

hedonistic. Noyes and Kolb in discussing "Oral Personality" state that: "if the individual, far beyond the age when the mouth should have ceased to be a focus of satisfaction, continues to be mouth-centered, he is said to be of an oral type of personality" (A. P. Noyes and L. C. Kolb, *Modern Clinical Psychiatry*, Philadelphia, Saunders, 1963, p. 23).

In addition to dangers to oneself one must consider the effect smoking has on others. Smoking in public places is offensive to many individuals. The extent of irritation probably reflects varying degrees of allergic response or susceptibility.

The US Government has found itself subsidizing tobacco farmers and at the same time spending much money in publicizing the dangers of tobacco. Only in 1971 was the commercial advertising of tobacco on radio and television banned. The total budget of such advertising was estimated at well over \$200 million per year.

CHRISTOPHER T. REILLY

SMUT. See also *Pornography*. This Anglo-Saxon word means pornography. It is derived from the word *soot* and originally meant the dirt on the hands, faces, and clothing of chimneysweeps that would besmirch anything they touched or brushed against.

In modern American usage, it has come to mean those pornographic writings or photographs which are so evil and obscene that they will soil the mind and virtue of anyone who comes into contact with them, particularly children. The fact that "Smut Peddler" fits into a newspaper headline much more conveniently than does "Pornography Merchant" probably accounts for its emergence as a common noun (and, as "smutty," an adjective) in current American English.

"Smut" is often used by state legislatures as a synonym for pornography in describing what is prohibited by law, along with

another Anglo-Saxon word of low social value, *lewd*. It adds to the onus of the charge against the accused. It is a derogatory word to describe material that offers a cheap, illicit sexual thrill and to characterize those who deal in it for profit.

GLENN D. EVERETT

SOCIAL CHANGE. It is now an accepted fact that society is in the midst of rapid social change. We are here concerned with means of adaptation by the church to this situation (see the reports of the Ecumenical Council on this subject).

1. The driving forces of this social change are on the one hand demographic growth and on the other, technology. It is impossible to say which of the two is the determining factor. The demographic explosion is to a large extent caused by applications of technology (medicine), and conversely, the development of techniques is brought about by the demands of the size of world population. The two are interdependent. Thus they cause an upheaval of the whole of life and of society. Population growth beyond a certain level brings with it a modification of structures and social forms, and of modes of thought. Thus it is that beyond a certain point of population density the quantitative becomes qualitative. Technology modifies not only courses of action and the *levels* of life, but also the *mode* of life and finally the entire *milieu* of life. All this takes place very rapidly: technology evolves, it seems, more and more quickly. There are a certain number of applied inventions which grow in geometric progression, and we know that the population growth rate has taken on the speed of an exponential curve. Thus one has the impression of rapid social change.

In order to evaluate the situation correctly, two very different levels must be distinguished. On the superficial level, we do indeed see all the traditional forms of life and society in upheaval. So we have the

feeling that there is nothing stable in our world, that the future is completely unforeseeable, and that situations are completely fluid. But on a deeper level, one is aware that there exists a coherence, a continuity of stable structures. It is a question of the technological structure: techniques evolve, applied technology multiplies, technical products replace each other rapidly; but this is appearance. The technological system (taking "system" in the sociological sense) remains coherent, develops according to its own law, and behind the facade of rapid change, is slowly "getting its house in order."

The evolution of other factors now depends upon this technological system. These factors are therefore neither free nor unforeseeable, and one cannot hope to modify this social change in a voluntaristic way with regard to the economic, political or psychological levels, which are the superficial aspects. The only decisive intervention would take place on the level of the technological system. But that level is very difficult to attain, and even more difficult to transform. Here, we are, nevertheless, summoned only to consider social change, or the "surface effect" of the phenomenon.

How does social change present itself? It seems to me that one can hold to three principal aspects. The first is the destructuralization of the body social — which implies two reciprocal facts: the disappearance of intermediate groups, and the tendency to "massification." The traditional sociological structures (family, trade guilds, groups of friends, neighborhood networks, stable social strata, etc.) used to correspond to a demographically small society in which professional relations were constant, social upward mobility slow, and interchanges very infrequent and small in number. All this has changed. We are witnesses to the disappearance of "intermediate bodies," i.e., to the setting up of direct contact of the individual with global society. The tragic period in the

Western world was between the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. Since then, we have progressively recreated new groups (for example, the unions, numerous associations), but ones which do not have the vigor and the protective role of the old groups. And the crisis becomes more grave in countries of the Third World where the destructuralization of the traditional family, of clans, of tribes, of marriage relationships, is a veritable catastrophe. We know, moreover, the debate concerning massification. That this is taking place is indisputable, however, if one considers that modern man lives constantly in contact with the masses (urban). But one must not draw from it catastrophic consequences (anonymity, up-rooting, etc.).

The second aspect is that of equalization. By the diffusion of technology and by the demographic burden, a double social equalization is produced: legal and economic. Legal equalization is felt in the growth of democratization at all levels. Similarly from the point of view of economic life there is a tendency towards a redistribution of goods in such a way that the intervening gulf is diminishing more and more. But, of course, it is a question of tendencies (that is, the direction of the evolution which unquestionably cannot be rapidly achieved), and not of totally accomplished realizations. What is nevertheless very characteristic is that this double democratization is so very evident to our eyes that any exception, any contradiction, takes on the aspect of scandal: scandal of economic inequality, be it between rich and poor nations, be it the fact of the existence of pockets of poverty in Western countries; scandal of racial inequality; scandal of the limitation of democracy due to the non-participation of workers in the administration of enterprises. But these facts are scandals not by relation to moral values that we would have chosen, but by relation to the inevitable process of evolution of modern society.

