



the SEMINARIAN

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TRUE DIALOGUE VS. PROPAGANDA SESSION

It is quite true that the recent Max Lackmann session did not result in true dialogue. In the very nature of the situation this was impossible. A Roman Catholic and a Lutheran can enter into true dialogue when each represents a different position, clearly defined. Then they can meet, each willing really to listen to the other.

It was quite obviously not in this spirit that Max Lackmann came to this seminary. He is a man under the discipline of his own Lutheran church in Germany. This is quite in order, since he holds a position counter to that of the Augsburg Confession to which every Lutheran pastor must subscribe as a true witness to the Gospel. No one can honestly subscribe to Article VII of the Augsburg Confession in its total context and at the same time say that the one true Church is the Roman Catholic Church and that the dicta of the pope speaking ex cathedra are binding upon all Christendom. No one can possibly subscribe to both the Augsburg Confession and the decrees of the Council of Trent without the weirdest kind of mental and moral gymnastics.

Mr. Lackmann -- it would be only consistent to address him as a lay-man, since on his own view he lacks valid ordination -- therefore, did not come here in order to enter into honest dialogue but literally to make propaganda for a point of view, to promote the position of the League for Evangelical-Catholic Reunion, which is dedicated to the corporate reunion of all churches to the one true Mother Church of Rome. He declared to begin with that no man-made "gimmicks" were to be used in efforts to further the one already-existing unity of the church.

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CONTEST NOTES

A few points bear clarification and correction regarding the Seminarian contest which opened last week. The entries should not be research essays, i.e. based on the careful comparison of various scholars' views. They should serve to present the writers' thoughts on how they might approach this matter in a parish situation, like that of Pastor Shewa. Thus, they should not involve the amount of time a term paper of comparable length would.

Speaking of length, last week's article incorrectly stated the top limit at ten pages, single-spaced. Double-spaced was, of course, intended.

The contest closes TWO WEEKS FROM TODAY, April 18, at 12 noon. All entries should be sealed in envelopes. The prizes of \$15. and \$10 will be awarded after Easter vacation. The names of the judges will be announced as soon as possible.

WARTLUFT NAMED DANFORTH INTERN

The Danforth Foundation of St. Louis, Missouri, recently appointed David J. Wartluft, a Middler, as one of twenty-four Danforth Interns for the coming academic year. The announcement states that "the selection was made on the basis of intellectual capacity; personal qualities promising success in campus religious work; and sincere, mature dedication to Christian service." Mr. Wartluft will spend his intern year on a college campus, yet to be chosen.

HEYER ECHOES

The Heyer Commission announces the total result of the recent appeal for Guianese students at Waterloo Seminary in Canada. A total of \$412 was collected from students and faculty.

"Existence precedes essence" is a philosophical formula which almost every field of modern thought has adopted, the notable exception being some forms of theology. It means that the particular reality is the basic reality, and that our thought must be seen as an attempt to grasp that reality in some intelligible form. It means that truth is in the object and not in the thought about the object, and thus it implies that all human thought is relative to its object.

Lackmann's theology does work from this formula and because it does his basic attitudes were somewhat enigmatic on first, unreflective hearing, even ludicrous. We are so much aware of our thoughts about things that we forget to test and determine all our thought by the external reality it seeks to know.

The Church and the living presence of its Head are the realities upon which theology is to be built and not vice-versa. It is a terrible distortion of a truly Word-centered theology to make the words about that Word the determining factor. This is applied practically by affirming first the visible reality of the Church, and then explaining it dogmatically - not the other way around. When we confess the Church or any other divine reality we are not creating it by our confession or determining its character by our thought.

Therefore, it is falsely idealistic to attempt the reunification of the churches only after everyone has thought the thing through, as if we could even imagine a state of affairs which just plain does not exist. Rather, the reality which is sought should be affirmed and lived; then out of it will arise self-cognition. Hence, the prime necessity is action, the action of love and fruitful meeting and planning with each other. Furthermore, the place of the hierarchy is best understood as the leadership in the life and not primarily in the thought of the Church.

This is, by the way, the real danger in being a theologian: the satanic impulse to make thought the final reality, to make the world fit our conception of it and build our institutions on dreams. It is possible, however, to have an open mind theologically while firmly confessing the Lord's work it tries to fathom -
(continued bottom of next column)

Dear sir:

Since the topics of law and discipline have been tossed around lately, we'd like to add one other thought - as outsiders. And, as outsiders, we'd like to remind you that everyone who comes onto this campus who is not a seminarian or faculty member is an outsider. The Seminary Community itself is important to outsiders - and shouldn't the Seminary Community be important to those who compose it? For example, how enthused would you feel about preaching at a church where none of the regular members were present? It must be very elating to stand in the pulpit of the Mt. Airy Seminary Chapel and speak to professors and a very small fraction of the student body! An outsider would think that seminarians might have the courtesy and respect of responsible persons. We wonder if preachers at Wednesday Chapel services can fail to sense the irresponsibility and disrespect that is so obvious in an empty chapel. It's really not a matter of should or shouldn't; it seems more like a simple matter of courtesy (assuming that characteristic is present) and just a bit of loyalty to a corporate ideal and purpose.

Fhyllis W. Prigge
Carol H. Auger

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UNITY (Continued)

it is imperative to do this lest we sin against the Lord's Body.

Thus, I would suggest, that we seriously examine the presuppositions of our own thought, to see whether we may not be dismissing present and future realities by absolutizing the product of our minds. People once thought that the earth was the center of the universe - it looked that way to them and it made sense to them, and they refused to hear those who thought differently.

