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AN EVOLUTIONARY RHETORIC IN A REVOLUTIONARY AGE: A STUDY

OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE KINGDOM

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AN EVOLUTIONARY RHETORIC IN A REVOLUTIONARY AGE: A STUDY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

More than thirty years ago, Donald C. Bryant declared that it

had been "the fault of history . . . and especially . . . of the history

of literature and oratory, to let the study of figures obscure or blot

out the study of forces and social movements."[1] Although this imbalance

has persisted to some extent, a number of movement studies have appeared

in the last three decades.[2] The present study hopefully adds to

rhetorical-movement literature in two ways, methodologically and sub-

stantively, as it considers a significant social movement.

Scope of the Study

This is a study of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom, one of many

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[1]Donald C. Bryant, "Some Problems of Scope and Method in Rhe-
torical Scholarship," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXIII (April, 1937),
187-88.

[2]See, especially, Leland M. Griffin, "The Antimasonic Persuasion:
A Study of Public Address in the American Antimasonic Movement" (unpub-
lished Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1950); "The Rhetoric of
Historical Movements," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (April,
1952), 184-88; and "The Rhetorical Structure of the Antimasonic Move-
ment," in Donald C. Bryant (ed.), The Rhetorical Idiom: Essays in
Rhetoric, Oratory, Language, and Drama (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell Univer-
sity Press, 1958), pp. 145-59.

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movements which arose in the last decade of the nineteenth century in

response to the social crisis in America and to the appeal of the social

gospel. Limiting the study to the Brotherhood of the Kingdom is desir-

able for several reasons. First, the term "social gospel movement" lacks

definition. Alan Hamilton suggests that "the social gospel does not

represent a defined creed, organization or program. It is rather . . .

'an attitude and a conviction.'"[1] Charles Price Johnson found that

the social gospel was not an organized movement "in the sense of having

a definite organon." He contends that "a study of social gospel pro-

nouncements will reveal every type of thought from the most conservative

to the extremist liberal."[2] Thus, a focus on one specific organization

permits an intensive study of its thought.

Second, the limitation is necessary because of the time period a

more inclusive study must cover. Two notable histories provide chronicles

of the social gospel from 1865 to 1940.[3] Other writers indicate that,

by some definition, a social gospel is coterminous with Christianity.[4]

Lacking more specific time boundaries, a study of the social gospel's

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[1]Alan H. Hamilton, "The Social Gospel," Bibliotheca Sacra, CVII (April-June, 1950), 212; the secondary quotation is from Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of the Expansion of Christianity IV, 405.

[2]Charles Price Johnson, "Southern Baptists and the Social Gospel Movement" (unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1948), p. iv.

[3]Charles Howard Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism, 1865-1915, Yale Studies in Religious Education (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940); and Paul A. Carter, The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel: Social and Political Liberalism in American Protestant Churches, 1920-1940 (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1954).

[4]Chester Charlton McCown, The Genesis of the Social Gospel (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1929), p. 5.

rhetoric becomes virtually impossible. Thus, the present study is limited to the period from 1886 to 1917, with the concentration on the years from 1892 to 1912. The years prior to 1892 mark the germination period of the movement, and the years after 1912 mark its decline.

A third reason for the limitation of this study is the writer's opinion that the Brotherhood of the Kingdom may be considered a microcosm of social Christianity. Therefore, theoretically, a study of the rhetorical approach of the Brotherhood should shed light on the rhetoric of social Christianity generally. Brotherhood membership included men such as William Newton Clarke, who was in the vanguard of theological liberalism in America, but who demonstrated little interest in direct social action; Leighton Williams and Walter Rauschenbusch, who were progressives both in theology and social theory; and Nathaniel Schmidt and William Dwight Porter Bliss, who were representatives of a more radical element in the social gospel.

Fourth, the Brotherhood is a useful movement for study because of the abundance of its rhetorical remains, including both in-group and out-group rhetoric. The plethora of rhetorical materials necessitates one further limitation. Although any discourse which casts light on the rhetorical patterns of the movement has been used, the study emphasizes the rhetoric of those men whom history has revealed to be the leaders of the movement. Consequently, Walter Rauschenbusch, Leighton Williams, Nathaniel Schmidt, Samuel Zane Batten, William Newton Clarke, and George Dana Boardman are the central figures in this study. Two other prominent social gospel personalities played peripheral roles in the Brotherhood. Bliss was really more a social activist than the

other Brothers. His own Christian Socialist movement demanded so much of

his time that he did not become a prominent figure in the Brotherhood.

Josiah Strong, on the other hand, affirmed a social gospel more com-

patible with the Brotherhood's.

Justification for the Study

Both church and cultural historians have long recognized the

importance of the social gospel in American thought.[1] Professor Schneider

argued that the social gospel was "the most far-reaching and apparently

permanent moral reconstruction in American Religion."[2] Thus, a study

of the social gospel is warranted because of the historical significance

of the phenomenon. A study of the Brotherhood is justified because it

is a definable movement within the social gospel, and thus amenable to

study. The Brothers experienced discontent with society, shared their

discontent in verbal interaction, developed norms and role relationships,

formalized an ideology, and determined strategies for effecting desired

changes.

A second justification for this study is, simply, that no other

rhetorical studies of this movement have been done, so far as the writer

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[1]See, for example, Kenneth Scott Latourette, Christianity in a
Revolutionary Age: A History of Christianity in the Nineteenth and Twen-
tieth Centuries, Vol. III: The Nineteenth Century Outside Europe: The
Americas, the Pacific, Asia, and Africa (New York: Harper and Brothers,
1961), pp. 152-235; Henry Steele Commager, The American Mind (New Haven:
Yale University Press, 1950), pp. 162-83; and Richard Hofstadter, Social
Darwinism in American Thought (Rev. ed.; Boston: Beacon Press, 1955),
pp. 105-22.

[2]Herbert Wallace Schneider, Religion in Twentieth Century America,
p. 72, as quoted by Richard Joe Crawford, "An Analysis of the Argumenta-
tion within the Religious Humanist Movement" (unpublished Ph.D. disser-
tation, University of Oklahoma, 1965), p. 22.

can determine. Historical, theological, and sociological analyses of

social Christianity are available, but rhetoricians have largely ignored

it. A recent publication purports to be a rhetorical study of "Chris-

tian Socialism," a term which the author uses as a synonym for the "social

gospel." Actually, however, the book is merely an anthology of speeches,

without consideration of interaction.[1]

Third, the nature of the movement's rhetorical problem makes

a study of the Brotherhood significant. The movement attempted to

effect sweeping changes without using revolutionary methods. The Bro-

thers wanted to keep that which was desirable in the institutions of

society, yet they sought to change the function and orientation of

institutions such as the church. The group endeavored to create a

favorable image with each of its several audiences in order to achieve,

eventually, the goals which the movement established.

Finally, a study of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom is justified

because of the eminence of its leaders. Since 1907, Rauschenbusch has

been the recognized "prophet" of the social gospel. William Newton Clarke

was one of the most notable theologians in America. Batten attained a

position of prominence within the Northern Baptist Convention. Strong

and Bliss, although less important to the Brotherhood itself, were two

of the most influential social Christians in America. Thus, the men of

the movement provide the basic justification for this study.

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[1]See Paul H. Boase, The Rhetoric of Christian Socialism (New
York: Random House, 1969). The book includes one chapter of historical
background, but does not attempt to analyze the rhetoric of the move-
ment as movement.

Methodology

The method employed is both eclectic and inductive. The basic
approach has been one of discovery. Rather than going to the material
with a set of preconceived categories to determine whether the rhetoric
of the movement conformed to those categories, the writer has gone to
the material to discover what happened. The analysis is organized,
therefore, on the basis of that discovery. Several sociological and
rhetorical considerations have guided the study, however.

First, the Brotherhood of the Kingdom was a social movement. As
such, its analysis requires the use of sociological guidelines. The
explanation of social-movement development which best fits the Brother-
hood of the Kingdom is that offered by C. Wendell King.[1] King's three-
stage development construct—incipient phase, organizational phase, and
stable phase—recognizes that many movements begin after social discontent
has already reached a high pitch. The application of King's theory to
the Brotherhood appears in chapter three of this study.

Second, the Brotherhood has been placed in historical context.
It was a social Christian movement. As such, it had similarities with
other social Christian movements. It also had differences, however. Its
uniqueness set it apart as a recognizable movement for a period of almost
twenty years. Its similarity to other social-gospel movements, however,
ultimately caused its loss of identity. An understanding of the Brother-
hood's relationship to other social Christians is essential if its rhet-
oric is to be understood.

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[1]C. Wendell King, Social Movements in the United States. Random
House Studies in Sociology (New York: Random House, 1956).

Third, the larger part of this study focuses on the role of

rhetoric as it functioned to produce a movement such as the Brotherhood,

to determine norms and role relationships, and to relate the movement

optimally to its environment. That process involves discovering the

rhetorical factors which might have caused the movement to be formed.

Initially, for example, individual efforts at social reform were

thwarted. As liberal Christians were thrown together in communication

situations, they began to perceive similarities of expression. Rhetorical

interaction with non-liberals demonstrated the futility of continuing

individual social-reform projects. Consequently, a movement such as the

Brotherhood became imperative. Thus, rhetoric played a formative role,

creating both the demand for a movement and describing the nature of the

movement. As the movement developed, rhetoric played a significant role

in the definition of the movement's ideology and the differentiation of

leadership roles.

Fourth, with respect to out-group rhetoric, three specific areas

demand attention: the audiences of the movement; the goals of the move-

ment—together with the messages and images it must project in pursuit of

those goals—and the channels of communication. Specific audiences are

difficult to label in any movement study, because of the number of rhetori-

cal transactions involved. Consequently, only generalizations regarding

audience have been attempted in this study. The Brotherhood of the King-

dom had several potential audiences. First, the movement could have ap-

pealed to the masses. Second, it could have confined itself to the churches.

Third, it could have sought an audience comprised of the entrepreneurs

the movement was wont to attack. Fourth, the group might have directed

its messages toward other reformers. In fact, the Brothers addressed

themselves to each of these audiences to some degree, and to some other

audiences as well. What is rhetorically significant is that the image

the group attempted to project and the message it sent were different,

depending on the nature of the audience. Likewise, channel selection

varied both according to audience and message. The Brotherhood employed

virtually every rhetorical channel available to it; in any given case,

the Brotherhood chose its channel deliberately.

Finally, the study attempts to assess the rhetoric of the movement.

The problem at this point is one of standard. Increased social concern

among churches, a goal of the Brotherhood, is undeniable. The assumption

that the Brotherhood of the Kingdom played a significant role in effecting

the change may not be a valid one, however. A constant problem in a

movement study is that of seeing clearly the function of the movement as

opposed to the function of individuals within the movement. Reflecting

on the movement at about the time of its disorganization, Rauschenbusch

wrote to Brother Arthur S. Cole, indicating dissatisfaction with the

movement's results.

> We have devised plans and made suggestions for years, and nothing
> has come of them. The organization has been anchored for years, and
> even when we churned the water some, we did not move. We must either
> make some radical move or conclude that the Brotherhood has accomp-
> lished what was in it.[1]

In spite of Rauschenbusch's observation, one premise of this paper is that

the movement, as movement, was significant because it provided a seedbed

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[1]In Rauschenbusch "Papers," American Baptist Historical Society,
July 2, 1912. Later references to the Rauschenbusch "Papers" will em-
ploy only the official library designation for the Historical Society:
"NRAB."

in which were nurtured several of the most outstanding social gospel

spokesmen in America.

Plan of the Study

Chapter II

The intent of the second chapter is to provide historical

background for the Brotherhood of the Kingdom. The chapter includes a

definition of the social gospel and other terms frequently used as

synonyms. It seeks to trace the historical antecedents of social

Christianity both in Europe and America, as well as the social con-

ditions which produced the social gospel in the United States.

Chapter III

The following chapter presents a brief history of the Brotherhood

of the Kingdom as a social movement. Using King's analysis of the stages

of social movements as a basis, the chapter describes the inception, or-

ganization, and stabilization of the movement. The chapter also includes

a description of sociological factors in leadership development.

Chapter IV

The fourth chapter summarizes and analyzes the movement's pre-

organizational rhetoric. The chapter indicates that social conditions,

individuals' social status, individual frustration in relation to

social goals, and interaction with small groups all lead to the crea-

tion of social movements. During the period covered by the chapter

(1886-1892), individual rhetorical products are largely unavailable,

except for the sermons and addresses of Rauschenbusch. Inferences

are drawn from biographical works and other materials concerning rhe-

torical efforts of other key figures. In addition, two channels of

communication are of importance during the latter part of this period.

First, the Brothers began to have a sense of identity and mutual support

as they participated in the Baptist Congress for the Discussion of Cur-

rent Questions. Second, a small group of liberal Christians united

in the publication of For the Right, a monthly paper dedicated to the

working people of New York City.

Chapter V

Chapter five focuses on the in-group rhetoric of the movement dur-

ing its organizational phase (1892-1897). The emphasis of the chap-

ter is the movement's ideology, which it derived from the theological

and educational backgrounds of its members, but which it refined through

verbal interaction during annual conferences at Marlborough, New York,

Missionary Conferences at Amity Baptist Church, personal conferences

and correspondence, "circular letters," and other publications of the

movement's Executive Committee.

Chapter VI

The following chapter is also concerned with in-group rhetoric,

but the emphasis is on the rhetoric of conversion and group cohesion.

The former is directed toward "non-members," but not technically toward

an "out-group," since converts to a movement are generally sympathetic

with it, while "out-group" refers to an enemy. Group cohesion is de-

veloped by a number of strategies, which are described, analyzed, and

illustrated in the chapter.

Chapter VII

The movement's strategies for the evolutionary reformation of society are the subject of chapter seven. The chapter includes a brief description of the several potential audiences of the Brotherhood. It suggests the two basic goals of the movement, both of which are subsumed in the concept the Kingdom of God. Further, it identifies the general strategy of the Brotherhood in relation to each goal and the image which the movement attempted to project to each audience.

Chapter VIII

The final chapter summarizes the history and rhetorical approach of the Brotherhood. It also offers a tentative evaluation of the movement's rhetoric from a variety of viewpoints.

CHAPTER II

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL: MATRIX OF MOVEMENTS

Introduction

This chapter has three basic purposes. First, it will provide

a description and historical background of the social gospel. Second,

it will provide a basis for comparing the Brotherhood of the Kingdom--

the specific movement being studied--with other approaches to the social

gospel. Finally, the chapter will stress that the social gospel was not

one historic social movement but an ideational matrix in which a number

of social movements developed.

Hopkins is probably in error when he suggests that "America's

unique contribution to the great ongoing stream of Christianity is the

'social gospel.'"[1] The term is American, of course, having been used

first by the Christian Commonwealth Colony in Georgia.[2] By some defi-

nition, however, a social gospel is as old as Christianity. Rauschenbusch

insists that the Hebrew-Christian religion has been basically social since

the days of the Old Testament prophets.[3] F. H. Stead traced the history

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[1]Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 3.

[2]Ibid., pp. 196-97.

[3]This is the basic argument of the first third of Walter Rausch-
enbusch, Christianity and the Social Crisis (New York: The Macmillan
Company, 1907), pp. 1-142.

of social Christianity from antiquity to modern times.[1] And Chester

McCown asserts that "there have never been wanting those who have in-

sisted on applying Jesus' teachings to the practical problems of group

life."[2] In ante-bellum America, evidences of social concern were mani-

fest: "associations for the promotion of temperance, women's rights,

world peace, prison reform, and . . . the abolition of slavery." Revi-

valism prompted movements for social reform as evangelists such as

Charles Grandison Finney "exhorted his converts to throw themselves

into one or another of the social reform causes, under the slogan "Saved

for Service."[3]

The Social Gospel Defined

All Christian social concern cannot be equated with the social

gospel, however, although Hopkins used the term to refer to virtually all

reform efforts which had any Christian basis.[4] Henry May prefers to make

the term more specific. Having surveyed the causes and effects of con-

servatism among American churches in the second half of the nineteenth

century, May turns to an analysis of three distinct types of social reform

movements. He classifies adherents of the movements as "conservative,"

"progressive," or "radical." Only the social theories of "moderate pro-

gressives" compose the "social gospel," according to May. He uses a more

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[1]Francis Herbert Stead, The Story of Social Christianity (2 vols.; London: James Clarke and Co., Ltd., c1924).

[2]McCown, The Genesis of the Social Gospel, p. 5.

[3]Carter, The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel, p. 8.

[4]Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel.

inclusive term, "social Christianity," in reference to "all attempts to find Christian solutions to social problems."[1] Boase puts the emphasis on socialism in his anthology of speeches, The Rhetoric of Christian Socialism; yet the speakers included are those whom May calls "social Christians." J. Neal Hughley solved the problem to his own satisfaction by referring to "protestant social idealism," because he feels that the term "social gospel" has suffered pejoration.[2] Another descriptive term for the phenomenon being studied is Washington Gladden's "applied Christianity."[3]

Four of the five terms will be used in this study. Three of them--"social gospel," "social Christianity," and "applied Christianity"--will be used interchangeably, since in the writer's opinion the differences among them are not criterial. Although many exponents of a social gospel considered themselves "Christian Socialists," the term will be used in this study only in reference to men or movements which identified with Christian Socialism, either through rhetoric or group affiliation.

For definitions of the social gospel, the works of its leading proponents provide the best sources. At the end of the era under consideration, Rauschenbusch defined the term.

> The social movement is the most important ethical and spiritual movement in the modern world, and the social gospel is the response of the Christian consciousness to it. . . . The social gospel reg-

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[1]Henry F. May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America, Torchbooks (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 170.

[2]J. Neal Hughley, Trends in Protestant Social Idealism (Morningside Heights, New York: [n.p.], 1948), pp. 1-20.

[3]Washington Gladden, Applied Christianity; Moral Aspects of Social Questions (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1886).

isters the fact that for the first time in history the spirit of Christianity has had a chance to form a working partnership with real social and psychological science. It is the religious reaction on the historic advent of democracy. It seeks to put the democratic spirit, which the Church inherited from Jesus and the prophets, once more in control of the institutions and teachings of the Church.