Finally, the third aspect is the tendency towards the disappearance of ideologies. We are witnessing a more and more radical questioning of all beliefs; moral, religious, social, political. Traditional ideologies are at once intellectually criticized and abandoned as beliefs. Ethical values are rejected. There is no longer a common behavior, and we are also losing, as much from the psychological point of view as from the moral or spiritual, the necessary reference points for the conduct of life. This summary description may appear as a description of crisis. But it must not be forgotten that any social change is actually a crisis which takes for granted criticism of what used to be and the separation between what is in the process of dying and what asks to live.

Finally, one must point out that this social change happens either by voluntary intervention by men and groups of men, or by an involuntary process. It is evident that demographic growth brings with it completely involuntary consequences and that there is in it a process of change that we cannot direct or master except if we were to modify the demographic evolution itself. Voluntary interventions can be of two types: either violent (revolutionary and of a political nature) or non-violent (reformation of the Technostructure, whether by psychological action, by use of political power, or by what would seem to be more effectual, decisions by groups of technicians).

2. Of course, Christianity, Christians and the churches find themselves situated in the midst of these changes and undergo the counter-blows of the crisis. The true danger is not that Christianity be eliminated as an ideology, nor that the social power of the churches be contested. It is double: on the one hand, that Christianity in this society be readapted as religion (i.e., as means of not seeing the obligations implied by transformation, as refuge, as false consolation, as illusion); on the other hand, that the

churches seek at any price to adapt Christianity to these changes (politicization of Christianity, total engagement on the social level, modification of the basis of the message by hermeneutics, attempts to synthesize modern cultural aspects with Christianity, etc.). The first error is conservatism, the second progressivism. But the two exist at the most superficial level of social change. Nor can it further be a question of approving or disapproving this social change and of bringing a moral judgment to it: it exists, and we must take it into account. It seems that the responsibility of churches and of Christians in these questions would be considerable, but of a completely different sort than either the mystical or the political. I will give only two examples.

One of the serious elements of the situation is the absence of reference points of evolution — points of stable values by relation to which we can measure the meaning and orientation of the change. This change cannot be borne by man except if man conserves a certain number of fixed points to know where he is going — like the navigator's use of the stars. One of the essential roles of Christianity presently is to furnish modern man with these fixed points. By this is not meant the repetition of traditional values, but rather it implies the radical refusal to justify and to adapt oneself to all that takes place (for example, Cox justifying the large city). With revelation as a starting point, new values are to be *created* which are sufficiently certain so that man can by relating to them judge social evolution and choose a certain orientation not for political or ideological motives, but based on a judgment conforming to the coming of the Kingdom of God. This is what the church has always done at the time of great mutations of civilization (first, fourth, ninth, sixteenth centuries), and we must do it again. This is the first great service that we can render to men. (The

rest, the struggle for social justice, etc., is very secondary in relation to it.)

The second facet of the Church's responsibility is very different. The problem is occasioned by the fact that technology always has the effect (resulting from its constant striving after perfection) of producing in each group a certain uniformity of essential objectives and a closing up of the society which is crystalizing itself. (Contrary to what is often said, that technology incessantly produces the bursting forth and change of society, it is here that the difference between the two levels of evolution intervenes.) A group which tends to close up, to become uniform, is a condemned group. It ceases to evolve fundamentally (and *that* is what is threatening for us today, much more than rapid change), because it is fixed upon principles which no one questions any more (the technical principle, for example). The role of Christianity is then to introduce into such a society a group of new tensions, to challenge the structures, and to bring about the birth of a critical mind (much more profound than the hippy movement, but of the same order). These are the three conditions for a society continuing to evolve positively, instead of becoming sclerosed and abandoning itself to the apparent disorder. In sum, Christianity must above all instigate the possibility of a true social change in a society where there are only apparent changes. J. ELLUL

SOCIAL CLASS. Our Lord Jesus Christ was heard gladly by the poor. He chose his disciples from the skilled laboring classes of people. Many of his followers were from the dispossessed of the land. However, he conferred with rich young persons, with educated men of the power structures of his day, and fell into conflict with those who were comfortably secure in positions of religious leadership and political power. He could, in other words, communicate the

truth which he perfectly incarnated to people of all social classes. Yet, not long after the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ it became evident that in the development of the church class distinctions were becoming a basis for preference in the fellowship of Christians. James 2:1-9 asks: "Are ye not partial in yourselves . . . ? . . . But ye have despised the poor." The whole context of this passage is a mood of challenge to the Christian fellowship for building on social class distinctions. This failure often has been repeated and we can profit from recent studies of Christian history.

Max Weber, in his book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York, Scribner, 1958), first made the distinction between the kind of religious expression which he called a "sect" (which lays heavy emphasis upon personal spiritual conversion, spontaneous religious testimony, and moral standards that stand apart from and in critical contrast to the rest of the worldly culture around them), and a "church" (which lays heavy emphasis upon accommodation to the secular order, the development of ritual and organization or religion, and the use of the power of the church as an agent in society). The "sect" is exclusive in its membership along moral and religious lines. The "church" is exclusive in its membership along cultural and prestige lines. Whereas Weber is credited with this original formulation, Ernst Troeltsch in his lengthy *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches* (New York, Harper & Row), attempted to document the ascendancy of the church-forms over the sect-forms of the Christian faith as the churches sacrificed and compromised Christian ideals in an effort to "get ahead" in social class. Richard Niebuhr, in his book, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, (Magnolia, Mass., Smith), documents the American accommodations of this process.

The neat distinctions of Weber,