

His place in the higher learning in America

The Christian Intellectual

FRANCIS G. WILSON

I

AN INTELLECTUAL is a complicated person. For while his sign and seal is knowing much and being able to speak about the "views" he holds, he is also at war with the minds of many of the people who surround him. Even when he has received power and honor, the inner tension is seldom resolved. Moreover, the intellectual is a relatively recent class of men; as a half truth it is said the word "intellectual" was coined at the time of the Dreyfus Case to describe those artists and scholars who wanted a reversal of the conviction. They were a class of men emotionally alienated

from traditional judgment, from the Church, and from the bourgeoisie. The idea of the "intelligentsia" is older than intellectuals as a genus of men, as the use of the term in nineteenth-century Russia indicates. They were men emancipated from popular prejudices; they were enemies of tradition in society and government; and they were unwilling to admit that a defender of Christianity could be an intellectual.

So it was about a century ago the rebels against society became quite self-conscious about their superiority over other people.

It was not long before it was common in Western Europe, especially on the Continent, to speak of a distinctive group of people who were known as the "intellectuals." Even in America in recent years the intellectuals, mostly rebels, critics and revolutionaries, have begun to discuss their own "group" problems in intellectual magazines, which are often referred to as "the little magazines."

The peculiar quality of the intellectual is his ability to talk, write, and to have opinions on the more difficult subjects, such as the arts and sciences, and on the issues of public policy at the level of the social sciences. Intellectuals believe they have a knowledge and understanding about their specialty that their neighbors do not have. It is hard for an intellectual to be a modest man, but sometimes a great intellectual and philosopher like Jacques Maritain is a humble man. The intellectuals carry forward into the future the arts, the sciences, and the technical knowledge that is necessary for the professions, and for the discussion of economic and political questions. Intellectual effort in the past as now is a phase of creating an image for oneself. It involves the acceptance of a style of thinking which is rhetorical in the main rather than colloquial and conversational; it involves a mode of expression, a technical vocabulary, which changes in different areas of the sculpturing of decision; it involves a concern for the impersonal problem; it moves from the concrete to the abstract, from mental experience to the classification of that experience. It accepts a method related to modes of thought in the liberal arts—theology, philosophy, aesthetics, history, literature, mathematics and science, and linguistics—and these are the life of reason. When making a decision, the intellectual acceptance of a truth may be purely formal, that is, it may not require a personal statement of commitment.

The more profound or ultimate the proposition, the more personal the commitment must be, and such a commitment reaches to others, from the I to the You. A symbolic body may achieve its origin in the *formal* acceptance of truth, but the society or the group may also result from a profound assertion of the true as both objectively and personally true.

The intellectual is primarily engaged in being a creator and an artist. The saint and the rationalist, St. Thomas and Unamuno or Ortega, have this in common—they must acquire rationality because of their inner commitment; the development of rationality is a duty and a moral function, thus their commitment to being an intellectual is a complete ethical dedication. Life is a fight to win the truth and through the truth to win a proper freedom. But dedication makes the intellectual uncomfortable among non-intellectuals, just as non-intellectuals are uncomfortable with him. The intellectual keeps aloof from society or he makes war upon it, but still he adheres to it, and he shares in its responsibilities since he will often seek the rewards of a life of power.

But there are two planes on which the intellectual is defined. First, in Europe and in Anglo-Saxon countries he has been defined as a technician of his specialty; he labors primarily in his own corporation or profession; he is a professor, a teacher, a journalist, a writer, or the member of a profession that requires a complicated training like that of lawyers and engineers. Indeed, much the same may be said of the more significant political leaders. Second, we in America, as the Latin peoples of Europe, usually speak of an intellectual as a person with a knowledge of the arts and sciences, or withal a learned man. In the Mediterranean area especially, the intellectual concerns himself with many things, and his sphere of activity touches many

publics. His ideas form the intellectual culture of a time; with Xenophon it is the standard of political Virtue, with Aristotle it is the mature man of the *Ethics*. At one extreme, because of the intellectual's prestige, is the pseudo-intellectual, and at the other is the intellectual great, or demigod, the Nobel Prize-winner, who sets the tone of an age and who draws all others of his kind after him. The pseudo-intellectual can frame no denunciation of the demigod, and the genuine intellectuals must follow because rejection of him would mean their own destruction or loss of status.