The social gospel is the old message of salvation, but enlarged and intensified. The individualistic gospel has taught us to see the sinfulness of every human heart and has inspired us with faith in the willingness and power of God to save every soul that comes to him. But it has not given us an adequate understanding of the sinfulness of the social order and its share in the sins of all individuals within it. It has not evoked faith in the will and power of God to redeem the permanent institutions of human society from their inherited guilt of oppression and extortion. . . . The social gospel seeks to bring men under repentance for their collective sins and to create a more sensitive and more modern conscience.[1]

Shailer Mathews, a member of the Chicago University faculty and one of the avant-garde among Christian social theorists, put it somewhat more succinctly. He said that the social gospel was "the application of the teaching of Jesus and the total message of Christian salvation to society, the economic life, and social institutions . . . as well as to individuals."[2] Neither Mathews nor Rauschenbusch could speak for all exponents of a social gospel, however. Moreover, no simple definition will suffice, because of the different positions which advocates of social Christianity assumed. Therefore, an understanding of the phenomenon requires an investigation of its antecedents, its basic tenets, and the range of positions assumed by its adherents.

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[1]Walter Rauschenbusch, A Theology for the Social Gospel (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1917), pp. 4-5.

[2]Shailer Mathews, "Social Gospel," in Shailer Mathews and G. B. Smith, A Dictionary of Religion and Ethics, pp. 416-17, as quoted by Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 3.

Antecedents of the Social Gospel

Outside America

Although Christianity has always exhibited social concern, the
specific conditions which prompted the development of the social gospel
are concomitants of industrialization and the attendant development of
cities. "Social Christian movements have developed in all industrialized
countries since the inception of the capitalist era."[1] The first signi-
ficant social Christian movements developed in Great Britain, but France
and Germany soon became involved.[2] Movements first sprang up among
Protestants, although Catholics became actively engaged in the social
problem and their movement received a special thrust when Pope Leo XIII
issued Rerum novarum on May 15, 1891.[3]

Early social Christians assumed one of several attitudes toward
the conditions of society and Christianity's relationship to it. Some
felt that a socio-economic order derived from Christian doctrine was
distinct from the natural social order. Others saw a possibility of re-
forming the existing order by the infusion of the Christian spirit.[4] A
third group was concerned only with distinguishing Christian approaches

[1]"Social Christian Movements," Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,
XIV, 123.

[2]For a recent history and interpretation of movements in Great
Britain, see Peter d'Alroy Jones, The Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-
1914: Religion, Class and Social Conscience in Late-Victorian England
(Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1968).

[3]For an English text of the encyclical, see Five Great Encycli-
cals (New York: The Paulist Press, 1939), pp. 1-36.

[4]This was the Brotherhood of the Kingdom's position.

from un-Christian or anti-Christian manifestations of the social move-

ment.[1]

In general, social Christians have opposed a thoroughgoing

laissez-faire economic order, calling for a relatively high degree of

state interference in socio-economic affairs. Also, they have insisted

that workers have a right to own property and have shown favorable atti-

tudes toward trade unions. They have considered capitalism a threat and

have recommended the limitation of private gain through state regulation

of prices, taxes, wages, and conditions of labor. Social Christianity's

basic indictment of capitalism was that it placed profits above human

personality.

> Profit was attacked as the driving force and regulating princi-
> ple of capitalist economy. . . . There was criticism of the market
> as the only organ of economic intercourse even with regard to labor.
> Particular stress was placed upon the need of a wage adequate to sup-
> port a family and to allow for savings. Every social Christian move-
> ment has been characterized to a greater or lesser degree by this
> conception of man as the aim and subject of the economic system. As
> opposed to the mechanistic view of society there was set up the
> personalistic and ethical view. Profit as the sole directing force
> of economic life was rejected, for even in the spheres of economic
> and social life there is no suspension of ethical principles.[2]

Outside the United States, such social Christian views affected

a remarkable array of men. Among them was Charles Kingsley, whose social

protests were brought to America through the Protestant Episcopal com-

munion and through two novels, Yeast and Alton Locke. Of equal influ-

ence upon American social theorists was Frederic Denison Maurice. Sev-

eral of his books became popular in America, including The Gospel of the

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[1]"Social Christian Movements," Encyclopedia of the Social
Sciences, XIV, 124.

[2]Ibid., p. 126.

Kingdom of God (1864), The Commandments Considered as Instruments of

National Reformation (1866), Social Morality (1869), and Faith in

Action (1886).[1]

John Ruskin, Hugues Félicité Robert De Lamennais, Giuseppe Maz-

zini, and Friedrich Naumann are a few other social thinkers who had

influence in America. Gladden and other American social Christians re-

jected Ruskin's "benevolent feudalism," but the Englishman's works greatly

affected them.[2] Lamennais was a French priest and political liberal

whose views of democracy and of the separation of church and state aroused

the hostility of both the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the government of

Louis Phillippe. After his severance from the Church, Lamennais de-

voted himself to the cause of the people and the service of republican-

ism and socialism. The Brotherhood of the Kingdom often discussed his

works. Likewise, the ideas of Mazzini held remarkable sway on many Ameri-

can social Christians, in spite of his militant revolutionist attitude.

The Brotherhood members admired his ardent nationalism and republican-

ism, although they did not subscribe to some of his methods. Naumann,

a German theologian, participated in the deliberations of the Evangel-

ical Social Congress and made his basic contribution to social Christian-

ity through several publications of that group which discussed the

ethics of Jesus.[3]

Thus, influences came from all over Europe. In addition to the

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[1]See Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 7.

[2]Ibid., p. 31.

[3]McCown, The Genesis of the Social Gospel, p. 16.

early Christian Socialists, England produced such noted social Christians

as Brooke Foss Wescott, Scott Holland, and G. A. Studdert-Kennedy, who

prepared the way for the development of Christian social reconstruction

in America.

In America

In ante-bellum America, many reform movements had humanitarian

rather than Christian foundations. For their part, churches often were

defenders of a conservative status quo. One of the earliest indications

of change was the publication of Stephen Colwell's New Themes for the

Protestant Clergy in 1851. The book "accused the Church of being a

bourgeois institution and held that in contrast it should give itself

to bringing society more nearly in accord with the teachings of Jesus."[1]

Probably the most prominent American among the precursors of

the social gospel was Horace Bushnell. A Congregationalist, Bushnell

graduated from Yale in 1827, after which he entered the Divinity School.

There, he turned to Coleridge, whose Aids to Reflection guided his reli-

gious experience more than any book except the Bible. Of Bushnell's

response to Coleridge, Thompson writes: "He was to be guided by heart

as well as by head, to rely more on feeling, on moral intuition, on

observation and experience, than on cold, intellectual reasoning and

logic that drew relentless conclusions despite the warm, quivering

protest of the moral sentiments, and spin lofty metaphysical specu-

lations with little meaning for life."[2]

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[1]Latourette, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, III, 225.

[2]Ernest Trice Thompson, Changing Emphases in American Preaching (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1943), pp. 14-15.

Two of Bushnell's works which probably had the greatest ef-
fect on social Christianity were Christian Nurture (c1841) and Nature
and the Supernatural (1857). In the former, he emphasizes the role of
social relationship in the formation of Christian personality, stressing
particularly the importance of the home in character development. He did
not exclude crisis conversions and revivalism, but he thought it more
desirable to utilize the social forces latent within the Christian home
to impart spiritual life.[1] Thus, he prepared the way for the emphasis
both on social forces and religious education which dominated the social
gospel.

H. Shelton Smith suggests four tenets of liberal theology, at-
tributable to Bushnell, which were generally accepted by the Brotherhood.[2]
The first is the philosophy of divine immanence. In reaction against
orthodoxy, liberals have emphasized God's immanence rather than his
transcendence. A second tenet, a distortion of Bushnell, is the idea
that conversion is a natural process rather than the work of a super-
natural agent. In effect, for many liberals, religious education sup-
planted the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. Third, Bushnell
held a moderate concept of the inherent goodness of the natural man,
which, when combined with evolutionary concepts, led to the idea of human
perfectibility. Finally, although Bushnell himself believed in the
deity of Christ, the Virgin birth, and the resurrection, his writing

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[1]Alan H. Hamilton, "The Social Gospel: III," Bibliotheca Sacra,
CIX (July-September, 1952), 272-73.

[2]Nature and the Supernatural includes Bushnell's statement of
theology which is largely responsible for the tendencies to which Smith
refers.

led some liberal theologians to view Jesus as nothing more than an

example, a moral teacher, a human being among human beings. They con-

sidered Jesus divine only in the same sense that all men are divine.[1]

Whether one accepts Bushnell's theology, he cannot deny that Bushnell

stands apart as the greatest single influence on social Christianity

in ante-bellum America.

Few men actually preached social Christianity before the Civil

War, although seeds were sown which later developed into a full-blown

social gospel. Revivalism led first to Utopianism and perfectionism,

then to a post-millenarianism that sought to improve society before the

return of Christ. Even conservative protestants felt that the individual

who was truly converted would give himself to fighting social ills. As

early as 1864, representatives of eleven denominations organized the

National Reform Association, which included among its objectives that of

"writing into the constitution of the United States the acknowledgement

of God as the source of all authority and power in civil government, and

His will, as revealed in the Bible, 'as of supreme authority, in order

to constitute a Christian government.'"[2]

Perhaps no man so epitomizes the social gospel in America as does

Washington Gladden. His ministry encompasses the years of the primary

existence of social Christianity in America. As a young man of twenty-

four, Gladden began his ministry during the Civil War, having pastorates

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[1]The analysis of the four tendencies is taken from H. Shelton
Smith, Faith and Nature as cited in Thompson, Changing Emphases in
American Preaching, pp. 46-47.

[2]Latourette, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, III, 225;
secondary quotation from Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 90.

in Brooklyn (1860-1861) and Morrisiania, New York (1861-1866). Disil-

lusioned with Calvinism, Gladden turned to Frederick Robertson and

Horace Bushnell. While pastor of the Congregational Church in North

Adams, Massachusetts (1866-1871), he defended Bushnell in articles in

the Independent and Scribner's Monthly. Also in North Adams, he became

aware of the industrial conditions which became one of his lifelong

concerns. There also he revealed an interest in ethical questions when

he published Plain Thoughts on the Art of Living (1868). From 1871-1875,

Gladden served on the editorial staff of the Independent, a position he

resigned because he felt the magazine's advertising policy was dishonest.

Returning to the pastorate, Gladden became minister of the North Congre-

gational Church, Springfield, Massachusetts (1875-1882). While there

Gladden edited Sunday Afternoon, a Magazine for the Household (1878-1800).[1]

Gladden reached maturity and finished his ministry with the First Congre-

gational Church of Columbus, Ohio, where he served as pastor or pastor-

emeritus from 1882-1918. While in Columbus, he not only ministered to

his congregation but stayed busy as a lecturer.[2]

During the same years, he published an impressive array of books

on theological and social questions. In Working People and Their Em-

ployers (originally published in 1876, but reprinted in 1885), he

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[1]In 1879, the title was changed to Good Company.

[2]Most biographical material on Gladden is from Allen Johnson and
Dumas Malone (eds.), A Dictionary of American Biography (New York:
Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), VII, 325-327. Because of Gladden's im-
portance to the social gospel, the reader may be interested in two full-
length works: Washington Gladden, Recollections (Boston: Houghton-
Mifflin, 1909); and Jacob Henry Dorn, Washington Gladden, Prophet of the
Social Gospel (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1966).

"acknowledged the right of labor to organize and advocated the identifi-
cation of capital and labor through some application of the principle of
cooperation."[1] The following year he wrote Applied Christianity (1866),
in which he suggested that the whole object of the Christian scheme of
ethics "is to counteract injuries wrought by the survival of the fittest."[2]
In addition to his attention to social questions, Gladden wrote prolifi-
cally in support of higher criticism and modern theology. In rapid suc-
cession came Burning Questions (1890) and Who Wrote the Bible? (1891).
Six years later, he wrote a supplement to the latter book, Seven Puzzling
Bible Books, in which he employed the principles of higher criticism as
he examined the books of Judges, Esther, Job, Ecclesiastes, The Songs of
Solomon, Daniel, and Jonah. His attack on conservative Christianity
mounted as he continued to write such books as How Much Is Left of the
Old Doctrine? (1899) and Present Day Theology (1913).

Gladden, whom Latourette calls the father of the social gospel,
maintained that society could be Christianized by the application of the
principle "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."[3] He called upon
the church to concentrate its energies on realizing the Kingdom of God
on earth. Rejecting the use of force, he sought to inspire individuals
with "the love of justice and the spirit of service."[4]

Gladden differed from the members of the Brotherhood of the King-

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[1]Johnson and Malone, "Washington Gladden," A Dictionary of
American Biography, VII, 326.

[2]Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, p. 229.

[3]Latourette, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, III, 226.

[4]Ibid.

dom in that he repudiated socialism because he considered it impracticable.

He granted that it might be an improvement over the prevalent individualism,

but maintained that it carried new dangers of its own. Like the Brotherhood,

Gladden believed that the remedy to industrial problems lay in evolution

not revolution, and he called for increasing Government ownership and con-

trol.[1] Gladden's economic theories are clearly stated in several of his

books. In Applied Christianity, he said that since Christianity had much

to do with the production of wealth, it should do something about its dis-

tribution.[2] He recommended that Christians do what they could by law to

secure a better industrial order and that they demand that the state crush

monopolies and gambling in stocks.[3] Further, he expressed interest in in-

valids, the aged, and destitute children, insisting that those who possessed

much should use some of it in behalf of the dispossessed. He admonished

the wealthy to construct sanitary tenements which could be rented at a

fair price and to donate money to the churches so they could carry on more

extensive social programs.[4] In Tools and the Man, Gladden advocated "in-

dustrial partnership."[5] Parrott has summarized Gladden's idea:

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[1]Thompson, Changing Emphases in American Preaching, p. 169.
Except for his rejection of socialism, Gladden's social theories dif-
fered from the Brotherhood's in only minor details, and it is likely
that he would have joined the movement except for the geographic dis-
tance and the pressures on his time which precluded it.

[2]Gladden, Applied Christianity, pp. 4-9.

[3]Ibid., pp. 16-19.

[4]Ibid., pp. 25-27. For a brief summary of Gladden's approach,
see John Henry Parrott, "The Preaching of Social Christianity in the
United States in the Twentieth Century" (unpublished Th.D. thesis,
Southern Baptist Seminary, 1950), pp. 63-65.

[5]Washington Gladden, Tools and the Man (Boston: Houghton-
Mifflin, 1893), p. 209.

Under this system, the capital was to be furnished and the
business organized and directed by the employer. The workers were
to be paid their weekly wages at the market rate. At the end of the
year a stipulated percentage of the net profits of the business was
to be divided among them, each man's dividend being proportioned
to the amount of his earning. Usually it was agreed that only those
who had been in the service of the business for a certain length of
time should receive the dividend, and those who had been justly dis-
charged should not share in the fund. By this plan the workers be-
came partners in the business. They were no longer just "hands"
but associates.[1]

Gladden did more than speak and talk about social problems. In

1900, he was elected to the city council of Columbus, where he played a

modest role in solving some of the city's serious problems. His eminence

among exponents of the social gospel is the result of his speaking,

writing, and active service to the cause, but he also made two other

contributions of importance. In his rhetoric he popularized most of

the basic tenets of the social gospel and inspired many of the young men

who embraced it. What those tenets were and who the men were are sub-

jects which must now be examined.

Basic Tenets of the Social Gospel

Dombrowski suggests that "social Christianity . . . had a decid-

edly antitheological bias."[2] Actually, however, the social Christian

revolt was against orthodoxy, not theology. The impetus for change came

from two problems which social Christians had to solve. First, they had

to find a way to meliorate the conditions of the masses suffering as a

result of industrialization and urbanization. Second, they had to

justify and insure the existence of the churches. The doctrines of social

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[1]Parrott, "The Preaching of Social Christianity," pp. 59-60.

[2]James Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism in
America (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), p. 14.

Christianity reflect the liberal tendencies in theology. Proponents of

a social gospel sought practical solutions to contemporary problems

rather than theological explanations for future hopes, but many of the

social gospel's tenets had definite theological bases.

Theological Concepts: The Problem of Authority

Every movement must justify its ideology on the basis of some

type of authority. Social-Christian movements--especially groups such

as the Brotherhood of the Kingdom--depended heavily on the Bible as a

source of authority, but not as the source. Many currents of thought

converged in social Christianity to produce its unique concept of

religious authority. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and Samuel

Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), although working separately, developed

similar theologies of religious experience. Influenced both by Kant

and Greek philosophy, Schleiermacher and Coleridge provided an orienta-

tion to religion based on feeling, or inner experience. Religion, for

Schleiermacher, became "the immediate apprehension of the Infinite in

the finite." Thus subjectivism, while not supplanting the authority

of Scriptures, added a new dimension to their interpretation.[1] Social

Christians considered the Bible important because it was a record and

interpretation of religious experience. "The Christian does not have

faith in Christ because of the Bible; rather the Bible gains its author-

ity from the believer's faith in Christ." In other words: "The

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[1]John Dillenberger and Claude Welch, Protestant Christianity Interpreted through Its Development (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), pp. 182-89. For a brief analysis and interpretation of Schleiermacher's theology, see Hugh Ross Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology (London: Nisbet and Co., 1937), pp. 31-100.

heart of Christianity . . . is not a doctrine or ethic, but a new life in Christ."[1]

Viewing the Bible as a record of human, albeit religious, experience made it possible for liberal theologians to study the Scriptures using the methods of "higher criticism." A companion, but distinct discipline--"lower" or "textual criticism"--had been accepted among churchmen for years. Scholars employed the latter discipline to ascertain the reliability of biblical documents, comparing and dating manuscripts to determine their authenticity and to locate the oldest, most accurate text. Higher criticism went far beyond the attempt to discover the original text and sought answers to such questions as: "What is the relation of the biblical books to each other? how were they written? when? by whom? what did the writers intend to say? were there historical causes which might account for the recorded developments in the scriptures? what is the relation of the biblical record to other records of ancient times?"[2]

Early biblical critics lived in Germany and enjoyed the relative freedom of inquiry of the German universities. The goal of their critical studies was historical objectivity, and as they proceeded, they raised many interesting questions. One of the questions involved the relationship of the three Synoptic Gospels[3] to the Gospel of John. Scholars noted chronological differences in the books. Also, the form of Jesus' teaching differed: In the Synoptics, he used parables and said relatively

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[1]Dillenberger and Welch, Protestant Christianity, p. 188.

[2]Ibid., p. 190; for the full discussion of "biblical criticism," see pp. 189-198.

[3]The Synoptics are Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

little about himself; in John, he talked often about himself and his

relation to God and he used long, involved discourses.[1] Further, John's

gospel often demonstrates lack of familiarity with the geography of Pal-

estine. As analyses of the gospels proceeded, the conclusions led to

"substantial agreement with a suggestion of Schleiermacher, that the gos-

pels. . . consist of a large number of fragments, more or less artifi-

cially connected."[2]

The Old Testament was the subject of even more severe attacks.

Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was generally discounted, as scholars

suggested that a team of editors put the books in final form as late as

the sixth century B.C. Scholars attributed Isaiah to two men who lived

centuries apart instead of to the fearless eighth-century prophet. In

time, the "reliability of the Old Testament record was seriously ques-

tioned." Ultimately the significance and authority of the Bible became

the issue, and the conclusion for many was that "acceptance of biblical

criticism meant the abandonment of the belief that the Bible is an in-

fallible record of divine revelation to men."[3] Although many may have

turned from the Bible and from Christianity in response to such assump-

tions, for others biblical criticism offered a solution to a crucial di-

lemma. On the one hand, many passages in the Bible directly contradicted

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[1]This one problem would have stimulated little controversy. Both
the liberal and conservative could explain the discrepancy, but they would
use different starting points. The conservative could solve the problem
by insisting that God simply inspired John to write about different events
in Christ's life, while the liberal insisted that the different emphases
were the result of disparate experience and perception.

[2]Dillenberger and Welch, Protestant Christianity, p. 193.

[3]Ibid., pp. 194-95.

the discoveries and theories of science. On the other hand, however, the

Bible and Christianity offered solutions to many of society's problems.

Some Christians concluded, therefore, that the Bible should be read as a

record of experience, not as a rule book or record of science, and that

stress should be placed on the principles taught in the Bible and not

on the literal meaning of the words.

Theological Concepts: The Kingdom of God

In addition to the theology of Schleiermacher and the study of

biblical criticism, the works of Albrecht Ritschl were of special sig-

nificance in the development of liberal theology and the social gospel.

Having been influenced by Kant, Ritschl constructed a "theology of moral

values." Further, he was largely responsible for the idea of the King-

dom of God on earth--the central ideological concept of social Christian-

ity.[1] Ritschl insisted that God _is_ love and he suppressed the notion

of God's holiness and justice. Consequently, he altered his view of

sin, of judgment, and of punishment. He optimistically maintained the

possibility of overcoming sin, and his optimism pervaded the social gospel.[2]

In retrospect, the optimism of social Christianity is difficult

to explain. Admittedly, an era which had a penchant for Horatio Alger

heroes might embrace unwarranted optimism. Americans of the late nineteenth

century were committed to the "American dream," and if one Utopian scheme

failed, two replaced it. Yet the exponents of applied Christianity were

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[1]_Ibid._, pp. 198-200. For an analysis of Ritschl's theology, see
Mackintosh, _Types of Modern Theology_, pp. 138-80.

[2]Dillenberger and Welch, _Protestant Christianity_, p. 200.

not ignorant of reality. They had read Our Country, How the Other Half

Lives, Poverty, and The Challenge of the City,[1] progressive revelations

that social problems were not being solved in America; yet social Chris-

tians remained optimistic. Their optimism was grounded in the idea of

the Kingdom. By 1912, Rauschenbusch declared that churches, families,

and, to a slightly lesser extent, politics had been socialized. That

meant, in effect, that three of the four leading institutions of life

were beginning to adhere to the Kingdom ideal. Only business remained

unconverted, and Rauschenbusch optimistically believed that its conver-

sion was possible.[2]

Other outgrowths of the Kingdom ideal were the concepts of the

"Fatherhood of God," the "Brotherhood of Man," and the "solidarity of

the race." In the application of Christianity to society, no human re-

lationship was unaffected by these concepts. The idea of God as "Father"

markedly differed from the orthodox idea. Whereas God had been consid-

ered the Father only of Christians, the new view made him the Father of

all men. Whereas God had been considered transcendent, accessible only

through an intermediary (Christ or the Church), the new view was that

God was immanent, immediately apprehensible by the individual. A common

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[1]Josiah Strong was one of the first to sound the note of crisis
when, in 1885, he published Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its
Present Crisis (New York: The Baker and Taylor Co., 1885). "Having
presented the thesis that the next five hundred years of American history
were dependent upon his generation's response to impending perils,
Strong gives one chapter each to a discussion of the following . . .
perils: immigration, Romanism, intemperance, socialism and wealth."
Next, he insists that Christianity is the answer, but his "optimism seems
a bit strange to the present-day reader." See Hamilton, "The Social
Gospel: III," pp. 273-74.

[2]Walter Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order (New
York: The Macmillan Co., 1912), pp. 458-76.

Father made all men brothers, while conservatives maintained that only regenerate men were brothers. Acceptance of "racial solidarity" meant a change in the concept of salvation. Whereas orthodox Christians concerned themselves with individual conversion, social Christians sought the regeneration and reformation of the institutions of society.

Philosophical and Scientific Concepts

While theological reorientation played a major role in the development of liberal Christianity, proponents of a social gospel were only slightly less affected by contemporary philosophical and scientific thought. The philosophy of social Christianity was pragmatism. The first test of religion was: "Does it work?" Liberal theologians restructured religion to meet the expectations of the day. If they could not always find a biblical solution to social problems, most social Christians could at least offer a religious solution.

Closely correlated with the philosophy of pragmatism was the social gospel's affinity for democracy and humanism. For some social Christians, democracy virtually meant socialism. Radical spokesmen such as William Dwight Porter Bliss and George Herron put the emphasis on Christian Socialism. Bliss became active in the Knights of Labor, and Herron, moving further to the left, joined the Socialist party. Most progressive social Christians took a more cautious view of socialism. Although they were interested in its methods and often found many of its goals compatible with those of Christianity, they were sometimes skeptical because of socialism's essentially irreligious, if not atheistic, orientation. Among the skeptics, the Brotherhood of the Kingdom saw much value in the

teachings of socialism, but also perceived that much harm could result if socialism became too powerful and supplanted genuine democracy and Christianity. The Brothers rejected Marxism because of its atheism and sought to make democratic institutions more social.

The evolutionary hypothesis was also of special significance to social Christians.[1] Liberal theologians found in evolution answers to many of the perplexing problems of the Bible. In general, however, advocates of a social gospel rejected the social application of the evolutionary hypothesis known as Social Darwinism. In doing so, they created a dilemma for themselves. They could not fully attain the perfect Kingdom of God so long as the genuinely inferior existed; yet they considered it unchristian intentionally to permit the annihilation of the inferior. The goal they established in response to this problem was the elimination of inferiority by providing adequate housing, education, medical care, work, and anything else needed to raise the deficient to a desirable level.

In pursuit of this objective, liberal Christians identified with nascent social sciences, especially sociology and economics. Although the eminent sociologist William Graham Sumner was a proponent of Social Darwinism, liberal Christians found his views useful as they attempted to formulate their own social views. Lester Frank Ward and Albion W. Small were also influential, as was Josiah Strong. Social gospel advocates were familiar with the economic theories of John R. Commons, Nicolas Paine Gilman, and Richard T. Ely. Combining the precepts of

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[1]On the evolutionary hypothesis as related to Liberal Christianity, see Dillenberger and Welch, _Protestant Christianity_, pp. 200-06.

Scripture, the hypotheses of biological and social sciences, social

Christians found justification for their belief in the "solidarity of

the race." Their attack on capitalism was largely based on their as-

sumption that racial solidarity precluded the "law of tooth and nail"

by which a capitalistic society operated.

Thus, social Christianity drew from many sources as it developed

its ideologies. In general, the basic tenets of the social gospel were

derived from a liberal interpretation of the Bible and of religious ex-

perience. The Bible became a book of principles rather than a book of

laws, a record of human experience rather than an edict from heaven.

Christian experience was construed to be a process rather than a cata-

clysmic event. The Kingdom of God was moved from heaven to earth. Reali-

zation of the Kingdom required amelioration of social conditions, which

would be gradually effected by the application of Christian principles

to the precepts of biological and social sciences. Applied Christianity

was not antipathetic to individualism. Instead, most social gospelers

believed that the individual could develop fully only in the context

of society and that he could develop as a Christian only in the context

of a Christian society. As Henry May says: "Preachers of social Chris-

tianity . . . . shared two characteristics: all were moved by a sense of

social crisis, and all believed in the necessity and possibility of a

Christian solution."[1] Just what that solution was, however, was a point

for argument. As social Christians sought answers, they tended to re-

flect some differences which make it possible to divide them according

[1]May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America, p. 163.

to their theological and social positions.

Range of Positions

Although dividing adherents of a social Christianity into dis-
crete categories is a nearly impossible undertaking, May's oversimpli-
fied tripartite grouping suffices for the purpose of this general survey.
May classifies each social Christian as either "conservative," "pro-
gressive," or "radical."[1]

Conservatives

"Conservative social Christians looked at current social unrest
with fear and horror," according to May. They were skeptical of or
hostile to trade unions and urged the use of solutions such as con-
sumers' cooperatives and savings banks. They offered no practical chal-
lenge to contemporary economic assumptions, yet they were not complacent.
Conservatives exhorted the poor "to be patient in hope of eventual im-
provement." In a word, "conservative social Christianity was essentially
a defensive doctrine."[2]

One of the leading spokesmen of conservative social Christianity
was Joseph Cook, a Congregational minister who "called attention to im-
moral conditions in the factories of Lynn, Massachusetts."[3] Cook sought
theocratic rather than democratic equality and endorsed co-operation,
arbitration, and factory legislation for the protection of women and

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[1]Ibid., pp. 163-265. Note that the term used by May is "Social
Christianity," not "social gospel," which he reserves for progressives.

[2]Ibid., pp. 163-66.

[3]Latourette, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, III, 226.

children. He rejected both the classic wage-fund theory and socialism.[1]

For several years, he presented his ideas in Monday lectures, which were

well-attended in Boston and given wide circulation by newspapers in the

United States and England.[2]

A. J. F. Behrends of Brooklyn was possibly the most authoritative

and influential conservative. He believed that both inequality and hard

work were inevitable. He advocated a living wage, restriction of child

labor, industrial insurance, and free Sabbath.[3] In Socialism and Chris-

tianity, (1886), Behrends sounded a note of urgency which was characteris-

tic of social Christianity. He believed that Christianity must provide

answers to the problems socialists were emphasizing.[4]

Progressives

Most progressive social Christians were cautious enough to main-

tain contact with an essentially conservative public, yet "venturesome

enough to start in new directions." Whether in spite or because of

this ambiguous posture, progressives had greater influence "on the course

of American social thought" than either conservatives or radicals.[5]

Among progressives, Washington Gladden was probably the most

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[1]May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America, pp. 163-66.

[2]Latourette, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, III, 226. For
samples of his lectures, see Joseph Cook, Boston Monday Lectures: Labor,
with Preludes on Current Events (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1880). One
of the lectures, "Infidel Attack on Property," is reprinted in Boase,
The Rhetoric of Christian Socialism, pp. 41-47.

[3]May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America, pp. 166-69.

[4]See Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, pp. 70-78.

[5]May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America, p. 170.

influential. May states, "The principal reason for Gladden's success

. . . was that he expressed the views of a large and growing group of

Protestants."[1] Nevertheless, Gladden was not the official spokesman of

the social gospel. Geographic distances, denominational differences,

subcultural biases, and minor ideological or tactical variations kept

social Christians from uniting into one movement. The general pattern

was for a few individuals who had become restive and who were geographi-

cally proximate to form an organization to study or correct some social

problem. In time, several denominations created commissions or agencies

for social service. Eventually, progressive social Christianity re-

sulted in the formation of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ

in America.

Among early progressives, R. Heber Newton, a liberal Episcopalian

of New York, was second in prominence only to Gladden. Newton "regarded

business as the basic factor in social organization," but rejected

"laissez faire as a regulator of commercial morality." Instead, he pro-

posed "a better distribution of trade, associations for price control

and standardization of materials and workmanship, cooperation, a revival

of craftsmanship, and improved business education." He accused the

contemporary church of emphasizing spirituality to the neglect of morality,

and believed that the church had abandoned its immature children "among

the pitfalls of trade" and left them "to fall into dishonor and ruin."[2]

Newton found other channels of service outside the church as a charter

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[1]Ibid., p. 175.

[2]Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, pp. 32-33.

member of the American Economic Association, an active member of the

Society of Christian Socialists, and as an associate editor of the

Christian Socialist paper, The Dawn.[1]

Another progressive social Christian was Dudley Ward Rhodes,

who launched an attack on the unethical practices of the Cincinnati

Streetcar Company. J. H. W. Stuckenburg led Lutherans into social

Christianity. The first important Baptist spokesman was T. Edwin Brown.

Episcopalians had two able social gospel protagonists in Bishops Henry

Codman Potter and Frederick D. Huntington.[2] Meanwhile, two outstand-

ing social-gospel figures resided in the Midwest. Shailer Mathews,

dean of the Chicago University School of Religion, and his associates

built a bastion for liberal Christianity which was intellectually as

respectable as any to be found. Charles M. Sheldon, pastor of the

Central Congregational Church of Topeka, Kansas, made his major con-

tribution to social Christianity in a novel, In His Steps, or What

Would Jesus Do? The book, probably the most popular social-gospel

novel, "went into thirty-six editions and sold over twenty-two mil-

lion copies in . . . twenty languages."[3]

Radicals

Progressives differed from radicals only slightly in many cases.

Some progressives referred to themselves as radicals, but they generally

lacked the militant revolutionary spirit which characterized the true

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[1]May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America, pp. 155-56.

[2]Ibid., pp. 175-80.

[3]Latourette, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, III, 228.

radical. Progressives worked toward the reformation of existing institutions, while radicals determined to overthrow the present order.

> [Genuine radicals] rejected the basic existing social and economic organization. They did not confine themselves to demanding a "new social spirit" or a few limited reforms. They did not believe that everything was basically all right. The remedies they proposed, though they were Christian, nonviolent, and often unrealistic, were sweeping.
> . . . They spoke in terms of crisis and crusade, instead of continually appealing for patience and conciliation. They were . . . willing to leave the mass of church opinion far behind and to accept rebuke, ridicule and loneliness.[1]

Two radicals stand out from all the others: William Dwight Porter Bliss and George Davis Herron. Bliss was the creative figure in the Society of Christian Socialists. A Congregational minister at first, he later became a Protestant Episcopal priest. Although he remained an ardent churchman, he used many agencies outside the church to achieve his goals. In 1886, he became a member of the Knights of Labor and was a delegate to the national convention the following year. He was an organizer of the Christian Social Union in 1891 and founded the Union Reform League in 1898. He virtually turned his Church of the Carpenter into an institution of social reform.[2]

Probably more influential and certainly more controversial than Bliss was the "western social messiah, George D. Herron."[3] He first attracted attention with an address in 1890 on "the message of Jesus to men of wealth." Within three years, he assumed the professorship of

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[1]May, _Protestant Churches and Industrial America_, pp. 235-36.

[2]Latourette, _Christianity in a Revolutionary Age_, III, 229.

[3]May, _Protestant Churches and Industrial America_, p. 249.

applied Christianity in Iowa College (Grinnell). He founded the Kingdom
movement, which was "reinforced by distinguished lecturers at Iowa Col-
lege, by a periodical, and by the American Institute of Christian Soci-
ology founded at Chautauqua in 1893 with Ely as president and Herron as
organizer and chief instructor."[1] Herron was also largely responsible
for the founding of the Christian Commonwealth Colony in Georgia.

Herron's socialism became more pronounced after the turn of the
century. By 1901 his loss of confidence in the churches, his advocacy of
"free love," and his espousal of socialism led to his being deposed from
the ministry.[2] He joined the Socialist party and tried, for a time, to
give the movement a religious character. After his divorce, in 1901, he
married Carrie Rand, daughter of Mrs. E. D. Rand, who had endowed the chair
of applied Christianity at Iowa College. "As early as 1901 he had as-
serted that Jesus' view of life was 'inadequate for Social Revolution'
and by 1910 he avowedly dropped the Christian phraseology, though his
temper and teaching remained dominantly religious to the end of his life."[3]

Effect on Organizational Life

As convenient as May's tripartite analysis is, it does not reflect
differences which leaders of the social gospel recognized themselves.
Although ideological and tactical variations existed, adherents of social
Christianity interacted freely, not only with other social Christians but
with groups which did not have Christian moorings. The Nationalists and

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[1]Latourette, _Christianity in a Revolutionary Age_, III, 229. Herron's
Kingdom movement had no relationship to the Brotherhood of the Kingdom.

[2]Ibid., pp. 229-30.

[3]Johnson and Malone, _Dictionary of American Biography_, VIII, 594-95.

single-taxers had many goals in common with the social gospel.[1] Existing

ideological differences did have one important effect, however; they led

to a proliferation of social movements. Ironically, the proliferation

continued apace during a time in which church leaders sought unity. Among

progressive movements were the Brotherhood of the Kingdom, the University

Society of the Christian Endeavor, and the Evangelical Alliance, while

more radical movements included the Christian Labor Union and the Chris-

tian Socialist Fellowship.[2]

Proliferation continued for a number of years, producing con-

fusion within social Christianity. Many men who were personally pro-

gressive became members of radical organizations. Leighton Williams and

Walter Rauschenbusch, founders of the progressive Brotherhood of the King-

dom, were also active in societies of Christian Socialists. They, and

many members of the Brotherhood, considered themselves Christian Socialists,

but the Brotherhood included a sufficient number of men who refused to

bear the label that the movement never officially united with Socialism.

While proliferation continued, church leaders sought a basis of

unity. In 1894, Frank Mason North was one of the founders of the Open

and Institutional Church league, a precursor of the Federal Council of

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[1]A close connection existed between Bellamy's Nationalist clubs
and the Society of Christian Socialists. "Mr. Bliss and most of the more
active members of the Boston Group had been interested in both organiza-
tions. Joint meetings were often held; . . . for example, in New York
they combined for a series of lectures by Lyman Abbott, De Costa, . . .
Leighton Williams, Walter Rauschenbusch, and others." See Dombrowski,
The Early Days of Christian Socialism, p. 101.

[2]For brief descriptions of these and other social Christian move-
ments, see May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America, pp. 255-260,
where radical movements are discussed; and Hopkins, The Rise of the
Social Gospel, pp. 42-49, 173-74, 263-67, and 303.

the Churches of Christ in America.[1] The organization of the Federal Council in 1908 symbolized the official recognition of the social gospel, since the Council's basic concern was the social problem.[2] After the founding of the Federal Council, the _raison d'etre_ of many movements disappeared. Some continued because they believed the Federal Council was not equipped to solve a particular problem in which the movement was interested. Still others eschewed affiliation with the Council. Entire denominations such as Southern Baptists steadfastly refused to cooperate.[3] Nevertheless, social Christianity had made a place for itself in America. Although the same idealism which characterized the nascent social gospel may not have survived the frustration produced by war, a concern for normalcy, and a massive economic depression, social Christianity was to survive after having been institutionalized in the Federal Council of Churches.

