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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

29 November 1985

C/F
Do you want me
to keep these?
(Liverpool meeting
follow-up)

D 2/12

My dear Archbishop,

Thank you for sending me a copy of your
Commission's report on Urban Priority Areas
- and for your personal note. I shall read
the report with interest.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Grace The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury

Bay

Lambeth Palace London SE1 7JU

November
27th

My dear Prime Minister,

I add this personal note to the package which is being sent to members of the Cabinet and a good number of members of Parliament and other figures in national life.

I hope you will have time to read some of the Report and particularly the theological chapter III which presents a justification for a Church voice in discussions about Urban Priority Areas.

It is not, of course, a comfortable read for Archbishops or for Prime Ministers! However, despite some reservations

which I have about certain sections, I believe the contents have real authority and deserve to be taken seriously by all who are concerned for the future life and health of our cities.

I am glad that it is a unanimous report — not easy to hold together cool Oxford Professors and black community leaders at the angry end.

The greater demands for change are addressed to the church and we shall be creating the machinery for consultation and coordination between our decision making bodies in the coming months.

My I say how greatly the Commission has been helped by secondment and support from the D.O.E.

With Best Wishes

Yours very sincerely
Robert Cantuar.

FROM DOOM TO HOPE

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✓ and please

A Jewish View on Faith in the City, the Report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas

(Numbers in brackets refer to paragraphs as listed in the Report)

1. General Observations

(a) Faith in the City is an impressively researched document, composed by a team of eminent theologians, scholars and social workers. The enquiry is based on a two-year critical analysis of relevant Christian sources, augmented by extensive practical experience, including visits to deprived areas in 33 towns and cities and 9 London boroughs. The Commission had the benefit of written evidence from some 300 religious and social agencies and individual experts, including one submission from a Reform rabbi. The conclusions and recommendations are addressed to the Church and the Government in about equal measure. They reflect a fairly even balance of Christian teachings, moral sensitivity and, at times, a measure of patent political bias (see 14 (a), (b) below).

(b) Any Jewish response is bound to be more modest in scope and depth, not having the advantage of either the expertise or the extensive consultation over a period of years available to the Archbishop's Commission.

(c) What is attempted in the following pages is a compound of comment, critique and alternative approaches, all derived primarily from Jewish teachings and from the Jewish experience. Both are of equal relevance in assessing the grave social issues at hand in a Jewish light.

2. The Right and Duty to Speak Out

(a) Before examining the findings of the Report in any detail, it should be stated, emphatically and without equivocation, that Judaism is in complete agreement with the basic assumption underlying the entire Report that religious leaders and organisations should address themselves to the grave social problems afflicting society today, both by arousing the public conscience on widespread suffering and injustice, granting this "a high place among our theological priorities" (3.25), and if necessary even by questioning the morality of economic policies in the light of their effects (9.52).

(b) The Jewish insistence on subjecting social issues to religious critical scrutiny and counsel is, if anything, even more pronounced and prominent. A massive proportion of Biblical and rabbinic legislation is designed to promote justice and fairness in social relations. If the whole range of "politics" - from sweeping exhortations on international relations to stirring calls for social justice at a national and individual level - were to be removed from the Hebrew Prophets, then their writings would shrink to an insignificant assemblage of some ritual and slight theology. The Biblical Prophets were history's supreme leaders of the opposition. Though they commanded no votes, and stood alone in their day, they are immortal today - for the very reason that they set timeless moral

imperatives against the transient dealings and decrees of contemporary rulers wielding political power.

(c) The renewed assertion of religious insights and challenges on current problems in the governance of a just and equitable society is therefore to be welcomed without reservation.

3. Differing Perspectives and Experiences

(a) From here on, our respective religious traditions, and more especially our opportunities for practical involvement, begin to diverge - leading at times to significantly diverse conclusions.

(b) Of the greatest importance is the pragmatic difference in perspective, gained from our totally differing historic experiences. Whereas in the collective Christian stance in Europe, deprived groups in Inner Cities or elsewhere have always represented exceptions to the norm, Jews have never been anything but a small minority which, until quite recent times, was subjected to severe discrimination and disabilities, and for many centuries confined to cramped life in the Inner Cities. It is precisely this Jewish experience which may provide the single most valuable Jewish contribution to many of the problems discussed in the Report.

