

Christian Biopolitics: A Credo & Strategy for the Future by Kenneth Cauthen

Dr. Cauthen is the John Price Grazer Griffith professor of theology at Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Grazer Theological Seminary. Published by Abingdon Press, Nashville; New York, 1971. This material was prepared for Religion Online by Ted and Winnie Brock.

(ENTIRE BOOK) A planetary society is emerging which makes requirements for human fulfillment that cannot be met unless there are profound changes in the ideas, values, and power coalitions that now determine our priorities and shape our future. The author details these necessary changes.

Preface

A planetary society is emerging which sets requirements for human fulfillment for the species as a whole that cannot be met unless there are profound changes in the ideas, values, and power coalitions that now determine our priorities and shape our politics.

Prospectus

Part I looks at the cultural and historical crises facing our human development. Part II. Analyzes the futurist movement of hope in both the secular and religious areas.

Part I

Challenge

We may not survive these next few years. If we can devise new mechanisms to help us survive this round of terrible crises, we have a chance of moving into a new world of incredible potentialities for all mankind.

Chapter 1: Transition: Perils and Promises

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Chapter 2: Transformation: Catastrophe or Conversion

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population and war.

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Postscript

Where shall we turn for a vision that can give us the victory without which we perish?

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Preface

A preface may serve a useful purpose if it provides the prospective reader with some indication of what he may expect in the pages to follow. I want to spell out some of the underlying principles that are assumed in the book and to suggest the audience that is most likely to be interested in what I have to say.

My thesis is that a planetary society is emerging which sets requirements for human fulfillment for the species as a whole that cannot be met unless there are profound changes in the ideas, values, and power coalitions that now determine our priorities and shape our politics. Our present ways of thinking and doing are not adequate to deal with the emerging ecological realities of Spaceship Earth in ways that not only allow us to survive but to provide justice and joy for all. In short,

Among those who believe that fundamental changes in American society are essential for the fullest achievement of the good life, a distinction can be made between the cultural transformationists and the political reformers. The former believe that the most important consideration is to nourish a new consciousness -- values, attitudes, goals, commitments, and life styles which will gradually remake society as the new vision takes hold of crucial segments of the population. Charles Reich's notion of "Consciousness III," which he thinks will accomplish "the greening of America," is an example of this type of

thinking. The latter believe that what is essential is developing a politically effective coalition among present and emerging groups that can gain the necessary power to effect policies designed to achieve a more just society and a more satisfying life for all. John Gardner's "Common Cause" operates on this premise, although the changes he seeks are toward the liberal rather than the radical side.

A dichotomy such as this is too neat, simplistic, and misleading if pushed very far. Nevertheless, in terms of this typology the present work is on the side of the cultural transformationists, although I do contend that both approaches are necessary. My basic appeal is for the development of a vision and a set of values appropriate to the emerging biological realities of the planetary society as an essential ingredient in accomplishing the political transformation that the fulfillment of life for all of earth's people demands. What is needed to make this a relevant proposal is a critical empirical analysis of the present situation in terms of whether there is any real likelihood of any class, group, or coalition of groups emerging as the agency of both ideological and political change. My own thinking is still inchoate on this point, but my tentative conclusion is that a new consciousness is arising in groups strategically placed in the socio-economic structure.

Advanced capitalism functions in a society in which a sizeable majority of people are relatively content with their roles as producers, consumers, and citizens. They tend to vote conservative and to defend the presently established institutions and values. But in two regions of the population are a minority of persons who are either presently excluded from many of the benefits of the society or alienated from some of its operating assumptions and values. The first is an underclass of the pre-affluent consisting of blacks and other racial minorities, the poor, and others at the margins of the socio-economic order. The second is a restless to radical, largely post-affluent group made up of the militant young, women in quest of liberation, students, intellectuals, and a variety of others scattered through the professions and other sectors largely outside the primary goods-producing area of the society. A common feature of this minority is a desire, expressed in rhetoric that runs from liberal to leftist, to achieve a society that is more humanly fulfilling and which extends its benefits to all persons. Likewise, such persons share various degrees of opposition to the conservative, nationalist, militarist, private enterprise ideologies and values designed to protect the vested interests of the privileged classes.

In the light of this analysis, then, my own scenario is cautiously hopeful, depending on (1) whether a creative minority of dreamers and doers with visions of a new life-fulfilling social order really emerges in strength, (2) the alliances that can be worked out with blacks, the poor, and other minorities now excluded from major social benefits, (3) the extent to which the populist idealism of the lower middle classes and working people generally favoring the extension of rights and equality to the "little man" everywhere wins out over the reactionary fears and prejudices which establishment elites and opportunist politicians are all too willing to exploit, and (4) what takes place at the center of the political spectrum itself under the pressure of events and in response to challenges to the established system from militant seekers of change.

This book is addressed primarily to those among the disenchanting minority who also belong to churches. To be more specific, I am thinking of a group of Christians -- mostly white, middle class, urban, highly educated, mainline Protestants -- who belong to what I earlier referred to as the restless to radical post-affluent class now surfacing at strategic points within the socio-economic order. I say this not to discourage any potential reader -- heaven forbid -- but merely to recognize that such persons are the most likely readers of a book like this. My aim is to nourish what I believe is an emerging new consciousness among many potential dreamers and doers in the churches who can help provide us with the visions and the values we need to promote a movement toward an ecologically optimum world community full of justice and joy in which the human race can not only survive but embark on exciting new adventures of physical and spiritual enjoyment.

Kenneth Cauthen

Rochester, New York

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Prospectus

This book is divided into two parts. The first begins with a cultural and historical analysis, asserting that mankind is moving toward the culmination of a process of human development thousands of years in the making. A planetary society is emerging under conditions that threaten to trespass the biological limits of the earth. Our problem is to move safely through the perils of this transition to realize the promises beyond. To do so, I maintain that we need a transformation of ideas, attitudes, and goals. This raises the question as to the possible contribution that theology and the church can make toward producing a creative minority of dreamers and doers who can provide us with the vision and the values that the future demands.

In the second part, I begin with the recognition that future-awareness has produced in the last decade a futurist movement in secular society and a variety of theologies of hope in the religious community. I call for an alliance of the two. There follows a philosophical and theological chapter in which I outline a framework of thought and action that I call Christian biopolitics. My concern here is to develop a religio-ethical perspective centered on life and the quest for enjoyment in a science-based technological age. This ecological model requires an organic understanding of reality. Such an understanding interprets man as a biospiritual unity whose life is set within cosmic nature, as well as within human history. Finally, I return again to the claim that the most significant contribution the church can make to the biopolitical task is to

nourish a new consciousness, a utopian vision of a desirable human future arising from the inspiration of the Christian past. I have set forth what amounts to a theology of the Spirit, interpreted as God's power for the future, to create among men a new reign of justice and joy in the emerging planetary society.

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Challenge

The trouble is that we may not survive these next few years. The human race today is like a rocket on a launching pad. We have been building up to this moment of takeoff for a long time, and if we can get safely through the takeoff period, we may fly on a new and exciting course for a long time to come. But at this moment, as the powerful new engines are fired, their thrust and roar shakes and stresses every part of the ship and may cause the whole thing to blow up before we can steer it on its way. Our problem today is to harness and direct these tremendous new forces through this dangerous transition period to the new world instead of to destruction. But unless we can do this, the rapidly increasing strains and crises of the next decade may kill us all. They will make the last twenty years look like a peaceful interlude.

To change our earlier analogy, today we are like men coming out of a coal mine who suddenly begin to hear the rock rumbling, but who have also begun to see a little square of light at the end of the tunnel. Against this background, I am an optimist -- in that I want to insist that there is a square of light and that it is worth trying to get to. I think that what we must do is to start running as fast as possible toward that light, working to increase the probability of our survival through the next decade by some measurable amount.

For the light at the end of the tunnel is very bright indeed. If we can only devise new mechanisms to help us survive this round of terrible crises, we have a chance of moving into a new world of incredible potentialities for all mankind. But if we cannot get through this next decade, we may never reach it.

John Platt, "What We Must Do" (*Science* Vol. 166, Nov. 28, 1969, pp. 1115, 1121. Copyright 1969 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science.)

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Chapter 1: Transition: Perils and Promises

THE NEXT FEW DECADES WILL BRING TOWARD COMPLETION A UNIQUE PERIOD OF TRANSITION IN WORLD HISTORY FRAUGHT WITH UNPRECEDENTED PERILS AND PROMISES AS MANKIND MOVES TOWARD A TRULY GLOBAL SOCIETY AT A TIME WHEN INCREASING HUMAN POWERS MUST BE EXERCISED WITHIN BOUNDARIES SET BY THE EARTH'S ECOLOGICAL LIMITS.

The human race is in the midst of a great transition involving such an enormity and rapidity of change as to constitute a transformation as far-reaching in its implications as that earlier great evolutionary leap when biological man became cultural man. This process is the fundamental fact of our time, but it occurs silently and almost invisibly, lost among raucous daily headlines telling of the spectacular events immediately before us. Nevertheless, the pattern is clear in its basic outlines, once we step back and reflect upon the underlying trends that are shaping the destiny of mankind.

The grand movement of history to which I refer is exceedingly complex

in all of its manifestations, but it can be suggested by a consideration of the following factors:

- Man's growing powers to shape his own destiny by extending his control over an enlarging range of external things and the emerging possibility of manipulating his own inner life and perhaps his genetic endowments.
- The unifying of the world through communication, transportation, and commerce.
- The fact that the basic processes having to do with the production of the world's goods are international in scope and require a globally interdependent network of correlated activities.
- An expanding common cultural milieu around the globe, the growth of international regulatory and monitoring agencies, the increase of transnational professional societies, world conferences, global projects, and the accelerating exchange of information and techniques on a worldwide scale.
- The approaching of the earth's capacity to support the exploding world population with the elementary physical necessities, food being the most crucial.
- The possible exhaustion of certain basic energy and material resources in the face of growing world demands and increasing numbers.
- The inevitable reaching of the limits within which the earth, the air, and the sea can absorb the excreted wastes and poisons of our technological civilization without producing massive ecological disasters.
- The claim that, given proper development and employment of the world's scientific and technological capabilities on a globally integrated basis, it is now possible to supply a greatly expanding population with all necessary physical requirements on a scale heretofore

very nature of the case, continue indefinitely, certainly not at the same pace that has characterized them in the recent past.

I suggest that . . . we are not at the beginning of continually accelerating change, but that we are in the middle of a unique transition crisis, like adolescence, as we make the jump from an undeveloped scientific and technological society to a fully developed one. . . . The slowing down of growth and the beginnings of our adjustment to it may become one of the major phenomena of the next thirty years. (*The Step to Man* [New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966], p. 187. See also John Platt, "What We Must Do," *Science* [November 28, 1969], p. 1115.)

A leveling-off is inevitable and in many cases is already in sight. Platt goes on to show how this is true, for example, with regard to high-energy accelerators used in modern physics, the speed and capacities of computers, or the control of bacterial diseases, among many others that could be mentioned.

The fact of reaching a culminating plateau becomes obvious in some connections:

Once a satellite system makes it possible to transmit sound and pictures around the earth at the speed of light, no further advance is possible except to extend or complete the network.

The speed at which persons or things can be transported across the globe has increased dramatically in recent decades. About 100 years ago, trains first achieved a rate of 60 to 70 miles per hour. Certain experimental planes now have traveled about 4,000 miles per hour. But we know the limits now. At 100 miles an hour vehicles (with wings) can leave the ground, but at 17,000 miles an hour they leave the earth and sail into orbit.

The inevitable reaching of limits in population growth can be shown most vividly and incredibly of all. Gerald Feinberg, a physicist, has calculated that at the current rate at which the population doubles -- about every forty years -- every atom in the estimated universe would be

converted into human protoplasm in 5,600 years! (*The Prometheus Project* [New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1969), p. 257.) Actually we know full well that the rate of population increase will level off one way or another within the next 50 to 100 years.

Platt is certainly right in that many of the kinds of change we now marvel at simply cannot go on forever or, in some cases, for many more decades.

In short, the formation of the planetary society, the approaching of the earth's ecological limits, and the attainment of certain built-in or intrinsic boundaries all are coming at a time when the scientific and technological capabilities of men are enlarging the range of alternative futures. These facts point vividly to the fact that world history is moving toward a completion of one stage of global evolution and human development. Granted that the various peoples of the world are being caught up into this broad sweep of history at different rates. Moreover, some aspects of life lag far behind others in their distance from the most advanced edges of the rush toward the planetary society. Nevertheless, the overall pattern seems clear enough. We stand already well into the process by which the scientific, technological, and cultural processes are weaving the interstices of the noöspheric network. The present generation stands at a crucial juncture in history. McHale writes:

Ours is possibly one of the most critical periods in human experience. Poised in the transition between one kind of world and another, we are literally on the hinge of a great transformation in the whole of the human condition.

The next fifty years may be the most crucial in all of man's history. We have few guides to follow and almost no usable precedent. (*The Future of the Future*, p.15.)

Human choices in the decades just ahead will decide whether, and to what extent, the culmination of that stage of history which began with the emergence of culture-producing men will bring with it universal happiness or worldwide horror.

Those theologians and philosophers who have spoken so bravely of "man come of age" have missed the most significant fact of our time. Man is not now an adult having moved out of the innocence, ignorance,

Also converging on the theory of the great transition is the vision of Buckminster Fuller. As a design engineer, Fuller sees the basic problem of mankind in terms of the necessity to integrate the production and distribution of the world's material necessities of food, housing, etc. on a global scale. Given a systematically interrelated world economy employing feasible technological innovations, it would be possible to provide the whole human population with plenty of everything needed. This is the startlingly new fact of history which is as yet not recognized or being acted upon appropriately.

Quite clearly, a complete transformation of human ecology in universe is occurring. It is not surprising that man, burdened with obsolete "knowledge" -- his spontaneous reflexing conditioned only by past experience, and as yet unable to realize himself as being already a world man -- fails to comprehend and cope logically with the birth of Universe Man. (*Utopia or Oblivion* [New York: Bantam Books, 1969] pp. 2-3.)

Confronted with the possibility of universal plenty and heretofore unattainable mental and spiritual adventures, the world is at the same time faced with annihilation through an atomic holocaust, due to our being trapped with outmoded ideas, values, and political ideologies.

This moment of realization that it soon must be Utopia or Oblivion coincides exactly with the discovery by man that for the first time in history Utopia is, at least, physically possible of human attainment." (*Ibid.*, p. 292.)

Within decades we will know whether man is going to be a physical success around earth, able to function in ever greater patterns of local universe, or whether he is going to frustrate his own success with his negatively conditioned reflexes of yesterday and will bring about his own extinction around the planet earth. My intuition foresees his success despite his negative inertias. This means things are going to move fast. (*Ibid.*, pp. 362-63.)

Kenneth Boulding calls the twentieth century a period of transition, from a civilized society to the age of post-civilization. The first great

transition took place some five to ten thousand years ago when men began to domesticate animals and settled down to an agricultural way of life. A surplus of goods produced by farmers made possible the beginnings of the city -- the characteristic mark of civilized society. But from the beginning of urban life, there began to rise a stream of knowledge and invention. This process is now rushing toward a climactic culmination that will in effect constitute the beginning of a new era -- what Boulding calls post-civilization. A global society is in the making, characterized by world industrialization and bound together in a communications and travel network. Such interdependence may produce a more uniform culture in the future, standing in sharp contrast to the wide diversity represented in the classical societies. About 25 percent of all the people who have ever lived are alive now. About 90 percent of all the world's scientists who have ever lived are alive now. Only about 5 percent of the total population is now engaged in agriculture, as opposed to about 75 percent in the classical societies. These facts make it easy to see how different our period of history is from that of most civilized human history. Our scientific and technological prowess has produced as many chemical publications since 1950 and mined as many metals and materials since 1910 as before those dates (a 1964 estimate). Such concentrations of persons and of techniques produce a foundation which will quickly lead toward a different kind of human world than man has known before.

The basis for both transitions has been an increase of knowledge. The modern period has seen the rise of the natural sciences, giving us new images and powers in relation to nature. It has also produced the social sciences, with their novel ways of understanding human institutions and processes. Together they have provided the cumulative and accelerating impetus leading into a new phase of world history. As he looks ahead, Boulding sees the prospects for mankind in the following perspective:

A postcivilized society of unshakable tyranny, resting upon all the knowledge which we are going to gain in social sciences, and of unspeakable corruption resting on man's enormous power over nature, especially biological nature, is by no means inconceivable. On the other hand, the techniques of postcivilization also offer us the possibility of a society in which the major sources of human misery have been eliminated, a society in which there will be no war, poverty, or disease, and in which a large majority of human beings will be able to live out

miss the unprecedented stage of world history which is being rapidly approached as the planetary society takes shape under the conditions of a world-crowding population, limited resources, and accelerating human capabilities. The human race has not before and will never again be at this point. Never have the stakes been so high. Never has the time of resolution been so brief.