Summary and Evaluation

No attempt has been made in this chapter to present a complete history of social Christianity. Neither can a final evaluation of the phenomenon be offered at this time. A more complete appraisal of one movement of the social gospel appears in the final chapter of this study in reference to the rhetorical goals and strategies of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom. Several observations of importance may be made at this point, however.

First, the social gospel was not one social movement but many.

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[1]Latourette, _Christianity in a Revolutionary Age_, III, 232.

[2]Dillenberger and Welch, _Protestant Christianity_, pp. 252-53.

[3]Latourette, _Christianity in a Revolutionary Age_, III, 100.

It was, in reality, an ideational matrix which gave birth to social ideologies ranging from conservative to radical. In general, social Christians were theological liberals, embracing higher criticism and a new concept of religious experience. Also, most advocates of an applied Christianity accepted the conclusions of physical and social sciences and adjusted their theological concepts accordingly. The central concept of the social gospel was the Kingdom of God on earth. The method of realizing the Kingdom, however, differentiated one type of social Christian from another. Conservatives attempted to operate within the social and economic status quo. They expected change to come gradually and urged the oppressed to be patient. Progressives were more eager for change and sought it more actively. They neither protected and defended existing institutions, as did the conservatives, nor did they seek to overthrow them, as did the radicals. Instead, they criticized and sought to Christianize the social order by working within it. Radicals, on the other hand, wanted to make more sweeping changes in society. Many of them lost sight of the religious foundation of their movements and became social activists.

Second, one cannot say unequivocally whether social Christians succeeded or failed in their mission. Since the "Kingdom of God on earth" is a nebulous, non-operational concept, one cannot say whether the reforms fostered by social Christians actually brought that Kingdom any closer to reality. Although they advocated many social reforms, most social-gospel spokesmen seem to have had Gladden's difficulty: "He advocated reform but never developed an organized conception of the moral order after that reform had been wrought."[1] Of some of the movements, one might

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[1]Parrott, "The Preaching of Social Christianity," p. 175.

be inclined to say that they succeeded too well, since they eliminated the necessity for their own existence as they cooperated in such ventures as the Federal Council of Churches. Another way of measuring the success of social Christianity might be in relation to its awakening the churches to the social problem. Whether they offered substantial solutions to any of society's most pressing problems, social Christians did at least arouse the interest of the churches.

Nevertheless, social Christian movements were always minority movements. They did not succeed in capturing the attention of the masses. The laboring people outside the churches were not responsive and the laymen within the churches were generally insufficiently educated to comprehend the points which separated liberal Christianity from orthodoxy.[1] For all its concern for the oppressed, social Christianity was a middle-class crusade.

Third, the Brotherhood of the Kingdom, while basically a progressive social-gospel movement, was a microcosm of the social gospel. Its membership included men who were relatively conservative in their social theories as well as those who were, on occasion, quite radical. The movement adopted the Kingdom of God as its watchword, and probably refined the concept more than any social Christian movement. Certainly, the Brotherhood more consistently adhered to the Kingdom ideal in its social program than did most social-gospel movements. The history of the Brotherhood is the subject of the next chapter of this study. In it, as in subsequent chapters, will appear specific characteristics of the Brotherhood which made it similar to or different from other

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[1]Hamilton, "The Social Gospel: I," _Bibliotheca Sacra_, CVII, 214-15.

social Christian movements. Following the brief history of the Brother-

hood, the rest of this paper is devoted to a study of the rhetoric of

the movement.

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORY OF A SOCIAL MOVEMENT:

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE KINGDOM

Introduction

The Brotherhood of the Kingdom was a social movement organized

in 1892. The purpose of the present chapter is to present a history

and analysis of the movement's development. "A genuine social move-

ment is an attempt of certain groups to bring about fundamental changes

in the social order, especially in the basic institutions of property

and labor relationships."[1] Change is the key concept. Movements are

not confined to simple interaction patterns among individuals; they al-

ways involve a desire for change. Also, such desire must be given overt

expression, for "only when the . . . individuals have become aware of

the fact that they have social sentiments and goals in common and when

they think of themselves as being united with each other in action for

a common goal do we acknowledge the existence of a social movement."[2]

A number of conditions may be conducive to the emergence of a

social movement, including "cultural confusion, social heterogeneity,

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[1]Rudolf Heberle, "Observations on the Sociology of Social
Movements," American Sociological Review, XIV (June, 1949), 348-49.

[2]Ibid., p. 349.

individual discontent, and mass communication."[1] Social movements are

most common in industrialized-urbanized societies where cultural con-

fusion and social heterogeneity are most prevalent. The individual

finds ample reason for discontent in such societies. First, the values

and ideals which he has derived "from one or more of his subgroups are

sometimes disparaged or opposed by other subgroups." Second, an in-

dividual's status may be recognized "but nominally or not at all by other

groups." Also, his goals "may be opposed by members of other groups,

especially when his goals violate the values of such groups or of the

society in general." Finally, an individual may be unable to attain

his goals because of personal inadequacy, fortuitous circumstances,

or "the absence or inadequacy of socially defined means to those ends."[2]

Without opposition, social movements would neither emerge nor be

of significance for study. Few movements develop among those who do not

perceive themselves to be disinherited to some degree. What has been

said of progressives is germane to the Brotherhood of the Kingdom.

Hofstadter considered progressivism a status revolution.

> It is my thesis [he wrote] that men . . . who might be designated
> broadly as the Mugwump type, were Progressives not because of economic
> deprivations but primarily because they were victims of an upheaval in
> status that took place in the United States during the closing decades
> of the nineteenth and the early years of the twentieth century. Pro-
> gressivism, in short, was to a very considerable extent led by men who
> suffered from the events of their time not through a shrinkage in

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[1]King, Social Movements in the United States, pp. 13-22.

[2]Ibid., pp. 17-22. See also Hadley Cantril, The Psychology
of Social Movements (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1941), pp. 48-50.
King's analysis is largely a refinement of the earlier one by Cantril.

their means but through the changed pattern in the distribution of deference and power.[1]

Members of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom suffered some of the same status contraction. Those who were ministers sensed the church's loss of influence as the nation became more industrialized. In the average city the saloons outnumbered the churches and became the center of social life for men, while women remained in tenements or worked in sweatshops, and children played in the streets.[2] The Brothers' status was also in jeopardy among conservative theologians and social theorists. As their theological views and social theories became more liberal, the Brothers were ostracized from an increasing number of groups in which they had previously enjoyed some standing.

This is not to suggest that the social gospel was little more than a status revolution or that the Brotherhood of the Kingdom was founded for no other purpose. The movement was begun in part because the members needed a group like the Brotherhood. They needed a group with which they could identify, a group which would support their individual efforts in social reform. They needed a clearing house for ideas and sympathetic, even if critical, ears to listen to those ideas. If not the most compelling reason for the movement's existence, the need for social reinforcement was certainly the most immediate one.

Other motives also prompted men to join the movement. Relying heavily on Max Weber's Theory of Social and Economic Organization, Heberle

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[1]Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, Vintage Books (New York: Random House Publishing Co., 1955), p. 135.

[2]For an analysis of the problem written by a member of the Brotherhood, see Josiah Strong, The Challenge of the City, One of the Forward Mission Study Courses (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1907), pp. 91-166.

suggests four motives which individuals may have in joining and supporting social movements. First, they may feel that the cause of the movement is just and desirable. Second, they may have a strong emotional response to the persons and conditions which the movement attacks. Also, they may affiliate with a movement because of tradition: family, community, or status group. Finally, they may be attracted to the movement because of the expectation of personal advantage.[1]

The life span of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom was too short for membership to become traditional. The group was not even popular among some subgroups (with which the members had previously identified) until after social Christianity gained some status in the first decade of the twentieth century. Brothers did feel that their cause was just, did have people and conditions to attack, and were attracted by the potential for personal advantage. The personal advantage came largely from having a number of like-minded individuals working collectively for a common goal. Like most social movements, the Brotherhood was "united and held together by a sense of belonging together and a consciousness of sharing the same opinions, values, and goals."[2]

Sociologists have suggested several useful constructs for analyzing the development of social movements. Dawson and Gettys postulate a four-stage development which includes "the preliminary stage of social unrest, the popular stage of collective excitement, the stage of formal

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[1]Rudolf Heberle, *Social Movements* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1951), pp. 94-96.

[2]*Ibid.*, p. 269.

organization, and . . . the stage of institutionalization."[1] By the time

the Brotherhood was organized, discontent was widespread in the United

States. While the Brothers met in New York to formulate organizational

policies, the Homestead Strike raged in Pennsylvania. The first annual

conference of the movement in 1893 was only weeks before the failure of

National Cordage Company and the onset of a massive economic panic. In

response to labor unrest, slum conditions, and myriad social problems,

several social Christian movements had already organized. The Evangelical

Alliance "devoted an entire section of its program to 'Christianity and

Social Reforms'" in 1873.[2] The American Economic Association began in

1885, largely in an effort to find Christian solutions to problems

resulting from the conflict between labor and capital.[3] Thus, the Bro-

therhood was a rather late arrival among social-Christian movements.

King suggests a simpler approach to movement analysis. Every

movement has a beginning, which King calls the "incipient phase." Next,

the movement has an "organizational phase," after which the movement at-

tains stability. Depending on the nature of the movement and its goals,

it may continue indefinitely in the "stable phase," or it may disinte-

grate, if its goals have been accomplished.[4] When employing this, or

any idealized construct for movement analysis, one must keep in mind that

some characteristics of one phase may persist into the next. In short,

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[1]Carl A. Dawson and Warner E. Gettys, An Introduction to Sociology (New York: The Ronald Press, 1948), p. 690.

[2]Hopkins, Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 39.

[3]Ibid., pp. 116-17.

[4]King, Social Movements in the United States, pp. 39-49.

the phases are not marked off by discrete points in time but represent

the progressive, evolutionary development of the movement.

The analysis which follows draws heavily on the concepts King

uses. The focus of this study, however, is the rhetoric of the movement.

Therefore, major attention is given to the communication patterns which

developed within the group, producing mutual goals, an ideology, and

strategies; and to rhetorical transactions with non-members in attempts

to make converts, to attack certain elements of the status quo, and to

defend the movement's ideology.

The Movement's Inception

Just what constitutes the beginning of a social movement is not

something on which scholars agree. Viewing a movement rhetorically,

Griffin says: "The inception period of a movement may be described as

that time when the roots of a pre-existing sentiment, nourished by inter-

ested rhetoricians, begin to flower into public notice or when some strik-

ing event occurs which immediately creates a host of aggressor rhetori-

cians and is itself sufficient to initiate the movement."[1] While Griffin's

definition may be useful in reference to movements involving immediate

and obvious crises, it is probably too limited to explain the nature of

the germination process through which most social movements go. In con-

trast, King states that "the incipient phase . . . is one which is only

recognized and defined in retrospect. It begins when the individual or

individuals chiefly responsible for the inception of a movement become

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[1]Griffin, "The Rhetorical Structure of the Antimasonic Movement,"
pp. 146-47.

conscious of that possibility."[1] Some movements never develop beyond the incipient phase. While studies of socio-rhetorical movements have been generally limited to those which have developed fully, some value may come from studies which investigate this beginning phase only to determine why the movement failed to develop.

In the incipient phase, the movement is actually only in prospect in the sense that it has no recognition as a movement. "Goals are likely to be general and regarded by . . . some members as immediately attainable; . . . ideological elements remain nebulous and tactics crude or unformulated." Also in the early phase of the movement, "loyalty is usually intense and group cohesion strong."[2]

A rhetorical analysis of the inception of a movement must include two classes of material. First, if the movement is to be understood its causes must be understood. The first question to be answered is, "What influenced the men who created the movement?" Second, individual and small-group rhetorical efforts demand attention. What crises did the individual face? How did he, together with sympathetic colleagues, attempt to deal with immediate rhetorical problems? What adjustments in invention or channels of propagation had to be made to effect the desired changes? Only a brief historical sketch appears here; the analysis of the rhetoric during inception is reserved for Chapter Four.

Influences on the Movement

The Brotherhood of the Kingdom was organized in response to three

[1] King, Social Movements in the United States, p. 42.

[2] Ibid., p. 43.

currents of influence. First, most of the movement's members were

steeped in liberal theology. Second, many held pastorates in large

urban centers and felt the influence of the "rhetoric of the streets."

Finally, those who had no direct experience were familiar with the

ideas of reformers who painted the social picture so vividly that vi-

carious experience became almost as compelling as direct experience.

Except for the laymen in the movement, the Brothers were thorough-

ly familiar with the tenets of liberal theology.[1] Liberal doctrines

had different degrees of influence on potential Brothers, however.

William Newton Clarke was already professor of New Testament in Toronto

Baptist College by the time Walter Rauschenbusch, Nathaniel Schmidt,

Leighton Williams, and Samuel Zane Batten began their ministries. Two

years before the Brotherhood's organization, Clarke became professor

of Christian theology in Colgate. Thus, theology was the orienting

principle of his life.[2] Although in the mid-eighties the younger

men were familiar with Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Bushnell, and other

liberal theologians, their attention was on more traditional and ortho-

dox doctrines. They devoted themselves to preaching, winning converts,

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[1]The role of liberal theology in the social gospel was the subject
of a portion of Chapter Two. See pp. 25-31, above.

[2]For a concise chronology of Clarke's life, see the General Cata-
logue of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, 1819-1930, pp. xxxiv-
xxxv. For a brief biographical sketch, see [Mrs. William Newton Clarke],
William Newton Clarke: A Biography with Additional Sketches by His Friends
and Colleagues (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916). For an ac-
count of his own pilgrimage from conservatism to liberalism, especially
in relation to the Bible, see William Newton Clarke, Sixty Years with the
Bible; a Record of Experience (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909).

and ministering to their people. Not until other influences affected

them did the younger men turn to liberal theology as justification for

their new social ideas.

In addition to formal theological theories, other factors played

a major role in the development of the Brotherhood. One of the most com-

pelling was the acute awareness of the many unsolved problems in society.

Rauschenbusch, whose church was in Hell's Kitchen, expressed his re-

action to the scene that inspired the name.

> My social view did not come from the Church. It came from outside.
> It came through personal contact with poverty, and when I saw how men
> toiled all their life long, hard, toilsome lives, and at the end had
> almost nothing to show for it; how strong men begged for work and could
> not get it in hard times; how little children died--oh, the children's
> funerals! they gripped my heart--that was one of the things I always
> went away thinking about--why did the children have to die?[1]

Harry Emerson Fosdick graphically describes the effect of direct experi-

ence upon Rauschenbusch's preparation as a social reformer.

> [Rauschenbusch] prepared himself . . . to speak persuasively, as
> a crusader for the Christian social gospel, by beginning his ministry
> in a needy metropolitan parish [Hell's Kitchen] among poor people.
> There he saw human life and want in the raw. There, starting out to
> save souls, one by one, he ran upon the terrific incidence of economic
> ill and social injustice upon the individual. There he saw human
> life as a two-way street, requiring good men to make a good society,
> but also requiring a good society to make good men possible. He
> approached the social applications of Christ's gospel by way of a
> deep, well-informed care for people, one by one.[2]

Meanwhile, Nathaniel Schmidt was having similar experiences as pastor of

the Swedish Baptist Church in New York.

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[1]Rauschenbusch, "Address to Central YMCA, Cleveland," _Associa-
tion Monthly_ (January, 1913), as quoted by Dores Robinson Sharpe, _Walter
Rauschenbusch_ (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1942), pp. 428-29.

[2]Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Introduction" in Sharpe, _Walter Rausch-
enbusch_, p. xxi.

Those who lacked direct experience, who were removed from the ghettos, the sweatshops, and the generally malignant atmosphere of industrial cities, were exposed to such conditions vicariously through the writing and agitation of men such as Henry George. His major work, Progress and Poverty (1879), was a critical analysis of the misery and desolation that lurked in the shadows of the gilded age. Both George and Robert G. Ingersoll attacked organized religion, accusing it of being unethical because it was otherworldly and of being "unfit to meet the demands of the new age of industry and science."[1]

George's influence was, in a measure, positive. Although the Brotherhood did not adopt a specific reform program which reflected the "Single Tax," it was in sympathy with many of George's premises. Ownership of property became a major concern for which the Brothers constantly sought workable, Christian solutions. They considered some type of property the inherent right of every man, but denounced capitalistic domination of land because they considered it atheistic.

Socialistic doctrines also had appeal for the Brotherhood. On several occasions, members of the Brotherhood commended Bellamy, and not a few of them were active in Nationalist clubs. Although most members of the Brotherhood were impressed with socialistic doctrines, the movement did not support the political party. When the movement adopted a program from socialism, it was careful to give the new program a "Christian" interpretation. In retrospect, one can see that the Brothers' penchant for socialism was never so extreme as some historians have tried to make

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[1]Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 59.

it. Henry May has justly placed Rauschenbusch and other members of the
Brotherhood among the moderate progressives.[1] George Mowry, on the other
hand, considers Rauschenbusch a radical who was at least as far to the
left as George D. Herron.[2] Although the Brothers deplored the excesses
of capitalism, their solutions to the problem were Christian solutions.
Herron, however, eventually asserted that the teachings of Jesus were in-
capable of coping with the modern social and economic problems.

In addition to liberal theology, personal experience, and the
work of crusading reformers, two other influences on the Brotherhood
deserve special attention. First, the Brothers were increasingly aware
that the Church was not fulfilling its mission of social reform. What-
ever value Christianity has for the "next world," the Brothers were
certain that the work of the Church had a present application. They
insisted that the church was not intended to be an end in itself. Rather,
it was established by Christ as an instrument, probably the best instru-
ment, for establishing and propagating the Kingdom of God on earth.

The second influence was the personal friendship of the young
men who were immediately responsible for establishing the movement.
Walter Rauschenbusch was the pastor of Second German Baptist Church,
Nathaniel Schmidt of the Swedish Baptist Church, and Leighton Williams
of Amity Baptist Church, New York City. According to Williams, the
young ministers held similar theological views and were even more united
in their social opinions. Concerning the impetus of their movement,

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[1]May, *Protestant Churches and Industrial America*, pp. 170-234.

[2]George E. Mowry, *The Era of Theodore Roosevelt*, Torchbooks
(New York: Harper and Row, 1958), pp. 28-29.