The university is the natural dwelling place of the intellectual, and the intellectual life flourishes with the strength and the responsible freedom of the universities. Of course, the university has no monopoly on intellectuals. In and around the world cities, like New York, Washington, London, Berlin, Paris, Rome, and Madrid, there are many intellectuals who live at a higher level of creativity than ordinarily is found in the university. They are the artists generally, while the scientists are found in the university, the government office, and the industrial laboratory.

II

MANY OF THESE INTELLECTUALS are Christians, but since the eighteenth century the rising intelligentsia has been predominantly hostile to Christians and their faith. They have been scientific free-thinkers and agnostics, especially hostile to the historic organizations of Christian churches. Here we have one of the great tragedies of the modern world, the revolt against revelation and traditional truths, which other civilizations have experienced in their late ages, in the time of the decay of tradition. Where some reconciliation has been effected, it has been achieved generally by rejecting any firm religious doctrines, and especially

by repugnance at church organization, or, in other words, a functioning priesthood or ministry. Even the idea of God seems to fade away, a little at a time like the grin of the Cheshire cat of *Alice in Wonderland*. The intellectual of this character becomes a revolutionary and a theologian of progress.

Let us ask then: what is a Christian intellectual? There are many Christian intellectuals on any university campus, but the atmosphere or the tone of behavior is nevertheless essentially indifferent or remote from an interest in Christian belief. A Christian intellectual is one who cannot conceive that his dedication to research in the arts and sciences is in any way inconsistent with his theological engagement. For the arts and the sciences are part of God's world, and in the end there can be no conflict between the knowledge gained by research and the knowledge gained from revelation, the Christian tradition, or from theistic philosophy. But the pride of the intellectual and the search for fame or power may easily get out of proportion. The idea of a moral duty drawn from Christian teaching then becomes a nuisance.

Some things must be clear. The Christian intellectual has made certain commitments to the truth of religious tradition as it emerged from the foundations of Judaism. To the Christian, the coming of Christ was an inevitable epoch in history. Eric Voegelin's position in his great contemporary work, *Order and History*, is that the historical process is to be understood as the movement of societies either toward or away from union with God. It is his basic conception that every decisive society of history has interpreted its mundane tasks in relation to its understanding of what is ultramundane, that is, God in relation to man, society, and the cosmos. The search is always for the symbolic representation in

revelation, in liturgy, in sacred poem, in secular tale, in the drama, and in philosophy which discloses the central core of hope and judgment upon which every society turns. Voegelin has further contended that in Israel for the first time mankind apprehended what it means to have a history, that is, to have movement in time toward the consummation of man's will and God's will. It is some sort of perception of this truth of history that creates the Christian intellectual. It is on this basis that the intellectual can reconcile his commitment to the intellectual life with his understanding of the vastness of man's experience with God.

III

THE CHRISTIAN INTELLECTUAL has found support for his right to exist in the pluralistic conception of society. For the intellectuals, the conception of a pluralistic society suggests that there is no conformity or uniformity among all intellectuals, and that on the most serious of all questions, the ultimate question of man's relation to God, there is existentially an abyss of difference among intellectuals.

Still, what is meant by a pluralistic society? It means in simplest form that the public law and the operating consensus of a state recognizes the right of widely divergent groups to exist; that the state as supreme temporal authority considers it proper for different philosophies of life to be represented in education and in politics; and that within society the rights of various religious groups are recognized. The pluralistic political society is one in which such a situation is accepted by the state. If we would seek the root of the pluralistic society, we can return to the Gospel where Christ tells us to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's. There is thus a mul-

tiple loyalty in man, for he is loyal both to the king of the earthly state and to the king of the heavenly. In the same person we find both the citizen and the Christian.

Somewhat later Pope Gelasius I said that there are two principal powers in the world, the state and the Church. The medieval mind held that there are two jurisdictions, two ways of life, and if each performs its proper functions there will be no conflict. But whether the great societies—the Church, the Empire, and the universities—are parts of the one commonwealth or of two was always a troublesome question to the medieval mind. All through the Christian centuries the great issue has been this dualism between the spiritual and the temporal, and some tension between them should not cause any disturbance of mind. To be natural and proper, this tension must exist within and between free citizens who compose both a free church and a free political society. Today as yesterday one of the surest means to test whether a society is free is to inquire into the freedom of the institutions of religious life. Totalitarianism is not pluralistic because it denies first of all the right of men to commit themselves to alternative symbols of order.