In short, "utopia" and "oblivion" are symbols defining the absolute limits of historical possibility for this given epoch. The actualities of the historical future will doubtless not reach on a planetary scale the full range of potentialities of either pole. The total world process is far too complex and is moving toward the culminating point at far too many varying rates of speed within its innumerable subsystems. Nevertheless, the fundamental fact of the unique promises and perils of the emerging era should not be underestimated.

Given this background, the following chapters will look at the requirements of world historical salvation. How can we avoid disaster and attain a desirable future? Where shall we look for help? To science and technology? To political action? Is there a contribution that theology and the church can make? It is to these issues that the following chapters are devoted.

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Chapter 2: Transformation: Catastrophe or Conversion

IF WE ARE TO AVOID THE WORST PERILS AND REALIZE THE BEST PROMISES OF THE FUTURE, SOME MAJOR WORLD PROBLEMS MUST BE RESOLVED FOR WHICH THERE ARE NEITHER TECHNOLOGICAL NOR POLITICAL SOLUTIONS APART FROM A FUNDAMENTAL TRANSFORMATION OF IDEAS, ATTITUDES, VALUES, COMMITMENTS, AND GOALS.

There is widespread agreement among futurist writers with respect to the most crucial world problems -- issues of such magnitude that failure to resolve them will result in enormous destruction, conflict, and misery on a global scale. Kenneth Boulding contends that we can move through the great transition to the happy prospects beyond only if we can avoid the war trap, the population trap, and the entropy trap. By the last he means the exhaustion of essential material resources before alternatives are available or the depletion of human vitality and genetic integrity. (*The Meaning of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 75-155.) Dennis Gabor suggests war, population, and leisure as the great challenges, arguing that the last may surprisingly turn out to be the most intractable of the three. (*Inventing the Future* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964])

John Platt puts on his list of must-be-resolved-to-avoid-world-tragedy the following threats within the next five to twenty years: nuclear or radiological-chemical-biological warfare, famines, ecological balance, development failures, local wars, and the rich-poor gap. ("What We Must Do.") This cataloging could proceed indefinitely. Suffice it to say that on nearly all lists would appear an unholy trinity of (1) nuclear or RCB warfare, (2) population and hunger, and (3) increasingly the possibility of ecological unbalance of catastrophic global proportions. Leisure, the possible shortage of natural or material resources, political revolutions, or other serious breakdowns of administrative functioning, all stand in the wings as other specters to haunt us if they get out of hand -- a formidable array.

If nuclear/RCB war, population/hunger, and pollution are taken as three major traps that must be avoided during the transitional period, it can be argued upon good authority that for none of these dangers is there a strictly technological solution. "Technological solution" here refers to an answer provided by scientific and/or technological advances without any significant change in ideology (ideas plus values) or sacrifice of present comforts. Jerome Wiesner and H. F. York in a widely discussed article in *Scientific American* conclude that the present situation is characterized by increasing military power and decreasing national security on the part of the major powers. They maintain that "this dilemma has no technical solution." ([1964] 211:27.) What is meant is that no conceivable increase in superiority of military capability can in a nuclear age provide security. If there is to be a resolution, it must be on political grounds. Men must reconcile their differences through negotiations, foregoing any resort to nuclear combat as a final resort. When both sides have the capacity to destroy each other, it is no longer true that when one side wins, the other side loses. In advanced conflict such as nuclear powers are capable of waging today, war is a matter of both losing if it occurs or both winning if it does not.

Garrett Hardin has recently argued that population and pollution are also in the class of "no technical solution problems." ("The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science* [December 13, 1968], pp. 1243-48.) The hope that, by farming the sea, increasing the yield of grains, or otherwise working a miracle of production in food science and technology we can in the nick of time prevent mass starvation without any of the affluent having to give up current privileges, is vain. The inescapable fact is that, in a finite world, population cannot be maximized but must rather be stabilized in order to achieve a qualitatively good life for a reasonable

number. But how can this be done? Not by voluntary persuasion or by appeal to conscience, he contends, because of the logic implicit in what he calls "the tragedy of the commons." Picture a grazing land open to everybody. All is well until the carrying capacity of the pasture is reached. Then each herdsman will confront the following problem. If he adds one more cow to the commons, he will benefit from that increase by a value of plus 1. But the loss to the grazing land will be shared by all -- a loss to the individual herdsman of considerably less than minus 1. But the remorseless working of things when all follow this individually rational solution finally creates disaster for the whole community. Freedom in a commons creates a false logic when the goods are limited.

Applied to population the results are inescapable. Given the fact that nature does not punish by diminishing over-breeders, it is clear what will happen when a family, race, or nation is tempted to look upon the world as a commons and increase their numbers for some selfish purpose. All such units are locked into the logic whereby particular gains are made in a way that creates universal loss. The appeal to voluntary restraint or to conscience is self-defeating, putting each into a double bind. Since some will heed the voice of conscience while others ignore it, two communications come through. (1) Society will condemn you if you do not voluntarily act responsibly. (2) Society will condemn you for being foolish, in that others will take advantage of your virtue and exploit the commons. The result is that you are damned if you do, damned if you don't, obey your breeding-restricting conscience.

Pollution illustrates the tragedy of the commons in a reverse way. A polluter finds it advantageous to discharge his wastes into public land, air, or water. The reason is that the costs of neutralizing his poisons are borne by him alone, while the damage to the commons is shared by all alike. The unavoidable conclusion is that we can no longer allow the air and waterways to be regarded as a goods held in common.

"Mutual coercion mutually agreed upon" is the only alternative to the certain ruin, Hardin concludes. A political solution involving an extension of morality is the only way out. There is no technical solution which, by itself, can save us from the miseries of overpopulation and the disasters of ecological disruption.

Coercion has to be politically achieved and administered by the power of the state. Does politics offer any hope? Beryl Crowe takes up the

emergency mobilization of the best scientific talent available to work at the imminent crises of war, population, hunger, and pollution that threaten our very existence. ("What We Must Do.") But he too stresses the importance of social invention -- the creation of novel ways of solving human problems. All the human creativity and imagination available need to be set to work immediately, devising mechanisms for rescuing us from the futile and self-defeating conflicts that beset us. The social sciences must play a major role in this regard. In the past we have had science for intellectual pleasure, science for control of nature, but now we must have science for survival. While Platt puts his faith in the resourcefulness of the sciences to solve human problems, he highlights the importance of the value question at least implicitly by his insistence on the necessity of reordering the priorities by which we as a society invest our talents.

Kenneth Boulding agrees with John McHale and John Platt on the importance of social invention. It was the methods of testing and developing our images of nature that created the situation in which we find ourselves. In order to ride out the transition into the new world, "we must apply these or similar methods for reality testing to our images of man and society." (*The Meaning of the Twentieth Century*, p.191) A social strategy for avoiding the great traps -- war, population, entropy -- is the great need of the day. Boulding rests his hope on the prospective growth and effective influence of an "invisible college." This college is made up of members from all over the world representing many religions, races, philosophies, cultures, economic ideologies, and so on. The common feature binding them together is that they are people who have "a vision of the nature of the transition we are passing through and who are determined to devote their lives to contributing toward its successful fulfillment." (*Ibid.*) Designating his book, *The Meaning of the Twentieth Century*, as a tract for the times, he sees himself as an unashamed propagandist in behalf of the unseen but real community of those who appreciate the perils and promises of the future, and who align themselves with those creative forces which can save the world.

Our precious little planet, the blue-green cradle of life with its rosy mantle, is in one of the most critical stages, perhaps the most critical stage of its whole existence. It is in a position of immense danger and immense potentiality. There are no doubt many experiments in evolution going on in different parts of this big universe. But this happens to be my planet and I am very much

regarded with horror. Even in the face of the dangers implicit in "the population explosion," all would view voluntary limitation of the number of children born to be the ideal solution. Certainly all possible efforts to spread the knowledge and technology of contraception is the first priority, along with the duty of fighting the current orthodoxy of the Roman Catholic church which forbids all forms of effective birth control. However, we should prepare ourselves for the time when state coercion may be required. After all, the law tells me how many wives I can have. Why can't it tell me how many children I can have? At the international level, offers of economic aid will have to be made conditional on the full cooperation of the recipient country in controlling population growth.

4. *War.* Given the recognition that nuclear conflict between the major powers would lead to unprecedented global destruction, plus the fact that relative increase in military superiority cannot guarantee security, we stand in urgent need of innovative strategies to deal with the problem of war. The negative task is to intensify the horror, futility, and absurdity of the present arms race among the nuclear powers, particularly among the U.S.A., and U.S.S.R., and Communist China. There is also a positive task. Suppose we begin with the dawning possibility that it is now possible to produce enough of the basic material essential for all human beings, given the proper technological innovations plus access to the world's resources on a globally integrated basis. To seek ways and means to realize this goal may provide a key to peace. This vision, if taken seriously in this country, for example, would lead to more emphasis upon a positive strategy to overcome the growing gap between the rich nations and the poor and less on the dominant negative strategy of containing the enemy by filling him with fear of our power to destroy him. The causes of violence are many. but to provide all men with basic economic security would provide one way of easing the tensions that lead to war. Moreover, de-emphasis on weapons on our part would help to correct the image the Russians have of us as a threat to them and provide an initial step which could lead to mutual disarmament. The present imbalance in the use of resources can be seen in the fact that the total expenditures of foreign economic aid from all donor countries is equivalent to about 6 percent of the amount spent on military and defense projects.

I would not for one moment contend that any of the problems I have discussed here -- nationalism, consumption, population, and war -- have easy or simple solutions. Neither would I dismiss the value of what Karl

Popper has called "piece-meal social engineering," that is, attacking the worst present evils rather than operating from some long-range utopian goal. My basic point is that the day-to-day struggle for resolution of exceedingly complex problems has small chance of success unless we transform some of our present ideas about how the world works and some of our ideals about what we want to achieve. Hence, we need a realistic picture of what is really happening in our world, and we need a positive set of appropriate goals to point us toward ways of dealing with problems that (1) will really work and (2) lead to the kind of world that is worth living in.

It needs to be emphasized that unless the "invisible college" of which Boulding speaks can grow in influence among all peoples of the world, we are in great danger. We can only hope that among the ruling circles of Russia, China, Brazil, Egypt, and elsewhere there is enough appreciation for the biological and ecological facts of life on earth during the coming decades to enable them to get a vision of what human survival will require. If there is, then perhaps fundamental desire to live and enjoy life may function to moderate the nationalistic frenzies, the absurd struggles for power, the long ingrained historical hatreds, and the blind ideological fanaticisms that now stand in the way of creative, effective responses to the present crisis. The future is not what it used to be, and the ideas, values, and goals that might have served yesterday well may kill us tomorrow if we do not abandon them for ways of thinking and confronting problems that are appropriate for the transition toward a new world.

In short, the optimum contribution that can be made by increasing scientific knowledge and technological prowess and by the power of political mechanisms will be forthcoming only when certain prior conditions are presupposed which at the moment do not exist. Indispensable to the creation of these prior conditions is an international transformation of goals and values growing out of a vision of the nature of the transition through which we are going. This transformation must also include at least some minimal comprehension of the basic steps which must be taken in order to avoid catastrophe and realize the enormous potential for human enjoyment which is within our reach. Contributions to this reordering of priorities can be made by scientists and engineers (as concerned, knowledgeable citizens in possession of knowledge vital to society). The transformation can be aided by establishment politicians (within the limits of the present power realities which determine who can get in, or stay in, office). Help can be

rendered by ordinary citizens in every walk of life who are alert to the signs of the times.

Potentially more productive than any of these establishment influences may be the impact of protest communities. I refer to groups who in their various ways are calling for radical transformations of institutions and values -- the poor, the blacks, the militant young, and, increasingly, the women of our society. Similar iconoclastic groups around the world, as well as the poor and oppressed everywhere, are most likely to be open to the vision that the times demand. This expectation grows not only out of an analysis of those forces working among us for revolutionary change, but is an implication also of Christian insights. The alienated and the oppressed in a society are those to whom the hope of the gospel is most clearly directed. As Jürgen Moltmann has written:

For the future of God begins in this world, as the Beatitudes show, with the poor, the mourning, the persecuted, and the pure. . . . According to the inner dialectic of Christian hope, ultimately the rich do not save the poor, but, on the contrary, the poor save the rich. ("Political Religion and Christian Political Theology." Public Lecture at the University of Rochester (October 16, 1970).

The underlying assumption of the preceding analysis is that society is a complex of interrelated systems. An impetus introduced at one point has potential, possibly cumulative effects throughout the whole social order. The same change has actual effects through at least a part of it. To put it differently, I am arguing the sociological validity of what might be called "the ecological principle." I mean that in society as well as in nature everything is connected to everything else. This principle is congenial to the perspective of general systems theory and the insights of process philosophy with its dynamic-organic model of natural and social reality. The problem, then, is to find out how to "plug into" the system in ways that begin or accelerate the process of creating ideas, values, and goals adequate to the critical tasks of world historical salvation.

It is at this point that I as a Christian question the contribution that theology and church can make to the process of value transformation that the emerging planetary society so desperately needs at this critical juncture in human history. The following chapters will begin to explore

this issue.

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Christian Biopolitics: A Credo & Strategy for the Future by Kenneth Cauthen

Part I

Dr. Cauthen is the John Price Grazer Griffith professor of theology at Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Grazer Theological Seminary. Published by Abingdon Press, Nashville; New York, 1971. This material was prepared for Religion Online by Ted and Winnie Brock.

Chapter 3: Dreaming: Visions and Values

OUR BEST HOPE IN THIS CRISIS OF WORLD TRANSITION LIES IN THE EMERGENCE OF A CREATIVE MINORITY OF DREAMERS AND DOERS WHO CAN PROVIDE A VISION AND A SET OF VALUES SUFFICIENTLY POWERFUL IN MEANING AND MOTIVATION TO CONVERT MEN FROM THEIR IDOLATROUS IDEOLOGIES AND LOYALTIES AND REORIENT THEM TOWARD ONE OVERRIDING GOAL -- THE SURVIVAL AND FULFILLMENT OF THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE IN THE DAWNING PLANETARY SOCIETY.

Do ideas and ideals have the power to alter the course of history? Crane Brinton reminds us that among the stock of ideas developed in the modern world is "the idea that ideas are powerless to influence human actions." (*The Shaping of the Modern Mind* [Mentor Books; New York: New American Library, 1953] p.7.) Historians of the French Revolution have debated the point as to whether or not it was the ideas of the philosophers concerning human rights, equality, justice, democracy, freedom or the interests of the ordinary people pinched in belly and pocketbook that led to the uprising of 1789. Felix Rocquain argued in an 1878 book, *The Revolutionary Spirit Before the Revolution, 1715-1789*,

that one should not turn to the writings of Montesquieu, Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire, etc., and to the ideals of "liberty, equality, fraternity" for an explanation of what drove Frenchmen to revolution. Rather one should look to the concrete grievances -- high taxes, poor roads, periodic famines, governmental restrictions on free enterprise, and outmoded feudal dues, etc. In 1906 Marius Roustan published another view in a book under the title *The Philosophers and French Society in the Eighteenth Century*. His argument was that it was the ideas of the philosophers at work in a society which had genuine practical grievances that produced revolt. It was the presence of certain ideals coming from the intellectuals that made the difference between the abortive unrest in the earlier part of the century and the successful uprising of 1789. Frenchmen hungered for bread in the 1750s, but it was when they had learned from their philosophers to seek for more than bread, i.e., for their "natural rights," that they began to take effective action. Brinton takes the position that Roustan is closer to the truth than Rocquain.

Indeed my basic position is that for the understanding of human behavior in society the whole controversy as to whether material conditions (appetites, interests, "drives," or in Marxist terms, the "means of production" and the consequent "class struggle") cause men to act is at bottom pointless and unprofitable. No automotive engineer would dream of debating whether the gasoline or the spark made the internal-combustion engine run, let alone which came first, the gasoline or the spark. . . . Without *both* gasoline and spark, no working motor; without *both* ideas and interests (or appetites or drives, or material factors) no live, working human society, and no human history. (*Ibid.*, p.9.)