Williams wrote: "We had become impressed . . . with the evils of cherish-

ing individual ambition and became convinced that it was our duty to work

unitedly as far as fidelity to individual conviction permitted us to do."[1]

By 1889, these young men had articulated their desire to establish a reli-

gious group patterned after the Jesuits; but, as Rauschenbusch put it, it

was their desire "to graft the zeal and cohesion of Francis Xavier . . .

on the stock of a purer faith." They wanted to have "the strength and

cohesion of the Jesuit Order but with personal freedom and initiative."[2]

Pre-Organization Rhetoric

The rhetoric of this protestant band of Jesuits is the subject

of the next chapter. Suffice it now to say that rhetorical efforts during

the germination stage of the movement were largely individual. Since most

members, and virtually all the leaders, of the movement were ministers,

they naturally relied heavily on preaching. Most of the preaching from

1886 to 1889 was traditionally evangelistic, although sermons emphasizing

the Kingdom of God increased after 1889. As King has suggested, the move-

ment was largely interested in immediate goals during this period. Basi-

cally, those who were interested in starting such a movement sought an

audience for their ideas. They soon realized that their own parishes

did not provide audiences. Also, they knew that the audiences they did

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[1]Leighton Williams, "The Brotherhood of the Kingdom and Its Work" (from an address delivered at Omaha, Nebraska), The Kingdom, I (August, 1907), n.p. The Kingdom was the Brotherhood's official organ during 1907 and 1908 and is not to be confused with a paper of similar title which Herron's movement published. Any reference made to the latter publication will include the city (Minneapolis).

[2]Walter Rauschenbusch, "Explanations of the Brotherhood," An address at the session on organization of the Rochester chapter of the Brotherhood, 1903, in Rauschenbusch "Papers," NRAB.

have were impotent so far as change was concerned.

The turning point came in 1889. That year marked Rauschenbusch's return to the ministry after an extended illness. It also marked the beginning of interaction among liberal Baptists at the Baptist Congress for the Discussion of Current Questions. Having found sympathetic colleagues in the Baptist Congress, the initiators of the movement accelerated their pace toward organization. Also in 1889, a small number of those who were later to form the Brotherhood began a short-lived paper, For the Right, in the interest of the working people of New York. The failure of the paper was important for a number of reasons. First, it proved that the Brothers were attempting to appeal to the wrong audience. Second, it made them aware of the weaknesses in their sociological theories. And finally, it revealed the nebulous state of their nascent ideology.

By 1892, Samuel Zane Batten, a Baptist minister from Philadelphia, had become associated with the group. Prior to his entrance into a more general social-gospel ministry, Batten had "specialized in a violent form of Prohibition."[1] He was the man who formally suggested the organization of a group which would be devoted to the study and realization of the idea of the Kingdom of God on earth. Organization took place in 1892.[2]

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[1]Mitchell Bronk, "An Adventure in the Kingdom of God," The Crozer Quarterly (January, 1937), p. 23.

[2]The exact date of organization is in question. Three meetings were held in 1892. The May and December meetings were in Philadelphia, the July meeting in Rauschenbusch's home in New York. No one argues for the May meeting as the time of organization. Sharpe and Batten say the July meeting marked the formal beginning of the group. Hopkins, Leighton Williams, and Arthur Cole favor the December date. See Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, p. 116; Batten, "Letter," quoted by Sharpe, p. 117; Charles Howard Hopkins, "Walter Rauschenbusch and the Brotherhood of the Kingdom," Church History, VII (January 1838), 138; Williams, "The Brotherhood of the

The Movement's Organization

During the organizational phase of a movement, a division of labor occurs and a status hierarchy develops, according to King. The group modifies its ideology and recognizes that some of its goals are ultimate rather than immediate. Some immediate goals are necessary, however, to avoid having members of the group lose interest. Goal attainment depends upon the development of a set of doctrines—ideology—which state the basic culture, value-system, and norms of the group. Further, the group must develop cohesion and a general strategy for goal attainment.[1] Also, King suggests that branches or chapters appear during the organizational phase of the movement as membership expansion is sufficient to support them. King's idealized analysis, however, does not reflect precisely what happened in the Brotherhood's case. Some of the patterns which he describes as being typical of one phase of a movement's development seem actually to fit in an earlier or later phase. Therefore, the description of events which follows represents the writer's perception of the development of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom.

Purpose of the Movement

Implied in what King has said is that a movement must determine its reason for existence immediately. As indicated earlier, the group _qua_ group had special significance for the members. Because of their

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Kingdom and Its Work," n.p.; and Arthur S. Cole, "The Brotherhood of the Kingdom," _Baptist Commonweal_, n.d., n.p., in Brotherhood "Minutes," NRAB.

[1]King, _Social Movements in the United States_, pp. 30-49, 67-84.

individual frustrations as they attempted to effect change on the local

level and because of their collective failure to convert the Baptist

Congress to a more liberal position, the Brothers needed a group such as

the Brotherhood.

Fundamentally, however, the movement's raison d'etre was the

propagation of the Kingdom of God ideal. Their action was prompted in

part by their awareness of the divisions which existed in Christianity.

Reflecting on the reasons for the Brotherhood's existence, Rauschenbusch

explained the importance of the Kingdom ideal to the movement.

> We saw the Church of Christ divided by selfishness; every demonination
> intent on its own progress; often at the expense of the progress of
> the Kingdom; churches and pastors absorbed in their own affairs and
> jealous of one another; external forms of church worship and polity
> magnified and the spirit neglected; the people estranged from the
> church and the church indifferent to the movements of the people;
> aberrations from creeds severely censured, and aberrations from the
> Christian spirit tolerated.
> As we contemplated these blemishes on the body of Christ, and
> sorrowed over them in common with all earnest lovers of the church
> of Jesus, it grew clear to us that many of these evils have their
> root in the wrongful abandonment or the perversion of the great aim
> of Christ: the Kingdom of God.[1]

In their formal statement of principles, the Brothers expressed the idea

thus: "Obeying the thought of our Master, and trusting in the power and

guidance of the Spirit, we form ourselves into a Brotherhood of the King-

dom, in order to re-establish this idea in the thought of the church, and

to assist in its practical realization in the world."[2]

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[1]Walter Rauschenbusch, "The Brotherhood of the Kingdom," National Baptist (1893), as quoted by Vernon Parker Bodein, The Social Gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch and Its Relation to Religious Education, Yale Studies in Religious Education (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), p. 18.

[2]Spirit and Aims of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom. The text of the "Spirit and Aims" was reprinted as a part of all Brotherhood publications except monographs. It appears separately as Brotherhood Leaflet

Since the central concept, the superordinate goal, of the Brother-
hood was the Kingdom of God, the group was more "value-oriented" than
"power-oriented."[1] Formal membership in the movement probably never
exceeded 150 at any given time. Twenty years after the movement's found-
ing, Rauschenbusch asserted that "the organization has been too unselfish
to become large, but it was a powerful support and stimulus in those
early days of isolation."[2] Support for movements with value-orientation
comes from a conviction of the worth of the movement's program or "the
degree to which the key decisions which govern the movement's course
. . . are directed toward promoting the . . . program."[3] In other words,
a potential convert must believe in either the value the group attempts
to propagate, the method of propagation, or both. In general, the success
of "value-oriented" movements is measured "by the degree to which de-
sired changes are promoted in the larger society," rather than by ad-
ditional membership.[4] The Brotherhood's problem at this point was that
of making operational a concept such as the Kingdom of God. In an effort
to do so, the group spent several years defining its ideology.

Ideology of the Movement

The Brotherhood's major goal during the first five years (1892-

No. 1. It was adopted as a basis for organization in August, 1893.

[1]See Ralph H. Turner and Lewis M. Killian, Collective Behavior
(Englewood Cliff, N. J.: Prentice-Hall , 1957), pp. 331-38 on "value-
orientation," and pp. 361-64 on "power-orientation."

[2]Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order, p. 94.

[3]Turner and Killian, Collective Behavior, p. 331.

[4]Ibid., p. 335.

1897) was to develop an ideology. In-group interaction in pursuit of

an ideology is the subject of chapter five of this study. Beginning

in 1893, the Brotherhood held annual conferences at Marlborough, New

York.[1]   Also, each spring several members met in conjunction with the

Amity Missionary Conference.

All who attended the first Marlborough conference were clergymen,

except for Mornay Williams, an attorney and the brother of Leighton

Williams, one of the movement's founders. The stated purpose of the

first conference was to have papers read on the subject of the Kingdom,

with a view to having them published. Unfortunately, financial diffi-

culties made publication impossible, and none of the papers were pre-

served. The "Minutes" of the conference reveal several things about the

movement, however. First, the "Kingdom" was the movement's consuming

interest. Virtually every major address related in some way to the King-

dom idea. Second, the Brotherhood was a voluntary association, guided by

democratic principles. As the movement developed, practice did not always

reflect the ideal, but the ideal did not change. Also, the conference

included a discussion of most of the issues which were to be the move-

ment's concern throughout its existence.[2]

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[1]There was one exception in 1902, when the meeting was moved to
Morristown, New Jersey.

[2]Papers read included: "The Kingdom of God"--George Dana Boardman;
"The Two Equal Commandments"--H. H. Peabody; "The Social Ideals of the
Hebrew Theocracy"--Nathaniel Schmidt; "The Present Kingdom"--William New-
ton Clarke; "The Program of the Kingdom"--Samuel Zane Batten; "The Rela-
tion of State, Church, and Kingdom"--Leighton Williams; "The Teacher in
the Kingdom"--S. B. Meeser; "The Ethics of the Kingdom"--Walter Rauschen-
busch; and "The Christianity of Christ"--R. G. Boville. See the "Minutes"
of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom, pp. 9-10, NRAB.

The second conference, August 7-12, 1894, attracted more than

twice the number of the first. Sessions were devoted to "The Holy Spirit,"

"The Kingdom of God on Earth," "The Land Question," "Christian Union,"

and "The Coming of the Kingdom."[1] From one to three papers were read at

each session and open discussions followed. Thus, with each member

expressing the results of his thought and research or his responses to

each paper, the Brotherhood continued to refine its ideology. By 1897,

the movement's ideology was relatively complete.

Group Cohesion

Although a group's ideology may become relatively stable, devel-

oping and maintaining group cohesion is a never-ending task. Having an

ideology in which the members can believe is one means of developing co-

hesion. However, if a movement is to survive and thrive it must have an

"esprit de corps." Blumer says, "Esprit de corps might be thought of as

the organization of feelings on behalf of the movement."[2] Members in a

movement must "have [a sense] of belonging together and of being identified

with one another in a common undertaking." When members develop a feeling

of comradeship, "relations tend to be of co-operation instead of personal

competition." Blumer suggests three ways in which a group may develop

esprit de corps: "the development of an in-group--out-group relationship,

the formation of informal fellowship association, and the participation

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[1]See the Report of the Second Annual Conference of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom (1894), NRAB.

[2]Herbert Blumer, "Collective Behavior," in Principles of Sociology, ed. by Alfred McClung Lee (2nd ed., rev.; New York: Barnes and Noble, 1951), p. 205.

in formal ceremonial behavior."[1]

As chapter seven of the present study indicates, the in-group--out-group relationship of a movement is not always easy to specify. In a sense, "out-group" refers to the enemies of a movement. Yet the concept enemy is often taken to mean "hostile," when it may need to be construed as "apathetic." A movement such as the Brotherhood had to identify its enemies, but it also had to identify with other non-members.

The Brotherhood gave much attention to group cohesion during the annual conferences, the "retreats" at Amity, and other interaction situations. In addition, they published "circular letters," which were sent to members and other interested people. Within a year of organization, the ceremony of the movement began to develop. By 1894, "The Battle Hymn of the Kingdom" had been written, and the members adopted it as a theme song. An official membership pen and stationary, together with a seal provided both identification and a feeling of permanency. Also, the Brothers were jealous for their private business meetings. Not only were the meetings not open to the public, but records of private business meetings were not entered into the "Minutes" of the Brotherhood. In addition to purely ceremonial matters, the Brotherhood devoted much of its time to the formulation of in-group rhetoric, including a rhetoric of conversion and indoctrination, as well as means of providing cohesion.

Group Leadership

Group cohesion may depend in part on the movement's leadership.

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[1]Ibid., pp. 206-08.

Of leadership, Turner and Killian state that "more is written and less

known . . . than almost any . . . social phenomenon."[1] Most theories of

leadership suggest that it is a set of functions rather than, or as well

as, a status designation. An individual who does not hold an office in

an organization may still perform leadership functions which members of

the group consider vital. In this connection, King makes a distinction

between "charismatic" and "legal" leaders. The former stems from author-

ity and power that reside in the person of the leader; the latter derives

power from the office held.[2] The Brotherhood of the Kingdom established

an Executive Committee almost immediately. In its hands resided all the

power to control the movement, theoretically. Membership of the committee

changed slightly from year to year, and in later years the number was in-

creased so that ten or more men served each year. In reality, however,

the Executive Committee had little power beyond that of publication and

distribution of materials and of conducting the movement's official busi-

ness during the interim between conferences. The real power rested with

Leighton Williams, Walter Rauschenbusch, Samuel Zane Batten, and to a

lesser extent with William Newton Clarke, George Dana Boardman, and

Nathaniel Schmidt. Williams was the organizer, giving attention to the

paperwork and the minutiae of the movement. Batten functioned as the

agitator, who created interest among original members and continued to

attract attention for the movement as movement. Rauschenbusch, if he

were not at first, became the prophet, almost the charismatic leader

of the movement.

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[1]Turner and Killian, Collective Behavior, p. 454.

[2]King, Social Movements in the United States, p. 35.

King says that in charismatic movements one leader is usually

dominant. All other functionaries have ranks of lesser importance when

compared with the "messiah." Further, he states that there is seldom a

lieutenant fully capable of assuming the role when the leader dies or

steps down.[1] Rauschenbusch was not a charismatic leader in the sense

that Father Divine or Martin Luther King might have been in their respective

movements. Nevertheless, the loss of Rauschenbusch as a leader virtually

tolled the knell of the movement. The loss came gradually, however. After

1907, Rauschenbusch became the recognized prophet of the social gospel,

and his time and energy for the Brotherhood were limited. After the pub-

lication of Christianizing the Social Order (1912), demands on his time

became so great that he completely ignored the Brotherhood, and the move-

ment suffered rapid decline.

The Sherifs suggest that once this leadership hierarchy has been

established, it is relatively stable. Such was certainly the case with

the Brotherhood. Members look to leaders for the analysis of the situa-

tion, formulation of an ideology, and determination of strategy. Leaders

also provide the articles of the movement's platform and the formulas--

for example, slogans--for expressing the movement's goals and values.[2]

So long as leaders fulfill the expectations of members, leadership remains

unaltered. Simons has identified a number of rhetorical requirements

which the leaders of a rhetorical movement must meet: (1) "They _must_

attract, _maintain_, and _mold_ _workers_ (i.e., _followers_) _into an efficiently_

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[1]_Ibid._, p. 36.

[2]Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn Sherif, _An Outline of Social Psy-
chology_ (Rev. ed.; New York: Harper and Row, 1956), p. 726.

organized unit." (2) "They must secure adoption of their product by the larger structure (i.e., the external system, the established order)." (3) "They must react to resistance generated by the larger structure."[1] In general, leaders of the Brotherhood had little difficulty with either the first or last requirement. The second is more difficult to evaluate, simply because the Brotherhood's "product" is not easy to identify. The general acceptance of the social gospel among both churches and colleges, however, is indicative that this and other similar movements were relatively successful in keeping their ideas before the public. The nebulous nature of the Kingdom of God idea made actual evaluation of success impossible. Leaders of the movement were forced to settle for magnifying short-range successes such as legislation.

Two leadership crises almost destroyed the Brotherhood before it launched its public program. While Nathaniel Schmidt was professor of Semitic languages and literature in Colgate University, he was suddenly relieved of his duties in 1896. William Newton Clarke, another Brother, was professor of Christian theology in Colgate at the time. He apparently did nothing in Schmidt's behalf. Whether for personal or tactical reasons, Clarke remained silent. Ironically, his own views were at least as liberal as Schmidt's, yet Clarke did not come under attack. Rauschenbusch wrote a letter in Schmidt's defense and sent it to several Baptist leaders, requesting that they support his protest of Schmidt's dismissal. Fortunately, a position of even wider influence

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[1]Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," Quarterly Journal of Speech, LXI (February, 1970), 3-4.

opened for Schmidt at Cornell. He accepted the position and averted

possible catastrophe for the Brotherhood.[1]

The other crisis was even more of an in-group crisis than Schmidt's.

Occurring earlier, it was nevertheless closely related to Schmidt's pro-

blem. Leighton Williams signed Rauschenbusch's defense of Schmidt and

alienated several Baptist leaders in the process. Shortly before the

Schmidt affair, Williams appeared in court and swore that the "City Mis-

sion Society of New York was organized contrary to the usual Baptist pol-

ity." Also, Williams directed a "bitter attack upon the Baptist ministers

of New York for acting decisively but without proof against a minister

accused of adultery."[2] For some reason, Rauschenbusch did not stand by

Williams, and Schmidt wrote him, criticizing him for his failure to do

so. Data are not available to indicate how the conflict was resolved

among the Brothers, but apparently their allegiance to their super-

ordinate goal was sufficient to overcome the problem. The two incidents

did impede the progress of the movement, however, and they made the first

years of what might be called "the stabilization phase" of the movement

rather unproductive ones.

The Movement's Stabilization

In spite of the two crises just mentioned, the Brotherhood was

prepared by 1897 to begin its public program. Actually, of course, the

group had used every available opportunity to transmit the program before

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[1]See Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 104-08.

[2]See ibid., pp. 108-10. The latter incident is sometimes re-
ferred to as the Tabernacle Church affair; see p. 108 below.

1897. Not until that time, however, was its ideology and strategy suf-
ficiently defined to permit an effective program of reform to function.
The direction taken during the organization of the movement was not al-
tered significantly after 1897; it was simply intensified. Once the
internal conflicts were resolved, the movement became relatively stable
until 1907. Its organization, ideology, and tactics were clearly de-
fined, as were status relationships.[1]

After 1897, members became involved in regional social and
ecclesiastical reforms. They initiated or accentuated social-gospel
programs in their local parishes. They organized local chapters in
Rochester, Boston, and Los Angeles. The movement, once largely Baptist,
soon included representatives of at least six denominations from nine-
teen states, the District of Columbia, and six foreign countries. In
addition, the Brothers established fraternal relations with like-minded
groups in Germany, England, and France.[2]

During this decade, little was actually done in the name of the
Brotherhood. Instead, the Brothers "projected themselves and their mes-
sage into dozens of voluntary associations." George Dana Boardman devoted
himself largely to peace organizations and to means of securing arbitra-
tion in international disputes. Leighton Williams expanded the Institu-
tional Church ministry of Amity Baptist Church. Batten, who lived in

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[1]On the "stabilization phase," see King, _Social Movements in the
United States_, pp. 46-49.

