

Answers to Bundy's Accusations

1. (p. 1) Reference to Cincinnati Enquirer editorial that the WCC should not have voted to receive Russian Orthodox Church into membership. The Enquirer is definitely not "one of the most respected newspapers in the USA". It is a provincial and extremely conservative sheet. Has few readers outside Cincinnati! One could at the same time cite many great world newspapers (London Times, Manchester Guardian) which recognized the importance of bringing in the Russian Orthodox. Why should we take the advice of a single secular newspaper on a question of ecclesiastical procedure?

2. (p. 1) Bundy refers to attacks on the United States by Archbishop Nikodim at the World Conference on Church and Society. The Archbishop apparently made his remarks in a press conference, not in the Conference itself, as Bundy says. Other speakers at the Conference were critical of the U.S. position on Vietnam. Americans replied to the criticism. It is not true that no similar condemnations were made at the Conference of presence of North Vietnamese troops in South Vietnam. And the report of the Conference condemns both massive American military intervention and "the infiltration of troops from the North". The statement that the Conference was "anti-American and anti-capitalist from the start" is unproven. On the contrary, the debate about Vietnam was difficult and extended.

3. (p. 2) Americans did not acquiesce silently. It is true they were troubled about the wide-spread criticism of the USA but they sharply challenged the speakers. But Mr. Bundy seems to be saying that USA policy can never be criticized, or that the whole world should be expected to support American policy.

4. Bundy implies on page 2 that the USA participants were mainly "leftists". This is a wild and unfounded charge as can easily be proven. Mrs Edith Green is a leading churchwoman, a veteran Congresswoman from Oregon, and has just been re-elected. She is highly regarded as one of the most thoughtful members of the US Congress, especially interested - it is true - in welfare legislation. Prof Kenneth Boulding is a follower of the extreme laissez-faire Hayek-Friedmann School of Economic Philosophy and defends his conservative views energetically, though he is at the same time a pacifist on questions of nuclear war. I do not know if Bishop Hines can be regarded as an "admirer and defender of Bishop Pike", but there is not the slightest proof for this statement which is controverted by the recent action of the Episcopal Church regarding Bishop Pike. President John Bennett of Union Theological Seminary is a liberal in politics but hardly a leftist by contemporary American standards.

5. (p. 3) Why were the Americans shocked by the Conference? Mainly because most of them had never before participated in an international conference. The debate was difficult and sometimes heated. It is possible an American walked out of one of the sub-sections. The study-sections were not closed to the press, but the sub-sections were. They had a drafting assignment and the Conference Planning Committee decided in accordance with World Council procedure that these smaller groups should have opportunity for private discussion and reflection. Since most of the press was western, it would have upset the balance to have a sub-section of 20 - 25 members with a group of western press observers. No section or sub-section was dominated by ideologists of right or left, and that statement can easily be proved by an examination of the list of officers for the sub-sections. All the officers of sections and sub-
sections

sections were experienced and dedicated Christian laymen or clergy.

6. (p. 3) Bundy calls Ige, Nikodim, Borovoy, Conteris and Bennett "cheerleaders of the Red Cause", and says they dominated the final pronouncements of the Conference. None of these men, including the two Russian Orthodox, have ever advocated that Christians should become communists, nor would hold that Russia or any other Communist country is above criticism. Bennett's criticisms of Communism in several of his books is a matter of public record. Ige is very critical of the USSR as a western imperialist country, but proposes mainland China as a model for a militant independent Africa! None of these men influenced the final Conference pronouncements, more than any other of the many Conference leaders. One could easily name twenty-five persons who had far more to say in the thinking and drafting of the Conference, especially people like Dr. Margaret Mead (USA), Mr. Peter Kirk, a conservative M.P. from the U.K., Prof. Roger Mehl of France, not to mention Mr. M.M. Thomas, the chairman, and Bishop Mosley, vice-chairman of the Conference, who chaired all the final sessions and who were the real leaders of the Conference.
7. (pp. 3-4) Bundy says Prof. Shaull advocated violent resistance. He said that violence might be necessary in some circumstances but other speakers said violence was against Christian principles. Prof. Shaull was not the only speaker at the Conference on that subject!
8. The quotes from the report of Section IV on racial and ethnic relations (p.4) are inaccurate. The second paragraph reads as follows:

"Tensions between racial and ethnic groups have become an acute power struggle. This was brought home to the Conference first by the announcement that the Rt. Rev. Alpheus Zulu, Anglican Bishop of South Africa, had been denied a passport by the government of the Republic of South Africa; second by the fact that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was compelled by racial conflict to stay in Chicago and to cancel his engagement with the Conference on Sunday, 17th July; and third, by the decision of the International World Court of Justice to throw out by a single vote on technical grounds, a six-year suit by Ethiopia and Liberia to end South Africa's control of South West Africa, thereby leaving unchanged the deplorable situation under the present administration of the Republic of South Africa and its policy of apartheid."