I agree with Brinton that ideals operating in the presence of interests can be powerful instruments of social transformation. There is a kind of thinking in which ideas are impotent, a mere intellectual exercise. There is another kind of thinking in which ideas, ideals, goals, are existential, efficacious, operationally powerful in leading to decisive change in behavior. Imagine a man high on a cliff overlooking a river. Far below he sees another man in a boat. Suddenly the boat overturns, and the occupant is thrown into the water. Too far away to be of any assistance, the man on the cliff speculates about the options available to the threatened man in the water. Should he try to make it to shore? Would it

management) through political (parliamentary democracy, universal suffrage) to the social (universal education, child welfare practices, women s "emancipation," New Towns, social planning. As Polak says, most features of social design in contemporary society were first figments of a utopia-writer's imagination. ("Futurology and the Imaging Capacity of the Future." Paper prepared for delivery at the Symposium on Cultural Futurology, American Anthropological Association [November, 1970], p. 6.)

Surprisingly enough, in his own paradoxical way Reinhold Niebuhr provides support for the idea that utopian ideals have a transforming power. He speaks of them as illusions but recognizes them as essential to social salvation even though they need to be subjected to realistic criticism. In the concluding paragraph of his famous early work, Niebuhr writes as follows:

In the task of that redemption [of the total human enterprise] the most effective agents will be men who have substituted some new illusions for the abandoned ones. The most important of these illusions is that the collective life of mankind can achieve perfect justice. It is a very valuable illusion for the moment; for justice cannot be approximated if the hope of its perfect realization does not generate a sublime madness in the soul. Nothing but such madness will do battle with malignant power and "spiritual wickedness in high places." The illusion is dangerous because it encourages terrible fanaticisms. It must therefore be brought under the control of reason. One can only hope that reason will not destroy it before its work is done. (*Moral Man and Immoral Society* [New York: Scribner's, 1932], p.277.)

I am among a growing number of people who believe that there is an urgent need for a rebirth of utopian thinking within the church and in society at large. This may be the dawning of "the Age of Aquarius" as the song from *Hair* says. But can we dare to believe that it may also become the age of the Spirit spoken of by the prophet Joel? "Then shall it be that I pour out my spirit on all; your sons and daughters shall be inspired, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." (2:28) Utopian visions need to be rooted in the earth of present

reign of God by repenting, believing, and obeying. Translated into our contemporary terms the same notes can be sounded in a situation in which "the unit of survival is the human race." (Hoagland) Today mankind faces a future filled with threats of massive misery and destruction from atomic holocaust, ecological disaster, hunger and crowding from overpopulation, conflict growing out of the exploding anger of peoples long oppressed, and so on. But there is also the promise of a unified planetary society living in harmony with nature, using the natural resources of the earth for the benefit of all the earth's living creatures, and opening up prospects of human adventures never before possible. If we are to avoid the threat and attain the promises inherent in the culminating phase of this epoch in world history, our requirement is a massive transformation of ideas, attitudes, commitments, and goals on the part of human beings around the globe.

The world needs a vision and a set of values commensurate with the perils and promises of the planetary society. Can we produce enough dreamers and doers in time? utopia or oblivion? -- that is the question. The human race will be deciding the answer in the next few decades under circumstances of a major transition in the history of mankind. In our time it is becoming increasingly plain that, as John Platt says, "The world has now become too dangerous for anything less than Utopia." (*The Step to Man*, p. 200.)

The first part of this little "tract for the times" has attempted to get at the "big picture." The second part will assume this analysis of the transition toward a planetary society under conditions which approach the biological limits of the earth during a period of rapidly accelerating scientific knowledge and technological prowess. The attempt in the last three chapters, however, will be to present a framework within which theology and the church may operate to develop a responsible strategy during these crucial decades ahead.

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Christian Biopolitics: A Credo & Strategy for the Future by Kenneth Cauthen

Part II

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Response

But if the past is the domain of facts over which I have no power, it is also the domain of knowable facts.

For man in his role as an active agent, the future is a field of liberty and power, but for man in his role as a cognizant being the future is a field of uncertainty. It is a field of liberty because I am free to conceive that something which does not now exist will exist in the future; it is a field of power because I have some power to validate my conception (though, naturally, not all conceptions indiscriminately!). And indeed the future is our only field of power, for we can act only on the future.

Bertrand de Jouvenel, *The Art of Conjecture*

The future cannot be predicted, but futures can be invented. . . The first step of the technological inventor is to visualize by an act of imagination a thing or a state of things which does not yet exist and which to him appears in some way desirable. He can then start rationally arguing backwards from the invention and forward from the means at his disposal until a way is found from one to the other.

Dennis Gabor, *Inventing the Future*

Harper's Weekly commented in 1902: "The actual building of roads devoted to motor cars is not for the near future, in spite of many rumors to that effect."

One week before the successful flight of the Wright brothers at Kitty Hawk, N.C., the *New York Times* had this to say about a rival plane builder: "We hope that Professor Langley will not put his substantial greatness as a scientist in further peril by continuing to waste his time, and the money involved, in further airship experiments. Life is short, and he is capable of services to humanity incomparably greater than can be expected to result from trying to fly."

Vannevar Bush commented in 1945 to President Truman as follows regarding the atomic bomb: "The bomb will never go off, and I speak as an expert in explosives." (These articles are taken from *The Futurist* [December, 1968], p. 121.)

These examples from the past remind us that attempts to predict the future are hazardous. This very fact, given the circumstances of the present, make it all the more important for us to learn better, if we can, how to anticipate future probabilities. There are compelling reasons for contending that interest in the future is, in our day, a matter of peculiar urgency. The fundamental defense of the study of the future can be stated rather briefly. For millions of years the evolution of life on this planet was largely a matter of "natural selection." But with the explosive increase of knowledge and power now going on, the future of life -- for people and animals -- will be increasingly a function of "human selection." At an incredibly rapid pace, men are developing the capacity to shape the destiny of all living beings on earth. We humans will have the kind of future we decide for by our present actions, whether such choice is deliberate or inadvertent. The capability of man will doubtless come to include, in a relatively short time, the possibility of his self-conscious participation in the direction of the evolutionary process itself.

If the claims made so far sound a bit grandiose, let us put it more cautiously. The growing consequences of human actions and the startling rapidity with which our knowledge and power grows combine to raise the stakes considerably. What we do sets in motion forces so powerful that they enter into the determination of the future in such a way as to limit the possibility of later actions negating or even modifying them. The most spectacular example, of course, can be provided from the technology of weapons. Herman Kahn has spoken of the plausible invention in the near future of a "doomsday machine,"

1. Increasingly Sensate (empirical, this -- worldly, secular, humanistic, pragmatic, utilitarian, contractual, epicurean or hedonistic, and the like) cultures
2. Bourgeois, bureaucratic, "meritocratic," democratic (and nationalistic?) elites
3. Accumulation of scientific and technological knowledge
4. Institutionalization of change, especially research, development, innovation, and diffusion
5. Worldwide industrialization and modernization
6. Increasing affluence and (recently) leisure
7. Population growth
8. Urbanization and (soon) the growth of megalopolises
9. Decreasing importance of primary and (recently) secondary occupations
10. Literacy and education
11. Increasing capability for mass destruction
12. Increasing tempo of change
13. Increasing universality of the multifold trend

Within this context certain baselines are established, using quantifiable, statistical data where possible, with respect to population, military power, economic growth, energy sources, etc. Extrapolations are then made with regard to future possibilities, using all available information to make judgments about how all relevant factors will interact to produce outcomes. "Surprise-free" projections are made incorporating those trends which are most probable. This description of "a standard world" is accompanied by several "canonical variations," alternative futures which are also quite possible given certain other combinations of circumstances. "Scenarios" are then sketched which seek to show precisely by what steps some hypothetical sequence might come about and to indicate what alternatives for choice exist for each actor at

each crucial point for redirecting the process.

TABLE II

Final Third of the Twentieth Century

(Relatively Apolitical and Surprise -- Free Projection)

1. Continuation of basic, long-term "multifold trend"
2. Emergence of "postindustrial" culture
3. Worldwide capability for modern technology
4. Very small world: increasing need for regional or worldwide "zoning ordinances" for control of arms, technology, pollution, trade transportation, population, resource utilization, and the like
5. High (1 to 10 per cent) growth rates in GNP per capita
6. Increasing emphasis on "meaning and purpose"
7. Much turmoil in "new" and possibly in the industrializing nations
8. Some possibility for sustained "nativist," messianic, or other mass movements
9. Second rise of Japan (to being potentially, nominally, or perhaps actually, the third largest power)
10. Some further rise of Europe and China
11. Emergence of new intermediate powers, such as Brazil, Mexico, Pakistan, Indonesia, East Germany, and Egypt
12. Some decline (relative) of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.
13. A possible absence of stark "life and death" political and economic issues in the old nations

TABLE III

Some Possible Causes of "Surprising" Changes

in the Old Nations

1. Invasion and war
2. Civil strife and revolution
3. Famine
4. Pestilence
5. Despotism (persecution)
6. Natural disaster
7. Depression or economic stagnation
8. Development of "inexpensive" doomsday or near-dooms day machines
9. Development of nuclear "six-gun" weapons technology
10. Resurgence of Communism, or revival of Fascism
11. A racial, North-South, rich-poor, East-West, or other disruptive polarization
12. Economically dynamic China (~ 10 per cent per year growth)
13. Politically dynamic U.S., U.S.S.R., Japan, West Germany, Brazil, and other powers
14. New religious philosophies and/or other mass movements
15. Development of UN. or other worldwide organizations
16. Possible regional or other multinational organizations

17. Psychologically upsetting impact of new techniques, ideas, philosophies, and the like

TABLE IV

The Postindustrial (or Post-Mass Consumption) Society

1. Per capita income about fifty times the preindustrial
2. Most "economic" activities are tertiary and quaternary (service-oriented), rather than primary or secondary (production-oriented)
3. Business firms no longer the major source of innovation
4. There may be more "consentives" (vs. "marketives")
5. Effective floor on income and welfare
6. Efficiency no longer primary
7. Market plays diminished role compared to public sector and "social accounts"
8. Widespread "cybernation"
9. "Small world"
10. Typical "doubling time" between three and thirty years
11. Learning society
12. Rapid improvement in educational institutions and techniques
13. Erosion (in middle class) of work-oriented, achievement-oriented, advancement-oriented values
14. Erosion of "national interest" values
15. Sensate, secular, humanist, perhaps self-indulgent criteria become central

TABLE
V

A Relatively "Surprise-Free" Early Twenty -- First Century

1. We expect the rise of new great powers -- perhaps Japan, China, a European complex, Brazil, Mexico, or India.
2. There will be new political, perhaps even "philosophical," Issues.
3. There will be a leveling off or diminishing of some aspects of the basic, long-term multifold trend, such as urbanization.
4. The postindustrial and industrial worlds will have been largely realized.
5. Some success seems likely with population control, arms control, and some kind of moderately stable international security arrangements, though probably not a "world government."
6. In the industrializing world, disorder, ideology, and irrational movements will probably continue to play disruptive though geographically confined roles.
7. In the U.S. and Western Europe, there will presumably be either a return to certain Hellenic or older European concepts of the good life, or an intensified alienation and search made necessary and facilitated by the unprecedented affluence and permissiveness of the postindustrial economy.

The concept of "alternative futures" is fundamental to this approach. The idea is, that if the systematic context within which developments take place can be illuminated, it is possible to gain understandings which lead to relevant policy choices that facilitate desirable goals and avoid undesirable ones. There is no notion that futures can be predicted. The purpose of such studies is heuristic, an aid to learning, understanding, and choice. The most surprising thing would be that the "surprise free" projection actually came to pass. Even though the "standard world" may be the most likely outcome, it is still highly improbable in absolute terms. Modesty about any future projections is generated by the recognition that "*almost any day has some chance of bringing up some new crisis or unexpected event that becomes a historical turning point, diverting current tendencies so that expectations for the distant future must shift.*" (Kahn and Wiener, *The Year 2000*, p. 60.) Futures study can produce only a framework for speculation, not a schedule of events to come. Such study,

however, does attempt to be objective by sticking close to empirical data, to its critical analysis, and to projections based on it. It is value-free in intention in that it illuminates alternatives dispassionately with no expressed preference for one outcome over another. The authors recognize, however, that their biases with respect to what is determinative cannot be avoided.

In contrast, John McHale stresses the importance of value choices in thinking about the future. McHale is concerned not merely to make dispassionate projections of what is likely to occur, but is motivated by the fact that the future poses a crisis for mankind with which we are ill-prepared to cope. Survival depends on our abandoning obsolete ideas and ideals and inventing creative new ways to deal with the novel situations which the future is rapidly thrusting upon us. McHale is impressed with the role of human choice as determinative of the future. We can have, he urges, just the kind of future we determine it to be by our decisions and deeds. "From this point on, there is a growing realization that man's future may be literally what he chooses to make it, and that the range of choice and the degree of conscious control which he may exercise in determining his future are unprecedented." (*The Future of the Future*, p.6.) Hence, we need to decide what we want most in order that we may invent the future that we have chosen.

Futures research has so far been overbalanced in the technological, economic, and politico-military spheres. Moreover, much of it is tied too closely to traditional premises and priorities that are nationalistically and provincially oriented. McHale urges a radically innovative and adventurous approach to thought about the future, which will chart new directions and open up new possibilities for dealing with our problems. The priorities now lie not with technological development but with social invention -- the creation of new mechanisms of problem solving, novel forms of social organization, innovative life-styles, and so on. Further, the parameters within which we think of the future need to be expanded. "Aspects of this change in conceptuality extend inwardly, from unraveling of the micro-life code at the molecular level, to the maintenance of men beyond the earth's atmosphere and under its oceans, to the outward monitoring of other worlds and galaxies." (*Ibid.*, p. 12.) In particular, the basic ecological realities of today and tomorrow require us to think in terms of a "world-man image" in the context of a planetary society. The problems of sustaining the world community must take precedence over local and nationalistic interests if we are to survive at all. The sharp inequities between the rich nations and the poor, the population explosion, the pressures on food, land, and natural resources, the misery and disorganization generated by our local wars, and the global rise in human expectations of a decent life all combine to make futuristic planning essential.

Taking a similar value approach to the study of the future is Hans Ozbekhan. ("Technology and Man's Future" [System Development Corporation, SP2494, 1966]). His starting point is analysis of the present directions of what Jacques Ellul has called "the technological society." The central mark of this order, according to Ellul, is *technique*, "the totality of *methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency* (for a given stage of human development) *in every field of human activity.*" (The technological Society [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964] p xxv.) *Technique* is all-embracing in tendency. It threatens in its logical outcome to move toward completeness, both in terms of the areas of life embraced by it and in terms of its global outreach. The result is that life is reduced to a collection of means which increasingly are directed to the ends required by the necessities that emerge within the *technique*-dominated systems themselves as measured by the criterion of efficiency. What can be done must be done. Thus, *technique* becomes an autonomous, self-directing, all-encompassing force which increasingly subjects human life, feelings, and desires to the requirements of the encroaching systems themselves.

Allowing for the exaggeration, the pessimism, the distortion, and factual errors of Ellul's account, Obzekhan nevertheless thinks that there is enough truth here to warrant making this the starting point of thought about the future. Obzekhan argues that a "normative" approach is required in which the human imagination is set free to create images of a desirable human future that can be invented. Such a future would be redirected away from the dehumanizing, dead end toward which technological society is moving us. The technological perspective leads us to limit our conceptions of reality and of the future by seeing everything too narrowly. It assumes present rules and norms and projects futures in the light of them. We need to overcome this notion of a "logical future," which arises from the projection of current trends in line with what is feasible, by the notion of a "willed future," which projects images based on what is humanly desirable. Obzekhan believes that modern information gathering, data analysis, and computer techniques make it possible to build simulated models of alternative states of social systems that facilitate normative thinking about the future on realistic, empirical lines. This new technology provides a "technology" that will enable us to move beyond the age of technology.

Asserting that in our time the whole planetary system must be taken into account in planning for a humanly desirable future, he argues that the prime end must be to redirect the use of human and technological resources to overcoming the gap between the affluent nations and that much larger portion of mankind which still exists in hunger, poverty, disease, and misery. Both self-interest and morality require the development of such a world purpose. We

need an image of a future in which our technologies and energies are directed toward the achievement of human ends, rather than allowing the present imperatives of *technique* to carry us by its own weight toward a joyless robotism and finally to self-destruction.

