subject of Liberation Theology. In this newest article for Faith & Reason, Fr. Berbusse makes use of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's lucid "Instruction on Certain Aspects of the Theology of Liberation." He brilliantly sets forth the principle errors of the "Marxist analysis" and traces the development of these errors in both Latin and North American Catholicism.*



REFLECTION ON THE CHRISTIAN WEST BRINGS US A VISION OF CERTAIN CHRISTIAN theologians, both Catholic and Protestant, who have capitulated to Marxism in their attempt to arrive at world peace and justice. Some have gone the full way and adopted the Marxist ideology with its methods for the achieving of a New Man; others limit themselves to the use of "Marxist analysis" in the production of a New Christianity. Both have lost an adequate philosophy to serve their theologizing, are abandoning the idea of essential, unchanging truths, and are left open to the dialectic of an ever-changing world. They reject Christian dogmas defined by the Church in the centuries, as historically conditioned, non-relevant to a modern world, subject to an ever-evolving revelation from the world. This is their new Christian deposit of faith; and the tradition of 2,000 years of Christian teaching must yield place to the social and psychological findings of today. They are "existentialists", guided by a positivistic sociology and a sense-dominated psychology. They speak of *orthopraxis*, an awareness of what the current world is saying, and a grim determination to put this word into action; they reject orthodoxy as Out-moded, a tradition that is impotent in a modern world. While they use the same Christian terms, God, spirit, community, sacrament, divinity and resurrection, they have given them a new meaning, a secularized content. The substance of these words is no longer determined by Divine Revelation, but by a relevance to the on-going process of secular values.

Such rapport with the world is found in certain Christian theologians who have been seduced into forms of liberation theology which borrow heavily from Marxist thought. They justify this use of an alien ideology as a necessary defense of the poor and oppressed who, they assert, are best served by effective instruments of change. Cardinal Ratzinger says:

There are many political and social movements which present themselves as authentic spokesmen for the aspirations of the poor, and claim to be able, though by recourse to violent means, to bring about the radical changes which will put an end to the oppression and misery of people.

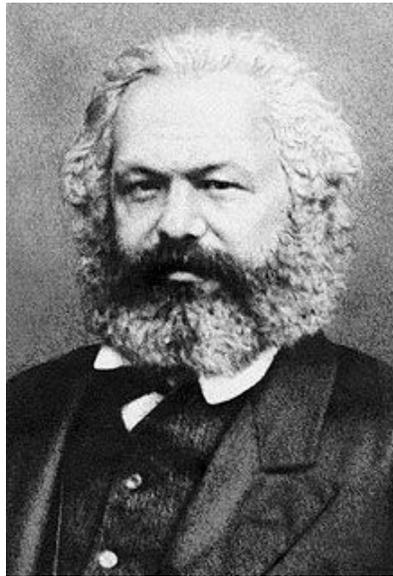
And so "the aspiration for justice often finds itself the captive of ideologies which hide or pervert its meaning."<sup>1</sup> Among the means proposed are systematic violence, political action and a use of the Bible to justify radical measures.

Sin, they maintain, is in the politico-economic structures, overlooking the fact that structures are a result of man's actions. And so capitalism is the greatest evil, and Marxism the most effective instrument for its destruction. The rich are to be brought low by the proletariat through the instrumentality of class warfare which is intensified by class hatred and violence. Soon the initial loving desire of sacrifice for one's suffering neighbor becomes an impassioned use of violent means to achieve their goal. It is a new Christianity of violence, based on "concepts uncritically borrowed from Marxist ideology", a recourse to "theses of a Biblical hermeneutic marked by rationalism"; and the new interpretation is "corrupting whatever was authentic in the generous initial commitment on behalf of the poor."<sup>2</sup>

It is called the "Marxist analysis" and is being used by some theologians in Latin America and in the United States, under the impression that it is the best scientific analysis. Since science is a word that assures authenticity, some are drawn to accept liberation theology's use of "Marxist analysis" as scientific. This is done without a critical study of Marxism's underlying principles which are an integral part of the "Marxist analysis"; and are not true science.

#### THE MARXIST ERROR UNVEILED

When Marx and Engels, in 1848, published the *Communist Manifesto* they proclaimed that "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle". In this they effectively denied the common good which transcends the interests of classes in society, and declared their full support of a proletarian class in the struggle which was to be violent. One critic remarks: "This means that force, not reason, is the dominant principle of human history."<sup>3</sup> In studying Marx's "early writings" we find a no less strident historicism; in *The German Ideology* (1884) we read: "The inward nature of men, as well as their consciousness of it, i.e. their reason, has at all times been an historical product." The Marxist criticism is not an intellectual criticism with an appeal to universal ideals and moral principles, but "revolution is the driving force of history." Again, in the "young Marx" of 1843 we read:



*Karl Marx*

Criticism is not a passion of the head, but the head of a passion ... Its object is an enemy it wants not to refute but to destroy ... It is no longer an end in itself but simply a means.

From this the critical author<sup>4</sup> rightly concludes that Marxism is not truth but power-oriented. He cites Marx's *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*:

Material force must be overthrown by material force. But theory also becomes a material force once it has gripped the masses.

It is a force that is directed toward the passions of the masses, not to their intellects; and in all of this there is Marx's contempt for truth. With Machiavellian subtlety he poses as a moralist, "using morality to overthrow morality."<sup>5</sup> While castigating oppression by the bourgeoisie, he urges its use for the cause of the masses; and this, he would say, is because oppression is the very essence of history. It is history that begets the new Hegelian synthesis: the Marxist antithesis (revolt of the workers) will unseat the entrenched thesis (capitalist society), and produce the Utopian, classless society. Man will create a new man, free of

God, nature, morality and the common good. In a word, Marx has dehumanized man, and made him expendable.<sup>6</sup> This is why man in Russia, China, Cuba and their satellites is to be a holocaust in the revolution, sacrificed on the Utopian altar of history.

*Because of the intrinsic evils within Marxist theory, no Christian may use its critical analysis in the pursuit of justice.* As Cardinal Ratzinger observes, "In Marxism ... all data received from observation and analysis are brought together in a philosophical and ideological structure . . . ; the ideological principles come prior to the study of the social reality and are presupposed in it... ; and if one tries to take only one part, e.g. the analysis, one ends up having to accept the entire ideology."<sup>7</sup> Here he cites *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971) of Paul VI wherein we are warned that it is illusory:

to accept elements of the Marxist analysis without recognizing its connections with the ideology, or to enter into the practice of class struggle and of its Marxist interpretation while failing to see the

kind of totalitarian society to which this process slowly leads.

We must note that Marxist thought has become divided into various currents. Two of the principal divergences are found in Lenin and George Lukacs. The former held a totally materialistic emphasis with no allowance for spiritual forces making a progressive contribution to the advance toward the classless society. And so Lenin, along with Marx, would have allowed no revolutionary dialectic of the liberation theologians, Lukacs, holding to an Hegelianized Marxism, would allow for spiritual elements contributing to the revolution; and so exploit the naivete of liberation theologians. Writing in the *Brooklyn Tablet*, on August 7, 1966, Louis Budenz, former Editor of the Communist *Daily Worker*, and convert to Catholicism, stated that such Marxists allow a “progressive social role to religion”, as a “Marxist doctrinal concession to attract Catholic thinkers.” And here precisely fit those Marxist-Christian theologians of liberation who would venture upon the impossible: the transformation of Marx’s classless society into Christ’s Kingdom.