4. From Jewish "Ghettos" to "Urban Priority Areas"

(a) In fact, it is striking that the very term "ghetto", with its connotation of squalor, deprivation and racial hatred, was not so long ago applied exclusively to crowded, usually decaying, areas of Jewish settlement in the large cities. Only in the last few decades has the term been transferred to others living in these quarters under conditions of want, humiliation and hopelessness. However, "ghettos" is now being replaced by the more euphemistically-sounding "urban priority areas" and their clinical code-name "UPAs".

(b) Clearly, even if the situations are not entirely identical, some instructive lessons might be drawn, if we focus on how Jews eventually managed to leave the ghettos and achieve their emancipation as citizens enjoying social and economic opportunity and equality - a process which in its more acute stage spread over the better part of a century, from the mass-immigration of East European Jews beginning in the early 1880's to the post-World War II virtual evacuation by Jews of London's East End and other UPAs in most other British cities.

(c) The similarities go beyond squalor, confinement and poverty endured by Jews up to a few decades ago and by successive waves of other ethnic immigrants since then. When a Vicar in Greater Manchester is quoted as saying "It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that one is living in an area that is being...treated with hostility by the rest of society" (Report, p.3), the only amendment necessary for describing the comparative Jewish situation over many decades is to replace "difficult" by "impossible".

(d) There are of course also dissimilarities. Above all, Jews were not marked off by a distinctive skin-colour. Also, their thought-patterns and cultural/educational heritage were distinctly European, more amenable to acculturation and integration in Britain. But as against these advantages, Jews had some very considerable extra

disabilities, arriving not only destitute but without the slightest knowledge of the English language, none sharing the dominant faith, and all of them exposed to manifestations of virulent residual antisemitism, often erupting in acts of organised violence by fascist thugs and earlier anti-Jewish agitators.

(e) All in all, the parallels between ghettos and UPAs are vivid enough to warrant both comparisons and contrasts relevant to our theme.

5. Lessons of the Jewish Experience

(a) In a Farewell Address to my former congregation in New York which I had served for eight years before being appointed to my present position here in 1966, I referred to the civil rights struggle I had witnessed in America during the early 1960's, discussing what the Jewish community could contribute to greater equality and social progress among the disadvantaged:

How did we break out of our ghettos and enter the mainstream of society and its privileges? How did we secure our emancipation and civil rights? Certainly not by riots and demonstrations, by violence and protest-marches, or by preaching "Jewish power" or even non-violence.

Above all, we worked on ourselves, not on others. We gave a better education to our children than anybody else had. We hallowed our home life. We channeled the ambition of our youngsters to academic excellence, not flashy cars. We rooted out crime and indolence from our midst, by making every Jew feel responsible for the fate of all Jews. We denounced any fellow-Jew besmirching the Jewish name by some misdemeanour as guilty of a desecration of the Divine Name. We did not gate-crash into our Gentile environment; we made ourselves highly-acceptable and indispensable by our industrial, intellectual and moral contributions to society.

That is how we gained our freedom and equality, and that benefit of our experience we should impress on our negro fellow-citizens.

Let them give two or three hours extra schooling every day to their children as we gave to ours, let them build up by charitable endeavours great federations of social welfare as we did for our poor, let them instill in all negroes a feeling of shame for any crime committed by a negro as we instilled into all Jews a sense of disgrace for any Jewish crime, let them throw out from their pulpits leaders who profess to be men of God but who openly defy law and order, as we would not tolerate rabbis who are brazenly in contempt of court or rabble-rousing demagogues, let them encourage ambition and excellence in every negro child as Jewish parents encouraged in their children - and they will pull down their ghetto walls as surely as we demolished ours.

Not by "Black Power," but by intellectual and moral power, by educational and cultural progress, will they become accepted and wanted in the rest of society.

That should be our Jewish contribution to ridding America of its ugliest stigma and its most explosive social problem, threatening whole cities with widespread unrest, bloodshed and destruction, and the entire country with disparagement all over the world.