A no less spirited but much more cautious, even pessimistic, outlook on the importance of anticipating and planning for future developments is provided by Donald Michael. (*The Unprepared Society*.) Asserting that we do not yet have either the facts or the methods to make forecasting a precise art, Michael argues that there are three basic reasons for continuing to make or act upon them: (1) some forecasts are likely to be close to the mark, (2) poor forecasts provide a better basis for planning than no prediction at all, and (3) well-done forecasts help to illuminate the many factors that interact to produce the future. The years ahead will bring increasing complexity in terms of more people and more problems. Moreover, we will have turmoil in society as a result of this complexity. Also, we will experience a scarcity of time and human resources to deal with the resulting disorder. In particular, the pre-potent technologies of cybernation and social, and biological engineering make a rapid shift toward long-range planning imperative.

Yet because of the irrationalities, complexities, inertia, and resistance to and fear of change, we are not able at the present to predict accurately enough, plan wisely enough, or make effective changes rapidly enough to avoid troubles ahead. But this realism makes it all the more necessary to try harder to anticipate future developments and devise effective strategies for directing social processes toward desirable ends. Finally, Michael urges the importance of developing educational procedures to train a special cadre of persons with the intellectual and emotional skills necessary to assist in the process of applying what we know to the task of planning and achieving humanly fulfilling futures.

This sketchy survey of approaches to futuristic studies provides only the barest of hints of the variety of such endeavors now burgeoning among us. But even this cursory glance reveals disagreement as to how prepared we are both to forecast and to achieve a world shaped more closely to the heart's desire. Olaf Helmer is unreservedly optimistic. He is confident that the approach that is now possible, given new methods of anticipating probable futures and of planning, gives man a possibility of control that makes human prospects brighter than ever. This confidence is matched by other spokesmen of man's new knowledge and power who easily shift from their enthusiasm about advances in the scientific-technological realm to an optimism about what can be done using these powers to direct the social order toward solutions of

threatening problems. Emmanuel Mesthene, director of the Harvard Program in Technology and Science, says:

We have now, or know how to acquire, the technical capability to do nearly anything we want. Can we transplant human hearts, control personality, order the weather that suits us, travel to Mars or Venus? Of course we can, if not now or in five or ten years, then certainly in 25 or 50 or 100.(Quoted in Ferkiss, *Technological Man*, p. 20.)

In like manner, Glenn Seaborg, a distinguished atomic scientist, makes more ambitious claims. A *New York Times* report of a 1963 speech runs as follows: Dr. Seaborg

. . . expressed faith that man could, if he tried, solve all of today's agonizing problems -- war, hunger, the population explosion, water shortages, pollution. "Man may well have reached that point in history, that stage of his development . . . where he has not only been made master of his fate, but where his technology and his morality have come face to face." Science has given mankind an opportunity "to control and direct our future, our creative evolution. . . . I believe we can be masters of our fate."(Quoted in Langdon Gilkey, *Religion and the Scientific Future* [New York: Harper & Row, 1970], pp. 79-80.)

Other futurists take a more cautious view of man's ability to control the future. Herman Kahn and Anthony Wiener construct a number of alternative scenarios of the future, some of which envision a world of unprecedented wealth, leisure, opportunity for new experiences, and so on. But they conclude their recent work with a hint that future man may indeed end up like Faust. His desire to exploit the world and realize all its pleasures through science and technology may finally lead to ultimate catastrophe and the loss of his soul. There is no guarantee, they conclude, that we can ever master the art of controlling human destiny and molding the world to fit our fondest desires. In short, the pictures of possible futures being offered us by the forecasting experts are by no means universally utopian or unreservedly optimistic. They are sometimes quite depressing. Some futurists envision among alternative prospects a world devastated by thermo-nuclear war, a vastly overcrowded, hungry population existing in misery, and a human race scratching in the earth with crude instruments because the raw materials necessary for an industrial technology have been exhausted beyond replacement.

My own predilections lead me to side with the more cautious among the futurists with respect to the success man can have in controlling his destiny and remaking the world according to some chosen end. Donald Michael states my own convictions when he argues that

on the one hand, we face enormously complex issues, problems, and opportunities, and we will have to use unprecedentedly powerful means for responding to them, especially an improving capacity to do long-range planning. On the other hand,... our ability to plan and to implement those plans will continue to be seriously limited by methodological, institutional, and human weaknesses. Consequently, we will live in a period of tremendous turmoil. This circumstance in turn will require still greater efforts at long-range planning and institutional change.(*The Unprepared Society*, p. 106.)

It is important, I believe, to adopt neither an extreme pessimism nor an extreme optimism about the future of mankind. What is crucial is that both the promises and the perils are increasing. This fact makes it necessary to use the full range of human powers to cope with these dangers and the opportunities. Mankind does have limited range of freedom to choose among alternative courses and to act upon his insights regarding the probable outcome of various alternatives. But at the same time man is motivated by his anxieties, insecurities, and his egotism.

Moreover, he must live with the continuing impact of his past upon the present. There is a massiveness about the flow of history that cannot be easily redirected. We cannot, for example, overcome in a moment the long-standing cold war between ourselves and Russia. There are great hatreds arising in the poor and the oppressed around the world. The affluent will not in great numbers gladly give up their privileges in order that the deprived may share in prosperity. Nationalism and racism and ideological fanaticism hold men in their powerful grip. All of these forces have a dynamism of their own and will continue to shape the future.

The point is that we cannot, by taking thought, simply redesign ourselves and our world in accordance with some projected ideal. Those who speak so optimistically in most cases seem to make too easy a transfer from technological progress to human progress. It does not follow that, because we can go to the moon because we set our minds to it, we can accomplish some human social end in the same manner. Things and people are not equivalents. The ability to manipulate the former toward chosen ends does not mean that

the same thing can be done in the human and social sphere. Dennis Gabor remarks that his studies of futurist writers show that generally the optimists are those who take man into account only as a producer of goods. (*Inventing the Future*, p. 17.) The pessimists are those who look at man as a whole. Yet the future is open. It can be, to some extent, in Gabor's word, "invented."

Hence, I believe that we need to cultivate futurism both in the secular world and in the church. In this connection it is fascinating to notice that, parallel to the rise of the interest in futuristic studies in society, the religious community has witnessed the emergence of various "theologies of hope." Jürgen Moltmann, J. B. Metz, Harvey Cox, Carl Braaten, Robert Jenson, Gabriel Fackre, and many others have recently written in this vein. (Moltmann, *Theology of Hope* (New York, Harper & Row, 1967). Metz, *Theology of the World* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1969). Cox. *On Not Leaving It to the Snake* (New York: Macmillan Paperbacks ed., 1967). *The Futurist Option* (Paramus, N. J.: Paulist/Newman Press, 1970), by both Jenson and Braaten. Fackre. *The Rainbow Sign* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmann's, 1969). The earlier work of Teilhard de Chardin also belongs in its own way to the genre. The future, then, has become a central category for contemporary theology. In characteristic Germanic overstatement, Moltmann, whose *Theology of Hope* is a basic work in this movement, has written, "There is, therefore, only one real problem in Christian theology... the problem of the future." (P. 16) Theological futurists stress the note of an anticipated fulfillment yet to come which pervades the biblical message. Set within a time-dominated framework running from creation to consummation, the Bible witnesses to the purpose of God to call into being a special people loyal to him and through them to open up for all men the prospect of a glorious fulfillment in a Kingdom of peace, harmony, and joy. Human hope rests upon the promise of God to consummate the past in a future in which the potentialities of life are fully realized. Living hope for the future leads to militant action in the present to establish justice, to feed the hungry, to free the oppressed, and in every way to heal the hurts of men in anticipation of a complete victory over evil that defines the horizon of possibility.

It was, as a matter of fact, the impact of the Judaeo-Christian tradition on Western civilization that is chiefly responsible for the awareness so prevalent among us today that history presses forward toward novel achievements, that the future is open and full of promise, that man is a free creature whose own decisions and deeds enter into the shaping of tomorrow's world. The future-consciousness which today pervades Jew, Christian, and secularist alike is the cultural gift to us of the faith of Israel and of the church. Moreover, science and technology, which together constitute a major force shaping the future, are

indebted in fundamental ways to modes of thought and styles of life that have their ultimate source in the religious experiences of Hebrew prophets and Christian apostles. Hence, contemporary secular futurology and contemporary eschatology grow from common ancient roots.

I count myself among the theological futurists. I believe that among the important tasks of contemporary theology is forging an alliance between secular futurology and a theology of hope. In particular, I believe that secular studies can benefit from the framework of values and the wisdom about man's ultimate commitments generated over the centuries in the experiences of prophets and saints and articulated in fresh, contemporary language by critical theological inquiry. On the other hand, theological concern with the future needs to be correlated with the specific, detailed empirical data provided by futuristic studies in universities and think-tanks. Theology needs to make use of newly developed methods of studying the future and the projections that follow from them. Moreover, theologians need to subject to critical evaluation the presuppositions about man, history, and values that underlie the forecasts and findings of secular thinkers, as well as the strategies they propose to lead men toward desirable alternatives.

Turning specifically to recent theologies of hope, I would make two specific criticisms of most. First, they tend to develop their categories too exclusively in terms of biblical and theological categories without correlating them sufficiently with the processes that are occurring in the real world. Moltmann's *Theology of Hope* is a good example of this. Terms like hope and promise come most alive when they are related concretely to the experiences of men. God's promised future needs to be discussed in relationship to some projection of man's actual historical future that I attempted in the first three chapters of this book.

Secondly, most futurist theology, and recent theology generally, has seen man's life too exclusively in the context of society and history and has neglected the natural and cosmic setting of the human enterprise. In the following chapter I attempt to outline an approach to the future using an ecological model in which life becomes the central category. Human life with its quest for enjoyment is then viewed in relationship to the natural, social, and technological environments which shape man's existence. I call this perspective Christian biopolitics. I believe that this framework can provide a bridge between secular and theological futurism, between the futuristic studies of the think-tanks and a theology of hope. It also points the way toward discerning in part the contribution the church may make in our time to the achievement of a humanly desirable future in this period of world transition. It

is to these tasks that the remainder of the book will be devoted.

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Christian Biopolitics: A Credo & Strategy for the Future by Kenneth Cauthen

Part II

Dr. Cauthen is the John Price Grazer Griffith professor of theology at Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Grazer Theological Seminary. Published by Abingdon Press, Nashville; New York, 1971. This material was prepared for Religion Online by Ted and Winnie Brock.

Chapter 5: Life: Enjoyment and Ecstasy

THE THEOLOGY WHICH CAN BEST SERVE THE CHURCH IN ITS MINISTRY TO THE SOCIETY OF THE FUTURE WILL TAKE THE FORM OF CHRISTIAN BIOPOLITICS -- A UTOPIAN APPROACH TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE QUEST FOR A DESIRABLE FUTURE, WHICH TAKES AS ITS CENTRAL THEME THE FULFILLMENT OF LIFE WITHIN THE TOTALITY OF THE NATURAL, SOCIAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL SETTINGS OF HUMAN EXISTENCE.

No matter how you interpret it, the world will never be quite the same after July 20, 1969 -- the day that Neil Armstrong from Planet Earth first set his left foot upon the moon. Nothing could speak more eloquently of the fact that the future will be radically different from the past. The moon landing promptly set off a vigorous debate in the country about what our priorities ought to be in the light of this spectacular demonstration of what can be done, at least in the technological realm, when men are sufficiently committed. What are the goals to which we should commit ourselves as a nation in the seventies? Nothing, in fact, is more urgent than sustained debate to reassess our priorities and to determine what we really want most from the future. Such deliberations

and the decisions which follow are the essence of politics -- the sum total of all those actions by which a society organizes itself for the purpose of achieving the good life.

A good deal of theological writing lately has made politics a central category. Paul Lehmann, Harvey Cox, J. B. Metz Jürgen Moltmann and others have attempted to show the usefulness of this concept in elucidating a biblical understanding of man and his communal existence under God. (Lehmann, *Ethics in a Christian Context* [New York: Harper & Row, 1963]. Cox, *The Secular City* [New York: Macmillan, 1965]. Metz, *Theology of the World*. Moltmann, *Religion, Revolution and the Future* [New York: Scribner's, 1969]). Political theology is an enterprise which seeks, in the light of the Christian disclosure, to discern what God is doing to fulfill the potentialities of human life. Its other task is to discover the appropriate human response to the divine working in history. The Protestant Moltmann and the Catholic Metz have both attached their versions of political theology to the eschatological scheme of the Bible so that it becomes a theology of hope which entails a militant program of social action to improve the quality of human existence.

I, too, find myself convinced of the importance of developing a theology of hope based on the scriptural drama which runs from creation to consummation, telling of God's purpose to bring his Kingdom to pass in cosmos and in human history. We need a theology of the future for a future-oriented society. However, I believe that a political theology is too narrow, to the extent that it presents man only in his social and historical existence and does not take into account the natural and biological setting of human life. Hence in order to stress this wider environment of human decision and action, I wish to make a case for the development of a theology which, by design, is concerned with the theory and practice of Christian biopolitics.

Every theology needs to state the substance of the Christian message in a form that is both credible and relevant to the particular cultural situation to which it is addressed. It is in fact just such a reading of the present scene which, I believe, calls for a biopolitical theology. The particular aspect of the contemporary situation to which I wish to call attention has to do with man's growing powers to alter his destiny and the increasing interdependence of men with each other, with nature, and with the machines they create. These developments make imperative future-oriented research and planning in order to avoid disaster and to

achieve a desirable state of affairs in the decades ahead. We live in an era in which attempts to forecast developments in science, technology, and in society and then to devise alternative strategies in the light of the most probable futures will become increasingly important. Man has no choice but to attempt to exercise control over the vast number of interrelated systems which affect his life. Herbert Richardson speaks of the emergence of socio-technics as the crucial fact in the cultural era already dawning. "By socio-technics is meant that new knowledge whereby man exercises control not only over nature but over all the specific institutions that make up society: i.e., economics, science, and politics." (*Toward an American Theology* [New York: Harper & Row, 1967], p. 16.) I would only add that we ought to think in terms of a bio-socio-technic age in order to stress the fact that what is at stake is the future management of life itself. At this point it must be recognized that the interdependence of all life in relationship to the planetary environment places special obligations and limitations on the present generation. There is one world, one human family, one interrelated web of life woven on the spherical skin of the earth. Plants, animals, and men share a common environment. It is imperative not only that nations and races learn to live in peace with justice for all but that we also learn how to relate ourselves to our natural surrounding in such a way as to stay alive and prosper. We cannot afford to continue to make war, to tolerate oppression, to allow the gap between the rich and the poor to persist. But neither can we indiscriminately and indefinitely plunder the planet for its resources, overpopulate it with people, and pollute our air and water without paying the terrible consequences in human misery. If we are to have a future at all, we must at least learn the elementary requirements of biological survival.

In a special way, then, I am calling for an ecological model for politics and theology, which begins with human beings living in relationship not only to each other but to a natural environment. Commentary by three eminent men of our time underscores the need for politics broad enough to include biology. First, Aldous Huxley has argued that only if we take into account biological as well as the merely political facts can we hope to shorten the time of trouble into which we are moving.

Only when we get it into our collective head that the basic problem confronting twentieth-century man is an ecological problem will our politics improve. How does the human race propose to survive and, if possible, improve the lot and the intrinsic quality of its individual

members? Do we propose to live on this planet in symbiotic harmony with our environment? Or, preferring to be wantonly stupid, shall we choose to live like murderous and suicidal parasites that kill their host and so destroy themselves? . . . If our politicians were realists, they would think rather less about missiles and the problem of landing astronauts on the moon, rather more about hunger and moral squalor and the problem of enabling three billion men, women, and children, who will soon be six billions, to lead a tolerably human existence without, in the process, ruining and befouling their planetary environment. ("The Politics of Population," reprinted with permission from the March, 1969, issue of *The Center Magazine*, a publication of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, California.

Secondly, Norman Cousins has recently proposed that some foundation establish a Commission on the World's Future made up of eminent scientists and humanists with moral vision who would devote themselves to thinking about the problem of survival and fulfillment in the future. The Commission would think in planetary terms about the whole human race, transcending the narrow ties of national governments and racial and ideological prejudices. It would issue annually a Report on the State of Mankind. He points out, as does Huxley, that our problem is bad politics. Governments which were instituted among men to insure their security and well-being now constitute a big part of the problem. Devoting themselves to nationalistic interests, the governments of the world have become potential instruments of race suicide and world holocaust. Noting how men have polluted and raped the natural environment and how we have applied our ingenuity to practically everything except how to make the earth fit for human habitation, he concludes:

What has been happening to people that they don't understand is that they have made a geographical entity out of their world without a philosophy for ennobling it, a plan for conserving it, or an organization for sustaining it. Men crave to do good, to act reasonably and think decently. But goodness and decency and wisdom must have a world purpose in our time if life and thought are to have any meaning at all. "Proposal to a Foundation,"

Saturday Review [April 26, 1969], p.26.)