In our time a pluralistic society has come to include many different groups, with any or all of them raucously expressing their ideas on politics. Among the autonomous groups we now commonly see in a pluralistic society are economic organizations, like labor unions, business corporations, and professional societies. Or, as it has been forcefully put, we have big labor, big agriculture, big business, and big government, all trying to run society. But these corporative bodies have not destroyed in any way the importance of the religious commitment of an individual to an organized religious body.

The Christian intellectual lives in the

pluralistic society, but he hopes that the person is recognized as a child of God. He is personalist in his view of the nature of man, and he believes that because of the nature of man the person may make his commitment to his faith, his political order, and to his professional or corporate order. Since the university is the normal center for intellectual life, the test of the position of the Christian intellectual is his position among other intellectuals in the modern university. The Christian intellectual must thus claim a right to be a part of the university.

In the United States the freedom of Christian universities to exist, and the arrangements by which religious foundations near secular institutions provide opportunity for religious instruction, have helped to energize the pluralistic proposition in America. But in Europe in the nineteenth century there were liberals who, in the name of freedom or religious liberty (that is, liberty from religion), almost drove the Christian intellectual out of academic life. In England until well into the last century one had to be a member of the state church and to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles in order to enter an Oxford college. First dissenters, and then Catholics were permitted to enter, and now there is even an Oxford College named after Blessed Edmund Campion, one of the Jesuit missionaries who at the price of his life helped to preserve his faith in England.

A notable characteristic of American university life is its diversity, and its formal tolerance of the most contradictory forms of intellectual life. Not only do we have religiously-leavened universities, but the secular university is becoming less anti-religious and less non-religious than it used to be. There was a time when Andrew D. White, in alliance with Andrew Carnegie, set out to purge higher education of religious impact, save the most vague and in-

definable. Such was one of the ideals and one of the purposes of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, founded in 1905. And this meant, of course, that the individual professor to be respectable must have emancipated himself from organized religious association. He might talk about religion as a cultural force, but he would in nowise be a boorish disciple himself. Both White and Carnegie were hostile to organized religion, though White professed what he regarded as a purer and higher religion than might be found in the theology of his day.

In a letter dated April 16, 1905, the establishment of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching was authorized. The money given to the Foundation was to be used without regard to race, creed, sex, or color, and institutions of higher learning which were supported by the government, or "sectarian institutions," were excluded from its benefits. Those colleges free to men of all creeds or none were not to be considered sectarian; however, "only such as are under the control of a sect or require Trustees (or a majority thereof), Officers, Faculty or Students, to belong to any specified sect, or which impose any theological test are to be excluded." The founding letter as given in the *First Annual Report of the President and Treasurers* of the Carnegie Foundation, which was published in 1906, specifies that pensions for retirement were to "be paid to such teachers only as are, or have been connected with institutions not under control of a sect or which do not require their Trustees, their Officers, Faculties or Students (or a majority thereof) to belong to any specified sect, and which do not impose any theological test as a condition of entrance therein or of connection therewith." Detailed educational standards were stated, and it was observed with satisfaction in the *Report* that many colleges with

former church connections "have dropped any formal connection with denominational bodies." The *Report* further anticipated such a development in American education that the Carnegie Foundation might minister "to the whole body of teachers in America."

Andrew D. White was obviously flattered by the fact that Carnegie consulted him about his benefactions to education. White's *Autobiography* indicates they were in agreement, and apparently White was one of the strongest confirming forces in support of Carnegie's prejudices about religion. At the end of Vol. II of the *Autobiography*, White sums up his views on religion, indicating his conviction that religion and education are incompatible. He had expressed similar views in *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* written in 1898. He concludes the *Autobiography* by observing that we should assist Evolution rather than Revolution. The final paragraph of the work states: "The best way of aiding in a healthful evolution would seem to consist in firmly but decisively resisting all ecclesiastical efforts to control or thwart the legitimate work of science and education; in letting the light of modern research and thought into the religious atmosphere; and in cultivating each for himself, obedience 'to the first and great commandment, and the second which is like unto it,' as given by the Blessed Founder of Christianity."