We observe that many liberation theologians have been teaching that the Kingdom of God is principally temporal, a renewal of the world’s people in justice, achieved by force and under Marxist leverage. Father Juan F. Conneally believes that these theologians have been greatly affected by Adolf Harnack, the Liberal Protestant of the last century, who argued that the teachings of Jesus had been distorted in the centuries by the Church; that there must be a return to the *Essence of Christianity* which was to be modern and revolutionary. This Hegelian idea of evolution in religion was ultimately to substitute a temporal kingdom for the eternal one of Christian tradition. And then Marxists:

carry this image of a worldly kingdom even further. The Jesus offered to liberation theologians by the Marxists is an unreconstructed, battling, fanatical, non-conformist leader of a ‘popular revolution’, which harmonizes with Harnack’s liberal, non-Evangelical, Protestant perspective.<sup>8</sup>

Theologians of liberation who follow this lead end in a form of Christianity that is demythologized, holding all supernatural doctrine as unhistorical and irrelevant to the modern world. While de-emphasizing Marx’s materialism, they intensify the propaganda for revolutionary class struggle, seeing it as necessary to the dialectical progress toward a classless society. In a Lukacs’

Hegelianized Marxism, the middle class priest, nuns and laity of Liberation Theology find a way to bind Marxist praxis to allowing of Christ seen as a revolutionary. The result is a Utopia that is acceptable neither to Christian teaching nor to Marxist ideology. And so the ‘liberationist’ have forged a new theology for the New Man; one of their zealots expresses this ideal:

Much of the new theology is going to be done by the oppressed themselves ... The real theologians are the poor who are suffering their passion and beginning to reflect and pray together in their struggle.<sup>9</sup>

We see in Lukacs’ Marxism a using of the dialectic to convince the liberationist that Marxism is a new development of Christianity, the humanism of the twentieth century; and so the class struggle becomes sacralized. Bishop Elchinger of Strasbourg, in July, 1976, spoke of it as the heresy of the century, become almost a pseudo-religion:

Marxist ideology considers the class struggle a necessity, more than that, the driving power of history, the absolute condition of progress ... Certain groups of Christians, in spite of their good intentions, end up by deviating from the Gospel message ... They do not reject the Marxist dynamics of the class struggle....

Living in the anti-Christian atmosphere of Marxism, the spirit and the conscience of Christians are gradually imbued with it: one becomes what one lives and one ends up thinking as one acts ...

The class struggle creates an atmosphere of suspicion and contempt, it gives rise to a new racialism which tends to appreciate persons solely in terms of the social class to which they belong. This Manichean dualism is completely anti-Christian. . . The crushing of one category of men by another will always incite inevitably to revenge ... it is social war.<sup>10</sup>



Whatever be the form or technique of Marxism it will ever have at its core “atheism and the denial of the human person, his liberty and his rights.”

Any attempt to “integrate into theology an analysis whose criterion of interpretation depends on this atheistic conception is to involve oneself in terrible contradictions.”<sup>11</sup> With a pseudo-spiritual approach to man’s nature the Marxist-Christian will accept a total subordination to the collectivity. In the logic of Marxist thought, the “analysis” is inseparable from a praxis that reflects on the basis of materialistic and relativistic principles and then goes into violent action. It is the praxis of a class which believes that it alone has the current truth. All other classes are to be regarded as aggressors, to be suppressed without dialogue or mercy; they are entrenched evil and - for some Christian Marxists - to be denied the sacraments of the Church. The awfulness of the Marxist juggernaut is seen in the zealots of liberationists who consistently follow the logic of Marx, whether in the mode of Lenin or Lukacs.

#### MARXISM IN LATIN AMERICAN AND UNITED STATES CATHOLICISM

In Latin America and the U. S. the Marxist thesis has been adopted as a means to justice by certain theologians who fashion both a theory and a supportative structure from Scripture. The Maryknoll Fathers, both missionaries and seminarians, in 1977, were subjected to a series of indoctrinating lectures on “structural analysis”. This was to be an analysis of the structure of capitalism, by means of a “twentieth century adaptation of some of the insights of Karl Marx”; and the goal was to be action which “will overcome capitalism and lead toward the establishment of a more just society;” and that society was to be “a liberating and humanistic socialism.” In workshops the participants were to become aware of a dialectic between the ‘base’ and the ‘superstructure’. The former consists of the bourgeoisie or dominant class of owners of production and the workers whose labor produces; the latter is the capitalistic State that maintains the dominant class in power with its profit motive. To overcome this oppressive structure, the Christian is advised that he must engage in a “communal action” that will “liberate” the masses. This is to involve “theological reflection” that will produce a “faith response”; and then be merged with a “socio-political analysis”. Then the participants would become aware of the “social sin”, and generate action that will bring humanistic socialism.

Verbatim the director of the seminar says:

The main thrust of Structural Analysis is the theoretical analysis of the dynamics of capitalism. Theory, not for its own sake, but theory for praxis for conscientization and action which will overcome capitalism and lead toward the establishment of a more just society, a liberating and humanistic socialism.

He tells us that this brand of Marxist analysis is a product of western European Marxism, “flowing from the works of Georg Lukacs, Antonio Gramsci and the critical theory of the Frankfurt School.”<sup>12</sup>

Lukacs’ theory has already been analyzed in this paper. Antonio Gramsci, like Lukacs, rejected the crude dialectical materialism and interpreted the “dictatorship of the Masses” as allowing for a participation of the masses in the political decisions of the Party. He resisted the action of Stalin, turned to the “early Marx” of 1844, linking this with the idealist tradition of Hegel. He was a founder of the Italian Communist Party, a friend of Palmiro Togliatti (leader of the Communist Party until his death in 1964), and loyal to the Communist International. Gramsci (1891-1937) spent his last years in jail, under Musolini, where he composed his *Prison Notebooks* and *Letters*. From these we learn of his philosophy of praxis which justified political action. But in his approach to the liberal intellectuals, he appealed to the Hegelian dialectic within a history of the human spirit. His Socialism was a secular religion, a new culture,<sup>13</sup> a bridge between Marxist and non-Marxist thought.

The Frankfurt School referred to in the Maryknoll seminar is a Communist Institute in Frankfurt, Germany, established by a young Communist millionaire, Felix Weill. In 1967 Herbert Marcuse and Eric Fromm came to America from its halls; and devised a means of making Marx acceptable to humanists.<sup>14</sup> They turned to the youthful “notebook” of Marx with its immature but materialistic theories, and managed to seduce many Liberals, Christians included.

In the Maryknoll seminar of 1977, the Peruvian theologian, Gustavo Gutierrez, was presented as the ideal in discerning justice in the evolution of history, a “human or world history”. The basic idea is:

There are not two histories, one profane and one sacred, ‘juxtaposed’ or ‘closely linked’. Rather there is one human destiny, irreversibly assumed by

Christ, the Lord of history. His redemptive work embraces all the dimensions of existence and brings them to their fullness. The history of salvation is the very heart of human history.<sup>15</sup>

Here Gutierrez uses all the right words, *sacred, redemption, salvation*, but in an essentially different way. The sacred and profane are fused into one reality, and from the resulting Monism it is the world and its values - learned from Hegelian praxis - that dominate. The Church's teachings, derived from Divine Revelation and interpreted by the Church's orthodox magisterium must yield to orthopraxis, that is, the ever-changing teaching of the world. In another writing,<sup>16</sup> I have analyzed the Marxist thinking of Gutierrez.