[2]On Brotherhood membership, see Frederic M. Hudson, "The Reign
of the New Humanity: A Study of the Background, History, and Influence
of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation,
Columbia University, 1968), pp. 413-24.

Nebraska during most of the period, attacked the alcohol industry through various temperance organizations and served as president of the Nebraska Anti-Saloon League. Clinton Rogers Woodruff, an attorney from Philadelphia, was influential in the National Municipal League. William Newton Clarke served as a professor in a seminary, lectured at several colleges and universities, and published four major books during this decade.[1] Meanwhile, Rauschenbusch resigned his pastorate in New York City and accepted a position in Rochester Baptist Seminary. From that time, Rochester became a center of social-gospel activity. A prominent feature of the movement's strategy during this period was participation in interdenominational religious activities. Local federations of churches especially attracted them, and the Brothers were instrumental in organizing several local groups. Participation was virtually forced upon them because their own denominations were often cool and unreceptive to their liberal views.

The period from 1908-1913 is difficult to classify. In many ways, the movement was still in its stable phase. By 1907, it had become a recognized social-gospel force. With the establishment of the Federal Council of Churches, however, and the inclusion of Christian ethics in the curricula of colleges and seminaries, several Brothers felt that no need existed for their movement. Yet this period was probably the movement's most productive, although the members' activities eventually led them away

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[1]William Newton Clarke, An Outline of Christian Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898); Can I Believe in God the Father? (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899); What Shall We Think of Christianity? (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899); and The Use of the Scriptures in Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905). Clarke used the first book as a basis for his regular lectures in Colgate. The others grew out of lectures at prominent universities.

from the Brotherhood into wider circles of social influence. The most

definite change to come over the movement was that members began to

seek places of service within their own denominations rather than risk

further alienation. Success in this attempt provided their most im-

portant channels of propagation during this period.

The Movement's Decline

The Brotherhood of the Kingdom declined rapidly after 1913, in

part because the Brothers had broadened their interests and activities to

such an extent that no time remained for the movement. Also, the Bro-

therhood lost its greatest prophet during this period. At first the

loss was gradual, but it was nonetheless real. Rauschenbusch's books

sold by the thousands and he was in constant demand as a lecturer. As

his personal audience increased, his time for and interest in the Brother-

hood declined. The movement did not formally disband; it simply dis-

integrated. Or, as Mitchell Bronk so aptly put it: Finally, "there

happened the War. An era ended—and many other things besides . . .

[the] Brotherhood."[1]

Summary

Thus did the Brotherhood of the Kingdom develop from its incep-

tion in the late 1880's to its decline in the second decade of the twen-

tieth century. The movement was one of the more durable and "perhaps

the most important social-gospel society in a period remarkable for or-

ganizations."[2] During the movement's germination period (inception),

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[1]Bronk, "An Adventure in the Kingdom of God," pp. 27-28.

[2]Hopkins, Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 131.

rhetorical efforts were largely individual, except for cooperation in the Baptist Congress and in the publication of For the Right. The impetus for the movement came either from liberal theology or from direct or vicarious experience with the social problem. Further, the movement was necessary because individuals realized that they either had no audience or were addressing the wrong audience.

Formal organization occurred in 1892, after which the Brotherhood devoted almost five years to in-group interaction, ideological definition, and the development of cohesiveness. Although they made efforts during the organizational phase to enlarge their audience, evidence suggests that the movement was not well-known outside Marlborough except among other social reformers. By 1897, the movement's ideology was well-defined and it had attracted a coterie of reformers and liberal theologians both in the United States and abroad.

Having overcome two serious crises within the membership, the movement became relatively stable by 1897. Throughout the following decade, the Brotherhood's interest was propagandizing for the Kingdom of God, largely through interdenominational channels and the printed media. By 1908, the movement's attention had turned back toward the denominations of the respective members. After the founding of the Federal Council of Churches, the Brothers attempted to implement social programs within their own churches.

Finally, acceptance of social Christianity marked the decline of the Brotherhood and most similar movements. Individuals such as Rauschenbusch and Batten were forced to devote so much of their time to other organizations that little time remained for the movement.

Without a parting word or final ceremony, the Brotherhood of the King-

dom simply ceased to exist, as did so many social Christian movements

in the face of the World War.

The specific rhetorical problems which the movement faced during

the almost thirty years of its existence will be discussed in the chapters

which follow. The most serious problem faced by the movement was de-

scribed by Mitchell Bronk more than twenty years after the movement's

dissolution. The Brothers were never certain regarding the Kingdom, "how

[they] . . . wanted it to come, and how [they] wanted the church to re-

gard it."[1] How they started their rhetorical journey is the subject of

the next chapter.

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[1]Bronk, "An Adventure in the Kingdom of God," p. 28.

CHAPTER IV

RHETORIC OF THE EARLY PERIOD

Introduction

The idea for the Brotherhood of the Kingdom originated in 1887

or 1888 with the newly formed friendship of Walter Rauschenbusch,

Leighton Williams, and Nathaniel Schmidt. The movement remained in its

germination or inception stage until Samuel Zane Batten joined this cir-

cle and specifically recommended procedures for organizing the movement.

Rhetorical efforts during the period from 1887 to 1889 were largely

independent. Ministers addressed their own parishioners, wrote occasional

articles, and addressed local ministers' conferences--usually within

their own denominations. In 1889, several liberal Baptists began to

join forces in the sessions of the Baptist Congress for the Discussion

of Current Questions. The same year, Leighton Williams, Walter Rauschen-

busch, J. E. Raymond, and Elizabeth Post started For the Right, a monthly

paper published in the interest of the working people of New York. The

rhetoric of the early period (1887-1892) is the subject of this chapter.

Chapter divisions represent the major rhetorical channels employed.

Preaching of the early period is the first topic. Unfortunately, only the

sermons of Rauschenbusch are available for analysis. The homiletic

activity of other leaders must be inferred from biographical and other

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secondary materials. The emphasis of the analysis is on the change from

traditional evangelical motifs to a social gospel. Further, consideration

is given to the role of rhetoric in changing the speaker and to the

changed rhetoric of the speaker. The Brothers-to-be faced a completely

different rhetorical problem in the Baptist Congress than they had in

their own pulpits. In both the Congress and their pulpits the speakers

were concerned with flooding existing channels of communication with

their new social message. In the Congress, however, the goal was to

enlist the support of other ministers for social Christianity. Failure

to accomplish this goal precipitated the formation of the Brotherhood.

This chapter deals also with For the Right. The editors' goal was never

fully clarified, but the stated purpose of the paper was to provide an

organ for the working people. The problems which the editors experienced

provided additional justification for a group like the Brotherhood.

Early Preaching

Although the Brotherhood of the Kingdom emphasized the laity

and attempted to break down the barrier between the sacred and the

secular, the clergy and the laity, the movement was fundamentally a

clerical movement. Men such as Rauschenbusch, Batten, Schmidt, and

Williams did not emerge from seminaries fully developed social-gospel

preachers, however. When they started their ministries, Gladden had

already established himself as an advocate of social Christianity.

Josiah Strong published Our Country (1885) at about the time these young

men were entering their first pastorates. In the middle of the 1880's,

however, most of these young preachers were unconcerned about Gladden

and Strong. Gladden was removed from them by difference in age, denomi-
nation and location. Strong was important to them only because of his
activity in the Evangelical Alliance. Although exposed to liberal theology
to some extent in their seminary curricula, the young men were less
committed to theoretical studies and more committed to the orthodox goal
of "saving souls one by one." Neither were they aware of the growing
interest in social Christianity. Reflecting on the period some years later,
Mitchell Bronk said that the preaching of the 1880's and 1890's was
"entirely concerned with individual salvation and individual morality,"
except for that which attacked the "drink evil" as being a national, social
problem, instead of a specific, individual problem. The only other social
crusade Bronk recalled was that of the feminists, especially Susan B.
Anthony, who "made the enfranchisement of women a very religious matter,
but all the men and ninety percent of the women . . . took her splendid
argument as a joke."[1]

Men who took social Christianity seriously entered upon their social
ministry via one of three paths. Some of them, such as William Newton
Clarke and George Dana Boardman, turned to social Christianity as a result
of their liberal theology. Virtually all preachers of social Christianity
embraced liberal theological tenets to some degree, but commitment to the
new theology followed commitment to social action for some. The second
avenue of entrance was direct experience with the social problem. Williams
succeeded his father, William R. Williams, as the pastor of Amity Baptist
Church. The congregation was largely low-middle to middle class, but the

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[1]Bronk, "An Adventure in the Kingdom of God," p. 21.

church's location made possible a rather extensive "institutional church"

ministry. Rauschenbusch, meanwhile, as pastor of the Second German Baptist

Church had direct experience in the ghettos. Men who had no direct exper-

ience in urban-industrial centers learned of the social problem through

the agitation of men such as Henry George. In reality, most social

Christians travelled all three roads--liberal theology, direct and vicari-

ous social experience. The point is that one of the three initiated the

response toward social Christianity.

William Newton Clarke's entrance into social Christianity was

strictly via liberal theology. The social implications of Christianity

may be inferred from some of his later works such as An Outline of

Christian Theology, but he was one of the Brothers who never really

developed a concept of a social program.[1] In Sixty Years with the Bible,

Clarke reflects on his ministry during the seventies, eighties, and

nineties. He makes no reference to social issues in the book.[2] Yet,

indirectly, one may infer that his liberal view of biblical inspiration

changed Clarke's rhetorical approach. First, it changed his use of the

Bible in arguments from authority. Second, it changed the channel through

which Clarke's rhetoric was to be operative. Writing of the eighties,

Clarke says: "My message was not so directly borrowed from the Bible as

in former years, and was more suggested or inspired by it. Not the sight

of my eyes upon the page, so much as the experience of my mind and heart

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[1]Clarke, An Outline of Christian Theology, pp. 157-61, 354-60.

[2]The book offers compelling demonstrations of the importance of
higher criticism and liberal views of inspiration.

with its truths, was placing it at my disposal."[1] Also during the

eighties, Clarke became professor of New Testament interpretation in

Toronto Baptist College, where he served four years. Concerning his

response to the new position, Clarke writes: "Not more truly than in

the pastorate, but in a special sense, the Bible was now my special field."[2]

And teaching became his special field. Although he was the pastor of the

Baptist church in Hamilton, New York from 1887-1890, he promptly returned

to the classroom and spent the rest of his life training young seminarians,

a role which several of the Brothers were destined to play.

One might be inclined to say that the rhetoric of the new theology

provided a sense of role definition for Clarke. In the years of the Bro-

therhood's inception, not Clarke's preaching but his response to the new

theology is the important thing. To some extent, the observation is cor-

rect. The point is, however, that Clarke was both influenced by the

new theology and was an influence for liberal theology. Being older than

most of the men who were to join the Brotherhood, Clarke had already

found his audience. In later years, other members of the movement

realized the wisdom of his choice.

Nathaniel Schmidt is something of an enigma in the Brotherhood.

Little is known of his early preaching ministry except that he was the

pastor of the Swedish Baptist Church in New York City for almost three

years. Like Rauschenbusch, Schmidt studied in Europe, taking his Masters

at the University of Berlin. Throughout his life, Schmidt seems to have

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[1]Ibid., p. 127.

[2]Ibid., p. 156.

been more dedicated to a liberal study of the Bible than to a social pro-

gram. However, after the turn of the century, he left the Baptists and

united with the Ethical Culture movement. His social gospel, such as it

was, was a product of his brief pastorate in New York.[1]

The preeminent preacher of social Christianity within the Bro-

therhood was Walter Rauschenbusch. His early sermons, however, bear few

marks of the reformer. Instead, the sermons evidence conservatism, pietism,

and evangelicalism.[2] For the present study, several observations about

Rauschenbusch's preaching are important. First, his preaching and pastoral

ministry were important to his own role definition. In the period from

1886-1892, Rauschenbusch changed from the preacher-evangelist, to the

pastor-teacher, and finally to the social reformer.[3] Second, as implied

by the preceding statement, Rauschenbusch changed the focus of his

preaching. In the first stage, his sermons were orthodox, evangelical

appeals for repentance, conversion, and personal righteousness. Most of

the sermons were in German and were addressed to all members of his con-

gregation. In the second stage, the influence of liberal theology is

apparent. Rauschenbusch ceases to hand down biblical edicts and begins

to warmly admonish and guide his people. In the final stage, he becomes

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[1]For biographical material on Schmidt, see the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School Bulletin, III (October, 1930), xxxiv; also, Johnson and Malone, Dictionary of American Biography, XXII, Supplement Two (1958), 596-97.

[2]See Max L. Stackhouse, "The Formation of a Prophet: Reflections on the Early Sermons of Walter Rauschenbusch," The Andover Newton Quarterly, LXI (January, 1969), 139.

[3]Rauschenbusch assumed the pastorate in 1886; the Brotherhood was organized in 1892.

more active in social reform, including sermons on political issues.

A third evidence of change is in Rauschenbusch's analysis of the social

problem. Whereas he initially considered the social problem merely a

manifestation of individual or personal sin, he came to the belief that

the problem was inherent in the institutions of society. Finally,

Rauschenbusch's early sermons reflect his awareness of a need for a

larger audience. He went beyond his own denomination looking for new

channels for his social message.

The changing emphasis of Rauschenbusch's sermons developed slowly,

but it began almost immediately.[1] As Clarke was changed in response to

the new theology, Rauschenbusch responded to the "message from the street,"

the actual conditions of the ghetto. His awareness of the social problem

caused him to change his reading habits markedly. As a result, he was

acted upon rather than being the actor for a time. Instead of the sermons

of evangelicals such as Dwight L. Moody, Edward Judson, Alexander McClaren,

J. Hudson Taylor, and John A. Broadus, Rauschenbusch turned to the works

of Richard Ely, E. J. Shriner, and Richard Heath, the last of whom became

a member of the Brotherhood. He found in F. H. Giddings, John A. Fitch,

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[1]The writer has examined Rauschenbusch's sermons, which are in the American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, New York, NRAB. Early sermons are in virtually unreadable German script, mixed with Rauschenbusch's own variety of speed writing. Fewer outlines are in German after the second year in Rochester. Evening sermons are in English before morning sermons, probably because a larger number of young people were present in the evening. The English versions also include a personalized shorthand. Outlines are substantively rather complete, but they reflect little of the speaker's style. Although most of the outlines seem to be notes in preparation for a sermon, some appear to be notes jotted down by the speaker after a message has been delivered. Interpolations appear in practically all sermons whose dates indicate that the speaker used them more than once.

E. A. Ross, R. H. Edwards, John Graham Brooks, Brooks Taylor, Tom L.

Johnson, and Emile de Laveleye "a confirmation of his own economic

thought." He also read Jacob Riis, Edward Bellamy, Henry George, Tolstoi,

Mazzini, John Spargo, Werner Sombart, and Paul Sabatier, thus familiar-

izing himself with contemporary thought.[1]

In addition to his observations and his reading, a personal tragedy

in the winter of 1888 affected Rauschenbusch's preaching. After having

Russian grippe, he returned to work sooner than he should have and became

totally deaf. His personal anguish made him more sensitive to the social

problem. He did not, however, launch an immediate social campaign. In-

stead, his sermons indicate a struggle to hold on to that which was

desirable in traditional Christianity by relating social concern to ortho-

dox concepts.[2] Even if he had wanted to make a more drastic change,

the nature of his church probably precluded it. Many of the church's

members were elderly, conservative people. The young pastor had to

find a way to preach his new gospel without alienating his parishioners.

After his deafness and return from a leave of absence several

months long, he began to interpret the New Testament more practically and

less literally. In doing so, he was able to maintain rapport with his

conservative parishioners. The change was so subtle that most of his

uneducated church members probably did not notice it. On Easter, 1889,

he used the text: "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."[3]

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[1]Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 64-65.

[2]Ibid., pp. 65-67.

[3]John 20:20.

Although affirming the resurrection of Christ, Rauschenbusch stressed

the continuity of Christ's existence. Instead of emphasizing the eternal

Saviour, awaiting in heaven, the preacher pictured Jesus as "the present

Saviour and helper." In the last two points of the sermon, he returned

to fully orthodox concepts, declaring that Jesus would be the future

judge and redeemer and that both the disciples of long ago and the people

of New York had "eternal life through him."

If the concepts changed too subtly for his people to notice,

the new role of the pastor-teacher was more obvious. Commenting on

this new role, Stackhouse explains the change.

> The interaction of Rauschenbusch and his congregation begins
> to be quite noticeable. He is no longer Der Herr Pastor delivering
> the absolute truth from on high, but a man of his people teaching,
> awakening, and showing, although it is not until November of the
> following year [1890] that he can say that he is not sure on a
> particular matter and that hence his ideas ought to be seen as
> counsels, not commands.[1]

Not only did Rauschenbusch change his own relationship with his people,

but an increasing number of his sermons reflect his attitude toward sin

as a social matter. In June, 1889, Rauschenbusch developed the theme of

"racial solidarity" in a message on the Golden Rule. He said that people

comprise a social body which is like a rod of iron: It cannot be jarred

in "any place without making every molecule in it jar."[2] Moreover, he

insisted that those who suffer immediately as the result of social sins

are not the only ones to suffer; suffering is passed on to posterity.

Step by step Rauschenbusch developed the motifs which became the

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[1]Stackhouse, "The Formation of a Prophet," p. 151.

[2]Rauschenbusch, "Sermons," XIV (June 9, 1889), NRAB.

nucleus of his social thought. Also, by September, 1889, the transition

from orthodoxy to liberal theology was complete. For several months be-

fore that time, Rauschenbusch's rhetoric was probably as much speaker-

centered as it was audience-centered. That is, his rhetoric functioned

as self-persuasion as he groped for a realistic social Christian message.

On September 8, 1889, Rauschenbusch presented his most comprehensive and

compelling statement concerning the temporal Kingdom of God. As might

be expected, he delivered the sermon in the evening when his audience

was predominantly youth. The change from orthodoxy is best exemplified

in the speaker's protest against selfish Christianity: "thinking only of

getting oneself to heaven." He argued that Christianity had the power to

change men so they could remove mountains of social evil.[1]

Although Rauschenbusch continued to function as the pastor-teacher

of his people, he assumed an additional role as a social crusader by late

1889. He was sustained in his new role by his fellowship with Williams

and Schmidt, as well as liberals with whom he interacted in the Baptist

Congress. Having spent a year preparing his people and reinforcing his

own economic views, Rauschenbusch began to preach more on economic ethics.