It is said we are having a religious revival in America, and that a greater percentage of the people belong to churches than at any previous time in our history. Some doubt the depth of the revival, but in the end it must signify more than the current American saying that "religion is a good thing." If there is a real religious revival in America, it will have its impact on the university; it will suggest that theology, as of old, has a place among the

subjects of scholarly labor. In the American pluralistic society, the university should be pluralistic as well, and side by side with teaching dealing with the "state" of each science there will be instruction by the Christian intellectual in the philosophy and the metaphysics of the faith in which he believes. It will involve life here and now, not the remote examination of a distant past.

To say that the Christian intellectual has a place in our intellectual life means that we recognize the pluralistic character of universities, rather than saying that an intellectual by definition must be one who has emancipated himself from religious teaching or a belief in the supernatural. To recognize the place of the Christian intellectual in America, as he is given recognition now in the societies of Western Europe, means that American universities will slowly but certainly swing back to the historic and original idea of the University. The recognition of the Christian intellectual may signify in the future a return to the concept of John Henry Cardinal Newman's university as one with a spiritual purpose at its core.

IV

THE GREAT OBJECTION to recognizing that there can be a Christian intellectual in a state university or a Christian seat of learning is the feeling among secularists that science and religion are incompatible. They have insisted that the university must be separated from religious sponsorship, and education to be education at all must be non-sectarian, or rather non-religious in character. It was said in the last century there was a no-quarter warfare between science and religion. One of the chief difficulties, therefore, of our time is the lingering feeling among many that science and theology cannot legitimately exist together, that religion in education is divi-

sive, and that science must stand for the destruction of theology. Christians have felt that scientists, venturing beyond the proper claims of their science, have been at times the enemy of the truth of an order in history under revelation. The theologians have spoken firmly: properly speaking there can be no warfare between science and religion, for truth is a unity with pluralistic expression—the scientific, the theological, the humanistic, and the artistic. Indeed, we must include the intellectuality of the modes of inquiry and reason of the liberal arts, for they represent the pluralities and the unity of truth.

The future of the relation of science and theology is not bright simply because religion is a good thing, or because everyone ought to have some sort of religion, just as one may have his favorite wines and spices. Rather, if religion has no theology its future is dim, whatever becomes of science. The future state of reconciliation between science and religion implies a resurgence of theology. It is possible to define the boundaries between science and religion only in terms of a science that is highly conscious of its strict adherence to scientific method. And it would seem the same might be true of religion, that is, a religion with a theology in which the foggy distance is cleared and the darker recesses are lighted with the lamps of logic, reason and revelation.

This future will be realized in the university whose life is shared with the Christian intellectual. When the elite of the university can recognize that scientific method has its limits and that there are important and true things that science does not say, and when the same elite can recognize that there are such things as theological problems which may be explored by theologians through the highest and most qualified uses of reason, then the age of reconciliation will be upon us. It will not come by

evasion, or by soft talk about religion being nice to have around in a disordered human situation. The Christian intellectual may or may not have some competence in theology; he may or may not be a philosopher; perhaps he is a scientist and perhaps he is not. But always the major premise, often inarticulate, is that if man seeks the facts of God's world it is reasonable also to seek God.

The kind of statement to which objection should be made is illustrated by the conflict over evolution. Few propositions are more evasive, insipid, and even false, than the poetic symbol of W. H. Carruth in 1909:

A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jelly-fish and a saurian,
And caves where cavemen dwell;
Then a sense of law and beauty,
And a face turned from the clod—
Some call it evolution,
And others call it God.

It is one thing to say that Evolution and God are identical, but it is quite different to say that evolution as a process of nature is one thing and that a knowledge of God in the ordering of the soul is another. Among some religious people there was acceptance of the account in Genesis as literal, and on this basis it could be said there developed warfare between science and the Bible, or between scientists and theologians. In the retreat from this position, a lot of theological flesh was lost. No doubt, liberal Christianity was one consequence, including the view that Christianity should be primarily a social reform movement. A more common view taken by theologians was that though evolution might account for the foot, for example, the soul was infused by God into man and the presence of the soul made the fact of man a reality. It has also been said that the

theologian would not be competent to express an opinion on the method of evolution, such as Darwin's natural selection and the struggle in nature, or on the issue of Mendelian law and modern genetics.