But the Maryknoll seminar is not fully consummated in Gutierrez's theorizing; it must be strengthened by Jose P. Miranda's *Marx and the Bible* which offers a new hermeneutics of the New and Old Testaments. By the historical method Miranda rejects the Catholic theology whose Supreme Being he calls "the God of Greek philosophy, who is removed from history". In place thereof, he envisions an "active God, the political God." We are told that "the first act of salvation history is political and economic liberation"; that the Law of the Old Testament is basically legislation of social justice; "that, in Romans 3:21, Paul attests that the original intent of the Law is to bring about social justice." and, in summary, "God reveals himself in history through an act of liberation."<sup>17</sup> Quoting J. L. Mays commentary on the *Book of Amos*, we are told that the execution of the will of God for Israel "belongs to the horizontal sphere of society." It is evident from these few passages that the liberationists are determined to fuse the spiritual order into the profane in such a way that temporal prosperity is to be the chief concern of the Christian apostolate. The crass errancy of this Scriptural interpretation of Miranda has been exposed by prominent Biblical scholars, Marxicologists, dogmatic theologians and social scientist, in a book entitled *Enjuiciamos a Marx y la Biblia*. One of these writers, the distinguished scholar, Fr. Gustav A. Wetter, S.J., charges Miranda with global judgments, vague formulation of ideas, and an exaggeration of common traits in Marx and the Bible, noting that Marxism is atheistic.<sup>18</sup>

Others in Latin America who pursue this apostolate of Christian Marxism - or Marxist Christianity - are John Sobrino of El Salvador, Paolo Freire, Hugo Assman of Brazil, and Juan Luis Segundo of Uruguay. John

Sobrino is a Jesuit teacher of theology in El Salvador and author of the book *Theology at the Crossroads*, in which he adapts the thought of Hegel and Marx to his understanding of a Liberation Theology. In his *Monistic Idealism*, George W. F. Hegel finds that his "Idea" reaches its perfection in the political order, and so can be called the presence of God in the world. This historicized idea of God requires that He be in the historical process; that He is the mystery in history, and manifest in the history of the world. Sobrino adopts this Hegelian process and fashions his own political theology, in which he reasons that God is "identical with the evolving universe" and arrives at ultimate synthesis when "God becomes all in all". The existence of God only is when "he creates community and human solidarity."<sup>19</sup> Man must, then, find God by entering into the historical process and engaging in the "revolutionary effort to create a more just world." Sobrino sees Christ as evolving into God:

A mere man at the beginning of his earthly life, Christ became the Son of God by becoming fully human through his denunciation of the religious and political leaders of the day who were oppressing the poor.

While rejecting the charge that his theory is Adoptionist - condemned in the Councils of Nicaea (325), Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451) - Sobrino speaks frequently of Christ "becoming God", of becoming Son "in and through the process of becoming human."<sup>20</sup> Faith in Christ, therefore, means nothing more than being a disciple of the historical Jesus and working for social justice. As for Christ's knowledge, Sobrino maintains that he was, like all men, subject to ignorance and error; his mission was "essentially political", and he was put to death as a political rebel. His resurrection is merely in process, "through a praxis that seeks to transform the world." And since injustice is in its structures, Christians in following Christ must fight for justice and so create the new man. Then, there will be a resurrection in Christ. Again we return to the basic idea of a Monistic world in which there is no distinction between the sacred and the profane, "because the historical process, or what we call profane history, is identical with the Deity and therefore sacred."<sup>21</sup>

From this we see that there is "only one history, one in which the distinction between the history of salvation and profane history is no longer necessary." This succinct analysis of such liberation theology is made by

Cardinal Ratzinger who charges such liberationists with finding in class struggle the fundamental law of history. And so “there is a tendency to identify the Kingdom of God and its growth with the human liberation movements.” God is identified with history, and faith becomes fidelity to history; and every “affirmation of faith or of theology is subordinated to a political criterion which in turn depends on the class struggle.”<sup>22</sup> As though these heterodox teachings of the liberation theologians were not enough, they go further by confusing the poor of the Scripture with the proletariat of Marx. And then they create a “Church of the People”, a Church of a class whom the liberationists must *conscientize* in the light of the organized struggle for freedom.<sup>23</sup>

With this concept of *conscientization* we are introduced to the thought of Paolo Freire, a Brazilian liberationist who engaged in a labor of educating the poor. For “authentic education,” he says, one must combine both understanding and political action; and so he espouses a socialism that justifies the use of revolutionary violence. His program of theory, action and education is often vague, redundant and complex, and can be attributed to his dialectical thinking. He calls his “humanizing education” Dialogical; it is geared to cultural change, and is constantly discovering “antagonistic contradictions inherent in any social system.”<sup>24</sup> Herein one detects not only a Hegelian, but a Marxist premise. Freire’s social change must be ever in a process of demythologizing reality; in part there must be “liberation from magical thinking and dependence upon priests and rituals.” He labels anti-dialogical education “unscientific and oppressive”; and so reactively indicts all systems of the West, including modified forms of capitalism and the social teaching of the Catholic Church.

Freire’s thinking is said to be characterized by five strains: personalism, existentialism, phenomenology, Marxism and Christianity. In personalism he seeks a liberation of mankind from dehumanizing technology; in his existentialism - drawn from Sartre, Jaspers, Marcel, Heidegger, Camus and others - Freire searches for “authenticity”; through Husserl he explores phenomena in order to find reality; a dialectic of struggle is drawn from Marxism along with its idea of revolution; and from Christianity he derives his ideal of liberating the suffering masses from oppression. But here the likeness ends. His rigid conceptualizing about the Church and his subjectivist generalizations render him unable or unwilling both to see the depth of Christian teaching and the

diversities among Christians. In this process he divorces himself from the integral Catholic philosophy of man, the emancipating theology of the Church and its balanced social doctrine.

Religion for Freire is in process, and so he holds it to be an ever-changing “myth”, since permanence is constantly confronted by change. Man, in order to be “authentic”, must reflect upon and act in the world. As in Gustavo Gutierrez, he clings to the world as theology’s primary source; and so Revelation - given by Christ into the custody of the Church - is subject to change. But who is able to decipher authentic change? The one who engages in such orthopraxis is the one who truly understands the socio-political problems of the day. Freire’s epistemology gives objectivity to the universe and to man. It is his “conscientization” that brings liberation from oppression; whereas the Church’s “traditional” education is inauthentic, a “magical consciousness” that attributes human situations to God’s will. Freire’s philosophy sees steps in “humanization” which are “cultural action for freedom, conscientization, politicization, radicalization, and finally political and cultural revolution.”<sup>25</sup> It is a philosophy of experience which allows no room for timeless being and truth. In this he is by self admission a disciple of John Dewey whose planning is an amoral functionalism in a world of mere becoming.<sup>26</sup> Truths are merely functional, or instrumental in arriving at a knowledge of the one world of becoming, and religion must be fashioned by “empirical naturalism”.

The large error in Freire is that his liberation is political, while pretending to be theological; it fails to reach the ideal proposed when “its profound motives are not those of justice in charity” to all; and when “its final goal is not salvation and happiness in God.” In *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope Paul VI taught true Christian social thought:

We exhort you not to place your trust in violence and revolution: that is contrary to the Christian spirit, and it can also delay instead of advance that social uplifting to which you lawfully aspire ...Violence is not in accord with the Gospel.<sup>27</sup>

The social thought of Freire is in no sense Christian, but, rather, doctrinaire Marxism, a theory without true respect for people, a radical program of revolution without consideration of the freedoms of those who oppose him. It accords with Mao Tse-Tung’s *praxis* who tells us that “the movement of change in the world of

objective reality is never-ending and so is man's cognition of truth through practice (*praxis*).” Mao's “People's Democratic dictatorship” is to be “led by the working class and based on the workerpeasant alliance . . . its first function is to suppress the reactionary classes who range themselves against the socialist revolution.”<sup>28</sup> It is self-admitted that Freire has leaned upon the thinking of the holocaustic Mao.<sup>29</sup>

Within the school of radical liberationists Juan Luis Segundo, a Jesuit professor of theology in Montevideo, Uruguay, has a chair from which he plans a restructuring of the Church: away from a linear and toward a dialectical tradition. His thesis rejects a universal Church which is “regarded as the exclusive bearer of salvation.” He distinguishes between two Christs: the Mystical Christ, a particular and limited reality; and a Cosmic Christ which is a universal reality, i.e. all humanity. So interwoven are they that the distinction between them, in regard to salvation, is erased. In accord with Karl Rahner's term, “supernatural existential”, Segundo sees that “the human beings we know are born within an existence whose structure is supernatural.” And so Revelation “is not a formula entrusted to the Church for safekeeping,” but a “living Word which calls out to human existence in every age.” Man's understanding of this revelation “advances as humanity itself grows and deepens through its own questioning.”<sup>30</sup> In consistence with this, Segundo holds that Tradition is not maintained by a “logical concatenation of formulas”, but by a faithfulness to the Spirit and in a “response to the questions that are posed by new situations in history.”<sup>31</sup>