(quoted in my The Timely and The Timeless, Vallentine Mitchell, London, 1976, pp 415-416)

(b) Nineteen years later, I drew similar lessons from the Jewish experience in a discussion on community relations convened by the Metropolitan Commissioner of Police between senior London police officials and a group of religious leaders, all Christian except myself. A black minister of a West Indian community charged the police with "institutionalised racism", based on an "ethnocentric" attitude which sought to impose white behavioural patterns on all minority groups, for example, by dispersing West Indians congregating in groups on street corners, though this is their normal and accustomed "street culture", or by white social workers counselling West Indian parents counter to their traditional, strict child-rearing practices. He condemned these attitudes as "oppressive", exacerbating the relations between ethnic minorities and the police.

(c) I took occasion to explain that before the most recent influx of immigrants, the last minority to come to Britain were Jews. We could well understand the difficulties, problems and tribulations of social integration. We eventually succeeded, but by adopting an entirely different attitude. Although we had escaped from persecution in countries in which government and police were often looked upon as the enemy, on arriving here we had cultivated trust in and respect for the police, realising that our security as a minority depended on law and order being maintained.

(d) Moreover, we never demanded that, ourselves being heirs to a distinct culture and tradition, British society at large ought to change its character and assume a new multi-ethnic form, making due public allowance for varying ethnic traditions, whether in policing policies or in family counselling under local authority auspices. We were quite content for Britain to remain "ethnocentrically" British. The Jewish community was most anxious to preserve its own identity, but it had done so (the considerable cost of some inroads by assimilation notwithstanding) not by insisting on public help, nor on changes in official policies, but by creating its own educational and social institutions designed to preserve and transmit what was special and singular in the Jewish heritage.

(e) Of course, I did concede the minister's argument that there were some substantial differences, notably that of colour. But I still felt justified in drawing attention to the successful Jewish self-help in achieving social and economic integration in the face of disabilities which, it should not be forgotten, more recent immigrants and other disadvantaged city-dwellers no longer suffered, especially as they enjoyed welfare state benefits which had not been available to earlier arrivals on these shores.

(f) But I submitted as the most crucial difference the fact that Jews

at the time were content to be patient and to wait and struggle for several generations to attain their social objectives, whereas we now lived in an impatient age demanding instant solutions, and resorting to agitation and social unrest if these were not immediately forthcoming from government and the more advantaged segments of society.

(g) The lessons to be drawn may be imprecise and not without reservations. They are bound to be unpalatable to a generation conditioned upon rights demanded from others rather than duties owed to others. But it may still be salutary to remind those presently enduring much hardship and despair that others have faced similar trials before them, and that self-reliant efforts and perseverance eventually pay off, turning humiliation into dignity and depression into hope and fulfilment.

6. Jewish Social Teachings: Similarities and Differences

(a) Moving from the Jewish experience to the teachings of Judaism, we find a broad measure of agreement with the Christian approach on fundamentals. There is a common abhorrence of social injustice, oppression and deprivation. The Christian conscience condemns poverty as utterly demoralising (Report, Chapter 9), just as in Hebrew poverty (oni) is identified with affliction (inui) as an unmitigated curse. Both faiths raise the relief of want as a precept of the highest religious virtue, and both regard the humiliation of worklessness incompatible with the dignity of man created in the Divine image.

(b) Yet there are some important variations in perspectives, even at the theological level. These distinctions are plainly recognised on both the Christian and the Jewish sides. The Report itself draws attention to one characteristic difference between the traditions of the Old Testament and the New:

Only a tendentious reading of the gospels can suggest that Jesus was primarily a social reformer, let alone a violent revolutionary. Whatever the implications for society as a whole (and these indeed have been profound) the characteristic sphere of Jesus' ministry was that of personal relationships and individual responses (3.5).

Religion had been a deeply personal and private matter long before Descartes. But the separation of religious faith and practice from the rest of the life, and the compartmentalization of religion within a fundamentally secular understanding of the world, is made possible only by a dualistic approach to the human person. Such an approach has been popular in the West only since the Enlightenment and may already be obsolete. It is only in this relatively brief period that the question could have arisen of a gospel which was not concerned for society as much as for the individual (3.8).

The Report continues:

It is against the background of the excessive individualism of much Christian thinking in the 19th century that we must place Marx's perception that evil is to be found, not just in the human heart, but in the very structures of economic and social relationships. This perception is also found to a notable degree in the Old Testament (from which, in fact, Marx may have derived it), where there is explicit recognition of the inevitable tendency of the rich to get richer and the poor to get poorer unless some constraint is imposed to limit the freedom of individuals to profit without restraint from a market economy. Most ancient societies were aware of this tendency... But the Old Testament is unique in attempting to impose a number of controls upon society to check the inevitable increase of social and economic inequalities...(3.11).