While evolution created a long storm over whether the account in Genesis should be taken as an alternative to biological theory, such a conflict does not seem to exist with contemporary physics. Physics has helped to still the controversy over theology, because it has surely heightened the perception of mystery in the universe, though physicists can hardly be called mystics. Furthermore, the atomic age has brought such uncertainty about the future of man that the purpose of man, and whether there is an objective moral order, have surely become pointed questions to discuss in the effort to salvage a world always on the brink of new disasters.

What is the function of the Christian intellectual in the university of the pluralistic society? What is the chief duty or office of the Christian intellectual in the tension that exists between science and theology in the minds of both scientists and theologians? The office of the Christian intellectual is chiefly that of peace-maker; it is irenic. But it is irenic in two senses. The Christian intellectual should seek to reduce tension between scientists and Christians, and he should likewise seek to place boundary markers between science and religion.

Actually, the conflict is most precise in the social studies. Many social scientists are disposed to say that values, that is, the principles of a moral order, are subjective or even mere aesthetic preference, and that they have no validity outside of the emotional bent of the individual. The Christian believes that the moral order is an objective fact. It should be possible in practice for the social scientist to stay within his science, and for the Christian to affirm the truth of a moral order.¹

V

THERE ARE few questions on which feelings run more deep than on the issue of religion in education. It not only penetrates to the core of the American doctrine of the separation of church and state, but all over the world where Christians and totalitarians face each other one of the bitterly contested issues of policy is the control of schools.

The American may draw on a rich tradition of liberty in education. But where the revolution has struck and the traditions of living have been disrupted, diversity in education has been destroyed and the freedom of the parent in the education of his children has been revoked and absorbed by the tyranny of the new state. Our quarrels in America are mostly at the margin, for the freedom of the parent in the religious education of children is recognized; churches are open, and they may engage in charitable, medical, and educational work; seminaries may be operated, and religious orders may exist without hindrance. Beyond this, citizens are generally freed from test oaths for public office, and all citizens can claim to be equal before the law regardless of their religious convictions.

Religious intellectuals of all kinds have claimed a share in the work of teaching and research. Their first claim is that they have a right to be what they are and to have positions in universities just as other intellectuals. The Christian intellectual in the university is first of all a scholar. His duty is to be abreast of the current state of the subject he teaches. His Christianity should help him fulfill his duty as a scholar and a teacher. In other words, the religious interpretation of life should assist in the vocation of being an intellectual.

The Christian intellectual can throw light on social and institutional questions be-

cause he understands the individuals who are involved. Because he is a believer he understands religious doctrine, religious tradition, the significance of liturgy, and on occasion such knowledge of theology as he may have will be of use in broadening the research understanding of religion in social activity. Social science does not reveal the conscience because it seems constantly to be seeking statistical totals in human behavior. The Christian intellectual can probe the existential, the commitment of the individual, and he can understand the work of conscience in each person. At his best, as a statesman of education, he will be led to take positions on the controversies that exist among us. Will he not stand, first of all, for religious freedom in the organization of schools? Will he not defend the right of parents in the fulfillment of their moral duties to their children, and will he not participate in the dialectic over the meaning of the separation of church and state in America?

Finally, the Christian intellectual must say that religion is a necessary and proper part of education. Instead of the three "R's" there are four: reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion. Ideally, he will say that religion should be taught on the basis of freedom within the school, though he can, no doubt, accept the retreat from the McCollum decision in the *Zorach* case, which is the present basis of released-time religious education in the United States. The Christian can live with the present decisions of the Supreme Court, though he would obviously like to see more religious training in education. In this sense, he will defend the right of special schools to exist along side of public schools, and the right of students to move freely from one to the other. Beyond this, the right of the teacher to engage in his chosen work must not depend on the kind of religious views he accepts, but rather on his charac-

ter, his competence, and his fidelity to his duty.