In attempting to establish his dialectical tradition, he offers examples in the history of the *Acts of the Apostles* where we read of Christians confronting the religion of Israel, and then of new converts who would confront the established Christian community. And so the process once begun continues, with each age acquiring a deeper understanding of Christianity. It is liberation from a particularist notion of Israel, of primitive Christianity, of the medieval Church, and throughout the centuries: and with the Church acting as “the consciousness of humanity.” Segundo concludes that the Church does not offer us a Christian theory about man, because to do so would be “triumphalist” and magisterial; that there is no Christian anthropology. It is man who, developing in the course of the centuries, becomes “God's alphabet” to enlighten us on the meaning of our existence. Those Christians who “hang on to outdated forms of the past” are indicted

by experience.” We are here at the metaphysical core of Segundo's thinking. The authentic perception of man's nature and liberation must be found in an ever-changing manifestation of the world; it is here that God's revelation is known by the Church and by all humanity.

This evolutionary theorizing is very Hegelian in its historical searching for the new synthesis of each age; and since we are in the age of the sciences, Segundo believes that Teilhard de Chardin's “world vision” will enlighten us through “transitions” found in “the evolution of the Universe.” He reinforces Teilhardian fiction with his facile dogmas: “Man needed a million year of preparation” in order to arrive at the threshold of being able to assume evolution. Now is the time, he tells us; “only within the last hundred years or so that he has begun to glimpse this destiny.” As confirmation he quotes a poetic passage from Teilhard's *Activation of Energy* (1963) that proves nothing. Let us see a bit more of Teilhard's thought which is so impressive to Segundo:

At the core of the social phenomenon there is coming to a head a form of ultra-socialization. Through it the Church is gradually taking shape, vivifying all the spiritual energies of the noosphere under her influence and fashioning them into their sublimest form. The Church is the reflectively Christified portion of the world, the principal local point of interhuman affinities for super-charity, the central axis of universal convergence.



Here Segundo finds a radical similarity with his ideas on “the essence and function of the Church.”<sup>33</sup> We are told that we are in a “new vital order within the human situation,” the time of the Christian *phylum* which is “framed in an evolution that is interpreted as the rise of consciousness; and it is moving in “the direction of the thrust of biogenesis.” Now such Teilhardism, if adopted, produces a reflection which he calls the “true gnosis”. And finally we are assured by Segundo that “the Church abides by the law governing the successive thresholds of evolution.” The Church's “slight substance” is nothing else but “its opposition to that which is not love but uniformity.” Lastly, in the words of Rideau, a commentator

on Teilhard, we learn that the Church, “only within this perspective”, is the “the central axis of universal convergence and the precise emerging point of an encounter between the universe and the Omega Point.”<sup>34</sup>

These massive generalizations - derived in part from Teilhard - need an extensive writing to refute. First, it is false to say that there is not a Christian anthropology, or that God's covenanted relation with His People did not make clear man's nature and the purpose of his existence. The Revelation to Abram of the wandering clan of Terahites - because of their worship of the one God and their refusal to engage in the astral polytheism of the settled Mesopotamians - was a reward and a sacramental symbol of man's existence under God. Again in the Mosaic exodus God deepened His revelation and fortified it with commandments. Man needed no anthropocentric science to realize his nature and its reason for being. At the fullness of time, the prophecies - ever abundant to the covenanted People - were fulfilled in the coming of Jesus Christ who, as the Lord God Incarnate, was most able to inform His disciples of their Redemption and elevation to the partaking, through ecclesial and sacramental life, in His Divine Life. He needed no evolutionary process to provide man with an essential understanding of the meaning of his existence; nor an Hegelian dialectic to provide man with encounters necessary for growth; nor any cosmogenesis to merge with a Christogenesis in the arising to the Omegapoint. Christ gave His authority and teachings into the custody of the Apostles whose successors guide the Church in seeing the true development of understanding of the deposit of Faith. To understand this development one need only turn to Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* in order to see that what was once taught by the Church is ever taught, and especially so when more profoundly taught under new and approved theologizing and rewarded by prayer. This is no gnosis derived from man's world-view reflection, no *orthopraxis* influenced by Hegelian or Marxist ideologies; rather, it is a working of the Holy Spirit within the Church established by Christ and ever promised His protection. Whatever truth there is of man's nature and existence residing in the world, it is seminal; and for enlightenment it must turn to the Divinely established Church, not the Church turn to the world for enlightenment. Like his contemporary, Gustavo Gutierrez, Juan Luis Segundo needs correction in historical, logical and theological expressions that flow so easily from his pen. Many other errors are to be found in his writings, and these demand another writing at greater length.

A last liberationist for our consideration is the Brazilian sociologist who reduces faith to a sociological, historical action. Hugo Assman's secularist theology finds its basic reference point in human experience which he regards as superior to official church teaching. He denies the theology of the Cross as satisfaction for sin, and gives to Jesus and His death a merely historical and political meaning. The New Testament is mere symbolism, something to be used in the liberation of man, to be revised by experience. There are no absolute truths, but merely ever-changing historical experiences, in which “politics is the most important element of human activity.” As one of the most radical of liberationists, Assman dismisses the CELAM (Episcopal Conference of Latin America) statement at Medellin (1968) as “euphoria”, the teachings of Paul VI, in *Populorum Progressio*, as “not up to expectations”.<sup>35</sup> Assman, with his liberating faith in the world (*praxiology*), rejects all traditional theological and ecclesiastical language. In this he agrees with Harvey Cox who says: “Theology in the first instance should not be a systematic or speculative discipline, but a critical one, and to that end should work more and more with the tools of the social sciences rather than with the traditional categories of philosophy.”<sup>36</sup> In discarding such traditional languages, Assman criticized them as having “their ultimate concern in eternity, God and the salvation of one's soul. Their relationship with the world, with life, with history was at worst negative and at best purely tangential.” And so faith is found in the world which is ever evolving. His voice is one of the most radical of the liberationists.

## THE MARXIST SEDUCTION INVADES THE UNITED STATES

As we have already seen, the theology of liberation with its clear Marxist colors has come to the United States through conferences sponsored by the Maryknoll community and in the publications of its Orbis Books. But the appeal of Marxism has reached far more deeply into American life, impregnating our universities, liberal think tanks, Protestant and Catholic groups of concern, and even into the advisers of clerical conferences. This was foreseen, in 1964, by such astute observers of the American scene as Sidney Hook who wrote of Karl Marx:

In the second coming he appears ... robed as a philosopher and moral prophet with glad tidings about human freedom ... In his train flock not the industrial workers of the world but the literary intellectuals of the capital cities of the world, not

the proletariat, but elements of the professorial ... a varied assortment of writers and artists, of idealistic young men and women in search of a cause, some square, some beat and some Zen.<sup>37</sup>

The image of Marx, in the last half of the Twentieth century has become respectable, a thinker for the classroom, a moralist for the church, and ideologue for our political action. As we have already seen the new image of Marx came to this country from the Frankfurt Social Institute by way of Eric Fromm, Herbert Marcuse and others of the same formation. The writings of Gramsci, also, have had their impact, as in *Marxism: An American Christian Perspective*, wherein a Catholic priest finds Gramsci's idea of the "achievement of hegemony" a usable Marxist means.<sup>38</sup> Fr. Arthur F. McGovern, S.J., as a Christian, should be aware of the immense conflicts such civil hegemony - with its avowed dependence on Lenin - would bring for Christianity. Gramsci states that "when we succeed in introducing a new morality in conformity with a new conception of the world, we end up by introducing that conception of the world too, so that an entire reform of philosophy is brought about."<sup>39</sup> It is to be a new world, in which Catholics "no longer need intermediaries ... no longer need pastoral guidance, they will learn to use their own strength ... They will be men who will break down the idols and who will decapitate God."<sup>40</sup>