What is called for is some way to transcend or transform the idolatrous governments of the world and to develop a goal and a plan for making the earth into a proper home for mankind. Perhaps, he suggests, a Commission on the World's Future would help.

Finally, Secretary General of the United Nations U Thant has recently reported a study made for a Global Conference on Man's Environment in 1972. He calls attention, as experts increasingly are doing, to the deterioration of the world's resources in arable land and forests and to the pollution of air and water by pesticides and waste products. Noting that the population of the earth is expected to double by the year 2000, reaching seven billion, the study adds:

The need to provide food, water, minerals, fuel and other necessities for such increasing numbers of people will place pressures on virtually all areas of the earth and demand the most careful planning and management of natural resources. No nation can any longer be isolated from these global pressures. (*New York Times* article, June 24, 1969.)

With this background in mind, then, let me spell out some of the characteristics of a biopolitical theology, which seeks to take into account man's total life set within nature and cosmos as well as within society and history. The central theme of biopolitics is life and its fulfillment. An evolutionary perspective is assumed in which human existence is seen as the outcome of a long process of development whose beginnings are lost in the distant past. Reflecting upon this emergence of living organisms and finally man, one cannot help but ask what is really going on here? What intentions are being expressed? What purposes are being worked out? In whatever sense terms like intention and purpose are legitimate, it would appear that the cosmos is trying to produce life, and life strives for the fulfillment of its potentialities. This is a clue, I believe, not only to a philosophical interpretation of the meaning of human existence but also to the practical quest of men to find the good life for themselves and their societies.

The recognition of the centrality of an evolutionary perspective means that man needs to be viewed as a biospiritual creature who requires a

delicate balance of favorable environmental conditions as the necessary prerequisite to any possible flowering of his unique human capacities. Man must survive before he can prosper. He must have space, food, water, at certain levels of quantity and quality before he can write poetry, build nations, command armies, pray to God, or love his neighbor. Unless his body can live, his spirit cannot flourish. In short, biopolitics presupposes the unity of nature and history. Man belongs to the cosmos as well as to society. He began to be created in the deep interior of the stars billions of years ago when the heavier elements were being formed. If there is a creative intention, a divine purpose, being worked out, we need ways of interpreting it that include those processes that were occurring when the first self-duplicating molecule appeared on earth as well as what happened on Good Friday and Easter morning. Too much recent theology has been one-sided in its emphasis on the historical setting of human existence, neglecting to relate in any organic way the natural foundation of man's spirit to the framework of the divine activity. Biopolitics, on its theoretical side, intends to correct this by viewing man in a comprehensive cosmo-historical, biocultural setting.

I believe that such a metaphysical scheme is available in process philosophy. (I have worked out my own version of this philosophy in *Science, Secularization and God* [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969]. Some material in this section also appeared earlier in an article, 'Salvation and the Mission of the Church,' *Religion in Life* [Autumn, 1970], pp. 382-92.) In such a scheme, reality is viewed in terms of an evolutionary process which has given rise in successive stages to novel forms of life, all aiming at the fullest possible realization of their potentialities. At some point in the evolutionary process, organisms appeared which were capable of subjective awareness, of enjoying their being. The most complex of these creatures is man, a self-conscious spirit who has added to the achievements of natural evolution the wide range of developing cultural creations. But he emerges as a part and product of a total evolutionary process which is prior to him. His goal-seeking, value-producing efforts reflect the goal-seeking, value-producing activities of the cosmos itself and of God, who is both the life of the cosmic organism and its primordial ground.

A further characteristic of biopolitics is that it is both a theoretical and a practical enterprise. It includes not only a conception of reality but a theory of value and a program of action. When life is taken as the basic category for interpreting the meaning of cosmic and human history, the

good or the aim of life is understood in terms of the enjoyment of existence. Organic wholeness is taken to be the rule of normative functioning in living systems. This means that enjoyment occurs when each part of the system does its job well in harmony with all the rest so that the goals of the individual or the society taken as a unitary whole will be achieved. The term enjoyment needs some clarification. It is not, as used here, identical with pleasure. What the person who is experiencing organic wholeness enjoys is not some particular pleasing sensation or experience, regardless of how sensual or how sublime it may be. What he enjoys is the fact that he is, that he exists, that the gift of life has been given to him. This is an ontological hedonism. It means basically the sense of harmonious union of life with life and of life with its ultimate Source. Ontological hedonism means rejoicing that it is good to be despite the threats and ambiguities of life. The experience of pleasure is not ruled out. It has an important place, but other goods have a place as well in contributing to the joy of being. The particulars with which one fills his life are secondary to the basic sense of meaningfulness and worth which one attaches to the fact that he is. This does not mean that there are no standards of value. Some pleasures are trivial, others degrading. Some actions are neutral or destructive. Some goals are self-defeating. Fundamentally, however, enjoyment refers to the sheer gladness of being alive, the sense of being at one with all of life, the awareness of being at home in and belonging to the world.

Biopolitics seeks not only a coherent theoretical scheme -- whether in reference to being or to value. It also seeks for ways to organize the goal-seeking activities of life at every level -- in societies as well as in individuals -- in such a way to achieve the maximum enjoyment of being. Reflection and action, theory and practice, theology and politics, go together.

Another feature of biopolitics is that it overlaps religion and ethics. Religion has to do with the ultimate value commitments that men make in their quest for fulfilling the potentialities of their lives. The promise of life is good, but the promise is not always or completely realized. Potentially and essentially it is good to be. Actually and concretely, existence is ambiguous, a mixture of good and evil. Salvation is the enjoyment of existence, despite its ambiguity. In its actuality salvation is enjoyment; at its acme it is ecstasy -- the unrestrained joy experienced on the occasion of an acute awareness of the harmonious union of life with its surrounding community and its ultimate ground. Ecstasy is to the redeemed life what sexual orgasm is to marriage. It occurs as a

climactic moment in the rhythmic alternation between work and worship, action and contemplation. The deepest meaning of salvation involves the love of life and a life of love. One is saved in loving and in being loved. To love is to enjoy the being and to will the good of another. Being loved is having one's being enjoyed and one's good willed by another. Life in love is experienced as joyous union with all beings. The love of life is expressed in gratitude for the gift of being. The final Object of love and the final Subject of love is God -- the Whole in whom all live and love and have their being. God enjoys the being and wills the good of the creatures. The creatures, insofar as they are saved or being saved, enjoy the being and will the good of God.

Ethics has to do with the detailed choices and actions appropriate to the realization of the potentialities of life. This achievement is experienced as joy in being. The ethical principles growing out of the biopolitical theology that is here being defended can be stated in a formal, abstract way as follows: Always act in such a way as to maximize maximizing enjoyments. This means that moral action should be directed toward the attainment of the largest possible range, depth, and variety of future achievements. To implement this fundamental rule, particular contexts would have to be taken into account and concrete judgments made about what ranges, depths, and varieties of enjoyment are to be included and what weight given to each factor. At this point, individual intuitions, pragmatic considerations, and debatable claims about competing values will necessarily enter the picture, along with a good deal of sheer guesswork and *ad hoc* improvisation.

Nevertheless, I believe that this basic motif of seeking maximizing enjoyments provides a key to understanding the final goal of all human moral action. That ultimate good, as I understand it, is the achievement of the greatest possible fullness of life in every living creature in a continuing process which opens up ever enlarging possibilities of experiencing the joy of being. This, in turn, is identical with the perfecting of the enjoyment of God. In short, I believe that this evolutionary, eschatological, hedonistic ethic is an appropriate contemporary philosophical understanding of the biblical commandment to love God with all one's heart and one's neighbor equally as oneself. This way of putting it is especially relevant when this double-sided imperative is connected with Jesus' own teaching that God numbers the hairs of our head and takes into account the sparrows of the air and the lilies of the field. This formulation of the ethical imperative is, of course, closely related to what Albert Schweitzer called "reverence for

life."

In short, biopolitics leads in one direction to a consideration of life in relationship to its ultimate ground -- God the Creator. It results in the other direction in specific guidelines for the relating of creatures to each other. Worship and work, ultimate commitment and concrete deeds, religion and ethics, form one comprehensive whole in which each dimension presupposes and leads to the other.

A final identifying mark of biopolitics is that it employs a method of creative synthesis. Assuming that truth is one, science, philosophy, and theology are seen ideally as mutually supporting perspectives on reality. The revelation of God, given in Scripture, is regarded as authoritative only insofar as it provides clarifying images which illuminate experience as it is critically interpreted by reason. Theology within this framework articulates the meaning of the inherited tradition of the Christian community in the light of empirical knowledge supplied by the sciences. It makes use of the resources of the philosophical community and of other religious traditions. It seeks to incorporate insights available from literature and the arts. In short, theology embraces wisdom from any historical or contemporary source that assists in making sense out of the meaning of human life. The Bible and the history of the interpretive tradition with the church will continue to occupy a central place for the contemporary Christian. However, the Bible is not to be regarded as an arbitrary dictator of dogma, nor as an infallible source of truth either in religion or any other area. Rather it is self-authenticating as an especially rich treasury of ideas, symbols, ideals, and models of God and man. Its authority is in its power to grasp the reader convincing him of the truth of its message. The Bible is to be believed because it actually functions to make sense out of experience, providing a clarification of the meaning, purpose, and destiny of human life. The final test -- not the first test nor the only test -- of religious truth is the intuition of the individual person.

This method of creative synthesis has two particularly important features for the future. In the first place, theology will need to become increasingly a corporate enterprise in which teams of thinkers combine their efforts to relate Christian insights to the complex issues of a science-based technological age. The individual theologian, who laboriously over several decades works out multi-volumed works of systematic theology, may play a decreasing role in the total theological enterprise. In the second place, the theology of the future needs to be by

design a thoroughly interdisciplinary task. Theology as an isolated discipline which is structured primarily or solely in reference to biblical and traditional dogmatic themes will decline in importance. Both the discipline isolation and the language isolation which are all too characteristic of previous forms of academic theology need to be overcome. The theological work which will be most useful in the years ahead will be that which works out its motifs in correlation with the whole range of the biological, behavioral, and social sciences, and does so in language which has the widest possible touch with ordinary modes of speech common to all educated persons. Far too much theology is written at such levels of abstraction that its meaning is lost on all but a few professionals, who in turn retaliate with more esoteric verbiage of their own. There is an important place for technical work in theology at the professional level. This requires special language systems in which abstractions are a necessary part of analysis and communication. I am only insisting that more theologians are needed to work at the interdisciplinary level with secular thinkers and that more theologians should strive to write for a larger audience.

This claim that the future calls for corporate, interdisciplinary theological inquiry leads to the conclusion that futuristic research institutes and "think-tanks" are needed by the religious community as well as by secular agencies as we approach the twenty-first century. I would argue that all churches and seminaries need to become deliberately future-oriented, both in order to help persons cope with the radical changes that will be forthcoming and to organize themselves in ways that help direct society toward a humanly desirable future. In addition, I believe there is a need for specialized institutions that will bring together a group of theologians and a variety of secular futurists trained in the various sciences and the humanities to anticipate future developments, to elaborate visions of ideal futures, and to devise strategies for effecting social changes leading toward their attainment. Such centers would be, first of all, future-oriented research institutions, probing the whole range of questions associated with the implications for morality and religion of anticipated developments in science, technology, and society. The results of such inquiries could be made available not only to churches and their agencies but also to other relevant publics for whom such data would be useful. Communications with the mass public would be sought through radio, TV, films, and publications of all sorts. The aim would be to involve as many people as possible in dreaming of, planning for, and working toward ideal futures in an informed way.

Secondly, Centers for Religion and the Future could be training schools for specialists in future-oriented ministries. Such training in programs of continuing education would involve not only young persons looking toward a career in the church but also church leaders at every level. I envision such centers as organic-cybernetic institutions with sensors bringing information from all important sources where the future is being formed and in turn feeding back the results of reflections upon these influences to places where visions of desirable futures could be transformed into programs of action. At this level contact is needed not only with secular futuristic institutes and universities but also with local churches, with ecumenical and denominational headquarters, with the ghettos, the marketplaces, and wherever new ideas, values, styles of life, and socially effective forces are coming into being. Nothing is more important for the church, I believe, at the level of theological education than the development of future-oriented centers of research, communication, and training along the lines I have only sketched here.

With these basic features in mind, the next step is to elaborate in more detail the scope, structure, and aims of biopolitics. The analysis up to this point has assumed that a comprehensive approach to the world's destiny is required. Put in systematic structural terms, biopolitics takes into account the totality of (1) natural systems, (2) social systems, and (3) technological systems. These three realms, while distinct for purposes of analysis, increasingly make up one interdependent system. By natural systems I mean the given resources of earth and its evolved life. This includes the land, the sea, and the air, as well as all the living creatures that inhabit them and make use of the wondrous resources they provide to sustain life. Included also are all those delicate balances of nature and those interacting systems and processes which the ecologists describe by which living things relate to each other and to their environments. Human life is set within this complex web. Man increasingly is a threat both to himself and to other species by virtue of the powerful things he does to his environment with his machines, his chemicals, his weapons, and his waste products.

By social systems is meant the sum total of all humanly developed knowledge, cultural patterns, institutions, values, and goals. For thousands of years man has been a culture-producing, history-making animal. His unique powers have enabled him to learn, to create new ways of doing things, to develop elaborate ways of organizing his group life. Mores and morals, laws and rules, religions and rituals, have all come into being in the course of human history to interpret the meaning

of life and to guide behavior. Each of us is shaped from infancy by the institutions of society. There is, then, a social ordering of life in addition to the natural ordering, and each interacts with the other.

But there is a third system that plays a growing role in defining the context of our lives. I refer to all those humanly produced tools, machines, techniques, and mechanisms by which we extend our powers to effect changes in our environment. I refer not only to jet planes, television sets, automated factories, computers and all such inventions, but also to techniques of surgery, opinion sampling, data analysis, advertising, project planning, and so on which help us get things done more effectively. These are all humanly created and function within a social order, so that they (techniques and skills especially) might well be included under that heading. Yet in our time there is growing concern that our lives may be increasingly threatened by the role of technology (tools, machines, gadgets) and technique (ideas and skills which enable men to control and manipulate both things and people). The fear is that in a technocracy persons may be dehumanized as they become cogs in the machinery in ways in which freedom, spontaneity, and feeling are sacrificed to the efficient operation of the system (The literature is immense. Jacques Ellul, Lewis Mumford, Erich Fromm, and many others have written on the subject. For a brief statement, see Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter-Culture* [New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1969]). The fact that ours is a technological society justifies this distinct treatment.

With respect to each of these spheres, biopolitics is concerned with (1) goals, (2) analysis, and (3) strategy. By goals is meant those ideal ends which should guide men in searching for a better future. I have suggested that there is an important place for dreams and visions of the most nearly perfect social order possible for men. But goals need to be stated not only in utopian terms but also in concrete fashion in ways that direct situations toward the achievement of the ideal. The Kingdom of God defines the goal of history in absolute terms in ways which always transcend human achievement. The Christian believer will formulate his dreams of heaven on earth in the light of his understanding of this divine consummation toward which history moves but never fully reaches. But goals are also needed defining the next step which needs to be taken in any given area of human activity, whether it be in the local schools, in dealing with poverty, in fighting pollution, in combating racial discrimination, in ending the war in Vietnam, and so on.

Analysis refers to the search to understand the structures and processes that are presently operating. Before corrective action can be taken, one needs to have as clear a picture as can be had of the constellation of factors that have led to life-frustrating situations that call for change, whether the issue be poverty, pollution, overpopulation, or the rich-poor gap among the nations. It is important to add to this so far quite obvious point the observation that such an analysis to be most useful must involve a comprehensive systems approach. By this is meant that the framework of understanding must be as embracing as possible in order to include all relevant factors properly weighted in relationship to the whole system of forces that are present. But not only must analysis be comprehensive in terms of horizontal inclusiveness but needs also to include consideration of depth issues. Any question pertaining to the human condition when pressed to its limits requires decisions about the nature of man and about the ultimate context of human action. Hence, philosophers and theologians as well as social scientists and psychologists have perspectives to offer from their special vantage points.