The function of any intellectual in a dynamic, moving society is never static. The problems raised by the existence of the Christian intellectual are not to be resolved here and now, but only through history, through a dialectic and a dialogue carried on through the generations of experience which go to make up our tradition. Such is especially the case when we now move beyond dialectic to the practice of dialogue between those intellectuals who differ profoundly among themselves.

VI

IS THERE such a thing as a vocation of being a Christian intellectual? St. Paul spoke once to some of his spiritual children, urging them to abide in their callings. Christians were to abide in their callings with humility and fidelity. What St. Paul objected to in the learned, the intellectuals, and those who claimed to be wise, was their pride. The symbol of the wisdom of the poor and the humble who shared in the wisdom of Christ was set against the pride, and the hunger for wealth and power, to be found in what we might today call "the intellectuals."

Pride expresses itself most easily in the intellectual in his contempt for those who know less than he does or for those who disagree with him. I once heard some one say in a jibe at Voltaire: "I will defend with my life your right to say what you believe, provided what you say is intelligent, well-informed, responsible, not superstitious, and that it is neither the mouthing of a madman nor the effusions of an authoritarian or psychoneurotic personality." The sacred literature on many occasions seems to consider pride the peculiar sin of the learned and the rich. But in addition to the sin of pride, the intellectuals often seek power, and most readily they

may reach for positions of authority in government agencies. When the intellectual gets into power he may seem even more of a compromising politician than one whose first skill is the art of politics. At least it is observed that the intellectuals in government who aspire to the laurel of regenerators of the social body do not escape from political downfall, or political strife, just because they may be informed in the sciences, the social sciences, or generally in human learning.

Would St. Paul extend his advice to intellectuals to abide in their callings? Was not he a learned man, as well as a craftsman? It would appear that St. Paul had no objection to learning, whether Greek, Jewish or Latin, but he did object to the weaknesses of the intellectuals, whatever might be their culture. When St. Paul spoke in Athens in the public square, he was indeed speaking to intellectuals who liked nothing better than to talk, and to be proud about the ignorance of others. The knowledge of a Christian is a source of authority, that is, a source of moral knowledge; it is a sanction for justice and the symbol or doctrine of order. One may not say that St. Paul was anti-intellectual, nor may one cover his pride by saying his own critics are anti-intellectuals.

Being a Christian intellectual is a vocation in St. Paul's sense, in which, if we have the ability, and the calling so to speak, we should abide. In recent years more than one student of Christian thought has recognized the function of the intellectual in the Christian order of life. Some have talked of a theology of work, and the time has come perhaps to speak of a theology of the intellectual. Such an inquiry must seek first the individual and try to rescue him from submergence in the group or in some kind of a statistical aggregate. More pointedly it might try to accept the function of the intellectual as

distinct from service to the state, or, as the Classical Man might say, to the City. Along with a theology of the intellectual, which would be primarily Christian, there is also the philosophy of being an intellectual.

Voegelin has described the origin of philosophy at the time of the Hellenic "leap into being." Philosophy had rejected the historic mythology to be found in Homer and Hesiod, and with Xenophanes the poets began to seek in God a universal spiritual principle. In the next stage, the philosophers insisted there is an order in the soul distinct from the order of the city, and thus in philosophy one finds a rebellion against the submergence of the individual in his mundane citizenship. The tension between the statement of the order of the soul and the affirmation of duty to the City, which Socrates exhibited when he refused to escape, is the substance of an inquiry into the nature of the intellectual. Philosophers, whether Greek or Christian, classical or modern, affirm the right of the wise man to exist and to speak to the world. They say that the order of the soul can never be subordinated in a state. Might we not say that the dualism between the soul and the City made it possible to reconcile Christian and Greek thinking at a later time?