Other imports from Latin American Marxism can be found in the resource persons who helped prepare for the radical National Conference on "Liberty and Justice", held in Detroit in October, 1976. Under the aegis of Fr. J. Bryan Hehir, Director of the Division of Justice and Peace of the NCCB, a Fr. Jesus Garcia Gonzalez was invited to give his input. This Mexican sociologist engaged in a host of generalizations among which we discover the Church implicated with oppressive governments and the United State in the role of dominant oppressor. We find no indictment of the Marxist impact on Latin America; no praise for the contemporary Frei government in Chile; no indication of the disaster that the Socialist government of Salvador Allende brought to that country, with its plan of collectivization under a Marxist ideology. In a previous writing, I noted these and repeat them as an example of the unwillingness of "Christian Marxists" to see the facts:

The destroyed economy, the impoverished people, the peasant revolts against the collectivized 'land reform', the closing of the Catholic TV station,

the restricting of sale of paper to the opposition press, and the importation of 'Marxist squads' from Cuba and other Communist countries were all part of the new way of liberation brought to Chile. Small but militant groups of radical actionists from the Christian Democrats = who called themselves 'Christian Marxists' - worked with the Allende elements for a violent class conflict that would overthrow the 'oppressive structure', and set the utopians in government.<sup>41</sup>

Gonzalez turned his attention to the "evils" in the U. S. Catholic structure which he described as preoccupied with the management of people, sacraments and property, and "a relative lack of attention to grave social and economic problems which plague their flock." Gonzalez's superficial indictment of the United States, his crude form of political action, was quite alien to the Catholic Synodal Document on "Justice in the World" (1971) which states:

Of itself it does not belong to the Church, insofar as she is a religious and hierarchical community, to offer concrete solutions in the social, economic and political spheres for justice in the world. Her mission involves defending and promoting the dignity and fundamental rights of the human person.<sup>42</sup>

With such radical imports from Latin America as Gonzalez, the disaster that characterized Detroit was no surprise.

In 1975 the *New Catholic World* published Joe Holland's "Marxism Deserves a Catholic Hearing". This member of the *Center for Concern* in Washington, D.C. found that Latin America's Theology of Liberation "represents the attempts of these groups (Christians for Socialism) to articulate its faith from a Marxian perspective." It is the "radical strain in the contemporary Christian-Marxist dialogue, and "claims to be Marxist itself," with its sympathies in accord with "the Chinese interpretation of the Marxian tradition." Holland remarks that the Church is rapidly losing the loyalty of many of its people at all levels; and sees advantage in examining "the liberal policies and assumptions within the U.S. context from a Marxian perspective." Moreover, he believes, that the "explicitly religious crisis ... might be enriched by input from Marxian resources. This would require constructive projection out of the Marxian tradition, since it contains little that applies immediately to religious expe-

rience.” The true orientation of Holland’s thought is revealed when he refers with approval to Dom Helder Camara’s talk in the University of Chicago, suggesting that a “Christian approach to Marx might be the contemporary equivalent of Thomas Aquinas’ courageous approach to Aristotle in his own times.”<sup>43</sup> The comparison between an Aristotle-Aquinas relation in the evaluation of man in his nature and values, and a Marx-Christian physical base from which Christianity could build its theology. As Dr. Vernon J. Bourke explains:

Aquinas adapts Aristotelianism to his own purpose. Man is described as a creature of God, endowed with a soul capable of everlasting existence after separation from the body at death, possessed of all the essential capacities of brute animals plus intellect and will. On all these points, Aquinas has significantly modified the psychology of Aristotle’s *De Anima*.<sup>44</sup>

Marxism which is at the basis of the Communist experience of man has three constitutive errors: materialism, inhumanity and collectivism. For Karl Marx matter is the origin of the whole of reality; it unfolds in material productive forces, having its necessary law of development in antagonistic production relations, until it reaches the “classless society”. And so atheism is immanent in Marxism which expresses its antagonism to religion; the idol of self-creation and self-redemption is its god and temple. Secondly, whereas true humanism must remain open to transcendence, to the God who creates, becomes man’s Providence, and promises man Eternal Life and blessing, Marxism fails to recognize the value of man, his dignity and his rights; instead it has man - unlimited men - as victims in the Hegelian dialectic of evolving matter. Thirdly, “the Communist system sees in man only a degree of development of society . . . society conceived as a collectivity to which individuals are subordinated.” As Cardinal Hoeffner so well says: “The Communist system does not recognize a State or social authority obliged to pursue the common good, but only the ‘authority’ of the party or the dictatorship of the proletariat which, according to Lenin, is exercised by the ruling group.” The Cardinal concludes that “Communism, neither where it is in power nor where it adopts the democratic rule, is ready to renounce its materialistic conception. Therefore it does not have the necessary opening to God, to human dignity and rights.”<sup>45</sup> The possibility of using Marxism as an instrument for the Christian approach to the modern world is intrinsically impossible. Marxism and its socio-political expression, Communism, is not only

anti-Christian in all its being, but also economically and politically degenerative. As Solzhenitsyn says, “we don’t understand anything about communism if we judge it by rational human norms. As figured by Marx, the backbone of communism is naked power, power at any price without regard to the losses of the population or its degeneration.”<sup>46</sup> A monstrous centralized bureaucracy is destroying Russia’s economy and that of other Communist countries. The government forces the population’s attention on survival, in order to prevent reflection on political freedom and the dignity of man. Communism’s anti-human character, says Solzhenitsyn, “has no precedent in history.” It is a “trap from which no country has succeeded in escaping. No personal tyranny can be compared with Communist ideology . . . It would be hopeless to try to reach a compromise with communism. . . (It) is a negation of life and represents a mortal disease for all countries. It is the death of mankind.”<sup>47</sup>

The Marxist power of seduction has reached deep into the life of Liberals who have lost the belief of Truth that is within the compass of man’s reasoning intellect, or given through the Revelation of God. Religious, in their secularized humanism, are - in their Utopian idealism - most vulnerable to its witchery. As the perceptive Marxologist, Bertram Wolfe, expresses it:

Your Church is now preparing to enter into a ‘dialogue’ with the Marxists and the Communists. As men of good will, you are peculiarly eager to deceive yourselves as to those with whom you discourse and concerning what the real subject of discourse is. You have not mastered their gospels, but they have mastered yours. They meet your will to be deceived by their ardent will to deceive. Hence to me it seems that the outcome of the dialogue can only be an increase in confusion and loss of many of your best in the battle for men’s spirits.

