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The Church as Creative Force: Christianity and Revolution

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understanding of the Christian faith or of the sociological context in which that faith grows and develops. For him, a commitment in supernatural faith is little different from the commitment of the average party member to the "dogmas" of Communism. This said, it cannot be denied that some useful insights into Communism can be derived from the application of religious categories to an analysis of the Communist movement provided one does not, as Professor Daniels seems to do, tailor the Christian experience to the demands of the comparison.

The final chapter of the book, "Communism and the Future," says very little but perhaps what is said is all that can be said at present. The future would indeed seem to be bleak as far as the cold war is concerned if Communism, particularly the Chinese variety, made new gains in the underdeveloped countries.

The Bibliographical Note at the end of the book is a very valuable guide to some of the best sources available in English on World Communism.

In summary, it can be said that Professor Daniels has presented us with an insightful, imaginative and in places rather original analysis of World Communism. Though, at times, there is a tendency to press his analogies a bit too far, the book on the whole is a very rewarding experience.

JOHN F. DOHERTY

THE CHURCH AS CREATIVE FORCE

CHRISTIANITY AND REVOLUTION: The Lesson of Cuba. By Leslie Dewart. New York: Herder and Herder, 1963. 321 pp.

The author was born in Spain, received his primary and secondary education in Cuban schools, emigrated to Canada, and during the war years flew more than fifty missions as a pilot for the Royal Canadian Air Force. After the war, he completed his education and was awarded the doctorate in 1954 by the University of Toronto. He is presently Associate Professor of Philosophy at St. Michael's College.

"This is an essay in political philosophy. Its viewpoint is Christian, empirical, and existentialist. Its subject, in general, is the relation of twentieth-century Christianity to the world polity of today, to a world that is politically definable in terms of the thermonuclear confrontation of East and West. Its subject, in particular, is the relation of the Cuban Church to Castro's communist state" (from the Prologue, p. 15).

The book is divided into four parts: (1) The Origin and Causes of Cuba's Communism, (2) The Revolution and the Church, (3) The Christian Crisis and the Challenge of History, and (4) The Political and Religious Context of the World Crisis. There are also an epilogue: The Political Vocation of Christianity Today, and an appendix: The Theology of Counter revolution.

The main thesis of the book is that the attitude and the position taken by the Cuban Church after Castro's ascendancy to power was perhaps the main contributing factor to Cuba's becoming a communist state. The argument is as follows:

Castro fought against Batista, and for Cuba. Many joined him in the fight against Batista. Catholics, both laity and clergy, were second to none in that fight. However, it was after Batista's defeat when Cubans were faced with the task of making a new Cuba that the transition towards Communism began.

The first step in the remaking of Cuba was a land reform program. This was opposed in different ways and for different reasons by vested interests both in and out of Cuba. In this issue, the Cuban Church was unable to take a clear and positive stand. The second major source of conflict between Castro and the Cuban Church was the presence of the Communist Party in Cuba. In the beginning of the reconstruction of Cuba, Castro did not espouse Communism, but merely sought to make use of the communists for the good of Cuba. The Cuban Church, particularly the hierarchy, objected vehemently to Castro's association with the communists.

Hence, the Cuban Church failed to enter into the remaking of Cuba because it did not have, nor was it able to propose, a practical program for reconstruction, and also because so much of its energies was spent in merely being against something—in being anti-communist. Dewart suggests two reasons why the Cuban Church took this position.

The reason why the Cuban Church engaged in such a vehement, yet fruitless, fight against Communism was because it chose to do battle in the world of concepts. "...Christianity and Communism are mutually contradictory... the two are related by an opposition which mutually excludes their simultaneous falsity and truth..." (p. 204). The Cuban Church failed to see that "the confrontation between Christianity and Communism is a confrontation in history, an encounter between two realities both of which actually exist" (p. 205). As long as the conflict was in the world of concepts, Communism had to be seen solely as a threat to Christianity. However, if the Cuban Church had confronted Communism in the world of reality, it would have seen Communism as a challenge.

