

BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE Volume VIII Number 3 May/June 1972 3444 West Congress Parkway Chicago, Illinois 60624 U.S.A.

Toward a New Other-worldliness

By H. Richard Niebuhr



Few men in the 20th century have had Niebuhr's far-reaching impact on American theological thought. His paper on the purpose of the Church continues to be one of the cornerstones of RS—1. During his life as a pastor and as a professor, he brought new clarity to the basic questions confronting the Church in our time. He has described himself as an American Protestant scholar who looks to "the broad outlines of those great movements which have imparted to men... new force and courage for life's strange journey."

I. CHRISTIANITY AND THE TWO WORLDS

Man lives in two worlds and when he tries to make his home in one alone something goes wrong with him. Our race, like that of the migratory birds, cannot live and perform all its functions in one climate but must

Is either secularity alone or spirituality alone a sufficient universe for our time? The more we struggle with this issue the more we see the inadequacy of such a separation. H. Richard Niebuhr shows how the style of living in two worlds points the way for post-modern man to move into the future.

undertake a periodic flight to another homeland.

Not only Christianity but every wise understanding of man in his world, and even primitive custom produced by trial and error, recognize the duality of the human environment and the need for seasonal journeys from this world to another. Oriental wisdom offers its own accounts of the Here and the There and of the soul's transmigration. In the West, Greek theory on the one hand and Hebraic vision on the other have given men understanding of the two regions in which they must dwell as well as of the routes that lead from one to the other.

It is always a double thing. It is concerned with the transformation of this world into a kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, but it is equally interested in the reformation of the other world in which we also live into a land of grace and glory. It assumes a two-world life on the part of man and its proper task has been the conversion of this dual existence rather than the reduction of life to one or the other.

The Gospel is not a plan either for building the kingdom of God upon earth nor for attaining blessedness in a realm of spirit. It is always the double announcement that the Word has become flesh and the mortal put on immortality; it always carries with it the double injunction to seek the things that are above and to go into all the world. Yet it does not consist of two proclamations; for it speaks of one God who redeems a life lived in two worlds.

For the greater part of its history the Christian movement has been able to assume the existence among men of a two-worldly life and could direct its message to those who understood the duality of their environment. It could announce a Gospel that dealt with both worlds and undertake to convert the two-world philosophies is encountered.

Christianity did not need to challenge the Hebrews' temporal division between a present kingdom of this world and a future kingdom of God, but within the Hebrew framework of thought it pointed out two things that the other, future world was now ingressing into the present in Jesus Christ so that the present was now being transformed into a strange future, and secondly, that the present-future God was reconciling men to himself in the midst of their journey from life through death to life.

Similarly Christian faith did not reject Hellenic two-world thought, though the Greek way of understanding man's two homes was different from the Hebrews' interpretation. The chief concern of Christian faith was to convert this Greek two-worldliness, so that the Greek might see through the revelation of God in Christ how personal were the other-worldly objects of the soul contemplation, the form of the Good and the logos, and how graciously creative and redemptive they were. The resultant two-world theory of the Church has been a curious blend of Hebrew philosophy of history and Greek metaphysics in which the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul, the eternity and the historicity of the first and the second comings of Christ were equally maintained.

A new problem arises for both mankind and the Church when man's normal two-world outlook is obscured, when his migrations cease and he is confined to a single sphere. That situation has occurred twice in the history of the western world during the Christian era. We live in one of these periods, but our problem is not unique. For our situation is comparable to the one which prevailed in the centuries near the beginning of our era when the flight of men from the temporal to the eternal, from the

Christianity became extremely other-worldly, it was still recognizably Christian, centering the attention of eremites and gnostics on the vision of God the Father and Jesus Christ in the other world and disciplining adventurers into the realm of the spirit to humility and love of the brethren. In the inverted situation of our day. when the wheel has come full circle and when, to speak with Bergson, the frenzy of asceticism has been replaced by the frenzy for comfort, it is also hard but not wholly impossible to preach, understand, and live by the Gospel.

The great catastrophes and brutalities of our century cannot obscure the fact that Christianity has not only directed men's eyes to God and to Jesus Christ, insofar as they are

the world, who not only draws men to himself by the attraction of ideal being but enters compulsively into them, who moves men to respond to love by love, and calls forth great works of faith by his mighty work. Not only is the Christian Gospel in its wholeness obscured when it is translated into one-worldly terms by the life of man, the migratory being, into whose structure the law of a seasonal movement is written, is thwarted and distraught by confinement to one world, whether it be the world of sight or the realm of the spirit.