Strategy has to do with the designing of forms of action to achieve desirable goals, given the prevailing conditions. Goals define the ideal future state to be sought. Analysis specifies the present actual conditions which require change. Strategy seeks for concrete ways and means to affect change that will move the real toward the ideal, the bad toward the better, the intolerable toward what is at least bearable. It is conventional to say at this point that we have greater technological capabilities than we have social wisdom to deal with the complexities of the human factors involved in the problems of war, race, and the decay of the cities. It is too simple to attribute this gap to "cultural lag," for this is more a description than a causal explanation. Yet the future does demand greater attention to what McHale calls social invention, the application of creative intelligence toward the design of more effective problem-solving mechanisms to free us from the locked-in position we so often find ourselves in. As in dealing with analysis, so here also are we driven to the depth questions. We may gain much from using new techniques of gaming, simulation, computer analysis of the probable consequences of alternative strategies using massive collections of data, and so on. We are faced finally, however, with the question of the values by which people live and how they may be changed in desirable directions. Strategies must not be limited to the level of social mechanisms and political devices, but must be aimed at creating a new consciousness, a vision of a good future powerful enough to open us up

to new, more effective ways of solving our problems. If we cannot create such a transformed consciousness, we need at least to learn how to encourage and cultivate it wherever and however it appears. Hence, the church is thrown back upon its own resources to ask whether it has a gospel and a missionary thrust powerful enough to convert men from idolatrous loyalties and provide them with a vision of the future that transforms their basic commitments.

In summary, I have argued that the coming age must take into account all those systems and subsystems that affect the quality of human existence with the aim of producing an integrated functioning of the whole. Men must think of the whole range of biosocial conditions which pertain to the realization of the potentialities of individuals in a justly ordered society living in harmonious union with the planetary environment. The good future must be planned for in the light of some utopian vision sufficiently compelling to motivate men to devote themselves to its achievement. The aim of biopolitics is precisely that of elaborating such a vision of the ideal and to devise ways of attaining it. Biopolitics seeks, minimally, to bring about those elementary conditions which must be met if life -- human, animal, and plant -- is to survive at all and, maximally, to make possible the optimum enjoyment of existence.

Christian biopolitics, then, attempts to provide a framework for thinking and acting, a way of looking at problems and of working toward solutions. It is future-oriented, goal-focused, and life-centered. In bringing this chapter to a conclusion three brief clarifications may be helpful. First of all, while I have here focused on the global dimensions of contemporary life by way of spelling out the biopolitical task, it would be my contention that the fundamental categories I have employed could be used to deal with the whole range of social-ethical problems. The problems of personal fulfillment and of individual ethics could also be dealt with from this perspective. In every case one would begin with the category of life, asking, of course, about the distinctive features of human existence. The goal of human striving is taken to be the maximizing of the joy of life which is the accompaniment of the process whereby the potentialities of life are actualized in a process of continual growth. All such processes of self-creation inevitably, however, sooner or later come to rest in death, ideally at a point when the life-potential for that individual or society has been fully lived out. This approach is associated with a view of man as a biospiritual creature who is born and who dies, perhaps like the cosmic epoch to which he

belongs. Starting with these basic ideas, one could then develop a biopolitical perspective with respect to any given social-ethical issue and develop appropriate goals, analyses, and strategies.

Secondly, while the church has its own contribution to make to the biopolitical task, much that is required is the work of human reason, using categories and techniques developed in the secular sphere. At the global level to which I have directed attention here, the insights of experts and specialists of many sorts are needed. This is why I have stressed the need for Centers for Religion and the Future to bring together persons trained in theology and in the various disciplines to work out biopolitical goals, analyses, and strategies that can then be communicated to the larger society. Equally important, however, is the need of ideas and feedback from persons in all walks of life representative of the total society that express their visions, needs, insights, hopes, and fears. Elitism needs to be avoided by involving as many persons as possible in dreaming about the future while appropriate use is made of the special knowledge of experts. Obviously, ecumenical efforts at the national and world levels are required in order to involve most effectively the whole body of Christians around the earth in providing the dreamers and doers that are so vitally important to the achievement of a desirable human future. In this connection it should not be forgotten that there is an "invisible college" made up of persons from around the globe who share a common vision of the transition through which we are moving and who are seeking to find the values that will carry us through to realize as much of the promise of the future as possible. Christians in every land need to align themselves with such persons, though they may differ in religious faith and in other particulars.

Finally, while biopolitics is set within a goal-oriented framework which stresses the importance of utopian dreaming as a catalyst of social change, it must not lose sight of the power of evil in human life and history. Christian idealism needs to be balanced with Christian realism. I believe there is a particular need at the present to focus attention on utopian dreaming as a way of shaking us loose from obsolete ways of thinking and opening us up to those ideas, attitudes, and values that are appropriate for the future. I have argued that visions of an ideal future are socially useful in this period of transition as we approach the biological limits of the earth at a time when science and technology are leading us rapidly into a planetary society. At the same time, however, I am equally aware of the powerful deep-lying historical forces which put

limits on the ways in which men and nations can become open to a better future.

There are neuroses in individuals and in nations growing out of their peculiar histories that are extremely difficult to overcome. Human beings are blessed by their past, but they are also bound by it in ways that hinder them from appropriating visions and values that their future salvation requires. One need only think of the profound hatreds that separate Arabs from Jews in the Middle East. Memories of the past may dictate dreams of the future that can only perpetuate ancient conflicts. This point could be illustrated easily in innumerable ways. But in addition to the bondage of the past, there is the continuing tendency in human beings to corrupt any fresh achievement of new values. Sin persists because anxiety and egoism persist. Hence, there are demonic factors in history, structured evil powers, that will keep history ambiguous. The future as well as the present and past will confront men with a mixture of good and evil, joy and sorrow, fulfillment and frustration. But today we need new visions of a perfected social order, a planetary society in which all men have equal access to the means of human fulfillment in a world brotherhood at peace with nature and with God.

With this brief outline of the structure of a biopolitical theology in the background,(My first published statement on biopolitics appeared in *The Christian Century* [November 19, 1969], pp. 1481-83, under the title, "The Case for Christian Biopolitics.") let me turn finally to speak of the specific contribution that can be made by the church to the achievement of a good future.

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Christian Biopolitics: A Credo & Strategy for the Future by Kenneth Cauthen

Part II

Dr. Cauthen is the John Price Grazer Griffith professor of theology at Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Grazer Theological Seminary. Published by Abingdon Press, Nashville; New York, 1971. This material was prepared for Religion Online by Ted and Winnie Brock.

Chapter 6: Church: Message and Ministry

THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH DURING THIS PERIOD OF WORLD TRANSITION SHOULD BE FRAMED IN UTOPIAN-ESCHATOLOGICAL TERMS, STRESSING THE POWER AND PURPOSE OF THE DIVINE SPIRIT TO BRING ALL MEN INTO THE ECSTATIC JOY OF A NEW AGE, WHILE THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH IS BASICALLY TO CREATE A COMMUNITY OF PERSONS WHO CAN CAUSE, CELEBRATE, AND COPE WITH THE CHANGES THAT ARE REQUIRED BRING HUMANITY INTO THE PROMISE OF THE PLANETARY SOCIETY.

In his recent best seller, Alvin Toffler argued that many among us are already suffering from "future shock," an illness with both physical and emotional symptoms resulting from exposure to change beyond the adaptive capacities of the human system. He points out that if the last 50,000 years of human life were divided into equal life-spans of 62 years, there have been about 800 such lifetimes. Of these 800, fully 650 were spent in caves. Only during the last 70 has written communication from one generation to another been possible. Only the last 6 have seen a printed word. Only the last 4 have been able to measure time accurately. Only the last 2 have used an electric motor. The great

majority of all the material things we use today have been developed in the last of these 800 life-spans. (*Future Shock* [New York: Random House, 1970], p. 15)

This way of putting it sets in dramatic perspective the enormity and rapidity of change that the present generation is undergoing. My basic purpose in writing this "tract for the times" is to call attention to the crucial significance of the eight-hundred-and-first generation. We are living, I have argued, in a unique period of transition, marking a transformation as far reaching in importance as the leap that occurred when that biological man began to make history thousands of years ago. John Platt contends that "the present generation is the hinge of history," sentiments echoed by a burgeoning chorus of voices. But should not we be sobered by the recognition that throughout the centuries men have felt that their own time was somehow unique, that they were living through the greatest crisis of all, that the future of civilization depended on how they responded to great challenges of the ages? Did not Gilbert Murray, for example, speak of the "widespread failure of nerve" that occurred following the demise of the autonomous Greek city-states in the midst of the conquests of Philip and then Alexander the Great? The rapid influx of new ideas, exotic religions, strange customs, foreign languages, and novel wares catapulted the old Athenians out of their comfortable little world into a perplexing cosmopolitan setting. Is not this "failure of nerve" in the face of these vast changes and an uncertain future much akin to what Toffler calls "future shock"?

Yes, one must be cautious about making extravagant claims. One evening when I had presented the thesis found in the first chapter of this book, a distinguished New Testament scholar in the audience said to me in effect, "It may be all right for you theologians to talk this way, but we historians know that men in many ages past have felt that their generation was unique and that the outcome of the future depended on them. . . . Your thesis is absurd." Nevertheless, despite all this, I persist in my original claim that there are features in the present transition which do set it apart as a climactic era. While the psychological responses of men -- "failure of nerve" and "future shock" -- in our day and in previous eras in the face of rapid change may be similar, there are a number of converging factors which, when taken together, add up to an objectively novel state of affairs in history. My basic thesis is this: a planetary society is emerging. A worldwide network of interacting, interdependent human thought and activity covering the skin of the earth is developing, held together by global processes of

communication, travel, commerce, communication, and cultural exchange. This is happening under conditions when the human race is approaching the biological limits of the earth, in terms of its capacity both to support the rapidly increasing numbers of people with food and materials and to absorb the polluting poisons we cast off into the land, the sea, and the air. At the same time the knowledge and know-how explosion is putting unprecedented and rapidly multiplying powers in man's hands either to bless the earth or to curse it, to feed, clothe, and house all people and open up for them new vistas of creative adventure and enjoyment or to destroy the whole human race with doomsday weapons. In the light of all this, I believe it is true to say that we do live in a situation radically different from that of any previous generation.

Given this situation, what should be the message and ministry of the church in this eight-hundred-and-first generation? Throughout the preceding chapters I have suggested the basic outlines of a future-oriented perspective which takes the form of Christian biopolitics. This credo and strategy must be developed in alliance with secular futurists and other persons who are committed to a vision of a planetary brotherhood, living at peace with nature and with God, in which all people have equal access to the material resources of the world. In this final chapter, I wish to spell out more systematically some of the theological pre. suppositions which have been implicit throughout and to develop a conception of the role of the church for this crucial period of transition.

Biblical motifs are usefully viewed in a temporal perspective which moves from creation to consummation. The Bible opens in Genesis with the proclamation that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The Bible ends in the last chapter of Revelation with the promise that in the end the whole cosmos will be brought to glorious consummation in the appearance of a new heaven and a new earth. This destiny is seen as the consummation of the creation and as the realization of the divine purpose for the world. The message of the Bible is theocentric, and its Christology is to be viewed as a clarification of the relationship existing among God, man, and the world. The significance of the *kerygma*, which proclaims the redemptive work of God in Christ, lies in its opening up in a universally relevant fashion the manner of God's dealing with the whole created order in carrying out his saving purpose. The content of this disclosure can be found in the witness of the Gospels to the life, deeds, and words of Jesus of Nazareth, as well as in the apostolic testimony to the preexistent Logos,

the virgin-born Messiah, and the dying-rising, exalted Lord, the divine agent whose appearance marks the inauguration of the New Age. The central theme of the New Testament wherever one looks is the saving activity of God motivated by his unbounded love for every creature. Above all else, it is the quality and intention of the divine love that is manifest in Jesus. What he announces and inaugurates is the beginning of the end, the in-breaking of the eschaton in which the Kingdom of God long awaited and promised will appear in its fullness.

It cannot be doubted, however, that the New Testament focuses on the cross and resurrection as the event in which the divine love is most clearly discerned. The cross and resurrection, when demythologized and reinterpreted in a modern setting, symbolize the suffering and triumphant love of God which struggles in every time and place, in every event and experience, to fulfill the potentialities of every creature. The divine love which suffers and triumphs in the cosmos and in human history defines the meaning of creation and of consummation. God creates because to be is good; there is joy in existing. Man's being is a gift of God, and the fulfillment of his being is the aim of the underlying power which bears him and the whole universe forward in struggle and success, in crucifixion and resurrection. The enjoyment of being occurs when man responds in gratitude and trust to God and by reproducing in his relations with his human companions the quality and intention of the divine love. Man finds his true fulfillment in this life of grateful and adoring love toward God and self-giving love toward his neighbor. The end of life is an organic community of selves in which each finds his own enjoyment of life by sharing in and contributing to the good of the whole. Each suffers with every defeat and each triumphs in every victory that occurs in the human pilgrimage. Salvation is the enjoyment of life despite ambiguity. This joy in being is a possibility ever hovering over individuals and communities who can discern in the pattern of events the working of a universal purpose within the very nature of things. Men can be reconciled to one another and to life itself if and when they can be convinced at the depths of their being that the hope and promise disclosed in Jesus' announcement of the coming Kingdom is truly the wave of the future. Ambiguity can be partially transcended most of the time, and fully transcended in certain ecstatic moments in which the awareness of being in loving union with all life blots out all alienation. (The two previous paragraphs were taken from my article, "Salvation and the Mission of the Church," *Religion in Life* (Autumn, 1970), pp. 386-87.)

But what about the biblical notion of a final consummation in complete victory is finally and permanently won over the powers of evil? Classical Christianity has assumed a life beyond the grave for the righteous, a heaven of bliss forever. There is, of course, no way to settle that question prior to death. We simply do not know whether there is a life beyond or not. I am willing to leave the question open for the moment. However, I do believe that ideas of biblical eschatology, of a final consummation of the human drama, of heaven and hell, have primary relevance for history itself.

If we examine the Old and New Testaments, what we find, at least from the eighth century BC. on, is that in each era the prophets define an "end" to history, specifying an ideal destiny for the righteous growing out of the particularities of that time and place. As long as attention was focused on the community, the hope tended to center on a historical fulfillment for Israel itself in some future Palestine. A destiny for Israel is forecast in which righteousness, peace, and prosperity reign under a Davidic Messiah. (Isaiah) Later on when the individual comes to be more important and when the powers of evil, now cosmic in scope, are thought to be too formidable to overcome within history, the expectation becomes otherworldly, and a resurrection of the individual dead is announced. The revived faithful will share in the bliss of the new age, and the wicked will be further punished. This is the apocalyptic vision of Daniel and others of that period (second century BC.). In the New Testament an apocalyptic perspective is assumed. This age is running out. The new age is dawning. Men are urged to repent, believe, and obey God in order to inherit the bliss of the Kingdom to come and to avoid the wrath to fall upon the disobedient. The alternatives are set before men, either life or death, heaven or hell. The great transition is under way. Soon the consummation of all things will take place and the powers of evil will be put down once and for all. The dead will be raised. The judgment will take place, the righteous to inherit everlasting joy, while the wicked are abandoned to outer darkness.

If we take, for example, Isaiah (eighth century BC.), II Isaiah (sixth century BC.), Daniel (second century BC.), Revelation (first century AD.) and II Peter (second century AD.) we see that at each period in the history of Israel and the church the community looks forward to an ideal good future. Each set of images projects a perfected social order in which the ambiguities of history are overcome. The content of this ultimate hope grows organically out of the felt needs, miseries, dreams, and faith of that given period, using categories available in the culture of

the time. But at the same time this good future is seen as transcendent to the present order; that is, it embodies features radically different from those that are characteristic of the present. Isaiah sees the lion lying down with the lamb and the author of Revelation envisions streets of gold and gates of pearl. The central feature is that men are reconciled to each other in perfect justice and stand before God in ecstatic joy.