It is true that there appears to be little explicit continuation of this tradition in the New Testament (3.12).

(c) In the Christian tradition, therefore, addressed as it was primarily to the individual and as such bound to come to terms with poverty in the absence of social relief, the point of departure for meeting the widespread challenge of destitution was and remains St Paul's injunction to "remember the poor" (Gal. 2.10), as emphasised in the Report (3.2). Such individualisation of the poor man and the duty "to remember" him, whilst not altogether alien to the Jewish concept of charity, represents but a minor part in the social thought and structure of Judaism pertaining to the impoverished. In contrast to early Christian sources, Jewish pietists in the Middle Ages, writes the leading Jewish social historian of our time,

considered material well-being a blessing in itself, provided it was shared with one's neighbours. Punning on the two related Hebrew terms, the author of the Book of the Pious [13th century] even contended that "He who is now poor [rash] is going to be a leader [rosh] in the future". There certainly was nothing in that Book which resembled the early Christian or Franciscan ideal of poverty. All that mattered was honesty in dealing with both Jews and Gentiles and charitableness in dispensing the fruits of one's labours...(Salow Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1958, 8:48).

(d) On a more practical level, these nuances are particularly pronounced in attitudes to work, the acquisition of wealth and directives on social welfare.

7. The Attitude to Work

(a) The Report, whilst it distinguishes between work and employment (9.104ff), still falls short of hailing work as a virtue in itself, as an ideal to ennoble the worker and to serve society. It measures the worth of work largely by its reward, judging that we are each to be

valued for ourselves, not for what we do (9.109). Indeed, the Report somewhat critically states that -

our culture presupposes a close connection between employment and status. Social position follows types of employment or profession: long working hours are rewarded by extra pay or promotion; personal respect is gained by the ability to 'hold down a job'; one of the first questions asked of a stranger is 'What do you do?'.

It then continues:

There is none of this in the Bible or in early Christian tradition (3.15).

I fear this is an overstatement. Was not the sailors' question to the Prophet Jonah: "What is your occupation? and whence do you come? What is your country? and of what people are you?" (Jonah 1:8)?

(b) The Jewish work-ethic is rather more positive and demanding. A medieval Hebrew proverb identifies work (melakhah) with royalty (melukhah), no doubt inspired by the recollection that human history began with the Lord putting man into the Garden of Eden "to work it and to preserve it" (Gen. 2:15). No work is too menial to compromise human dignity and self-respect. "Skin carcasses in the market-place and earn a living" counselled the Talmud (B.Bathra 110a). All manner of labour was deserving of esteem. The key to true contentment, in the Jewish view, can only be found in economic self-reliance and self-sufficiency, as already asserted by the Psalmist: "When you eat the labour of your hands, happy shall you be, and it shall be well with you" (Ps. 128:2).

(c) An urgent Jewish imperative for a spiritually and materially healthy economy is therefore the cultivation of pride in work, a factor hardly reflected in the Report.

(d) Conversely, idleness is an even greater evil than unemployment, especially in a welfare state which maintains every citizen above subsistence level. Judaism deems idleness as the most unconscionable wastage of the human resources with which we are divinely endowed, leading to mischief and debauchery. Constructive work can be achieved when rendered in low-level employment as in the creative use of leisure. Nothing can counteract a flagging economy and the demoralisation of unemployment more effectively than the love of work and the conquest of idleness. Killing time kills prosperity and the spirit alike. Cheap labour is more dignified than a free dole, and industriousness generates greater wealth than increased wages for decreasing hours of work.

8. The Acquisition of Wealth

(a) In Christian teaching, the pursuit of wealth is clearly viewed with some qualms, as enunciated in the Report. It insists that wealth must not be amassed unless it is not only justly obtained but also fairly distributed (3.13; and 9.28). One wonders how, and by whom, the fair distribution of personal wealth is to be ensured.

(b) In a similar vein, the Report challenges the slogan of "efficiency" if the cost is disproportionately borne by the low-paid and unemployed (3.14), and if the benefits are liable to accrue to an ever-decreasing number of people (*ibid.*). It is not easy to understand the juxtaposition of efficiency with declining living-standards for the poorest and diminishing benefits for the greatest number. One would have thought that increased efficiency produces higher yields for all, and that lower efficiency must eventually lead to industrial stagnation, rising unemployment and falling living standards, in a competitive market where low cost and high productivity fuel foreign demand and domestic supply.