II. EARTH IS NOT ENOUGH

The sufficiency of secularism is becoming evident to many men in the very hour of its highest development.

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	Christianity Speaks to Both Worlds		Man's History is Mainly in Two Worlds		Secular Inade	quate	No Future	OTHER-WORLDLINESS			
					For Life	Today	In Only				
	Man is a Two World Being	Gospel Redeems Both Worlds	Chris- tianity Spoke to Both Hebrews and Greeks	One World Twice: Dark Ages and the Present	Science and Politics Depend on Another Perspective	No New Ideas Without Detach- ment	One World	Perspective of Eternity is the Foundation	Make Ready For a New Season		
	¶ 1-2	3-4	5-7	8-11	12-15	16-18	19-21	22-24	25-26		

activity of manipulation to the activity of contemplation also created a kind of one-world society, with the difference that the world in which the spiritualists sought to dwell exclusively was the "other" world rather than this one. Both periods seem unhealthy but it is difficult to call either quite unchristian.

In the early period it was hard to make the Gospel intelligible to men who sought only to know spiritual as self-evidently good, the material as evil. It was hard but it could be done, and while, under the circumstances,

visible in this world—but made many men see what it points to has not been without converting influence on the this-worldly life. Jesus has never been so well known as he is now, though the one who is known is the Jesus of history only.

Yet the this-worldly Christianity of our day is as truncated and crippled a movement as its other-worldly counterpart of the so-called dark ages was. Both periods lost that apprehension of God which characterized the prophets and apostles, the apprehension of a living Creator and Redeemer who enters into

It appears indeed that a great triumph of this-worldliness is near. It may be that we stand at a point in human history when the one-sided interest of past generations will bring its richest results. The hope of economic man for freedom from want-that is, from economic want-and freedom from fear-that is, from anxiety for food, shelter, and warmth-may be achieved within limits. Inches may be added to the physical stature and decades to the life-span of man. Communication and travel will doubtless be exceedingly swift; labor may be light for most, men, comfort great, information very

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extensive. We may discover a transient solution of the problem of power which will give us eternal peace of some generations. These things may be.

Yet in the hour when men envision the possible achievement of victory over nature in secularized civilization it is becoming clear to them that earth is not enough. They note that man's life in time is neither self-sufficient nor sufficient for him. It is not self-sufficient for if this secular life were not founded on principles that man had learned from other sources than are given him in this space-time world, it could not have succeeded at all Philosophers and historians have pointed out that natural science is based on convictions about the unity and intelligibility of the universe and on a morality of disinterestedness or, better, of self-denial, which are preconditions and not consequences of its work.

The politics of secularism rests on convictions about the dignity, the worth, and the equality of men which neither natural science nor ordinary observation can supply or validate; yet without them the political structure of so-called secular government did not develop and could hardly continue to stand. The self-evident truths about human rights are self-evident to men who have dwelt for a while in another world than the secular, temporal, natural sphere. They imply a human membership in a transcendent society and a human relation to a more than natural Being.

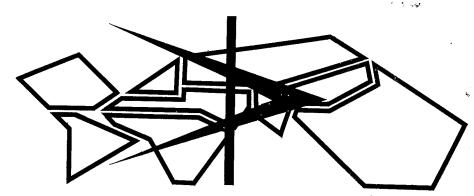
Reflective thought is persuaded to accept the conclusion that earth is

not enough even for earthly life, that secularism cannot exist as a mode of culture save by accepting principles that must be gained in some other than the secular sphere.

Two other considerations need to be made explicit in this connection. Secular life, the realization and enjoyment of temporal goods and the organization of economic-political societies, depends for its continuance and health on the presence of disinterested men as well as of some disinterestedness in the mass. Furthermore it can grow and develop only as men bring new ideas to bear on the new situations which arise for them In both respects secularism depends on other-worldliness. Plato discerned, Bentham assumed, and Roger Williams illustrated the truth that government can succeed only when governors are not too much concerned with their own temporal goods and when they do not stake too much on the success of government. Such disinterestedness is possible to men only insofar as their interests have been directed to other goods than those which they administer. As Prof. Lovejoy has said in The Great Chain of Being. There is perhaps nothing so favorable to success in this world's business as a high degree of emotional detachment from it." But without attachment to other goods detachment from this worldly concern is not possible. Today the dependence of government and political health on the disinterestedness which other-worldliness can foster is made apparent in a negative way by the failure of all our endeavors to achieve unity through the compounding and compromising of interests or to find peaces by matching them against each other in a game without an umpire.