Mr. Wolfe, a former Marxist and research professor at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, wished the Church well, “as one of the bulwarks of sanity in the half mad contemporary world.”<sup>48</sup>

But within the Church the seeds of revolution had been sown, and in a newsletter for the Jesuit social concern of California, a writer pursues “liberation theology” by “looking at the world through biblical eyes”, and finding political tyranny and a repressive economic order. With simple generalization, the writer indicts the Church

with having “almost invariably been on the side of the rich oppressors.” And now the change must come: “a radical break with the status quo;” and “put bluntly, this means that capitalism is on the block ... It all adds up to revolution.” And how is the change to come about? It is to be realized in a “pedagogy of the oppressed” (*conscientization*) through the planning of Paulo Freire. The writer facetiously concludes that “faith and action become virtually indistinguishable from one another; a key word is praxis, reflection and action to transform the world.”<sup>49</sup> It is unfortunate that a presumably justice-concerned religious has been seduced by the rhetoric and “idealism” of such Marxists as Freire. He indicts his own country and Church, and makes place for the “solutions” that come from the radically violent liberationist. In this he turns away from the Papal solutions which allow no fusing of plans between Marxism and Christian social justice. In an address at the Major Seminary Palafoxiano, in Puebla (Mexico), on January 28, 1979, John Paul II criticized theoretical ‘re-readings’ of the Gospel, in which “Christ’s divinity is passed over in silence” and interpretations given which are at variance with the Church’s faith. He condemned the idea of “Christ as a political figure, a revolutionary, as the subversive Man from Nazareth”; and stated that Christ “unequivocally rejects recourse to violence. He opens His message of conversion to everybody, without excluding the very Publicans.” The Pope cited *Evangelii Nuntiandi* in which Paul VI taught: “Liberation from everything that oppresses man but which is, above all, liberation from sin and the evil one.” Such liberation, says John Paul II, “is made up of reconciliation and forgiveness ... Liberation in the framework of the Church’s proper mission is not reduced to the simple and narrow economic, political, social or cultural dimension, and is not sacrificed to the demands of any strategy, practice of short-term solution.” The Church’s message of liberation may not be open to “monopolization and manipulation by ideological systems and political parties.”<sup>50</sup>

Innumerable are the centers in the United States that have experienced and fallen into the traps of the Marxists, and defend a Christian-Marxist dialogue. In 1976, *The Catholic Voice* of Oakland, California, wrote:

  
*“Liberation in the framework  
of the Church’s proper  
mission is not reduced to the  
simple and narrow economic,  
political, social or cultural  
dimension, and is not sacrificed  
to the demands of any strategy,  
practice of short-term solution.”*



“Marxism Unfairly Stereotyped in U. S.” The writer cites, as his authority, Roger Garaudy, a French Marxist philosopher who argues that “the society of the future could not even be conceivable without both Marxism and religion,” and that “the Marxist-Christian dialogue continues unabatedly to arouse interest and commentary.” And, we are told, that “most Catholics associate Marxism with atheism, treachery, totalitarianism ...” Assurance is given that “in its pure form, Marxian communism has

never existed;” but that “in their efforts towards this ideal, communist states have improved the education, health and welfare of the masses of their people.” Approving the series of articles, the Editor tries to convince us that “the Marxist analysis of society can also prove helpful . . . because it helps to evaluate the present circumstances of social and economic oppression that is the result of the concentration of surplus wealth and property benefiting only the few.”<sup>51</sup> The Editor in close agreement cites Gustavo Gutierrez who urges us to “situate ourselves in history”. Such naive idealism that

hopes to beget good from dialoguing with Marxism is condemned by Marxicologist, Bertram Wolfe, as a plan by which the Marxists will deceive such Christians and eventually convert them. The Utopian attraction blinds them to the intransigent determination of the Marxists to change the orthodox teaching of the Church; it, moreover, seeks to convince the novice of the justification of class hatred and violent struggle. The Christian is gradually seduced by better minds into the Marxist dialectic.

#### CONFLICT IN CENTRAL AMERICA: A PRODUCT OF MARXIST IDEOLOGY

Today’s conflict in Nicaragua brings into focus the immense tyranny of Marxism as it is realized in the dictatorship of the FSLN (Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional). It is a party that betrayed the goals of the Nicaraguan revolution of 1977 “in favor of the implementation of a Marxist-Leninist state. Somoza’s tyranny was ended, but a new one began under the influences of Castro’s Cuba, Mao Tse-Tung, Ho Chi Minh and Lenin. Carlos Fonseca who was influenced by Moscow, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara wrote that this “ideological purity” must never be compromised; upon his death in

1976, Humberto Ortega became chief theoretician and developed “a complex strategy to foment national mutiny while maintaining FSLN *hegemony* through military initiative and manipulation of the broad alliance of parties.” While the FSLN kept its Marxist-Leninist Sandinismo to itself, a “democratic” facade was its public image. When Somoza fell, Ortega wrote:

Without slogans of Marxist orthodoxy, without ultra-leftist phrases such as ‘power only for the workers’, ‘toward the dictatorship of the Proletariat,’ etc., we have been able - without losing at any time our revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Sandinista identity - to rally all our people around the FSLN.<sup>52</sup>

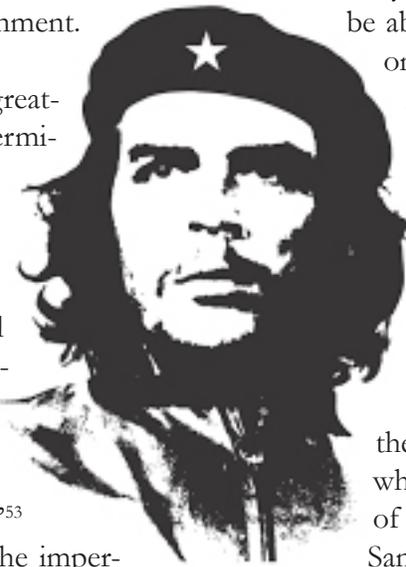
In the five member junta, two representatives were of the democratic opposition, while the controlling three were of the FSLN; and so the present totalitarian dictatorship of the Nicaraguan government.

The Catholic Church has suffered greatly from the Sandinista Governments’ determination to create a “new man”, fashioned according to their plan, and submissive to an impersonal god from within the dialectical movement which determines history. Consequently, there is no personal immortality, as in Christian belief. Fr. Ernesto Cardenal, infamous for his confrontation with the Pope, speaks of life after death as “a common body and also I would imagine a common conscience.”<sup>53</sup> The Sandinistas follow their own god, the impersonal progress in history; and their theologians are such as Jon Sobrino and former bishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico, Don Sergio Mendez Arceo. The latter is reported as having said: “I cannot divorce myself from history and, therefore, I am not anti-Marxist and I am anti-imperialist.” A contradiction between Marxism and Christianity is erased, and a Personal God is converted into the dialectical movement of history.<sup>54</sup>

This message of the “new man” has been spread by Blase Bonpane who served as a Maryknoll Missionary in Central America, married a former Maryknoll nun, and has taught at the University of California and California State University as a Central American specialist. In a 1981 address to a University audience, Bonpane said: “Jesus Christ is a communist in Central America”, adding: “Marxism and Catholicism began in an adversary

relationship. Now there are elements of Marxism in Catholicism;” and religion is “defined by conduct in a situation - that conduct will reflect justice or injustice.”<sup>55</sup> His apostolate was a conscientization and politicization; and here we see the influences of Paulo Freire and Gustavo Gutierrez. His shouted message condemned the U. S. support of the Salvadoran junta, “the world’s most criminal” government.

From such politicization, one can see that there would be created a *Popular Church*; and so there has been in Nicaragua with the full support of the Sandinista Government. In a series of centers, such as the Centro *Antonio Valdivies* and *CEPAD*, “revolution” theologians have pro pagandized and been given the support of 90% of the radio stations and 2 of the 3 newspapers allowed to publish. The basic viewpoint of their message is: a Christian’s duty is to support the revolution, and this must be absolute. Christianity and Marxism are not only compatible, but the latter is the only form that can embody and make effective the former. And so the Sandinistas envision two churches: the revolutionary Church of the Marxists and the traditional (reactionary) Church that must be supplanted. This analysis is from the testimony of Most Reverend Miguel Obando Bravo, Cardinal Archbishop of Managua. He witnesses to the attacks by the government on the Nicaraguan hierarchy which is labelled reactionary; and instances of this can be found in *Barricada*, the official Sandinista newspaper. The purpose of the Party is to create a new Church, as was noted by Pope John Paul II.<sup>56</sup>