The Church's encounter with Protestantism might suggest the attitude which should be taken towards Communism. The present *aggiornamento* with Protestantism is the Church's confrontation with Protestantism in the world of reality. This is why the Church now looks at Protestantism as a challenge and no longer as a threat. Why not also an *aggiornamento* with Communism?

The reason why the Cuban Church could not present a practical course of action for the reconstruction of Cuba was because of its deterministic view of society and history. "We believe in human freedom, but, like the Greeks, we assume the determinism of society and of history. This is why we have not really solved the antinomies of the individual and society and of personal responsibility and historical conditioning... We have not yet managed to devise a theory to explain the nature of that integration. The suggestion made here is that both society and history, being human, are as free as the human person is, and that all three realities are free in essentially the same way..." (p. 276).

"The Greeks needed to presuppose 'ideals' because they never doubted the bondage of fate... The proposition I question is that there is an ideal, even for here and now. When we enquire about what we should do if we are to do the right thing, we enquire about what we have to do to bring into existence what does not yet exist. For what is brought into existence is a thing only after it is brought into existence. What makes it the right one, thus, is not its nature prior to existence, but its being brought into existence in the right way, that is, according to the requirements of the actual situation (pre-eminently, of course, if we are believers, the actual situation in which we find ourselves in relation to God). The moral law is, in this concept, not a pattern according to which we cut the pre-existing, pre-allotted bolt of the fabric of life, but the loom and the scissors, the needle and the thread, which we use to weave, design, and put together our existence. We do not put on a moral quality. We are a moral life. All this, too, should be applicable to society and history..." (pp. 278-279).

Dewart's answer to the question of Christianity's political vocation today is a very positive course of action. While it is true that the Church cannot exist without cultural forms, any more than an individual's faith can, this does not mean that such forms are acquired only by acculturation. It is not enough for the Church merely to 'baptize' extant cultural forms. The time has come for Christianity to create its own cultural forms. "No doubt, this creation, required by the development of our history, demands by its very nature continuity with tradition. There is no material out of which to create the Christian cultural form of the future except our past and our history. But the continuity of this creative process with the past

should not in the slightest detract from its being a process or from its being creative" (pp. 286-287).

Thus, the greatest shortcoming of the Cuban Church in its hour of crisis was its inability to create. It was not a creative force because of its deterministic mentality, its authoritarianism, and its despairing withdrawal from the world; all of which are a denial of the humanity of Christ and of His Mystical Body. It is in this sense primarily that Dewart points to the Cuban Church as the main factor in Cuba's becoming a communist state. For when a people were searching for an answer, and when the Church should have spoken, it remained silent.

This is the lesson of Cuba which Dewart proposes to the entire Church. "It is worth underlining once more the fact that the Church risks above all a spiritual failure. What must be feared is not so much the danger of persecution as the possibility that the emerging catholic universe might remain outside the World Church. What must be feared is not so much that it shall suffer as that it might fail; not so much that the world might crush it as that the world might pass it by; not so much that the Church's mission might be opposed by others as that it might be left unfulfilled by us..." (p. 185).

The book jacket describes this essay as a fearless condemnation of the prevailing opinions of our society. Its spirit is better captured in Dewart's quotation from a pastoral letter (May 14, 1962) of Bishop Huyghe of Arras, Boulogne and St. Omer: "That man is a Catholic who opens himself to all... He is a Catholic who... becomes... overwhelmed by distress, whatever form that distress may take. He is a Catholic who instinctively rejects everything that is a source of division, who cannot meet anyone without tirelessly seeking out an area of agreement. He is a Catholic who sees in each man not... the label which is applied to him, of unbeliever, or Protestant, or Jew, or Communist, but the brother for whom Christ died, and who has been placed in his path in order to receive his love" (p. 89).

R. EUGENE MORAN

PLURALISM IN COMMUNISM

IDEOLOGY IN CONFLICT: COMMUNIST POLITICAL THEORY.

By Dieter Dux. Princeton, N. J.: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1963. vii, 198 pp.

This book is a collection of documents from Russia, Red China and Yugoslavia. Some are official papers of the various communist parties,