The paucity of new ideas in secular civilization today appears in the fact that apart from natural science, the new challenges of the new time marked by our planetary wars and our technological civilization are being met with the formulae and mental habits established a century and more ago. In vain men demand of their statesmen creative and hopeful, programs for world reconstruction. In vain the Church is challenged to meet the issues of men with prophetic insights. Those who make the demands are as bare of new ideas and adequate plans as are those whom they address. New ideas are not developed in the confusion and immediacy of secular conflict. They are found by those who not seek them, or do not seek them The sake of the secular problem. They are found in the contemplation of another world and in the view of this one sub specie acternitatis.

This inadequacy of the secular is apprehended by feeling even when it is not explicitly recognized. Today, when secular values are offered actually and prospectively in an abundance never before achieved, men are giving evidence of their dissatisfaction with them. Not only those who ask questions about the foundations of human existence but many others who continue to use the thought forms and the habitual modes of behavior of the this-worldly environment.



movement briefs

"Stopped by Chicago for a Visit:" Rev. Frank J. Bonnike, President, National Federation of Priests Councils...Rev. Yoshihiro Tanaka, Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church. Urban-Industrial Mission Committee of the National Christian Council, Japan...Bishop Johannes Gultom, Methodist Church of Indonesia and his associate Rev. Edward Hutasoit. Elizabeth R. Gatov. Former Treasurer of the United States. . Sister Margaret Rose, Head Librarian, Our Lady of the Lake. College, San Antonio, Texas. . . Students of the Asbury Theological Seminary, to look at 5th City and a new approach to community reformulation... Members of the Delavan, Wisconsin, Methodist Youth Fellowship, as overnight guests and participants in the Institute's ecclesiola experimentation.

In Seoul, Korea, Bob and Cynthia Vance have been joined by Don and Jane McClain to assist in setting up the International Training Institute scheduled for July 9th to August 19th. Designed for local churchmen from throughout Southeast Asia and Pacifica, the ITI will be hosted by the Christian Academy House in Suwon, thirty miles north of Seoul.

The Bombay religious house—The Urban Ashram—was visited by Dr. E. H. Johnson, General Secretary of Overseas Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, who shared his reflection, on a two-week journey through India and Bangladesh.

Movement and Order colleagues are preparing to participate in **Global Odyssey IV** during the month of July. Present plans call for intentional visits to all nine geo-social continents of the world, with a focus on the cities of Tokyo, Calcutta, Hong Kong, Nairobi, Cairo, Rome and Mexico City.

Some 180 participants sat down for the opening celebration of the **Spring Academy** in Chicago on April first. Participants from Australia, Venezuela, Mexico, Ireland and England joined with colleagues from the U.S. and Canada to gain the tools needed for equipping the renewed Local Church across the globe.

The Order of the Ecumenical Institute
celebrates
the death
of
Elizabeth Hall Glassner
Thursday, April 13, 1972

Betty, a fellow in the Order, was assigned to Chicago base, having previously served in the Oklahoma Region and the Oklahoma City religious house.

A major visitation weekend in Memphis region with colleagues from throughout Area South resulted in conversations with 500 laymen and 150 clergy in fifteen major denominations. Spring quarter RS-l and Parish Leadership Colloquies were recruited and groundwork was laid for congregations to participate in the Local Church Experiment in the fall.

In the midst of a Passion Play performed for the Order in Chicago, the **Emerging Generation** presented the movement with a new song to the tune of "Blowing in the Wind:"

This is my body I give unto you,
It's broken, that's the way that life is real.
And this is my blood that is spilled out for you.
It's given, that's the way that life is real.

Chorus

Eat this bread and drink this wine
And you will have eternal life.
For brokenness is givenness,
And givenness is good,
And it's a joy to know the truth about your life.

Whenever you do this remember me, Remember the words that I said, Your greatness is given, your torn life made whole, You can pick up the future and live.

5th City: Chicago has received a \$410,000 grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity as a model Pre-School Education Demonstration Project. These funds provide for the rehabilitation of the facilities and their expansion to handle over 200 children. The 5th City Pre-schooling Institute is now in its ninth year of ongoing experimentation in imaginal education.

RS-I has now been translated into Spanish, French, German, Japanese, Cantonese, Mandarin Malay, Taiwanese, Korean and Indonesian.