On November 1, 1890, his sermon was "Laissez Faire and Christianity." In

it, the preacher argued that laissez faire is an economic theory comparable

to "the gospel according to Cain," based on selfishness and on the dis-

avowal of obligation for others. The attack on laissez faire probably

meant little to his working-class parishioners, but the argument which

followed was a direct appeal to them. Contending that the church had

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[1]Ibid., XV (September 8, 1889), NRAB.

led the way in teaching brotherhood, Rauschenbusch asserted: "Whatever the church does, the world will do." He concluded that, although trade was still backward and unchristianized, the "principle of association, which is the principle of Christianity, is sweeping onward, and "it may be that the time will come when trade [is] also converted."[1]

Later in the year, Rauschenbusch spoke on the "Ethics of Jesus." In the sermon, he refers to himself as a radical. He considered Christ a radical and Christianity revolutionary, but his ideas require clarification. The radical revolutionary whom Rauschenbusch had in mind is "pure even in thought; truthful in words and in exercises of religion; loving, no angry words or deeds, no retaliation, no limit to love; simple, living by work from day to day." Far from advocating a revolutionary overthrow of existing institutions, Rauschenbusch concludes that "only by living can you persuade others. . . . Only by [a] different rule of actual life can [you] persuade men that Christians [are] different from others. . . . By personal sacrifices to live so, shall [we] reform the world, and make it possible for the weak to live up to it and shall force even the worldly to adjust."[2] What is unfortunate is the choice of terms. His concept of "radical" appears to be Christian, but it is by no means certain that his people fully understood the meaning of the term as he used it.

Rauschenbusch adopted a more radical posture in the "Social Prob-

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[1]Rauschenbusch, "Sermons," XVII (November 1, 1890; repeated with only minor updating of illustrations on August 21, 1898, Rochester), NRAB.

[2]Ibid., XVIII (December 28, 1890), NRAB.

lem, Our Problem," an address which he repeated often during and after

1891. His first argument is that society's greatest need is not simply

the abolition of poverty. Poverty, he contends, has three causes:

nature, individual character, and the construction of society. Arguing

from residues, he concludes that the last is the cause of "the social

problem." Mere poverty is not the problem: "When a camping party lives

on fish and hard tack, all working and sharing alike, there is poverty

but no social problem." Likewise, "When South Sea Islanders live in

abundance of nature, yet in grass huts . . . because [they have] no

desire or ambition for more, [there is] poverty, but no social problem."

Next, the speaker avers that the social problem is a result of juxtaposing

those who work hard and have little and those who work little and have

much.[1]

After tracing the history and present state of the social move-

ment, the speaker praised trade unions, the farmers alliance, the single-

tax movement, and socialism. Having praised the productivity which results

from the capitalistic system, Rauschenbusch offers two solutions to the

social problem: "abolition of privilege" and "association." He believes

that "association" is the "word of the future," and that it has meaning

both for the Christian and the Socialist, who will unite to solve the

social problem.[2]

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[1]Rauschenbusch, "Sermons," XVIII (Carmel Baptist Church, New York
City, February 11, 1891; Hamburg, November, 1891; Mount Pleasant Baptist
Church, Newark, January 26, 1892; Mizpah Chapel, New York City, March
20, 1895; German Church of Hoboken, April 4, 1895), NRAB. Rauschenbusch
called this message an "address" rather than a sermon because he prepared
it for someone other than his congregation and because he polished the
style, whereas in sermons he spoke extemporaneously.

[2]Ibid.

Thus, although Rauschenbusch identifies with socialism, his identi-
fication was never complete. In later years, he differentiated between
political and Christian socialism. What actually impressed him was that
socialists were attempting to change social conditions. As a social
Christian, he wanted to convert both unchristian socialists and unsocial
Christians to a better way.

That "better way" was the Kingdom of God. All of the economic,
political, social, and religious thought of Rauschenbusch and most mem-
bers of the Brotherhood must be understood via this concept. For the
last three years before the Brotherhood's organization, the Kingdom was
the dominant theme of the young preacher's message. In 1891, he told a
German audience that Jesus had two leading thoughts: "eternal life and
[the] Kingdom of God." The former, he insisted, was a familiar subject
which received constant attention. The latter is not so well understood.
Certainly, he said, "Königreich" does not mean "Heaven." Rather, it
equals the condition of things in which God's will is being done.[1]

With the development of the Kingdom idea, Rauschenbusch found
the watchword for his social program. His commitment to that idea promp-
ted him actively to encourage the formation of the Brotherhood. As early
as 1889, the same idea in its nascent state led him to unite with the
liberals in the Baptist Congress and to become an editor of For the Right.
The social gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch was adapted to the Weltanschauung
of his day, however. The changes which the Kingdom idea demanded were to
come gradually. Rauschenbusch did not appeal for revolutionary overthrow

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[1]Ibid., XVIII (September, 1891, preached in Berlin).

of institutions; he appealed to the practical concerns of his hearers.
To enhance his credibility with his parishioners, he continued to draw
heavily on the Bible for proof of his arguments, but he adapted his inter-
pretation to that of liberal theology. His illustrations and applications
had appreciably more "this-world" connotations as the years passed. The
hiatus in his message was the lack of a workable solution for the social
problem. He knew whom to criticize, but he did not have a specific plan
for correcting the evils he attacked. He sought both reinforcement for
and clarification of his recently conceived social thoughts. Thus, he
turned both to his personal friends, the liberals in the Baptist Congress,
and his associates of For the Right for assistance.

The Baptist Congress

Participation in the Baptist Congress was important to the men
who later formed the Brotherhood of the Kingdom. It offered one more
channel for dissemination of their new social ideal within the Baptist
fold. When the Baptist Congress first met in 1882, its purpose was to
provide an open forum "for the discussion of current questions--social,
political, or philosophic."[1] Early programs included discussions of
modern interpretations of Scripture and church unity. Frederic Hudson
believes that "the most profound function of the Baptist Congress was its
wrestling with the grave problem of unity and anarchy within the Baptist
Confession itself."[2] The Congress served other functions for those who

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[1]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 74.

[2]Ibid., p. 75. The following list of papers is representative of
those read by members of the Brotherhood. They may be found in the
Proceedings of the Baptist Congress for the year indicated. A relatively

later organized the Brotherhood, however. It became a meeting place for

Baptist liberals, who not only presented papers reflecting liberal views

to the Congress but also met in private sessions involving only small

groups of men. Two Baptist ministers who were organizers of the Congress

later became members of the Brotherhood. Both Norman Fox, of Morristown,

New Jersey, and George Dana Boardman, of Philadelphia, were ardent advo-

cates of church union, which became a dominant theme of liberal Christians.

Baptists generally have not favored church union because denominational

polity makes each church autonomous. Therefore, the denomination could

not act in behalf of, or without the consent of, every local congrega-

tion. The liberal Christian argument was that the church should not be the

center of the Christian movement. Rather, the Kingdom should be pre-

eminent and the church should sacrifice its personal desires in deference

to the Kingdom.

Although the Baptist Congress offered an additional communication

channel for social Christians, it was not the liberal sounding board that

it purported to be. The denomination was generally conservative, and the

Baptist Congress, although discussing social issues, remained basically

conservative. The liberals who formed the Brotherhood soon realized

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complete collection of the Proceedings is on file at the American Baptist
Historical Society (NRAB), Rochester, New York. See Walter Rauschenbusch,
"Who Shall Educate: Church or State?" (1888), "Natural and Artificial
Monopolies" (1889), "The Pulpit in Relation to Political and Social Reform"
(1891), and "The Church and the Money Power" (1892); Leighton Williams,
"Municipal Government" (1890), "Does Revelation End with the Scriptures?"
(1902); William Newton Clarke, "Phases of Theological Thought as Influ-
enced by Social Conditions" (1884), and "The Relative Authority of Scrip-
ture and Reason"(1892); Norman Fox, "The Organic Union of Christendom"
(1887); George Dana Boardman, "The Organic Union of Christendom" (1887),
and "The Disarmament of Nations" (1889); and O. P. Gifford, "Is Baptism
a Prerequisite to the Lord's Supper?" (1897).

that their efforts for reform were being thwarted in the Congress. One

conservative spokesman put the issue bluntly: "It seems to me that the

best thing we can do is to go on as we have been going. . . . Let us

leave the next generation to take care of itself. . . . I think there is

such a thing as coddling the poor too much."[1] Yet, even in the early

years the liberals received some hearing. In the late 1880's the Con-

gress discussed the theories of George and Bellamy. Rauschenbusch and

Williams were on hand to give favorable treatment to such liberal views.

Liberals had made some progress by 1892, but most of them were

dissatisfied with the rate of advance. They insisted that the "pulpit"

must play a more active role in relation to political and social reform.

Rauschenbusch, as one of the liberal spokesmen, presented a paper which

consisted of a one-paragraph introduction and "a few plain, candid

propositions," by which he expected "to win the assent of [the] . . .

audience, as a Christian audience."[2] His paper is an inverted "stock-

issues" case, in which he first suggests the proposed change, then

moves to a need-analysis, all the while implying the advantages of the

proposed change.

> My first proposition is that the whole aim of Christ is embraced
> in the words "the kingdom of God"; that this ideal is for this side
> of death, and not for the other side; that it is a social ideal and
> not an individualist ideal; and that in that ideal is embraced the
> sanctification of all life, the regeneration of humanity, and the
> reformation of all social institutions.

[1]Edward Bright, Proceedings of the Baptist Congress (1885), pp. 33-
34, as quoted by May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America, p. 191.

[2]Walter Rauschenbusch, Proceedings of the Baptist Congress (1892),
p. 127. A complete collection of the Proceedings is in the American
Baptist Historical Society, NRAB.

[In this paragraph, the speaker identifies his leading idea, the Kingdom of God. The idea is not objectionable to his conservative hearers until he relegates it to this world, instead of the next. Rauschenbusch could have made his position more acceptable to conservatives if he had said this world and the next. Further, he probably alienated some segments of his audience by suggesting that the Kingdom was strictly a "social" ideal. Being a social ideal did not make it objectionable, but being a social ideal to the exclusion of the individualist ideal did. He turns next to the changed function of the church.]

Second:--The church is the organ to accomplish this work. . . .

Third:--The fundamental work of the church is in the dissemination of ideas, and the spread of convictions. . . . We shall have to treat social and political questions just as far as there is righteousness and love in them. If it is a question of utility, it does not concern the church. If it is a question whether a street-car company ought to use electricity or cable power, the church has nothing to do with that; that is a question for civil engineers. But if it is a question whether the street-car companies are to own Philadelphia, or Philadelphia is to own the street-cars, that is a question of righteousness.

[Thus, the speaker suggests an innovative function of the churches. Whereas, they had been preaching a gospel of salvation, Rauschenbusch calls upon the churches to preach social justice. He both identifies with the church and suggests a new role for it. He turns then to a strategy for implementing change.]

Fourth:--The best time to preach on political questions, is before they have become political questions. . . . After they have become so, it is impossible not to become partisan in discussing them. The Christian church has the duty of treating questions, before the world treats them. . . .

Fifth:--Cases may arise where questions of righteousness and love [require] . . . that the church will have to throw its weight on the one side or the other. . . . In such cases as the lottery conflict in Louisiana, it is the duty of the church to spring forward and to throw itself into the conflict. At such times, prudent conservatism is more un-Christlike and far more dangerous than the most headlong impetuosity.

Sixth:--When individuals . . . feel the call . . . [to throw] themselves completely into political or social agitation, men of the church . . . should back them as much as possible. . . .

[Having thus proposed a strategy of active participation in social issues, attacking them rather than defending the status quo or attempting to solve big problems after they arise, Rauschenbusch turns to the need analysis. If the church does not act, it will lose its opportunity to act.]

Seventh:--If the church should leave political and social questions aside, and address itself only to individual and family morality . . . there will be a severing of the unity of life. Such a dividing of life is fatal to the rounded ideal of Christian holiness and consecration.

Eighth:--If we should leave these issues to be treated by others, we should infallibly lose the people. . . .

Ninth:--In case we should leave these things behind, it would bring disease into the life of the church, instead of saving the life of the church for spiritual work. . . .

[His conclusion is an appeal for discretion in the exercise of the church's social prerogatives.]

And finally, tenth, the last caution is this: If we treat political and social questions, let us not treat them from the standpoint of ecclesiastical politics. . . . Let the church be faithful and say to the people:. "We want nothing for ourselves; we are ready to give all for you." Then we may safely assume a position of leadership in embodying the law of Christ in the laws of our country.[1]

Records of the Baptist Congress do not indicate specific reactions of conservatives to such liberal messages. Clearly, however, the Brothers were discontent because change came so slowly. They did not withdraw from the Congress, however. The same year that Rauschenbusch delivered the address just quoted, he was elected secretary of the Congress. Having penetrated the executive committee of the Congress, and having won the allegiance of two originators of the group--Fox and Boardman--the Brothers proceeded to recruit membership for their own movement. They elected to remain in the Baptist Congress and to get what hearing they could.

Thus, participation in the Baptist Congress was important to the Brotherhood for a variety of reasons. First, it kept the Brothers in contact with other Baptists. Second, the Brothers became aware of the rhetorical importance of group reinforcement. As they cooperated in efforts

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[1]Ibid., pp. 127-29.

to present liberal ideas to the Congress, they developed a sense of co-
hesiveness among themselves. Third, the Brothers used what power they
had in the Executive Committee of the Congress to encourage liberal pro-
grams, especially ecclesiastical unity and social projects. Fourth, they
used the Congress as a seedbed for implanting liberal ideas, looking
toward a harvest of Brotherhood members. Greater success in the Baptist
Congress would have eliminated the necessity for the Brotherhood al-
together. Only partial success meant that a group such as the Brother-
hood was imperative.

Initial recruiting efforts produced meager results. At the first
annual conference in 1893, only ten Baptist ministers and one layman
were present. Leighton Williams, pastor of Amity Baptist Church, New
York City, and his brother Mornay Williams, an attorney, were hosts.
Meetings were held on the country estate of the late William R. Williams,
with Mrs. Williams serving as the hostess. Others in attendance included
George Dana Boardman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Philadelphia;
Nathaniel Schmidt and William Newton Clarke, professors in Colgate
University; S. B. Meeser, of Crozer Seminary; Rauschenbusch and Batten.
Other Baptist pastors present were R. G. Boville, H. H. Peabody, and
W. H. Buttrick.[1] Boardman, Clarke, Meeser, Peabody, Rauschenbusch, and
the two Williamses were part of the core group of the Brotherhood from
its inception until its demise--or until the individual's death.[2]

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[1]See Brotherhood "Minutes," August, 1893, NRAB.

[2]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," pp. 413-25.

<u>For the Right</u>

In addition to its bascially conservative nature, the Baptist

Congress was deficient in another respect so far as the Brothers were

concerned: It offered no avenue for direct contact with the working

people, the people who were the heart of the "social movement." The

same year the Brothers began to cooperate on a large scale at the Congress,

Williams and Rauschenbusch created another channel for their social mes-

sage. In association with J. E. Raymond and Elizabeth Post, they began

<u>For the Right</u>, which they published monthly from November, 1889, to

March, 1891. Raymond, a Baptist minister from Fordham, New York, was

the business manager; Post served as managing editor, while Williams

and Rauschenbusch had general editorial responsibilities. The business

manager made an appeal for a reading public in the second issue.[1]

> This paper is published in the interests of the working people
> of New York City. It proposes to discuss, from the standpoint of
> Christian socialism, such questions as engage their attention and
> affect their life. The paper is not the organ of any party or
> association whatever. Nor has it any new theories to propound.
> Its aim is to reflect . . . the needs, the aspirations, the long-
> ings of the tens of thousands of wage-earners who are sighing for
> better things: and to point out, if possible, not only the wrongs
> that men suffer, but the methods by which these wrongs may be
> removed. The editors freely give their time and labor to this
> undertaking, animated solely by the hope that their efforts may
> aid the advancement of that kingdom in which wrong shall have no
> place, but Right shall reign for ever more.
> The friends of social reform are invited to write for the
> columns of this paper and wage earners are especially requested
> to do so.[2]

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[1]Sharpe, <u>Walter Rauschenbusch</u>, p. 86, says that the paper was pub-
lished beginning in November, yet the issue for that month is number
two. No copies of the first edition are extant so far as the writer can
determine. Other issues are available on microfilm in the American
Baptist Historical Society, NRAB. Possibly the editors published two
issues in November, 1889, before their decision to make the paper a
monthly.

[2]<u>For the Right</u>, I (November, 1889), 2.

The editors of the paper had three goals: First, they wanted

to establish contact with the working people, outside and away from the

churches. Also, they wanted to provide a channel through which working

people could express their grievances and recommend solutions. Finally,

they wanted to identify with the "faltering Christian Socialist Society

in New York."[1]

The style of the paper was indicative of the editors' desire

to identify with the common people. Although the editors were educated,

their language is often the vernacular. Rauschenbusch wrote an article

attacking "slot machines"--a term he used to refer to vending machines.

After describing some uses to which "slot machines" had already been put,

he offered a bit of "folksy" dialogue, in which he pointed out many

advantages of such machines. He also saw the potential danger of auto-

mation, which could put men out of work. He concluded with a solution

to the problem and an appeal for courage.

> Surely there must be a hitch somewhere. Men and women, we be-
> seech you not to treat this thing lightly. . . . You, working-men
> and working-women, will have to think this out. Do not expect sal-
> vation from the rich and educated. Some of them are thinking and
> working to untie this knot, but most of them are thinking only of
> themselves, just as you would probably do, if you were rich. The
> help must come from yourself. We can help you, but we cannot do
> it for you. Read For the Right. It will help you understand one
> thing after the other. Spread it among your friends. Talk things
> over among yourselves. Do not lose courage. God is on our side.
> Keep your hearts warm and get your heads clear, and the better day
> will come.[2]

The rhetoric of such paragraphs stands in marked contrast to

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[1]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 48.

[2]"Drop a Nickel in the Slot," For the Right, I (January, 1890),

3.

the rhetoric of papers addressed to the Baptist Congress. At the Congress, Rauschenbusch and Williams appealed to their audience by using logic, quotations from Scripture, and references to historical precedent. The language, though vivid, was formal. In For the Right, the language was "folksy." At the Congress, the Brothers argued "Christian responsibility," while in the paper they claimed the blessing of God in behalf of the people. At the Congress, the rallying point was ecumenicism; in the paper, it was Christian socialism. The "devil term" in the Congress was "unsocial Christianity," while the "devil term" in For the Right was "wealth."[1] Williams wrote: "We believe that the cause of the people is the cause of God." Clearly, "the people" and "the wealthy" were antonymous terms as Williams used them.[2]

The editors of For the Right were unwilling to remain isolated voices of Christian Socialism, so they "organized a New York Chapter of the Society of Christian Socialists, which studied the history of Christian socialism and sought to embody their principles."[3] Christianity and Socialism were similar if not equivalent terms for the young liberals. These terms identified the protagonists in a struggle against the disciples of Darwin and of classical economics.[4] Although they accepted the doctrines

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[1]On the use of "devil term" in a movement study, see Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetorical Structure of the 'New Left' Movement," in J. Jeffrey Auer (ed.), The Rhetoric of Our Times (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969), pp. 17-18.