*Che Guevara*

In their espousal of Marxism, liberation theologians in Nicaragua have published such booklets as *Capitalism and Socialism for Beginners*, (1980), in which Marx is praised and the Cuban revolution offered as a model; and Marxism presented as the theory of revolution - the only ‘social science’ capable of enlightening Christians about the mechanisms of oppression and the way to overcome them. Fr. Ernesto Cardenal has written that “Marxism is necessary to be with God and men,” while not asserting that Marxists needed Jesus Christ to be with God and men. One author<sup>57</sup> remarks on the real effect: “Christians have become atheist Marxists through a process that began with their conversion to liberation theology.” For anyone with the most primitive awareness of Marxism, it

should be apparent that there can be no Christian-Marist cohabiting, since the revolution must suppress all opposition. And so “non-Sandinista Catholics and Protestants have been subjected to an ever increasing campaign of harassment and intimidation.” The measures have included mob attacks, takeovers of churches, denial of access to radio and the press, cancellation of all TV programs, censorship of sermons, vilification of individual clergy, the expelling of some Catholic priests from the country, controls on private education, and even the killing and maiming of Pentecostals and Catholic lay leaders in rural areas.<sup>58</sup> A glaring example of this is found in the suppression of the crusade of Argentine evangelist Alberto Mottes in January, 1984. One can conclude that “liberation theology has led Christians full circle, from opposition to a right-wing dictatorship to support for a left-wing dictatorship. The amazing fact is that, while Sandinistas do not publicly admit their Marxist-Leninist philosophy, one can find the commitment in classified documents. Bayardo Arce, one of Nicaragua’s nine comandantes, assured the hard-liners of the Socialist Party that elections were merely a strategem, a “tool of the revolution . . . an instrument that will disarm the international bourgeoisie.” After the elections, he assured them, we must think of a single party and put an end to “all this artifice of pluralism.”<sup>59</sup> This is a typical expression of Marxist-Leninist deceit.

In the waves of oppression against the people of Nicaragua by the Sandinista Government, one of the worst is the treatment of the Miskito Indians of the East coast. Professor Bernard Nietschmann of the University of California (Berkeley) reported to the *OAS Commission on Human Rights* that the Indians had suffered from “arbitrary killings, arrests and interrogations; rapes; torture; continued forced relocations of village populations; destruction of villages; restriction and prohibition of freedom of travel; prohibition of village food production; restriction and denial of access to basic and necessary store foods; the complete absence of any medicine, health care or educational services in many Indian villages; the denial of religious freedom; and the looting of households and sacking of villages.” Nietschmann photographed people who were tortured. Rape by Sandinista soldiers of Miskito girls, he said, “was common”, and this occurred in each village invaded. The practice of their religion was denied; and only in “those villages now under the protection of Miskito warriors are religious services being held... ; and many villages cannot hold church services because their religious leaders are in jail or are in exile in

Honduras or Costa Rica.”<sup>60</sup>

Wycliff Diego, a leader of the Miskito Indians since 1973, testified before the Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism, on Oct. 19, 1983, after having taken refuge in Honduras. He stated that there are “more than 20,000 native refugees in Honduras ... They have fled Nicaragua since 1980 when the Sandinista regime began persecuting them, killing them, jailing and concentrating them into camps inside Nicaragua.” He noted that there are approximately 220 Indian communities . . . a population of 200,000;” and added “we have been discriminated against by all the Communist regimes in Nicaragua for many years.” Here reference was made to the raiding and pillaging of towns in the mountain areas by General Sandino in 1931. He was regarded as a renegade Liberal by the Liberal President of Nicaragua, General Moncada. Mr. Diego remarked that the old people who had regarded the Sandino faction as Communists opposed the 1979 Sandinistas, while the young worked with them in overthrowing the Somoza Government. He also said that “the Sandinistas have destroyed at this time about 180 communities, the native communities of the Atlantic coast;” and then concentrate the people into nine concentration camps. In 1981, the Sandinistas “burned 51 churches, Moravian and Catholic Churches along the Coco River, which is the border with Honduras.”<sup>61</sup>



Interesting testimony was also given by Edgard and Geraldine Macias; Edgard was the founder, in 1962, of the Nicaraguan Christian Democratic Labor Union Congress, becoming in 1976 the president of the Popular Social Christian Party; under the Sandinista Government he held positions as Vice Minister of Social Welfare and Vice Minister of Labor. Geraldine is an ex-Maryknoll nun who, after leaving the order in 1974, worked in Protestant relief organizations. This couple supported the statements of persecution of the Miskito Indians; alleged that a USCC representative, and others from the Church World Service and the Washington Office on Latin America had refused to encourage their publication of an article on the persecution of the Church in Nicaragua; and stated that “continued support from such agencies as the World Council of Churches depends on their being supportative of the present government.” Mrs. Macias, in commenting of the U.S. funding groups, said:

I have come to believe that these people are of two categories: committed Marxist-Leninists who parade as Christians in order to influence the social programs of the church, and naive romantics that have no sense of ideologies and understand Marxism only as a vague theory. I think Maryknollers are in the latter category ... Liberation theology boiled down to a little more than an option for the poor, living with the poor, sharing their fate, and struggling against oppression, usually identified with the rightist dictatorships.

The usage by Maryknoll, she said, “was a hybrid of theology and an adult education method called the Paulo Freire method or conscientization.” The combination of liberation theology and conscientization “created a network of Christian-based communities throughout Nicaragua,” and the FSLN use the Freire technique “to preach class struggle, U.S. imperialism, and the need for armed struggle.” Mrs. Macias concluded her extensive testimony with the charge that “we have Miguel D’Escoto, Fernando and Ernesto Cardenal, as militants of the FSLN, and a wide range of others as sympathizers with this armed political party and committed to being anti-North American. The churches are involved in politics; the churches are involved in a diabolical coverup, and they are directly supporting a Marxist-Leninist government against the wishes of its citizens.”<sup>62</sup>

Edgard Macias began his testimony by stating that the “Popular Church” is part of the Third Worldism strategy of Soviet Marxist-Leninist expansionism. He said that Third Worldism is a thesis created by Lenin, as a Communist tactic, and that this small group has “assumed all the categories of Marxist analysis, of dialectical and historical materialism in this class struggle and North American materialism as the motor of history.” It “sanctifies the Soviet Union, condemns the United States, and denies the true Nicaraguan Church ... the right to speak.” It has recruited and indoctrinated youth in Marxist-Leninism; then it protected the FSLN guerilla actions in their churches and parish houses by oppressing Christian youth groups that were not of the FSLN. Priests in government and the “Christian rhetoric: of other Popular Church members were able to seduce the naive progressives, among them “the Maryknollers that like talking with holy indignation against North American imperialism without admitting that they, North Americans, together with foreigners of other nationalities, are manipulating the Nicaraguans to submit to Marxist imperialism.”

In typical Marxist style, the Popular Church confronts the legitimate authorities of the Nicaraguan Church ... thus creating division within the heart of the church. Under Fr. Fernando Cardenal’s leadership, youth belonging to the Sandinista defense committees have “unleashed mass terrorism with which they attack the independent churches . . . They also smear priests and others that they accuse of being reactionary.”<sup>63</sup>

Shortly after this witness’ testimony the Senate’s subcommittee heard the statement of the Guatemalan ex-Jesuit, Luis Pellecer, who admits being an ex-militant with a subversive Communist organization in Guatemala. He alleges that “under order of my superiors we utilized Marxist-Leninist ideology and worked with the poor, in order to influence the poor to opt for a violent revolution.” His propaganda message was that “the capitalist system does not work ... it kills people ... There is only one alternative to the capitalist system, and that is the socialist system.” Then, the “theology of liberation is used to delegitimize the capitalist system, and to give legitimacy to the socialist system.” By using the Bible, thought is manipulated toward a Communist system; this is evidenced in the Revolutionary Church in Nicaragua. In support of the testimony of Pellecer, the Senate subcommittee enclosed an informative article, entitled “A Revelation of a Jesuit Revolutionary”, and published by Figaro Magazine (France) on April 24, 1982.<sup>64</sup> This extensive writing on his formation for a social apostolate is most informative, and his reflections will lie dormant in the archives until we unearth them again in order to see how vital seminary training is for the priest.