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 保羅·田立克作

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TILLICH CHART

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Only in ourselves The light, the dawn, Or nowhere. Beneath our night A sun awaits us Greater than the universe The authentic freedom of man

summer 72 will...

ENABLE GRASSROOTS CHURCHMEN to frame comprehensive strategic designs for every local parish.

HERALD THE RENEWAL of the social process from the launching pad of the local church.

every local parish

TRAIN FRONT-LINE TACTICAL THINKERS in disciplined corporate research and depth spirit engagement.

FORMULATE PATTERNS for a global network of occupational guilds linking every local parts.

BIRTH THE LONG-RANGE VISION which will illuminate the next twenty years of renewal of human society.

BRING FORTH THE STRATEGIC DESIGN of the New Social Vehicle from the 77 Proposals of Summer '71.

new social vehicle

BUILD THE TACTICAL SYSTEMS for unifying the New Social Vehicle and the local church.

RECT. CREATIVE TRENDS working to free mankind rom the tyrangy of social imbalances.

build

the new man
the new church
the new world

TRANSPOSE TWENTY YEARS of movement formulation into the dynamic of global tellowbood

INVENT THE STANCE of the transestablishment, those who are engaged in the world, yet transcend it.

global spirit movement

FASHION THE DYNAMICS of the extended order and symbolic order as a common missional thrust.

CELEBRATE THE INAUGURATION of the new International Research and Training Center of the Spirit Movement.

FOCUS ATTENTION on the crisis of authentic vocation which remobilizes local man in every station of life.

PROVIDE DEPTH IMAGES to allow local man to move creatively in the face of social malaise...

secular evangelism

CREATE THE STYLE of secular evangelism for every office, every school, every factory, every home.

FORGE SECULAR-RELIGIOUS TOOLS to impact the world through conversations, social art, and popular preaching.

YOU ARE LOCAL MAN... Your insights are needed to shape the models for building the New Earth. In the new International Training Center, an eight-story building on Chicago's North Side, one thousand colleagues will work in seven congregations to create the strategies and tactics for the renewal of human society.

One Church Renewing One World

This is a report by a member of the team w

This is a report by a member of the team which recently visited inner city churchmen in 37 cities in North America. He is now teaching on the staff of the Academy in Chicago.

For the first time since civilization began, the entire globe is conscious of having one destiny on its hands. My destiny is tied to someone in a rice paddy in Viet Nam. As you and I stand as the Church in this radical moment in history; our task, our job, our struggle, is to build the new sociological forms which will sustain human existence across the globe, and allow men to grasp their relationship to the final mystery of life.

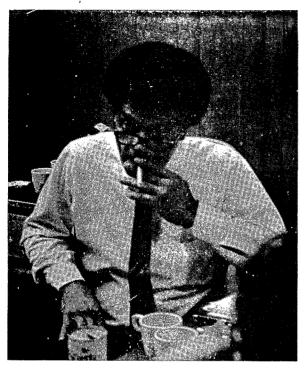
I want to spend a few minutes talking about the future of the global movement, and its relationship to the church in the black community across the North American continent. First, let me rehearse our journey very quickly. In 1962, we moved to Chicago and struggled to get hold of the cultural revolution, knowing that the city was the key to the future of the globe and that the inner-city was the key to the city. As we began to grapple with that, what emerged was the 5th City Project. This became the sign to black men throughout North America of the possibility of transforming the inner city. It was primarily through the image of that possibility that they related to the Spirit Movement.



Local Church Basic Training School, Fall 1971

In 1966, we created and began teaching the Black Heritage Course. The Movement recognized that the future of North America lay in the black man's assuming his destinal role. American society was a symbol to the globe of the pluriformity of humanness. Thus, the struggle going on between the black man and the white man came to stand, in the eyes of the world, for the possibility of forging global humanness itself. It was in this context that we began to push people on what it means to assume responsibility for the future of civilization.

The years 1962 to 1972 have characterized three periods within the black community. The first was the civil rights era which was marked by the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the style of non-violence. New corporateness emerged as men were caught by the vision of changing history. A second era was that of the black power movement. There was a shifting away from non-violence as the only tactic available to black people, and a breaking open of areas in



Local Church Continental Auxiliary Meeting, Fall 1971

which the greatness, beauty and power of the black heritage were revealed. Recognition of these cultural gifts allowed black Americans to assume a new style of self-confidence toward white society, as can be seen in the closed fist of the black power salute.