But let us note carefully that in no case did the consummation predicted actually come to pass. (This came home to me particularly while reading John Bright, *The Kingdom of God* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1953). I kept asking myself, "When are these Jews and Christians going to catch on to the fact that this perfect age is not going to take place in the way that was predicted?" The book is an excellent account of the centrality of the Kingdom of God in Scripture and of the various forms the hope assumed through the centuries.) Generation after generation prophets announced the imminent appearance of the Messiah and the inbreaking of the Reign of God with power. Time after time the future reality failed to measure up to the promise. The realizations that did occur were partial or took unexpected turns, as, for example, in the appearance of Jesus who did not quite fit the model of the expected Savior. Obviously the final consummation of all things in the full glory of the promised New Age has never come to pass. Rather, history moves on, full of ambiguity, a mixture of enjoyment and suffering, of crucifixion and resurrection, of tragedy and triumph. There are real gains. Lines of moral as well as material progress can be charted. But each new age brings with it new perils as well as new promises, and the perfected order of justice and joy is still a hope unrealized among the children of men.

My suggestion, then, is that we take the New Testament conception of the consummated Kingdom of God as a symbol of the transcendent goal of history. Heaven and hell define the ultimate limits of human destiny. Heaven stands for the complete blessedness and joy of life in perfect unity with nature, man, and God. Hell indicates the utter despair and damnation which characterize life completely cut off from meaning and enjoyment. In history we move between and toward these absolute possibilities. In addition to these absolutes which are transcendent to all epochs, we need specific, detailed images of a good future which set forth the ultimate horizons of ideal possibility for a given epoch. These concrete utopias consist of visions of a perfected social order growing out of an encounter between present actuality and future possibility in the light of that ultimate good defined by the Kingdom of God. I have,

in this book, outlined the content of an appropriate image of the future, a concrete utopia, relevant to the perils and promises of this era. I refer to the notion of a planetary society living at peace with nature and with God organized in such a way as to provide all persons with equal access to the available means of human fulfillment. I believe that this vision stands in the tradition of biblical religion with its future-orientation toward a perfected community, an ideal destiny which never fully comes to pass but which stands as a powerful lure generating faith, love, and hope. Persons who are grasped by the power of such visions, who are inspired by a "sublime madness in the soul" (Reinhold Niebuhr), are the probable agents of redemptive social change, even though they know in their critical moments that no future achievement is likely to embody the full measure of their treasured ideal.

The God who bears the historical process forward in suffering and triumph toward the perfected reign of justice and joy must be seen in three aspects -- God the Father (Creator), Jesus the Son (Clarifier), and God the Spirit (Consummator). God as Father is the transcendent Ground and Goal of the cosmic process. As Cosmic Life he is an Individual Organism who is striving for his own fulfillment through the perfection of his body-world. As Cosmic Whole he is also a Society of Organisms, made up of the sum total of all the finite processes that compose the spatiotemporal cosmos. As Ground he is the absolute originator of all particular beings who come into being and pass away. As Goal he is himself in a process of becoming, struggling toward the fullest possible realization of the potentialities of his Life.

God can be called perfectly good because we experience the potential joy of life as an excellent gift and because we believe Jesus to provide the best clue to the divine character. But the power and persistence of evil in frustrating the promised goodness of life raises questions as to whether God can be called perfectly powerful in any traditional sense. My own intuition is that God is most adequately comprehended in images stressing struggling, suffering love. God is prevented from achieving the perfection of his body-world, not only by the recalcitrant freedom of the creatures, but also by some dark, unspecifiable impediment. (I have worked on this problem in some detail in *Science, Secularization and God*, chapter 5.)

With regard to creation itself, three emphases have run throughout the theological perspective assumed in these pages: the goodness, the unity, and the goal-oriented striving of all created things. In the first chapter of

Genesis we are told repeatedly that God looked at what he had made and saw that it was good, very good, and this long before man appeared on the scene. Whatever is, is good, and it is good because it is. No thing is evil in itself. Evil arises in the interactions that occur among the parts of the universe. Things collide with each other. One being seeking its own ends interferes with the goal-seeking activity of another. Hence, it is not true to say that whatever happens is good.

Secondly, we must say that the evolution of galaxies, the development of life upon earth, and the story of man are part of one show. Suppose an observer could be placed so that he could see everything that happened. Imagine, then, that the flow of time is reversed. Our observer watches as very shortly there are no men on earth, only various animals. Then all life disappears; further back, the earth is a molten mass. Continuing to move backward in time, the mass of earth disappears into a gaseous cloud and merges with other vaporized bodies and so on until billions of years back we come, presumably, to the vast, compacted, superheated "atom" which, to reverse directions again, explodes to send the evolving, expanding galaxies on their way. When did God begin to create man? Are not our distinctions between nature and history shortsighted and of limited validity when seen in this cosmic perspective? While man is not a stone, or a tree, or a dog, or a chimpanzee, but a creature whose powers of reason and spirit set him apart, still his past merges with one vast creative process that recedes into primordial mystery. We cannot understand fully the nature of history apart from the history of nature.

Finally, while the Bible focuses upon the history of human salvation, the whole creature is struggling toward consummation, striving to realize to the fullest degree the potentialities of the creative thrust that throbs within it. Perhaps it will die at the conclusion of this epoch, maybe to rise again in some fresh adventure in times and spaces beyond all imagining -- a new heaven and a new earth.

God as Son refers in a special way to Jesus. Jesus is both Messiah and Logos. As Messiah he appears as a particular man in history, the divinely sent redeemer figure. As Logos he discloses the pattern and purpose immanent in the divine activity (John 1: 1-14). The symbol of the divine Son is a way of pointing to those places, times, and events in which the nature and character of the transcendent Creator are disclosed and discovered. Jesus is a unique Son of God because he provides for the Christian the single most effective clarification of the will and work

of God for and in history. There may be other "sons of God" in and through whom supplementary or corrective revelations may come. I am suggesting that in the society of the future, imperialism must give way to humility in religion. While the Christian will continue to find in Jesus a special, even normative, light and life leading to salvation, he ought to be open to listen to the testimony of other prophets and saints, even while sharing his own good news with confident conviction. It is more important in the future to ask how the great religious traditions can together open men up to the full potentialities of the joy of life. We should not seek some kind of exclusive loyalty to Jesus that will simply perpetuate religious divisions in ways which further accentuate the fragmentation of the human family.

God as Spirit is the divine presence and power at work in the world, both saving it here and now and luring it forward toward consummation. In a general sense, spirit is the internal vigor of organisms, that which makes them "alive," the quality of active energy driving toward the actualization of their potentialities. Spirit is, in this sense, almost identical with life itself, especially when thought of as the internal, invisible livingness or vitality of organisms -- animating, power-giving "breath." In man this quality becomes self-conscious and exists in union with rationality. Referred to God, Spirit is that ultimate power and meaning which gives life to creatures and directs them toward fulfillment. Most abstractly, Spirit is the power of self-transcendence. That which is being led or lured out of its present state toward a new state of wholeness and joy, is being saved. Hence, the Spirit is the power of God for salvation.

In the specific Christian sense, the Holy Spirit is the "secret energy . . . by which we are introduced to the enjoyment of Christ and all his benefits." (Calvin) (*A Compendium of the Institutes of the Christian Religion* [Presbyterian Board of Education, 1939], p. 89.) When persons experience the quality of life and love that was revealed, manifested, and intended in Jesus of Nazareth, there the Spirit is present. When human existence is enjoyed despite the ambiguities of life, the Spirit is at work. Wherever persons are united to each other and to God in justice and joy, the Spirit has done it. Where hope is born in the expectation of a good future, of a consummation of life in which its promise is fulfilled, the Spirit is the source.

Spirit, however, refers not only to the saving power of God in the present but also to the *nisus* which drives toward a consummation of

history that lies beyond any present realization. The Spirit is the vitality that operates on the frontiers of life directing it and thrusting it toward wholeness and joy. The Spirit is the quest for a fulfilled future, God luring and leading life toward an ultimate redemption that was promised and begun in Jesus but which waits for its complete realization. The Spirit, then, is the principle of novelty, the power of futurity, the fulfiller of promises. The theological perspective outlined in these pages is in a special way a theology of the Spirit, both because it focuses on ecstatic joy (life united in love to all of life as the culminating moment of salvation) but more because of its utopian orientation toward a consummation of present possibilities in a New Age (perfect justice in a prosperous planetary society). The ecstatic-mystical and immanent utopian tendencies are traditionally connected, particularly with emphasis on the Spirit. Montanus, Joachim of Fiore, Thomas M nzer and others with their notions of the imminent appearance of the *telos* are examples. In these theologies a historical consummation is expected which is identified with the age of the Spirit, which follows in succession the age of the Father and of the Son.

Let me develop this theme in the light of the thesis of this book. I have suggested that the study of the future may increasingly provide a source of insight and a guide to action, supplementing the role that the study of history has traditionally played. In times of stability when change comes slowly, men can learn well from the accumulated treasury of past experience. But if the next fifty years brings more change than the last five hundred, how valuable will the solutions of the past be for the problems of the future?

Men have always lived both by memory and by anticipation and must continue to do so. But I have urged that attention be shifted from the former toward the latter. Put theologically, this means that Christians need to concentrate less on remembering in faith what God has done in Christ in reconciling the world to himself and more on anticipating in hope what God will do through the Spirit to bring men into the ecstatic joy of the promised Kingdom. It may be more important at the moment to discern the intention of the Spirit than to declare the Incarnation of the Son. If it be protested that this is an unwarranted unbalancing of the trinitarian pattern, then I reply that the Spirit has most often not been regarded as significantly as the Son. All that I maintain is that an ecumenical council of 1975 ought to give as much attention to the Spirit of God as the ecumenical council of 325 gave to the Son of God. What we need is a genuinely trinitarian theology in the future that will take

the future as seriously as trinitarian theology in the past has taken the past.

Put philosophically, it may be said that the Father is the principle of power or creativity, the Son is the principle of order or meaning, while the Spirit is the principle uniting and transcending these two. The result is the drive toward novelty, fulfillment, and self-transcendence. A theology of the Spirit will emphasize freedom, the creation of the new, and the fulfillment of the creative process. Classical Protestant theology has insisted that the Spirit has to be tested by the Word, that is, by the norm given in history in Christ. Not all who claim inspiration are inspired by the Spirit. Not all enthusiasms, not all new proposals, not all innovations, are the work of the Holy Spirit. There are standards and structures by which the products of freedom must be tested. Word and Spirit, order and freedom, identity and novelty, established structures and creative innovation must be kept in balance.

Hence, the problem of a theology of the Spirit which stresses the new thing that God will do which goes beyond anything yet seen in history can be stated as follows: How can persons and societies achieve novelty without the loss of identity? How can one claim the promise of the future which brings what is new without losing the achievements of the past which are worthy to abide? How can we develop a theology of freedom which looks with radical openness to the future for new truths and values without neglecting the claims of a theology of order which is mindful of what has been established in the past?

In practical terms we are asking the question that is posed by Alvin Toffler when he speaks of the "future shock" which results when people are faced with changes so rapid and so profound that they cannot cope with them. They feel lost, insecure. They are confronted with so much novelty and are faced with so many new choices that they are threatened with a loss of their identity, having no secure principle of meaning to give them stability.

How much change can a person take without losing all security in his life? That is clearly a problem, both for citizens of our time facing the momentous and accelerating crises of the future and for the theological vision I have been developing in the preceding chapters. I have stressed the unprecedented era into which we are moving. I have claimed that we are headed for a new age, pregnant with magnificent promise and horrifying peril. I have maintained that basic transformations in ideas,

values, and goals are required if we are to prosper in the coming global society. Finally, I have called for the nourishing of utopian dreams of a perfected social order to shake us loose from our obsolete ideas and idolatrous loyalties and to open us to the images and ideals appropriate for the coming era. Clearly enough this hope for a fresh outpouring of the Spirit which will cause our old men to see visions and our young men to have dreams is a call for risk and adventure. Can the church be an instrument of the Spirit, a witness to a vision of a world brotherhood in which increasing knowledge and know-how are put in the loving service of human need? Can the church teach men to celebrate change, to welcome it and work for it? Can it at the same time provide meaning and stability in the midst of change so that people can keep their sanity? I believe that these are among the crucial questions facing the Christian enterprise today. The most creative intellectual response to these questions, I believe, will produce a theology which focuses on the human future in the light of the Christian past, which searches the revelation of God in Christ for the clues to the intention and goal of the Spirit of God for the future of mankind.

With regard to man I have already discussed briefly his nature as a biospiritual organism whose life is set within cosmos and nature as well as within society and history. Also, I have touched upon his tendency toward sin as a free, rational spirit who is seduced into idolatrous loyalties both by fear of losing his life and by fascination with special advantages he can gain for himself by calculating self-aggrandizement. I have tried to say, however, that most people do not fall into extreme patterns of evil doing toward their neighbors, either out of fear or out of sheer perversity. Rather, they struggle along adopting the conventional morality of their day, doing what they can, and hoping for the best, but not motivated by any great obsession for either good or evil causes. Hence, inertia, passivity, and lethargy are among the prominent sins of mankind as well as pride, greed, cruelty, and sensuality. Finally, I have held out the hope that a creative minority of dreamers and doers can be radically transformed by the power of a magnificent vision of an ideal future, while many others can be converted to a lesser degree so that they will at least provide some support for the prophets and producers of a new age. Beyond this, I would like to suggest some further dimensions that need to be included in any theology designed for the future. These have to do with the classical doctrines of the image of God and of election. These two can be considered together. In Genesis 1:26-28 we are told that God addressed the divine beings who made up the heavenly council, proposing that they make man in the divine image and that he

be given dominion over all living things. Man is to be like the gods, the heavenly hosts who surround the divine throne, and like God. In a theology for the future we need to take into account the polytheistic flavor of that early text and suggest that man is indeed becoming like a god. By this I mean that science and technology are putting powers into the hands of human beings that have traditionally been reserved for the gods. Gods were thought to be superhuman in knowledge and power but still finite.

Consider the following anticipated possibilities. It may be possible shortly for man to produce life in the laboratory that is constituted of the same biochemical elements as that which has evolved over billions of years by natural processes. Men may soon be able to create as many genetically identical copies as desired of any given person through what is technically called cloning. It may become possible sooner or later to modify personality through genetic engineering, thus creating whatever kind of person we desire. This forming of persons in accordance with a chosen pattern may be aided by electro-chemical control measures, by techniques of conditioning and training, and by a host of other methods now coming into being or yet to come. It may be possible to lengthen indefinitely the span of life by mastering the biological processes which control aging.

Cryonics holds out the yet unverified possibility that bodies may be frozen and later reanimated for an indefinite number of lives. Conception of babies and growth of embryos will likely become possible in a number of ways that completely bypass sexual intercourse and the womb. In the future, men may be able to build an existential computer, a conscious machine that can think, feel, and choose in ways that far exceed the limits of man's own powers.

Finally, men are coming to be capable of producing weapons, a doomsday machine, that can wipe out all life on earth. Man as godlike creator or godlike destroyer -- that seems to be the prospect. I have given familiar examples of future possibilities, some of which are sure to come (barring global disaster of some sort), others of which are likely, and others still uncertain. Nevertheless, what does finally come about, given the present rate of accelerating knowledge and techniques, will find us in a situation in which man can know and do what in former times was the privilege of the gods.

What I am suggesting is that man is coming to reflect God by

developing godlike powers. But note that the claim is that man is becoming a *god*, not God. That awe-ful chasm between man as god and God as God will everlastingly remain. Note also that I am suggesting that man is reaching out for godlike power. He does not show unambiguous signs of increasing in "Godlike" goodness. In man the image of God is distorted, corrupted, broken. In short, man is a sinner. Hence, his growing powers can have satanlike effects. This is one of the fundamental reasons why the coming epoch is fraught with unprecedented possibilities for lifting man to higher levels of enjoyment than the race has ever known before. But for the same reason, unprecedented possibilities of horrendous evil lie ahead if the demonic potential of man is unleashed in a holocaust of nuclear war or if he foolishly populates or pollutes himself to death. Thus, the man-god still needs to experience the saving grace manifest in Jesus the God-Man.

In the light of the foregoing it may be that the coming era will be the age of "theological man." The man who is becoming a god must face the God question in a twofold sense: (1) As a god, who is to be my God? In whose image am I made? What intentionality has come to self-conscious focus in me? What is my relationship to the total context in which I have emerged? What environing powers and purposes constitute the ultimate Source and Limit of my existence? What values, goals, and duties should take preeminence in my life? In what or whom shall I trust and to what or whom shall I be loyal when ultimate decisions must be made? (2) As a god, who am I? What is my true nature, function, purpose, and destiny? What am I good for, and what is good for me? For what was I intended, and to what am I headed? What is my place in the adventure of planetary life? What responsibilities, privileges, and limits define the range and the rules of human existence? These questions will increasingly emerge, I believe, in the minds of thoughtful persons in the coming decades and will define the existential situation to which the Christian message must be addressed. As already stated, Herman Kahn has himself said that increasingly the problems that must be faced are more theological than technological and that the remainder of this century will see a great deal of attention given to the question of the meaning and purpose of life. The present discussion is an attempt to begin the formulation of theological perspectives that speak to the condition of the emerging "theological man."

