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A Missionary Looks at a World at War

An Address Delivered June 1, 1941, at the Second Congregational Church of Denver

By the REV. CLARENCE W. DUFF

Former Missionary to Ethiopia and a Minister of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

I Hate War!

I HATE war! There are doubtless a number in the audience tonight who have had more actual experience in war than I have had. I am doubtful that there is any who has more cause to hate and abhor war than I.

Too young to be called in an early draft in World War I, I volunteered in the fall of 1918, only to be mustered out again about a month after the signing of the armistice. But I have vivid memories of an older brother's leaving for camp, from where he was to go

AUTHOR'S NOTE: This address is in essentially the form in which it was delivered last June in Denver. Our country is now at war with the Axis as the direct result of attack by a foreign power, but the principles herein enunciated still hold true and must be kept in mind by all who would wholeheartedly take part in winning victory and the peace that shall follow. America must fight not merely because she has been attacked and must defend herself. She must fight not merely to retain certain territorial possessions. Someone might go so far as to say that even now it would be better to turn the other cheek to Japan, to give her our cloak as well as our coat, to let her have what she wants in the Pacific and allow her to establish the "new order" in the Orient. No, America must fight this war to the finish because great wrongs have to be righted. There has been a right side and a wrong in the war from the start. True, the attitude of many Americans has been changed by Pearl Harbor, but Pearl Harbor has not essentially changed the main issue that has all along faced America. That issue ought to have been courageously faced long ago. It must still be faced. And if this article will help someone to see the Japanese attack in relation to the plain moral issue that has been before our nation long before World War II broke out in Europe, it will have accomplished its purpose.

—C.W.D.

as an ambulance driver to France for eleven months; of my father's prayer for him at the farewell service in the old country Presbyterian church, when my father, usually a man to hide his deepest feelings, broke down in the midst of his prayer and wept so that he could not continue; and of Mother's anxious days of waiting for letters from the front.

In the Italo-Ethiopian war I saw little fighting. I know something, however, of what it is to hear the enemy bombers roar overhead, with no way of knowing whether they might loose their deadly loads of bombs or poison gas or not, to feel a responsibility for defenseless women and little children, to supervise the digging of bomb shelters that might or might not have proven bomb-proof had they been tested. I know what it is to see, as the result of war and of the defeat of the rightful ruler of a country, the total collapse for four days and nights of all public order in the capital of that country; to see that collapse spread through large areas of the land and cause suffering and anxiety for six months, during which in many provinces there was no ruler and everyone did that which was right in his own eyes, destroying houses I had helped to build, scattering my belongings, left in the interior, to the four winds, forcing those with whom I had formerly been associated on an interior station to flee into the forests for hiding and then to live in danger of their lives for five months in the homes of friendly natives.

The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITORIAL

Christianity and State Totalitarianism

MUCH is said and written these days about totalitarianism. Just what is it? There are two distinct types of totalitarianism—church totalitarianism and state totalitarianism. The former is advocated by the Roman Catholic Church, which takes the position that the church should dominate every sphere of life, also the state. In 1873 Pope Pius IX declared in effect that the head of the Roman Catholic Church possesses the right, which he properly exercises under favorable circumstances, to pass judgment, even in civil affairs, on the acts of princes and nations. State totalitarianism, on the other hand, insists on bringing every phase of life, the church included, under the absolute control of the state. Its present-day representatives are only too well known. No Protestant will subscribe to church totalitarianism, but that state totalitarianism today presents by far the greater menace hardly admits of doubt. In fact, it is one of the most serious existing threats to the welfare of mankind.

Every once in a while it is said that the present world war is a war of democracy against state totalitarianism. No doubt that assertion contains a considerable element of truth, but it should not be taken without several grains of salt. The fact that totalitarian Russia is fighting on the side of the allies may well give pause. So may the expressed conviction of many thoughtful Americans that for some years already there has been in evidence in the government of our own land a totalitarian trend. And it goes without saying that the desire, however foolish, on the part of the citizens of one country to live under a totalitarian regime is no good reason for another nation to issue a declaration of war. The undersigned prefers to think of the present conflict as a war, by nations which themselves have transgressed God's law in many ways, on

wanton international aggression, flagrant international lawlessness, brazen international piracy, blatant international nihilism. Even that conception is not without its difficulties and, no doubt, suffers from oversimplification, but it does seem to name the chief factor in a highly complex situation.