Now the mood in the black community has changed again. There has been a shift from overt anger to hidden anger. The widespread sense of revolutionary failure has produced a vacuum of leadership. In just a few years there has been a shift from being excited about a corporate black nationalism to hiding in one's solitary vocation. Blacks have moved from "disestablishment" stance to one reflecting the death of the disestablishment. Missing is any real vision of how to engage in significant change; only frustration remains. But within that frustration, there is a growing trend toward significant grassroots participation in building models for community engagement.

During 1970 and 1971 we taught the Academy in two separate settings. The Urban Academy was primarily a penetration tool through which black churchmen were grounded in RS-1, whereas the Movement Academy concentrated on the methods of formulating the local and the global movement. Urban Academy staff found themselves recruiting and teaching RS-1 one quarter, then drawing from

among that group for recruits to the Academy. In 1972 the unparalleled response to this team in winter quarter penetration has resulted in the recognition that both black and white are being called to focus on the Local Church Experiment. With this awareness came the decision to hold only one Academy and to design the urgently needed regional recruitment procedures which will draw black and white alike to becoming equipped as 20th century local churchmen.

The one Academy this spring quarter has shown itself to be a powerful experience for both black and white. During the Community and Polis section of the curriculum, the participants symbolized their decision to take the city seriously by not only analyzing the problems in the cities but also developing concrete visions of the new city. Another result has been depth clarity on the Ur-image roots of the blocks between the races. The black man finds the white desire for "order" or rationality by itself a negation of his own gift. while the white man fears the black gift of "passionate vitality". Nevertheless, Academy participants this quarter have found that both gifts are essential to any serious building of the future and that it is genuinely possible to engage in this task in the very midst of these tensions.

What has become vividly clear once more is that no such thing as the "Black Church" exists. No more is there an entity labeled the White



Academy for Global Churchman, Spring 1972

Church. There is only the Church of Jesus Christ our Lord and the day-by-day decision to be that Church. The journey of black churchmen has been to recover and to remind us of that crucial insight.

As migratory birds for whom the season of flight is at hand must feel a vague uneasiness before external impulses combine with internal urges to send them northward in springtime, so now a general sense of discomfort is beginning to oppress men who have lived too long in one climate. They feel hemmed in and express their sense of confinement by calling attention to the narrowness of their world. Though they continue to speak of progress, the high expectations of coming adventures, the anticipation of expanding horizons are gone. They believe in progress after a fashion but have no enthusiasm for it since it only promises them more of the same thing that now they know so well.

feeling apprehend the morbidity of secular civilization, but, the promise of newness of life they do not discern.

III. TOWARD A NEW OTHER— WORLDLINESS

When is health and vigor to be found for a human society that is living without great hope, that is vainly trying to preserve values for which it can find no foundations in being, that is trying to solve new problems with old ideas and without disinterestedness, that is unable to satisfy the great human wants with the goods it can offer?

It seems plain that without rediscovery of the other world which

...without rediscovery of the other world...no answer to the problems of secular civilization will be forthcoming.

When so-called pessimists among them speak of the "end of our time,". or of the "decline of civilization," or the "end of an era," even so-called optimists reply with modest prophecies about a continued life measured in centuries, or millennia, or, for mankind, in millions of years. They also see death at the end of the road of the secular life. "Shades of the prison house begin to close" on our maturing civilization The mood of expansiveness and the joyful anticipation of ever new victories in man's so-called conquest of nature have given place to a sober defensiveness, as even the change in the temper of folk between the two world wars indicates.

There are days at the end of winter when the increasing brightness of sun does not so much promise the coming of spring as reveal the shabbiness and uncleanness of the wintry scene. Our day in history is something like that. Reflection and

is also man's home, the world of the soul and the spirit, of God and divine action, no answer to the problems of secular civilization and of men confined to that environment will be forthcoming. Time will not yield its secrets to those who cannot look upon it from this perspective of eternity. But it is also clear that eternity is not something we can know so long as we seek to understand it only for the sake of the illumination it can cast on time.

All the goods of the world may be added to those who seek the kingdom of God and its righteousness but none of them seem to be available to us so long as we seek the kingdom for the sake of having these goods. The other world has come into human view as the necessary foundation of this one but our interests, even for the most part in the Church, remain so firmly directed to the temporal sphere that our other-worldliness seems a negative thing, a mere qualification of secularism.