George Weckman

de propaganda fide

Significantly, the word "propaganda" came into currency from the Latin title for the Roman Catholic Society for the Propagation of the Faith. From its very inception, therefore, it had for Protestants unpleasant associations. Moreover, Webster's New World Dictionary offers this as one definition: "any systematic, widespread, deliberate indoctrination or plan for such indoctrination: now often used in a derogatory sense, connoting deception or distortion." Since Dr. Heineken (see "True Dialogue Vs. a Propaganda Session" in this issue) does not offer any special definition of the word "propaganda", we can only infer from the tone and thrust of his article that he means to use this term in its expressly derogatory sense. He seems to mean that Max Lackmann and the League he represents are attempting to use some form of indoctrination, coercion, "brain-washing" (to use another "loaded" term) to bring others to their point of view; that Lackmann and his confederates are not interested in discussing on a one-to-one basis but rather wish "to persuade to a point of view and not at all to encourage honest dialogue." Hence, a "propaganda machine."

Let everyone note clearly: the question is not whether Lackmann's position is tenable or not under Lutheran doctrine (and we are not here promoting that position), but whether his intentions and motivations and those of the League are to stimulate "honest dialogue" or not. Dr. Heineken clearly sets up two opposed possibilities: "true dialogue vs. a propaganda session", persuasion to a point of view vs. honest dialogue. True honest dialogue, then, cannot have any intention to persuade for or against either side.

Now let us ask the tacit question in all of this: was Lackmann here to propagandize? Yes - in the sense that he was here to present a point of view, to deliver a lecture on a particular subject, to offer a thesis, a thesis about which he feels very passionately. This was obvious, but it was not dishonest. There's not a professor on

this campus who doesn't deliver a lecture without a point of view, a fundamental thesis, a set of presuppositions with every intention of propagandizing in this sense, of winning over, of getting people to "join up."

But no, Lackmann was not "quite obviously" here to propagandize in the derogatory sense of that word, to subvert, to "brain-wash." If that was his intention, it was not obvious. Let us consider that alternative abandoned for lack of evidence.

As regards the matter of whether we had a dialogue or not that evening, in all probability we didn't. And this should cause us to ask why we didn't. Crediting it all to the structure of the situation seems an incomplete answer, for "dialogue" in the semi-technical sense in which we have been using it involves several things. (1) It involves the environmental factor, the actual getting-together-and-talking-it-over. That we had only in part due to the brevity of the time, the immensity of the subject, etc. (2) It involves two clearly defined points of view. Lackmann labored quite hard in his lecture to convey his, but no one had the opportunity to state any alternative. (3) Above all, it involves a mutual respect and willingness to share, to experience the oneness in Christ which supposedly transcends all barriers. Who can judge this? But what can be noted is that tempers rose, sarcastic remarks, both covert and public, were made, the matter of Lackmann's very justification before God was thrown in his face. In fact, either Lackmann is an exceptionally good actor or he was perhaps the calmest person in the room.

Ultimately, this is a moot question and not at all dependent on the truth or error of Lackmann's views (which are not here championed.) But it is an important question, for (and this seems a safe guess) as long as bitterness and dissension are the order of the day, we might just as well forget about any sort of Christian unity.

DIALOGUE VS. PROPAGANDA (Continued)

What is this league but precisely such a man-made "gimmick" -- not to say propaganda machine -- the sole purpose of which is to persuade to a point of view and not at all to encourage honest dialogue?

On the one point at issue, whether or not the Church of Rome is the one true Church, Mr. Lackmann was not open to persuasion but out to persuade. This was the sole purpose of his visit and it could, therefore, result only in controversy and not in dialogue. It could only call for a parting of the ways, for this was its purpose, to ask you to "join up", to leave one persuasion and take up another. Noone, whether abroad or in this country, can, therefore, remain a member of the confessional Lutheran Church and at the same time be a member of the League for Evangelical-Catholic Reunion, any more than a Roman Catholic could remain a Roman Catholic while denying the authority of the hierarchy. This is what the Reformation was about when it recognized no authority except that of the Word of God. If any of our own pastors are members of the League it is clearly time for disciplinary action taken in love. This is not witch-hunting, but this is positive speaking of the truth in love.

When Father Weigel comes to speak at our annual alumni convocation, it is hoped that there will be an honest dialogue between people who don't try to have their cake and eat it too.

Martin J. Heinecken

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Sebastian Seminarian Reports...

DEFINITIONS IN SEMINARIANESE

POLYCARP... A productive fish found in the Mediterranean.

SYNOPTIC PROBLEM... How to pass New Testament.

FORM CRITICISM... What happens at the Lankenau dances.

VOICE... The art of resonating, packing it in behind the belt, breathing from the diaphragm, projecting the voice, keeping the mouth moist, not dropping the "d's", and grabbing the floor with your feet...while appearing calm.

EXCURSUS... A method used by profs for filling in scanty notes.

EXEGESIS... (1) a term given to a crowd of Middlers in the library on Thursday nights. (2) an unknown term to Juniors. (3) a forgotten term by Seniors.

PREACHING CLASS... Homileticade

NEW TESTAMENT FINAL EXAMINATION... Divine Comedy OR "Heh, Heh, let's see if Bob can beat this one."

ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT... a mental dance somewhat akin to the twist in that a great deal of shaking takes place but there is little or no forward movement.

GRADUATION DAY... Realized eschatology.

N.Y. SYNOD OFFICE... Dead letter office.

REFECTORY FOOD... An introduction to Pennsylvania Dutch cooking?

DEPCONENTS... What Greeks take off their income taxes.

"CHRISTIANITY TODAY"... Yesterday's Christianity today.

DECLENSION... That sharp division that takes place between the student and the subject after the first two weeks.

MINISTERIUM ROULETTE... Choosing the new Seminary president.