It is not the purpose of this editorial to seek to determine how much truth there is in the assertion that the present war is a war on state totalitarianism. Rather does it aim to expose the antichristian character of state totalitarianism.

The Word of God speaks of at least three institutions of divine origin. They are the family, the state, and the church. The second chapter of Genesis relates that God himself created the woman, brought her to the man, and decreed that the two would be one flesh. The thirteenth chapter of Romans commands every soul to be subject to the higher powers because there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. And the Son of God declares, in Matthew 16:18, "Upon this rock I will build my church". It is highly significant that each of these institutions came into being by a distinct divine act. It follows that whatever authority may belong to any one of them was delegated to it, not by either of the other two, but by God. Consequently each is sovereign in its own sphere. God Himself has given the family certain rights on which neither the state nor the church may impinge. God has given the state certain rights on which neither the family nor the church may impinge. And God has given the church certain rights on which neither the family nor the state may impinge. The principle of sphere sovereignty is taught in Holy Scripture and is one of the basic principles of Christian social ethics.

How clearly Jesus enunciated that principle when He said, "Render, therefore, unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). Calvin was obviously right when he commented that Jesus here "lays down a clear distinction between spiritual and civil government".

Revelation 13 tells of the consolidation of the human race under a dictator. He is the political head of humanity. He wears crowns and to him are given power and great authority. He is also the religious head

of humanity. All that dwell on the earth worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. And he is the economic head of humanity. He causes all to receive a mark in their right hand or on their forehead, and that no man may buy or sell save he that has the mark, or his name, or the number of his name. Here is a picture of complete totalitarianism. Its head is the beast which opens its mouth in blasphemy against God. There is good reason for identifying this beast with antichrist.

State totalitarianism, then, stands condemned at the bar of Holy Scripture. For just a few examples, for the state to interfere with the parental education of children, to seek to regulate the spiritual affairs of the church of Jesus Christ, or to aim at the complete control of legitimate private business enterprise, constitutes a violation of Holy Writ and is most accurately described as antichristian.

The weightiest of all Scriptural arguments against state totalitarianism remains to be named. There is a totalitarianism which Holy Scripture declares to be a most beneficent reality and for which it demands universal recognition. It is the totalitarianism of Christ Himself. He is not only the head of His church, but He sovereignly declared: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18). When God raised Him from the dead, He "made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1:20-23). "God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). Christ is head of the church and the state, of the family and society, of labor and industry, of agriculture and commerce, of science and education, of politics and economics—in short, of every phase and sphere of human life. That being so, the totalitarian state is ruled out

absolutely. State totalitarianism constitutes a usurpation of the sovereignty which belongs to Christ alone.

The first world war was fought "to make the world safe for democracy", but in its wake came an epidemic of state totalitarianism. Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito are symptoms of that dread plague—unbearably painful and indescribably loathsome symptoms, but only symptoms. May God in His mercy hasten the day when the world will have got rid of these awful symptoms. But, if and when that has occurred, the disease may well be with us still.

The remedy for state totalitarianism is the Christian church's proclamation of the totalitarian Christ. War on pagan aggression has become necessary. But Christ does not enforce His

totalitarian claims with tanks and bombing planes. Not only is the gospel mightier than the sword, but the gospel is able to accomplish what all the mechanism of warfare cannot begin to do. The gospel, as an instrument of God's Spirit, makes men willing subjects of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords. Let the church, then, with all the energy at her command preach the totalitarian Christ. To do that is to employ the one effective remedy for the plague of state totalitarianism.

And only then will the peril of state totalitarianism have vanished completely and permanently from the face of the earth, when every kindred and every tribe on this terrestrial ball shall have crowned Christ *Lord of all*.

—R. B. K.