(c) Jewish sources, to be sure, also betray some ambivalence on economic pursuits. Discussing diverse attitudes among leading rabbinical authorities in the Middle Ages, our social historian already quoted observes:

On the one hand, they all echoed the old rabbinic insistence on the duty of earning a living, if need be through hard, even humiliating, labour. Jurists and moralists united in singing the praises of such self-reliance. On the other hand, they observed the negative effects of concentration on gainful employment. Maimonides voiced the general opinion that "most of the damage done to people in the various states arises from the lust for money and its accumulation, and the excessive desire to increase possessions and honours". Those philosophers who were not preaching the "golden mean" and moderation in all human affairs leaned to ascetism and self-abnegation. There were no medieval Jewish enthusiasts for the idea of "poverty" as such. All thinkers agreed that riches accumulated honestly were signs of Divine grace which may be enjoyed in moderation and utilised for good works towards less fortunate neighbours. Nonetheless, moralists viewed with considerable diffidence all human behaviour dictated by purely economic motivations... (Baron, *op.cit.*, 4:220f).

(d) While Judaism obviously insists on unimpeachable rectitude in the acquisition of wealth, and on the due allocation of a given percentage for charitable purposes (but which should not exceed one-fifth of what one has or earns), it never frowned on gaining wealth as such, nor demanded that wealth be shared or distributed to equalise rich and poor by some artificial balance, unrelated to effort and skill. On the contrary, wealth and honour are featured together in liturgical petitions (e.g. the monthly Blessing for the New Month) as they are in the qualifications required for the gift of prophecy and the credentials for the exercise of supreme judicial power so as to ensure total independence in leadership and judgement. Clearly, the emphasis here is not so much on the pursuit of wealth as an incentive to work as it is on its legitimacy in the striving for economic independence and for positions of influence and honour.

9. Collective Altruism or Responsibility

(a) As a moral rationale for dealing with the high incidence of unemployment and other forms of deprivation, the Report obliges the State "to provide compensating 'benefits' to those who do not share the relative affluence of the rest". The Report adds: "But it is not easy for state benefits to be given to individuals without affronting their human dignity", and the failure of our society to find an acceptable solution, as evidence the large number of benefits not taken up by those entitled to them on account of "the degrading conditions", is deemed "one of the more inhumane consequences of our free market economy" (3.17).

(b) Once again, the key concept here seems to be that those who are deprived are victims of the affluence enjoyed by the rest, and therefore entitled to "compensating 'benefits'", obliging the rich to share what they have with the poor by way of "compensation". Yet, in channelling these entitlements from the rich to the poor, the problem of causing acute personal humiliation still defies "an acceptable solution".

(c) As for charging the additional cost of adequate state benefits to the more affluent by higher taxation, the Report relies on "collective altruism" to secure a willing response for the extra sacrifices demanded to achieve greater equality (9.97). Such "collective altruism" may be a moral imperative, but it is hardly a fact. If it were as widely in evidence as is claimed, then surely the underprivileged would not require the state machinery of taxation for their amelioration; there are any number of channels, personal and organisational, through which the rich could practise their "collective altruism" in favour of the poor by direct forms of care and help.

(d) In the Jewish view, it is not so much "collective altruism" as "collective responsibility" which should serve as the principal guarantee that no section of the community will be abandoned. Collective responsibility, whereby each individual owes an account within his sphere of influence, obliges governments, as agents of society, to ensure social justice for all citizens. In a significant combination of ritual with social responsibility, Jewish commentators explain the Biblical law on the atonement ceremony carried out by the elders of a city nearest to "one found slain...lying in the field" (Deut. 21:1-9) to indicate that as leaders of the community they are held to account for such a crime, presumably because they did not secure shelter and food for the stranger in the city who thus became a victim of assault outside it (Rashi). The onus rests on national and civic leaders to protect citizens and strangers alike not only from oppression and injustice but also from hunger and homelessness.