In the middle ages Churchmen were accustomed to say men were governed principally by two powers, the kingship and the priesthood. But there was another power, and that was the studium, or the university, and the world of the scholar and the intellectual. In the life of the studium men turned to the study of letters, and the life of the community was incomplete without the recognition of the freedom of each. The studium was more than a monopoly of the university, for it was in the Church, the abbey, the cathedral school, and it was indeed wherever men prayed and worked, for the student and the intellectual also

worked. Cardinal Newman in 1858 wrote of the mission of St. Benedict: "Silent men were observed about the country, or discovered in the forest, digging, clearing and building. . . . There was no one that 'contended, or cried out,' or drew attention to what was going on; but by degrees the woody swamp became a hermitage, a religious house, a farm, an abbey, a village, a seminary, a school of learning, and a city. Roads and bridges connected it with other abbeys and cities, which had similarly grown up; and what the haughty Alaric or fierce Attila had broken to pieces, these patient meditative men had brought together and made to live again."

Let us cite part of the magnificent tribute to wisdom and to the man who has it that is found in sacred writing in the Book of Wisdom. Here is rejoicing in learning that may have, indeed, inspired so great an intellectual and university man as St. Thomas Aquinas. In Chapter 7, beginning with Verse 7, we read: "Wherefore I wished and understanding was given me: and I called upon God and the spirit of wisdom came upon me. And I preferred her before kingdoms and thrones, and esteemed riches nothing in comparison with her. Neither did I compare unto her any precious stone: for all gold in comparison of her, is as a little sand, and silver in respect to her is counted as clay. I loved her above health and beauty, and chose to have her instead of light: for her light cannot be put out. Now all good things came to me together with her, and innumerable riches through her hands, and I rejoiced in all those: for this wisdom went before me, and I knew not that she was the mother of them all. Which I have learned without guile, and communicate without envy, and her riches I hide not. For she is an infinite treasure to men: which they that use, become the friends of God, being commended for the gift of discipline."

The man of wisdom is a free man, a man who is spiritually free as well as free in the pragmatics of daily life. Commitment to an ideology comes properly after the search for spiritual freedom. Carl Sandburg said over the radio on Lincoln's Birthday, February 12, 1959 and 1960, that Lincoln was neither a liberal nor a conservative; he was profound and a mystic. Spiritual liberty has a hard time in this age of the "secular hypothesis" that there be no Gelasian dualism, no dualism between the freedom of the state and any other.

When the state becomes a closed-circuit idealism, it becomes heavy-handed, clumsy, and self-conscious about its own incompetence. The two Congressional breakfast prayer groups which meet each week are seeking a foundation of liberty beyond the institutional and the political, and many a Congressman or Senator has become increasingly religious in his search for freedom. The late Senator Elbert D. Thomas of Utah wrote much on the religious, Christian, and spiritual significance of freedom; he was guilty of that methodological offense of "reductionism" which in his case meant seeking political liberty outside of the political; it was a reassertion of the dualism of life against the secular unity claimed by the modern state.²

The modern ideologies—liberalism, communism, and others—are not at home with non-political categories, for all things must be reduced to the political, and institutionally to the unquestioned unity of the state. Few things have so moved the modern search for freedom, and few episodes have so clarified the mind of the Christian intellectual as the desperate loneliness of the Russian writer Boris Pasternak after he was forced to relinquish his Nobel Prize for literature. Pasternak's protest was spiritual, and it was against our time, in Russia and out; it was not political, sociological, or pragmatic. But it was religious,

aesthetic, and mystical. And to his aid as far as they might, came the thinkers, writers and intellectuals of all creeds, even those who admired the Russian economic system, for he showed the meaning of being a free man under tyranny. He showed, with his Russian Bible before him, and his novel before the world, what a Christian intellectual may be if his destiny demands it.

²The "relativism" of the social science liberal receives a dramatic expression in the refusal to take domestic communists seriously. At the Tenth Newberry Library Conference, April 18, 1959, in

Daniel Aaron's paper on "Communism and the American Writer," the communist movement in America was identified with or reconciled with the American progressive tradition. It was generally applauded by the group. See *The Newberry Library Bulletin*, Vol. V (August, 1959), pp. 84 ff.

³For information on the "Prayer Group," see the *Congressional Record*, 86th Congress, Second Session, February 26, 1960, p.p. 3303-3305, for an account of the Eighth Presidential Prayer Breakfast. The Bibliography of religious writings of Congressmen and Senators is long indeed. From data that cannot be presented here it seems that Mormon members have been the most prolific of the religious writers in government. However, Senator Ralph Flanders, for example, wrote on machine tools in his youth and on religious subjects about the time of his retirement from the Senate.