The Auburn Betrayal

By Ruling Elder MURRAY FORST THOMPSON

Conclusion

WE HAVE seen the origin of the Auburn Affirmation. We have sought to expose its heretical teaching. We have described the efforts of the conservatives to do something about it. What is the standing of the Affirmationists in the church today?

It is hardly necessary to say that they have not withdrawn from the church. Did they not affirm that they "sincerely hold and earnestly preach the doctrines of evangelical Christianity, in agreement with the historic testimony of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America"? They have not left the church; they have "taken over" the church.

The best method of determining the power and influence of the Affirmationists is to note some of the more important official positions which they hold. A study of their official status in the numerous presbyteries and synods throughout the country would be a herculean task. It is sufficient to see how many signers of the Affirmation are on the various boards and agencies of the church, and on the Permanent Judicial Commission and standing committees of the General Assembly. The results of our investigation have been tabulated, and will be presented in a separate article in an early issue of *THE PRESBYTERIAN*

GUARDIAN. These statistics will show the extent to which the church has honored the Affirmationists. They also will indicate that the signers of the Affirmation have not lost influence in the last seven years.

Prior to 1940, Affirmationists had been placed on the most influential standing committees of the General Assembly; they were elected to the mission boards and the Boards of Christian Education and Pensions; they were on the General Council, the central administrative body of the church; they were members of the Department of Church Coöperation and Union, which is becoming increasingly important in view of the efforts to unite with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (the Southern Presbyterian Church) and the Episcopal Church; they were on the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly, the highest judicial body in the church, next to the assembly itself. But it remained for the General Assembly of 1940 to honor an Affirmationist with the highest office in the church. That assembly elected as its moderator Dr. William L. Young, President of Park College, Parkeville, Missouri. Dr. Young's nearest opponent was a fellow-signer of the Affirmation, Dr. J. B. C. Mackie, of Philadelphia, and, on Dr. Mackie's motion,

Dr. Young was elected by acclamation.⁴³ Times had certainly changed. In 1924 the conservatives elected their candidate by a scant majority of 18 out of 910 votes.⁴⁴

Unquestionably the Modernists had a "field day" at the General Assembly of 1941. And they made the most of their opportunity. The Presbytery of Arkansas overtured the assembly to reaffirm once more the "Five Points" of the General Assembly of 1923.⁴⁵ Dr. Mackie, as the chairman of the standing Committee on Bills and Overtures, had the satisfaction of recommending that the assembly take no action on the overture. The recommendation was adopted by unanimous vote.⁴⁶ The signers of the Affirmation had come a long way. In 1924 they were able only to protest against the assembly's reaffirmation of the "Five Points"; in 1940 they were in a position to insure that the assembly should not make the same mistake again.

Nor did the Affirmationists fare so badly in the General Assembly of 1941. The leading candidates for moderator were Dr. Herbert Booth Smith of Los Angeles, and Affirmationist Henry Sloane Coffin of New York City. Although Dr. Smith was elected, Dr. Coffin received 46 per cent. of the votes cast. Furthermore, Dr. Coffin was nominated by Dr. Jesse Halsey, a fellow-signer of the Affirmation. And a "dark horse" who was "scratched" after the second ballot was another Affirmationist, Dr. William R. Farmer of Pittsburgh, who had been Visiting Professor of Homiletics at Princeton Seminary in 1937-1938.⁴⁷

Dr. Smith showed his colors immediately by appointing as vice-moderator Affirmationist Norman E. Nygaard of Los Angeles, and by appointing Dr. Coffin chairman of the standing Committee on Bills and

⁴³ *THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN*, June 25, 1940, pp. 190-192.

⁴⁴ It is also worth recording that Dr. Young appointed fellow Affirmationists as chairmen of half of the important standing committees of the assembly (Bills and Overtures, National Missions, Polity, Nomination of Members of General Council, and Social Education and Action).

⁴⁵ *Minutes, General Assembly, 1940*, Vol. I, p. 28.

⁴⁶ See *THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN*, June 25, 1940, pp. 187, 192.

⁴⁷ See *THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN*, June 10, 1941 (pp. 172-173) and June 25, 1941 (p. 180).