#### IRRECONCILABLES: MARXISM AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

In concluding this study on the fundamental and irreconcilable conflict between Christianity and Marxism, one need only advert to the Sandinista Creed which was printed in *El Nuevo Diario*, Nicaragua, on Jan. 7, 1979, and the teachings of John Paul II. In a parody of the Apostles Creed, the Sandinistas wrote:

I believe in Sandino, Father of Our Anti-Imperialist Popular Revolution. .

I believe in Carlos Fonseca, his beloved son, who inherited his ideals and tactics of the guerrilla fight, who was founder of the FSLN ...

I believe in the doctrines and battles of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Che Guevara, great teachers and leaders of the working class ...

I believe in the construction of the Marxist-Leninist Socialist society ... and its existence to the end of time. Amen.

(Puebla, Mexico)

This conception of Christ as a political figure, a revolutionary, as the subversive from Nazareth does not tally with the Church's catechesis ... The Gospels show clearly that Jesus ... unequivocally rejects recourse to violence ... The perspective of His mission goes much deeper. It has to do with complete and integral salvation through a love that brings transformation, peace, pardon and reconciliation.<sup>65</sup>

In an address to the Third General Conference of CELAM, John Paul II explained true evangelization in conflict with false liberation theology. He said:



## NOTES

- 1Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "Instruction on Certain Aspects of the Theology of Liberation," *Sacred Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith*, Rome, Aug. 6, 1984, sec. II, 2-3.
- 2Ibid., sec. VI, 1, 10.
- 3Paul Eidelberg, "Karl Marx and the Declaration of Independence", *The Intercollegiate Review*, vol. 20, No. 1, 11 Summer, 1984, p. 7
- 4Ibid., p. 8
- 5Ibid., p. 9
- 6Ibid., p. 10.
- 7Ratzinger, "Instruction", VII, 4-7.
- 8Unpublished manuscript of Fr. Juan F. Conneally, S.J. Loyola High School, Los Angeles, Ca.
- 9Ibid., Fr. Conneally cites Natl. *Catholic Reporter*, Sept. 19, 1975.
- 10L'Osservatore Romano (English edit.), July 11, 1976.
- 11Ratzinger, "Instruction", VII, 9.
- 12Peter L. Ruggere, "Theology, Mission and Structural Analysis," Maryknoll, N.Y., 1977. Appended to this is a document entitled "Scripture, Social Justice and Liberation," a talk given in Peru, and published in *Compassion*, vol. 14, No. 5, St. Michael's Monastery, Union City, N.J.
- 13James Joll, "The Marxist Ideologue" (Antonio Gramsci), Glasgow, 1977, Fontana/Collins, pp. 7, 11, 14, 23, 25, 48.
- 14Bertram Wolfe's *Letter* (unpublished), 1967.
- 15Ruggere, "Theology, Mission & Structural Analysis".
- 16Edward J. Berbusse, S.J., "Gustavo Gutierrez: Utopian Theologian of Liberation," *Faith & Reason*, Spring, 1975.k
- 17Ruggere, "Theology, Mission".
- 18Pierre Bigo, S.J., Salvador Castro Pallares, Juan Alfaro, S.J. Gustav A Wetter, S.J. Estanislao Lyonnet, S.J., *Enjuiciamos a Marx y la Biblia*, Mexico, D.F., 1973, Buena Prensa.
- 19G. H. Duggan, S.M., "signpost to a Dead End," in *Christian Order*, June, 1982, p. 326.
- 20Ibid., p. 327.
- 21Ibid., p. 328-30.
- 22Ratzinger, "Instruction", IX, 3-5.
- 23Ibid., IX, 10-11.

- 24 Denis Collins, S.J., *Paulo Freire: His Life, Works & Thought*, 1977, Paulist, 16.
- 25 Ibid., *Freire*, 55, 69.
- 26 Edward J. Berbusse, S.J. "The Mirage of Technological Humanism," *The Wanderer*, Oct. 9, 1975.
- 28 Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Dec. 8, 1975, St. Paul's Editions, p. 32-37. Mao Tse-Tung, *Four Essays on Philosophy*, Peking, 1968, Foreign Language Press, 14-17, 20, 81-83.
- 29 Collins, *Freire*, 25.
- 30 Juan L. Segundo, *The Community Called Church*, Maryknoll, 1973, Orbis Books, p. 15, 18-19.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Ibid., p. 29, 35, 49 (footnote, no. 8).
- 33 Ibid., p. 120.
- 34 Ibid., p. 122-24.
- 35 Edward J. Berbusse, S.J., "John Paul II & Theology of Liberation," *Faith & Reason*, Spring, 1980.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 Sidney Hook's review on Karl Marx *Second Coming*, *N. Y. Times*, May 22, 1964.
- 38 Arthur F. McGovern, S.J., *Marxism: An American Christian Perspective*, Maryknoll, N. Y., 1980, Orbis. The author attempts to show that Marx was not against supernatural religion, since "true Marxism is an open, constantly changing system of ideas." To use his "method of analysis" is not necessarily to adopt his historically conditioned atheism. And so we see an Hegelianized Marx, with *Gramsci* as the model.
- 39 James Joll, *Gramsci*, p. 98.
- 40 *L'Ordine Nuovo*, Nov. 1, 1919. *Gramsci* was co-founder of this paper in 1919, a weekly review of Socialist culture. It attempted to found the revolution on Factory Councils, with a center at Turin, Italy. Cf. Joll, *Gramsci*, p. 37.
- 41 Edward J. Berbusse, S.J., "Liberation Theology's Shadow Falls on the Church," in *The Wanderer*, Sept. 7, 1976.
- 42 *Synodal Document on Justice in the World*, Nov., 1971 St. Paul's Editions.
- 43 *New Catholic World*, Oct. 1975, p. 218-22.
- 44 Vernon J. Bourke, (ed.), *The Pocket Aquinas*, N. Y., 1960, Pocket, p. 91.
- 45 Cardinal Hoeffner, "The Pontifical Magisterium and Marxist Atheism," *L'Osservatore Romano*, Mar. 13, 1977.
- 46 A. Solzhenitsyn, "On Russia's Mortal Disease," in *Viewpoint*, *The Miami Herald*, Jan. 16, 1983.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Personal correspondence of Bertram Wolfe with Fr. Juan F. Conneally, S.J.
- 49 *Jesuit Social Concern*, Apr. 1975, Vol. III, No. 6.
- 50 John Paul II, *Puebla: A Pilgrimage of Faith*, N.Y., 1979, St. Paul's Editions, 99-101.
- 51 Ibid., 120-22.
- 52 *The Catholic Voice* (Diocese of Oakland, Ca.), Jan. 12, 1976.
- 53 David Nolan, *Ideology of Sandinistas*.
- 54 *National Catholic Reporter*, Nov. 5, 1982.
- 55 *Granma* (Havana, Cuba), Feb. 27, 1983.
- 56 *Summer Mustang*, July 23, 1981, Report by Staff writer, Michael Williams. Also, *El Nicaraguense*, June, 1983.
- "Open Letter" of Blase Bonpane to John Paul II.
- 57 Interview of La Prensa (Managua, Nicaragua) with Archbishop Obando y Bravo, Aug. 14, 1982.
- 58 Humberto Belli, "Nicaragua: Field Test for Liberation Theology", in *Puebla Institute*, Jan., 1985.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Testimony given on Oct. 3, 1983.
- 62 *Senate Subcommittee on Security: Hearings*, Oct. 18, 19, 1983, 128-30.
- 63 Ibid., p. 115-21.
- 64 Ibid., p. 121-28.
- 65 Ibid., p. 164-244.