10. Giving and Receiving

(a) Jewish perceptions differ. The operative words in the Jewish vocabulary of poor-relief are neither "entitlement" nor "compensation". The poor cannot be compensated for monies which others earn. When the Bible demands of the haves to stretch out a helping arm to the have-nots, using the words "you shall surely open your hand" (Deut. 15:8) - the "open hand" is not the beggar's asserting his entitlement to receive, but the giver's acknowledging his duty not to be tight-fisted in selfishly holding on to his possessions.

(b) Another specifically Jewish teaching may help to define this concept more clearly. Compensation does occur in the Jewish philosophy of rich-poor relations, but in an entirely different context. A Talmudic saying has it that "More than the wealthy man gives to the poor, the poor gives to the wealthy" (Shabbat 151b). The poor man, ennobling the giver, is compensated by the knowledge that he thus gives more than he receives, and the rich man is compensated for the diminution of his wealth knowing that he has thereby gained more than he has lost.

11. Human Dignity

(a) Herein lies the Jewish solution to the otherwise intractable problem of humiliation. Self-respect derives from a feeling that one is giving, contributing to the needs of others, and therefore being wanted. This is the objective not only of the saying on the superior value of what the poor renders to the rich. It is even more distinctly expressed in the provision of Jewish law requiring even the poor man who himself lives on charity to donate some of his proceeds for the relief of others. There is a double benefit in this: even the deprived person must learn to part with some of what he receives, thus training him in the art and satisfaction of giving; and his dignity is to be restored by letting him experience a sense of equality with the rich in supporting others in need. The principle is of Biblical origin: the Levites, who lived on the tithes they received from the land-owning Israelites, had themselves to contribute one-tenth of their receipts to the Priests (Nu. 18:26).

(b) In caring for the underprivileged, the motivation is to be not merely sympathy and compassion, but above all empathy. The principal Jewish exegete, Rashi, interprets the wording of the Biblical ban on extorting interest or seizing pledges for loans to "the poor with you" as a warning to the lender to "look upon himself as if he were the poor man" (on Ex. 22:24).

(c) In the ascending order of merit grading different forms of charity, Jewish law reserves the highest commendation for the philanthropist who does not give alms or a gift at all, but who helps the poor man to rehabilitate himself by lending him money, by taking him into a partnership, by employing him or by giving him work, so as to make him independent of help by others (Maimonides, Hil. Matnot Aniyim 10:7).

(d) Startling is the assertion "No Jew seems ever to have died of hunger whilst living in a Jewish community in the whole of our history" (Baron, op.cit., 1937, 2:100), testifying to the effectiveness of Jewish social legislation and moral exhortation.

12. Conclusions - Negative

(a) Practical conclusions or recommendations for application to the contemporary problems of the inner cities cannot easily be derived from the foregoing observations, comparisons and principles. Certainly, the evidence at my disposal is too scant, and the sources upon which I must rely too general for any authentic Jewish assessment of the realism to be found in some of the specific proposals urged in the Report.

(b) For instance, I have no data by which to judge whether public funds are available or can be raised to produce the job-creating public expenditure (9.62-64), Community Programmes for 500,000 places (9.80), increases in Supplementary and Child Benefits (9.91), housing grants (10.77) for all homeless people, with choice of accommodation being provided (10.78), revision of mortgage tax relief (10.98), a basic income irrespective of employment (9.103), and limits on "excessive overtime" (9.70). Most of these objectives are unquestionably desirable, but how feasible they are in the present state of the national economy I cannot ascertain.

(c) Nor can there be any Jewish counterpart to the excellent proposal for the Church Commissioners to set aside £1 million out of their capital of £1,792 million as seed money for a national appeal of £10 million eventually to yield a total of £4 million annually for projects to help the inner cities (7.82, 90-92). These areas are now denuded of Jewish communities, and they have neither the Jewish spiritual nor the social workers which would be required to operate such projects, quite apart from the incomparably smaller assets under Jewish religious control.

13. Conclusions - Positive

(a) What can be concluded with greater certitude is that from a Jewish point of view the direction of the critique of present policies and the general thrust in the search for solutions would have to differ in some quite substantial respects.

(b) Guided more by moral concerns rather than by economic theories or suppositions, a Jewish religious contribution would lay greater emphasis on building up self-respect by encouraging ambition and enterprise through a more demanding and more satisfying work-ethic, which is designed to eliminate idleness and to nurture pride in "eating of the toil of one's hands" as the first immediate targets.