Many of us can understand the need for such an "other-worldliness" today without being able to point out either in ourselves or in our society any real indications of its coming. The signs remain largely negative. There are a few positive signs. Among these are the theological movements of the post-liberal period. They are at one in their common attack on pure secularism and on that immanentism in religion which confines faith to forces evident to the temporal point of view. They agree in their recommendation of a return to the long tradition of mankind with its other-worldly interests and its two-world orientation. They unite for the most part in proclamation of the double Gospel of incarnation and resurrection, of the aggression of God into this world, and of his drawing of 1 men out of the world to himself.

The limitations of the positive movements toward a new other-worldliness in our times do not discourage those who live in dissatisfication with themselves and their secularism. For they are aware that any true other-worldly movement must come and will come from the other world itself. They live in expectation of springtime, though the expectation survives at times only as the prayer against their own unbelief. They wait for religious revival in themselves and the world and while they wait they labor to use the little faith they have, to respond to the signs from the other world thy dimly see, to make clear to themselves what they know vaguely and uncertainly. They say to themselves that the revival of religion like the kingdom of God comes not with observation, but is suddenly among us like the first day of spring. In the meantime they do what they can in their little faith to make ready the hard soil of heart and mind for a new season of life.

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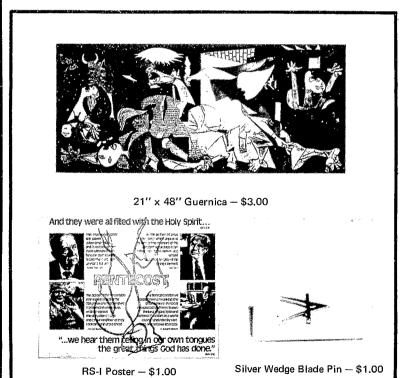


The renewal of the church brings with it a rebirth of songs and symbols. "Run into the Rising Sun" is a collection of some of those traditional and new songs which address the existential deeps of man today. Songs on the album are

Christ to Thee be Glory
All life is Open
A Mighty Fortress is Our God
The Cryin'
Oh Sacred Head now Wounded
The God Song
Sing Praise to Our Glorious Lord
Men of the Spirit
Adoramus Te Christe
Contemplation
On Poverty
Burdens Down
Sing Praise to Our Glorious Lord
On Obedience

"This is the Great Function of Symbols: to point beyond themselves in the power of that to which they point, to open up levels of the human mind of which we otherwise are not aware."

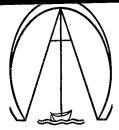
—Paul Tillich



Guernica, the wedge blade, and the writings of the four RS-I theologians become meaningful symbols to those who are concerned with the renewal of the Church in our time.

e.i. bookstore





June 1972

Dear Fellow Churchman,

Civilization has always been carried on the back of the religious, the spirit men of the time. Today it is the renewed Church in its world mission that is calling forth models of basic sociality, spirituality, and vocational authenticity.

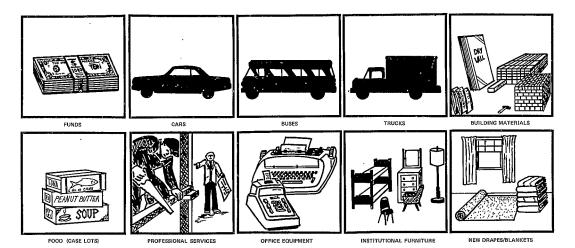
July I, 1972, marks the shift of the Spirit Movement from the first twenty years of building the foundation to the next twenty years of impacting the world. The summer programs have been signal happenings in this growth, particularly in the recent years of research assemblies. Summer '70 built a tactical system which has resulted in the Local Church Experiment, presently involving 144 Churches on the North American continent. Summer '71 initiated the break-open work on the New Social Vehicle, and resulted in documents on social process dynamics and the 77 Proposals for a new world.

With the breakthrough provided by the course, "The New Individual in the New Society," and the gift of the eight-story Kemper office building on the North Side of Chicago, a dynamic thrust has begun that will yield in Summer '72 the creation of strategies and tactics necessary to implement the N.S.V.

The systems created this summer will pattern the renewed Church for its new world mission, and will release untapped spirit creativity. Your participation through your time, your finances, and your gifts-in-kind are not only a personal sign, but also are a concrete enablement for others in common task.

Grace and peace,

Joseph W. Mathews for the Corporate Office



THE TEN MOST WANTED In-Kind Contributions

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of any of these items, or having information leading to their apprehension, should notify their nearest Religious House or the Chicago Office. Dollars are the most flexible gift, but often more tax advantage can be obtained through in-kind contributions of items such as those pictured.