The final paragraph is quite incorrectly quoted, the real text reads:

"Also the escalating war in Vietnam aggravates ill feelings between races arising from the fact that Americans and others of non-Asian stock are fighting with Asians and against Asians in an Asian country."
9. (p. 6) The quotes attributed to Bishop Nikodim were not made before the Conference. I suppose they were made in his press conference.
10. (p. 6) This is a curious passage. Bundy seems to say that Nikodim shows he is a communist by attacking Kenneth Thompson as an anti-communist, but that Thompson cannot be an anti-communist because he writes for Christianity and Crisis. Quite absurd!
11. (p. 6) Archpriest Borovoy was professor of church history at the Leningrad Theological Academy of the Russian Orthodox Church. His name can be spelled either Borovoy or Borovoi (depending on whether you use English or French spelling). Archpriest Voronov was another participant at the Conference.

In his paper Borovoy said:

"It is one thing to describe theoretically or to consider in a series of academic discussions, in an armchair, by a comfortable fireside, in the quiet atmosphere of library or study, the 'challenge and relevance of theology in an age of social revolution'; it is quite another thing to live under those conditions, to experience their consequences for oneself, to do theology and to live a life to witness to Christ in a socialist and secularized society."

How can this be construed as meaning that the Russian churchmen go round the world preaching revolution!

On the subject of Christianity and revolutionary change, Borovoy said:

"But that (Byzantium's social tradition) is radically opposed to the social tradition of early Christianity and the Greek fathers, the messianic preaching of our Saviour and the whole content of the teaching of the Old Testament prophets, which never grows old. No! Revealed religion in Israel and the early Church was social and revolutionary first; it became individualist and static later! The Kingdom of God was the Kingdom of the people of God before it became a Kingdom in the soul of each individual man. Our age is called to establish a balance between the personal and social effects of Christianity. It is sinful to pander to one's own psychosomatic nature. But it is equally sinful to bow down to evil and sinful social nature. Repentance - that is to say a radical change of mind, a radical break with the former way of life, a radical repudiation of the old, sinful ways, and equally a radical acceptance and engagement of one's whole self in the new and perfect life, i.e. all that we mean by revolution - this kind of repentance, this kind of revolution applies not only to the individual but also to the whole of society, to the nation, to the class, to every social group.

"Repentance is a call to renewal, to revolution, to new life - for every separate individual and for society as a whole. Thus Christianity is by its very nature revolutionary; and the new life required by Christian social ethics is more radical, more profoundly revolutionary, more novel than any other social system or doctrine, which has grown up outside Christianity."

In other words, Christianity is so revolutionary that it stands in judgement upon all known systems, revolutionary or otherwise!

12. (p. 7) Bundy's interpretation of Archpriest Borovoy's statement is inaccurate. What Archpriest Borovoy is really saying is that the Tsarist Russian Church was anti-revolutionary and was actively attacked by the communists for that reason. Contemporary Russian Christians are willing to help build a socialist society and that means that atheistic communism is unable to charge the Church with counter-revolutionary activity!
13. (p. 8) Archpriest Borovoy did not write a study paper for the Conference. Bundy must be referring to the paper by Archpriest Voronov. Archpriest Voronov's paper suggests that he is a kind of Russian Christian socialist. It is similar to the official statements of many Evangelicals. His paper represented his own personal views and not those of the Russian group at the Conference. Many expressed their views at the Conference and Archpriest Voronov did it through this paper. I am sure most people regarded it as propaganda.

14. (p. 9) Lochman's statement was one of the three on the subject of the Role of the Church in the Transformation of Society. Why quote only from one?
15. (p. 10) The quotes from Castillo of Colombia represent his statement of the situation in Latin America, to show what the Church confronts. A reading of his speech shows that he believes the Church must oppose such trends.
16. (pp. 9 and 10) The excerpts from Conteris show to what extent the demand for radical social change is building up in Latin America, especially among younger Christian leaders. It may be revolutionary, but is that a reason for the Church not to hear what such people have to say and why they say it?
17. (pp. 10 and 11) Dr. Blake's praise of Dr. John Mackay's criticism of McCarthyism annoys Bundy. Bundy's defense of McCarthy reveals more than anything else his own motives and convictions. Sen McCarthy, it will be remembered, was censored by his own colleagues in the United States Senate for his violent and unfair attacks on some of them, on the President of the United States (Gen. Eisenhower), and on great public men like General George Marshall, because they did not satisfy his standards of fanatical and violent anti-communism.
18. (p. 11) The Conference did not, as Mr. Bundy suggests, approve of Prof. Shaull's idea of Christian guerrilla groups for radical social action. On the contrary, the Conference said in its message:

"As Christians we are committed to working for the transformation of society. In the past, we have usually done this through quiet efforts at social renewal, working in and through the established institutions according to their rules. Today, a significant number of those who are dedicated to the service of Christ and their neighbour, assume a more radical or revolutionary position. They do not deny the value of tradition nor of social order, but they are searching for a new strategy by which to bring about basic changes in society without too much delay. It is possible that the tension between these two positions will have an important place in the life of the Christian community for some time to come. At the present moment, it is important for us to recognize that this radical position has a solid foundation in Christian tradition and should have its rightful place in the life of the Church and in the ongoing discussion of social responsibility."

19. (p. 12) Mr. Moyers' criticism of the Conference for its statement on Vietnam can be challenged because Mr. Moyers was basing his statement on a newspaper account rather than the actual text of the Conference report. Probably the President of the United States did not like the opinion of the Conference on the subject of Vietnam.