(c) In a partnership of service and civic solidarity, the more affluent section of society should provide more social agencies and counselling services as well as more capital for prudent enterprises in the inner cities, whilst out of them should go those otherwise unemployed, to provide labour for public works and other useful pursuits, even if at first poorly paid, with a view to the eventual abolition of the soul-destroying dole. Any job is better than paid idleness.

(d) The social and counselling services should help to bridge the gulf between "the two nations" by demonstrating care and concern. As a high priority they should be used also to assist in rebuilding solid family life now so widely ravaged by unemployment and permissiveness. Even more important for the recovery of the health of our inner-cities than the building and renovation of housing projects is the repair of home life as the inner fortress of love, care, decency and every social virtue. The Jewish experience of the home as the principal haven against the exposure to the bitter realities of life outside does not bear out the Report's scepticism:

The identification of Christian perspectives with male dominance and female subservience can only serve to reinforce attitudes which encourage the abuse of women in the family, while an emphasis on the need to put up with suffering, however terrible, makes women in these circumstances feel guilty if they seek to leave home. As a result, pastoral advice is often directed towards exhorting the woman to keep the family together, regardless of the risk to herself. Clergy have little to offer women in this predicament (12.32).

(e) In a Jewish blue-print for the regeneration of the inner cities, the family would feature very much more prominently and positively. For when the family breaks down, the most essential conditions for raising happy, law-abiding and creatively-ambitious citizens are frustrated.

14 The Role of Government and Unions

(a) Obviously the role of government in revitalising the inner cities must be vital and indispensable. But the Report seems to be unduly slanted against present government policies by placing all existing ills exclusively at their door. Some criticisms may be quite justified. But in the aggregate, the sole concentration on government failures may divert attention from other equally-important factors.

(b) Whatever the faults of the government's "dogmatic and inflexible macro-economic stance" (9.52), however valid the call on the Church to "question all economic philosophies [which] have contributed to the blighting of whole districts, which do not offer the hope of amelioration" (9.41), and however true the charge that "social welfare and taxation policies have tended to benefit the rich at the expense of the poor" (9.8), who have "borne the brunt of the recession" (9.11) - there are surely comparable responsibilities for economic decline and social deprivation attributable to the labour unions, whose role is altogether ignored in the Report. Can a morally-balanced analysis really overlook the crippling effects on the economy of strikes which paralyze entire industries, or other coercive measures which sometimes result in pricing whole businesses out of existence, thus directly swelling the unemployment ranks? Can one ignore the immorality of inflicting massive suffering on millions of innocent victims by the periodic shut-downs of essential public services and utilities? The selfishness of workers in attempting to

secure better conditions at the cost of rising unemployment and immense public misery can be just as morally indefensible as the rapaciousness of the wealthy in exploiting the working class in order to add even more digits to their astronomical profits, or as unacceptable as a government biased in favour of equating success with virtue rather than need with opportunity and human dignity with supreme merit.

15. From Doom to Hope

(a) The overall picture presented in the Report is grim, and even the prospects are described as "bleak" (9.37). No Jewish contribution could be more valuable than to help turn despair into hope, resignation into confidence that - given determination, patience, perseverance and faith in the infinite capacity of man to prevail over adversity - the new ghettos will be transformed as were the old and the growing wealth of the nation will increasingly be shared by all through shifting the emphasis from rights to duties and from having a good time to making the times good.

(b) The Bible relates the tales of three cities: one became the city of doom, one of salvation, and one of hope. The fate of each was determined by righteousness in human relations. Of the first, the Prophet writes: "Behold, this was the iniquity of Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and carefree ease was in her and in her inhabitants, yet they did not strengthen the hand of the poor and the needy" (Ez. 16:49). The second, Nineveh, was saved because the inhabitants heeded the call to "turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands" (Jonah, 3:8). And the third city is promised: "Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and they that return to her with righteousness" (Is. 1:27).

(c) The key to the transition from doom to hope lies within the heart of man, whose confidence must be sustained in the ultimate triumph over present problems and disabilities. This must be one of the supreme priorities for planners, administrators, theologians and every member of the community, most of all the disadvantaged themselves. For patients, faith in recovery is often half the cure. For home- and city-builders, the spiritual dimension is indispensable, as the Psalmist asserts: "Except the Lord build the house, they that build it labour in vain; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman wakes but in vain" (Ps. 127:1).

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