A second classical theme that needs to be given a new dimension is the doctrine of election. The man who is made in the image of the gods is given power and authority over all living things.

And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." (Genesis 1:28 RSV)

Man is an elect creature with a unique status and function, both in relation to all living things and with regard to the earth itself. He is to subdue it. From now on, however, we must understand this command in the light of Genesis 2:15. God put Adam in the garden and tells him "to dress it and to keep it." The Hebrew word translated as dress is *'abhad*, which suggests service; *shamar* (keep) means to guard, protect, or preserve.

A more powerful way of understanding this election of man to a special status is to see it after the pattern of Israel's calling to be a special servant people of God through whom light and life would be brought to all nations. This high privilege carried with it heavy responsibility. Likewise, the privilege of ruling over all living beings and of subduing the earth carries with it the obligation to care for all things. Increasingly varieties of birds, fish, mammals, etc., either perish or are perpetuated by what men do to them directly or to the environment. Consider the implications of the fact that seals in Alaska have mercury in their livers, while penguins in the Antarctic have DDT in their fat. Men destroy some forms of life as they range to and fro over the globe with their machines, their chemicals, and their bombs. But men have also saved others from extinction by taking special pains to ensure their continuing reproduction. Man is called as the elect creature into responsibility for other species who in their own ways reflects the glory of God and show forth in their own struggle to live that it is good to be.

But not only must man develop "reverence for life" (Schweitzer), he must also have regard for the goodness of the whole creation, that which is living and that which is not. The whole earth is now man's garden, and his task is to serve it, to guard it, to preserve it, and to protect it. This includes in our time taking care that the precious resources of the planet be used wisely and for the benefit of all men and that pollution be controlled for the sake of both survival and beauty. If man comes to have godlike powers, then his calling is to exercise the same regard for the goodness of all things, as does God, who numbers the hairs of our heads, takes note of every sparrow that falls, and gilds the lilies of the field. His duty is to so direct his own affairs and so to have regard for all

other creatures as to develop a future in which there is peace not only between man and man but between man and animal and between man and the whole delicate system of relations that makes the earth a cradle of life.

Finally, I would like to speak briefly to the question of the ministry of the church in the present period of transition. The church is the community of those who have found in Jesus of Nazareth the clue to the ultimate creative power that has brought all things into being and to the immanent vitality that operates on the frontiers of life directing all things toward fulfillment. This community takes various forms in history as it seeks to give visible, institutional expression to the imperatives of Jesus, through whom both a disclosure of the will of God and union with his saving work have been mediated. In this discussion by the church I shall mean basically the churches, the congregations of believers in their organized life. More specifically, I have in mind those mainline American Protestant churches made up of largely middle-class people, mostly white. Attention is directed here since such persons are the most likely readers of this essay, and at this point I want to be as practical and down-to-earth as possible.

After presenting an earlier version of what appears here as the chapter on Christian biopolitics to a group of United Methodist denominational officials, one person suggested that my concern was "white and suburban." I think there is truth here in that the poor, the black, and the oppressed generally are occupied -- and rightly so -- with a most urgent social struggle for simple justice. This practical point must be taken seriously, although I would argue that the issues I have discussed will increasingly affect the destiny of us all. Nor do I mean for a moment to retract what was said earlier about the role that the poor and oppressed may play in formulating and following visions of the good future. There is a great potential, I believe, in particular for dreaming and doing in the black church. The passion and purpose expressed in the dream of Martin Luther King hold a promise of reaching out beyond its immediate concern with black liberation to become a positive force in contributing to a general remaking of society. King himself had already begun to think not only of blacks but of the poor generally, and his linking of civil rights concerns to the immorality of the war in Vietnam is indicative of the promise that we hope may still blossom with power. My concern in these pages, however, is much more modest and will be directed primarily to mainline white American Protestantism.

During the last decade there has been, in the words of Jeffrey Hadden, "a gathering storm" in the churches. (*The Gathering Storm in the Churches* (New York: Doubleday, 1969). This conflict has emerged between the liberal and militant activist pastors and denominational leaders, on the one hand, and a large body of more conservative laymen, on the other hand, who think the church should stick to spiritual matters and stop meddling in politics and "social" issues. The "new breed" of clergyman is often seen in the streets and elsewhere protesting the war in Vietnam, demonstrating for civil rights for blacks, and leading the fight against poverty. This sight has produced consternation in many pious hearts who wonder what has happened to ministers to make them become fomenters of disorder. In addition, churches of mainline Protestantism have frequently resounded with sermons lambasting the complacency of the comfortable. Scorn has been heaped upon the defenders of the status quo who happen also to be the pillars of the congregation. The vices of the middle-aged and the middle class of middle America have been scored repeatedly, while the suburbanite is routinely pictured as one who cowardly flees from the tumult of the inner city to enjoy his affluence in the privacy of his background with its green grass and ubiquitous charcoal grill. Then, when these occupants of the comfortable pew who have been so severely rebuked are then asked for their money to support liberal and radical causes that are not in their minds the proper business of the church anyway, it is no wonder that stormy weather has developed.

While my own sentiments fundamentally favor the liberal social activists, I recognize that there are complex cultural and theological issues at stake that cannot be easily resolved. The storm has to do not only with the social role of the church but also relates, as Hadden points out, to confusion having to do with beliefs and the authority of the minister. Hence, the church is likely to be in for even more turmoil in the next decade. But with regard to the meaning and purpose of the church, both sides have a point. The conservatives are right in insisting that the primary function of the church is not to be a social action agency. The basic concern of the Christian message is with the ultimate issues of life, death, and destiny, that is, with man's relationship to God, his will and work, his providence and purpose. The sermon ought to offer more than another partisan line on current political controversies. The church should be a "sanctuary" from the world, an extra-worldly source of hope, wisdom, and comfort.

But the liberal activists are right in insisting that one cannot separate the

individual's relationship to God at the ultimate level from his relationships to other persons in the political and economic spheres. It is precisely the encounter with the gift and demand of God's love that puts the prevailing social order under radical judgment and requires a fundamental transformation of its structure. The experience of salvation is not complete apart from worldly action by individuals and churches not only to preach the gospel, but also to secure justice in society. If taken seriously, this task calls for corporate action by bodies of Christians as well as efforts by individual Christians in the various secular spheres in which they are involved. The gospel is a revolutionary social force precisely because it does confront individuals with the living God of the Bible. Appropriate means must be sought by which Christians make a corporate witness and impact upon the whole social order.

Beyond this, however, I think there are probably practical as well as theological factors that have entered into the turmoil of recent years over the role of the church in dealing with economic, political, and social issues.

The point I am leading up to is that for many laymen the gospel of liberal social activism offered to them by many pastors, denominational headquarters, and ecumenical leaders has not come as good news. Some laymen, of course, share the visions of their activist leaders. But for large numbers the message of judgment and condemnation which has come through has not produced militant social action designed to transform the structures of society. Rather the result has been to stiffen their support of the status quo. The reason may simply be that a message of liberation has been preached, but the liberation is *for somebody else*. They have been pronounced guilty, but guilt alone is not a motivator but a paralyzer, even if the judgment is accepted. They have heard demands for sacrifice of comforts but have not heard much promise of salvation for them. The white, affluent American, presumably, has it made already, and it is his heavy foot, he is told, which rests on the neck of the black, the poor, and the discontented. In this situation it should come as no surprise that not many volunteers have come forth to play the role of suffering servants.

If white middle class and affluent Protestant churches are to become dynamic centers of social transformation, then a vision must be offered them which makes it clear that the ideas, values, and actions required by the vision lead to *their* liberation. This is why the black church became

a positive social force in the previous decade. Black Christians were awakened to the possibility of release from bondage, a vision inspired and undergirded by the language of liberation growing out of the eschatological faith of the Bible.

If the analysis I have offered in these pages is correct, the vision and the values required to carry the human race through the perils of the transition to enjoy the promises beyond result in a union of self-interest and morality. There is no happier combination than this. If what is demanded of me by high moral principles also leads to my deliverance in a situation where not to act in accordance with these ethical demands or to continue in my same ways of acting leads to my destruction, then there are possibilities for basic transformations of my ideas, attitudes, and goals.

It is not surprising that affluent, white Americans have been defensive of present arrangements in America. A social order that has enabled them through hard work to succeed and prosper cannot be all bad. Where members of churches are also members of "the establishment," we should expect them to see basic congruence between the prevailing order and what Christian principles require. If, however, the analysis developed in this volume is correct, we are *all* in trouble unless we change. To refer to the parable of an earlier chapter, we are all in the overturned boat. *Our* lives are at stake. *Our* liberation is the prize that must be sought. If this is true, then changes of ideas and ideals are required by persons outside as well as inside the church. Can white, middle-class and affluent churches be a factor in facilitating the birth of a new vision, a new consciousness? There are some signs of hope.

There are reasons for believing that the group most able to appreciate the ecological dimensions of the emerging crisis -- population, pollution, use of resources -- may well be prosperous white Americans, especially their children. These are the same people that make up a good portion of the membership of mainline Protestant churches. In these congregations are thousands of professional people, teachers, scientists, engineers, physicians, and well-informed people generally who are in a position to understand the ecological facts of life. Perhaps more importantly it is the children of the affluent who are most alienated from the present order and in quest of a new society where peace and love dwell and where technology has lost its dehumanizing demonic powers. It is among the militant young, most of all, that the ideas and ideals that the future requires with respect to war, to consumption, to population, to

pollution, and to nationalism may be expected to flourish.

There are hints of a dawning new consciousness in America. (Elements and aspects of this new consciousness, its forms and contents, can be found in the following sources: William Braden, *The Age of Aquarius* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970); Charles Reich, *The Greening of America* (New York: Random House, 1970); Lewis Mumford, *The Pentagon of Power* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970); Erich Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968); Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966); Norman O. Brown, *Life Against Death* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1959); Ferkiss, *The Technological Society*; Lynn White, Jr., *Machina ex Deo* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1968), and Roszak, *The Making of a Counter-Culture*. In addition, I have been influenced in one way or another by the writers mentioned in the first three chapters: McHale, Calhoun, Boulding, Platt, Polak, and Fuller. Theological expressions of a new consciousness are found in Sam Keen, *To a Dancing God* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969); Harvey Cox, *The Feast of Fools* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), and, of course, Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man*. The rock-musical *Hair* is a cultural expression of a new quest for joy in relationship to cosmic-natural vitalities.) Its outlines are vague, its manifestations vary, even contradict each other. It is emerging from many sources, and its forms are still evolving. As life itself gropes toward new and higher expressions, so new visions evolve, mutate, leap up and out of the imagination. My own grasp of this dawning consciousness is impressionistic, vague, partial, biased.

Obviously in what follows I have blended my intuitions about a new awareness that may be actually emerging into the vision I would like to see flourish. In relationship to the past and present, the new consciousness will likely be more sensuous, ecstatic, erotic, earthy, bodily oriented, festive, playful, feminine, idealistic, utopian, mystical, sacramental, hedonistic -- in sum, a quest for joy in the wholeness of body and spirit. Its ways of expression will stress unity, harmony, peace, love, universal brotherhood. Its scope will be planetary, embracing all mankind in its hopes and dreams. It will value spontaneity and vitality more than cool, calculating rationality. It will not scorn intellect or critical reason but will trust feeling and intuition. Its aim will be to humanize technology, to put machines in the service of feeding, clothing, housing, helping, and healing all mankind. It will direct science into the service of life-values -- survival and fulfillment. It will

seek political mechanisms which express and accomplish its universal vision rather than simply consolidate power to promote some parochial idol. Its key categories will be organism, wholeness, life. Its perspective in the largest sense will be ecological -- seeking the unity and harmony of man with man, man with environment, and man with the vitalizing, creative, purposive powers that throb in the cosmos itself in its thrust forward. Its quest will be a kingdom of perfect justice and joy -- the ecstasy of life in loving union with all life and being.

Among what may be a growing number of people in our churches, aspects of a new consciousness are stirring, at least in the form of a vague hunger often below the level of articulate thought. There is a feeling for a new vitality that darkly aches to be born. This yearning is more obvious in the young, but it can also be found here and there among the not so young anymore. At least this is my hunch, an impression based on my own contact with church members but confirmed by what others are saying, writing, and feeling.

I believe in the light of this that the greatest opportunity before mainline American Protestantism in the seventies lies in nourishing this quest for a good future and in providing a basis of hope amidst the fears that arise from the thoughts of facing the future. I would like to see concerted efforts made in churches to discover in human experience where the growing edges of this hunger for hope are and to give shape and substance to it out of the communal memory of what God has done in Christ and in expectation of what he can and will do through the power of the Spirit. I have in these pages tried to give expression to my own dawning yearning, but I do so with modesty and in humility. The dreams and doings of us all are required. I can only give expression to my own intuition that this possible emergence of a new consciousness should be given shape by a utopian vision of a planetary brotherhood at peace with nature and with God, united with all of life in the enjoyment of its potentialities. Such a vision, I believe, can grow from the thrust of the human spirit, the quest of life itself, pushing its way to the surface in dreams and hopes of a better world, a world that is not yet but which might be.

I believe the church can give form to these vague yearnings out of the treasures of its own eschatological faith. I would like to see churches become centers where Spirit-inspired followers of Jesus set their imaginations free to dream of a world community united in peace and brotherhood. I would like to see worship services come alive with joyful

cries of humans made ecstatic by hope of a new world. I would like to see educational programs which immerse children into the history of hope in Israel and in the church, showing how visions of a good future grew in every age out of the memories of God's past disclosures to provide anticipations of a coming kingdom. I would like to see church schools become nourishers of dreamers and creators of doers, providing growing minds with the insights of Christian hope and with the empirical data of secular futurists, setting imaginations free to create images of wonderful future worlds that could really be. I would like to hear sermons giving shape to possibilities of human delight in the future God intends for us and setting forth the moral imperatives that are required to make the ideal real. From such visions of alternative good futures might come those guiding images that we need. From such visions might also come insights relevant to the discovery of social strategies and political mechanisms and technological deployment that could help give concrete substance to the futures we desire to invent. Out of such churches might come the dreamers and the doers with the visions and the values that can save us. At least this is my hope. Or is it my fantasy run wild past all realistic probabilities?

The task to which I would like to see Christians the world over commit, themselves during the next three decades is to formulate visions of a good future in the light of which believers can learn *to cause, to celebrate, and to cope with change*. The changes are coming. Believers need to be at work causing changes that direct men toward the promise of the new world. The changes are coming. Christians need to learn to live with the new, to welcome it, and to be open to it. The changes are coming. Followers of Jesus need to be so deeply rooted in a confidence in God's good providence that they can suffer with and for others as new outbursts of evil may erupt to postpone further the coming of the final, perfect day. The changes are coming. The world needs Spirit-inspired celebrators who can rejoice with every evidence of the coming of the expected kingdom, never ceasing to live in the faith that God loves and never finally loses, always loving the life that God has given, and always hoping for the good future he has promised.

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Christian Biopolitics: A Credo & Strategy for the Future by Kenneth Cauthen

Dr. Cauthen is the John Price Grazer Griffith professor of theology at Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Grazer Theological Seminary. Published by Abingdon Press, Nashville; New York, 1971. This material was prepared for Religion Online by Ted and Winnie Brock.

Postscript

THERE ARE POSSIBILITIES OF UNPRECEDENTED HAPPINESS IN THE DREAMS OF ALL MEN FOR LIFE AND JOY, IN THE DEDICATION OF MULTITUDES THE WORLD OVER STRIVING FOR A BETTER WORLD FOR ALL, AND IN THE ENORMOUS POWERS MAN NOW HAS TO SHAPE THE CONTOURS OF HIS DESTINY. THERE ARE POSSIBILITIES OF UNPRECEDENTED CATASTROPHES IN THE UNRESOLVED HATREDS OF THE HUMAN RACE, IN THE MISERIES OF THE IMPATIENT WRETCHED OF THE EARTH, AND IN THE ENORMOUS POWERS MAN NOW HAS TO SHAPE THE CONTOURS OF HIS DESTINY. HOPE AND DESPAIR -- THESE ANCIENT OPPOSITES ARE WITH US STILL. WHERE SHALL WE TURN FOR A VISION THAT CAN GIVE US THE VICTORY WITHOUT WHICH WE PERISH?