[2]"Some Chapters on Social Reform," For the Right, I (January, 1890), 2.

[3]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 61.

[4]On social Christians as dissenters, see Hofstadter, Social Darwinism, pp. 105-22.

of biological evolution, these liberal Christians refused to accept the

laissez-faire social and economic theories which derived from them. The

result was a bitter attack on capitalism and its corollaries, industriali-

zation and laissez faire.

> With the progress of invention and the growth of commerce, greater
> accumulations of capital have become necessary, and a strong tendency
> has become manifest to the concentration of business and the forces
> of production in a limited capitalist class, while the large majority
> of the community are becoming reduced to the position of mere wage-
> earners dependent on the capitalist class even for the opportunity
> to labor, and it may be said for the right to live. With every
> year the gulf between the two classes seems to be widening.[1]

Williams did not oppose profit or progress, however. He told his readers

that progress was both inevitable and desirable, but he insisted that

those who labored to produce goods should receive the proceeds from their

sale. Continuing to drive a wedge between the workingman and the capitalist,

Williams wrote: "The wealth has been shared by all, but not in fair

proportion to the service rendered. Landlord, capitalist and workman

have each received a share," he affirmed, "but so unequal has the division

been that social adjustments have been seriously disturbed."[2]

In the same issue, Rauschenbusch supported the single tax.[3] The

following month, Williams reinforced Rauschenbusch's argument and allied

capital and labor against the landowners.

> There is no necessary conflict between capital and labor, but
> rather between land on the one hand, and capital and labor on the
> other. Interest and wages may both rise at the same time, or both

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[1]Leighton Williams, "Some Chapters on Social Reform," For the
Right, I (February, 1890), 4.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Rauschenbusch, "The Crow's Nest," For the Right, I (February,
1890), 3.

fall together and this we often find that they do in fact; but
rent rises when they fall or falls when they rise.[1]

In March also, Rauschenbusch castigated the political machine and advocated

ballot reform.[2] In a later issue, his cause was "the eight-hour day."

He not only condoned strikes; he encouraged them. Strikes, he believed,

might give men "more time at home, more time to make love to their wives

and lighten the drudgery of house work, more time to take the little one

out for a walk, more time to read good books, more time to read For the

Right."[3]

Thus the editors agitated against capitalism, unearned increments

in land, political machines, and other aspects of the "social problem."

They advocated the single tax, ballot reform, the study of political

economy, the eight-hour day, and social equality on a par with political

liberty.[4] Their rhetoric did not go unnoticed, but it was noticed

by the wrong audience. Even the New York Times praised their work.

> Within the Baptist Church there is a small but significant move-
> ment. Three young clergymen . . . knowing the hopelessness of say-
> ing what they wanted to say in the denominational Press, and having
> words to say to the wage earners which they could not get them to
> hear in their pulpits, established . . . a paper called "For the
> Right," which is radical, yet Christian, and says boldly what in
> their opinion every pulpit in New York ought to be saying.[5]

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[1]Williams, "Some Chapters on Social Reform, " For the Right
(March, 1890), 2.

[2]Rauschenbusch, "The Crow's Nest," For the Right (March, 1890),
2-3.

[3]Rauschenbusch, "Eight Hours," For the Right, I (June, 1890), 3.

[4]"Political Liberty and Social Equality," For the Right, I
(September, 1890), 2.

[5]New York Times, November, 1890, as quoted by Sharpe, Walter
Rauschenbusch, p. 88.

Unfortunately, the young editors did not profit from recognition by the New York Times. The paper did analyze some of the clergymen's problems. First, they were unable to reach the workingmen from their pulpits. Second, they had limited or no access to denominational journals. The problem was, however, that they were also unable to reach the masses through For the Right. In approximately eighteen months, the paper suffered the same fate other independent papers suffered: The audience it sought could not afford to subscribe. Likewise, the audience showed little interest in the goals of the editors. Either people held on to the "American Dream" and looked forward to success as a sort of "given"; or, because of ignorance and illiteracy, they sat back and did nothing.

Among many difficulties, the basic rhetorical problem which faced the editors of For the Right was that their object of attack was external to their audience; the few readers of the paper were the afflicted, not the villain.[1] For lack of money and lack of response from their primary audience, the editors ceased publication of the paper in March, 1891, after learning some valuable lessons which were to affect the rhetorical strategy of the Brotherhood in later years. First, they discovered the importance of having a firm sociological basis for the practical programs they were to recommend. As a result, they intensified their study of Maurice, Kingsley, Ruskin, and contemporary sociology. Second, they realized that they were addressing themselves to the wrong audience. Except for the few people involved in organized labor, workers were doing little to relieve their own plight and showing little interest in

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[1]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 51.

doing so. Consequently, the young clergymen shifted their emphasis to a middle-class audience. In turn, the Brotherhood of the Kingdom did likewise.

Other Rhetorical Channels

The triumvirate--Rauschenbusch, Williams, and Schmidt--did not limit themselves to preaching, speaking before the Baptist Congress, and writing articles for a small paper. They employed interdenominational channels such as the conferences of the Evangelical Alliance.[1] Participation in this non-Baptist group laid the foundation for enlargement of the Brotherhood's membership in later years. Also, several years before the Brotherhood was organized, Williams, Rauschenbusch and other New York ministers "turned Amity Baptist Church into a headquarters for neighborhood and regional social gospel experiments."[2] Meanwhile, Rauschenbusch's pen was never still. He wrote Sunday school lessons for The Christian Enquirer and "squeezed all the Social Gospel he could" into the lessons.[3] He prepared German editions of hymns, edited Der Jugend-Herold, wrote a study course on Das Leben Jesu, and wrote articles for the Sunday School Times and the Examiner.[4]

Thus did the young ministers employ the available channels for propagation of their new social methods. They preached in their own

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, p. 83.

[4]Ibid.

pulpits and in others as they were invited. They addressed members of

their denomination in the Baptist Congress and of other denominations

in the Evangelical Alliance. They printed their message for the few

working people who would read it and addressed themselves to a somewhat

wider audience through a limited number of denominational or interdenomina-

tional publications. As individuals, however, Williams, Rauschenbusch,

and Schmidt received little notice prior to 1892. Recognizing that they

could make no appreciable progress toward social reformation in their

own pulpits and that their efforts were largely unrewarded both in the

Baptist Congress and their editorial venture, the young men determined

to organize the Brotherhood of the Kingdom. After organization began,

the Brothers recognized the need for refining their ideology and defining

their goals. The search for that definition and refinement is the sub-

ject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

DEVELOPMENT OF AN IDEOLOGY: THE

CONCEPT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Formed in 1892, the Brotherhood of the Kingdom experienced its

"organizational" phase between 1892 and 1897. Although individual

rhetorical efforts of the period are important, the most significant

materials are those which reveal in-group interaction leading to the

development of an ideology, the definition of roles and status among

members, clarification of goals, and determination of strategies. The

central concern of this chapter is ideology, although some attention

is given to group cohesion and goals.[1]

Importance of Ideology

Every movement must have an ideology, either expressed or im-

plied. It "may be spelled out in detail or represented in broad propo-

sitions which leave much to inference and tacit understanding."[2] Ideology

includes both the reason for and justification of the movement's exis-

tence, the values and ideals which the movement cherishes, the rules

which members follow, and a statement of the ideas or groups which the

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[1]Rhetoric as a cohesive force in a movement is the subject of
the next chapter.

[2]King, Social Movements in the United States, p. 32.

movement is against.[1] Ideology creates in a movement's membership a

"consciousness of kind," helping members identify their relation to each

other and to the larger society.[2] Most of a movement's ideas come from

the larger society, although the ideas may be adapted explicitly for the

movement.

> More important social movements tend to absorb a great deal of
> the social thought of their time and their ideologies therefore tend
> to become rather complex aggregates of ideas. Some of these may
> be regarded as specific and essential to the movement; they are the
> really integrating ideas. Others may be of mere accidental signifi-
> cance for this particular movement. The former may be called Con-
> stitutive ideas, since they form the spiritual-intellectual founda-
> tion of group cohesion or solidarity.[3]

"Constitutive ideas" usually concern three main problems of a movement:

"(1) the final goals or ends of the movement, (2) the ways and means by

which the goal is to be attained, and (3) the reasons for the endeavors

of the movement--that is, the justification of the movement or, . . . its

social philosophy."[4] The social philosophy of the movement determines its

goals and strategies. In the case of the Brotherhood, the philosophy that

man was perfectible in the context of the Kingdom of God and that perfect-

ibility was the result of a gradual process instead of a cataclysmic

experience determined the group's strategy. It also precluded the use

of strategies which might have been appropriate for more radical social

groups.

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[1]Ibid., pp. 32-33, 69-71.

[2]On the "consciousness of kind," see Franklin Henry Giddings, The
Principles of Sociology: An Analysis of the Phenomena of Association and
of Social Organization (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1896), pp. 17-19.

[3]Heberle, Social Movements, p. 13.

[4]Ibid., p. 24.

As indicated, the "constitutive idea" of the Brotherhood was the Kingdom of God, while the ultimate goal of the movement was the creation of a society so constituted that it _was_ the Kingdom of God on earth. Thus, the goal is embodied in, defined by, and to some extent identical with the ideology. As an ultimate goal, the Kingdom of God is well-defined in Brotherhood rhetoric. The difficulty is, however, that such a goal is "non-operational"; that is, it is not amenable to a specific set of criteria by which its attainment may be ascertained. The Brothers were never sure what would be the state of society even if the Kingdom became reality.

The Kingdom was more than a vague ideal, however, and the Brothers had some opinions about what must be done if the Kingdom were to be realized on earth. Considering the Kingdom the fundamental social, as well as religious, ideal, the movement proposed to eliminate social problems which precluded the actualization of the earthly Kingdom. This means that the Brothers were concerned with urbanization, industrialization, and all their attendant evils.

Many specific and immediate goals of the Brotherhood were related to municipal reform. By 1890, twenty-eight cities in the United States had a population of 100,000 or more.[1] Most of the larger cities were industrial centers, filled with ghettos, sweatshops, and corruption--especially in politics. The Brotherhood did not have a unique program of municipal reform. Instead, members of the movement studied carefully the various political parties' reform programs and actively supported

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[1]Giddings, _Principles of Sociology_, p. 81, quoting "The Compendium of the Eleventh Census," Part I.

those which seemed compatible with their own goals. Most reforms which

the Brothers favored fell in the mainstream of populism and progressivism.[1]

Social Christians had influence because they were able to focus on lead-

ing issues and to provide Christian solutions to many problems. As

Thomas Scheidel says: "The influence of persuasive speaking is greatest

when it serves to focus the impact of other social forces."[2]

Before launching a public program for reform, the Brotherhood had

to clarify its ideology and solidify its relationships. Therefore, one

of the first objectives of the movement was to create a group of like-

minded individuals who could work together for the promotion of the King-

dom ideal. "The role of the early Brotherhood," says Hudson, "was more

to fortify the courage of the Brothers than to etch a social gospel on

the society at large."[3] The members came together because they perceived

affinities; they were already attracted to the works of Schleiermacher,

Ritschl, Bellamy, George, and Ely. In effect, a rhetoric of identi-

fication was operative during sessions of the Baptist Congress. As

liberal Christians perceived the attitudes and interpreted the ideas

of other participants in the Baptist Congress, they were attracted to

each other because their personal opinions were similar. Differences

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[1]On the relation of the social gospel to Progressivism, see May,
Protestant Churches and Industrial America, pp. 204-34. "A manual of
city reform, published in 1895, . . . listed among 'Movements for Civic
Betterment' . . . the Brotherhood of the Kingdom"; see W. H. Tolman,
Municipal Reform Movements in the United States, pp. 139-45, as cited
in May, p. 225. See also, Leighton Williams, "Municipal Reform," re-
printed from The Arena, April, 1894.

[2]Thomas M. Scheidel, Persuasive Speaking (Glenview, Ill.: Scott,
Foresman, 1967), pp. 56-57.

[3]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 353.

of opinion existed, however, as the "Minutes" of the first annual confer-

ence attest: "The sessions throughout were marked by the greatest unity

of sentiment though not always by the absolute agreement in thought."[1]

Absolute agreement was neither possible nor desirable. With all their

emphasis on social matters, the Brothers never lost sight of the importance

of the individual. They both respected and encouraged honest differences

of opinion, seeking unity among themselves and the churches on the basis

of devotion to a common Lord and common goal, rather than a common doctrine.

Unity on certain essential points was imperative, however, if any sense

of group identity were to exist. Agreement came through in-group inter-

action during annual conferences at the Williams' Marlborough estate,

meetings in conjunction with the annual Missionary Conference of Amity

Baptist Church, circular letters distributed by the executive committee,

and personal correspondence.

Development of Ideology Through

In-Group Interaction

Importance of Interaction

The programs of Brotherhood conferences at the Williams' estate

were similar in format each year: Several hours were given to prayer and

fellowship; formal papers were read, followed by lively discussions; and

brief business sessions were conducted. Beginning with the second annual

conference (1894), all sessions except business meetings were open to the

public. At least one night during the week was given to a public meeting

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[1]Brotherhood of the Kingdom "Minutes," p. 11, NRAB.

in a local church. Leisure time provided opportunity for reflection

and dialogue. Often, two or three Brothers walked together, engaging

in dialectic discussions of significant social or theological issues.[1]

Moments of informal fellowship are important in any social

movement as the group tries to develop morale. According to King, "in-

formal fellowship" is one of the three most common techniques by which

groups foster esprit de corps. In-group rhetoric also functions in sup-

port of group morale in the cultivation of "ethnocentrism in the move-

ment's ideology and tactics" and in group "ceremony."[2] The former sug-

gests the formulation of common goals, values, and norms as well as

the identification of common enemies.

In their efforts to Christianize the social order, the Brothers

had two primary enemies: capitalism and unsocial churches. The former

was an inclusive term for economic evils in general, though it often

meant the "land system" rather than capital as the term is normally

construed. Nowhere is their grievance against the "land system" more

vividly stated than in Bolton Hall's remarks during a discussion at the

fifth annual conference. "We all stand for the coming of the kingdom

of God upon earth," he told his audience. Then he asked: "Suppose it

really did come now, would not the owners of the earth get a higher rent

for it?" His later statements were even more caustic.

> The lion's share of whatever social or moral improvements we
> succeed in bringing in, will go to the landowner. We pray for

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[1]Bronk, "An Adventure in the Kingdom of God," p. 28. Unfor-
tunately, no transcripts of such informal conversations are avail-
able.

[2]King, Social Movements in the United States, p. 33.

the relief of the poor; we say, "give us this day our daily bread."
Suppose that God should answer us in kind, and open the windows of
heaven to rain down clothing, shelter, and all things that mankind
needs, the landowners would have title to it under our laws.[1]

The enemy within the churches, on the other hand, was sometimes identified

as millenarianism. The Brothers attacked the "other-wordliness" of un-

social Christians. Such rhetoric was not designed to effect change in

society so much as to develop cohesiveness within the movement.[2]

Ceremony also contributed to cohesiveness. At the second annual

conference, S. S. Merriman introduced "The Battle Hymn of the Kingdom."

which he dedicated to the Brotherhood.[3] Shortly after the movement was

organized, the Brothers designed their letterhead, seal, and pin. Private

business meetings provided additional opportunity for in-group ceremony.

The high ethical standards which the Brothers adopted were also an aspect

of ceremonialism. Accepting the standards for themselves, they imposed

the same on anyone who aspired to membership. Making membership a matter

of importance was, itself, rhetorically important.

The fundamental method for developing group cohesion was the same

method used to formulate the movement's ideology. Each time the group

met, members read papers on social or theological issues. Following the

papers, the Brothers expressed their opinions. No transcripts of the

discussions during the first or second conference were preserved, but

the compiler of the Report commented: "We regret that such minutes as

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[1]Report of the Fifth Annual Conference (1897), pp. 6-7, NRAB.
Printed reports for conferences after the first are on file in the
American Baptist Historical Society, NRAB.

[2]Chapter six deals with in-group cohesiveness and chapter seven
with out-group rhetoric. See pp. 132-55 and 156-201 below.

[3]Report of the Second Annual Conference (1894), p. 12, NRAB.

were kept . . . have been lost. . . . It is our hope to have the dis-

cussions become as important contributions to the treatment of the themes

before us as the papers prepared beforehand."[1]

An analysis of later discussions reveals the Brothers' expertise

in a variety of fields. Schmidt, an authority in Semitic languages and

literature, and Clarke, the Brotherhood's foremost theologian, kept the

group oriented on matters theological. George Dana Boardman, the Phila-

delphia pastor, was joined in his interest in peace movements by Ernest

Howard Crosby, an attorney. Boardman's other area of specialization was

church union. He not only headed a committee on church union for the

Brotherhood, but also served as peacemaker during some disputes. Both

Leighton and Mornay Williams took special interest in municipal reform.

Rauschenbusch, of course, was to become the movement's most eminent church

historian. In addition, the movement included seminary and college pro-

fessors, pastors from a half-dozen denominations, laymen, and a number

of women.[2]

Interaction was not only instrumental in the development of co-

hesion and ideology; it also demonstrates the leadership hierarchy which

developed within the Brotherhood. The three men most responsible for

the movement's founding were also the recognized leaders of the move-

ment from the beginning. Williams made a strategic move when he invited

the group to his family's estate for the summer conferences. Hudson says

that the movement was, "from the beginning . . . Leighton Williams'

adventure." As proof, he says that "Williams quietly dominated the

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[1]Report of the Second Annual Conference (1894), p. 17, NRAB.

[2]Hudson, "Reign of the New Humanity," pp. 413-24.

Executive Committee, diligently governed the publishing of the annual

Conference Reports and occasional 'circular letters,' personally recruited

most of the ranks, and guided the movement through its many crises."[1]

What Hudson overlooks at that point is the leadership crisis which Williams

brought to the group by his inept handling of the Tabernacle Church affair.[2]

Nevertheless, Williams' leadership and importance to the group are undeni-

able. Being on the Executive Committee virtually every year, Williams

controlled the leadership of the movement by planning its annual con-

ferences, selecting the speakers, and editing their remarks for publication.

Further, as pastor of Amity Baptist Church, he controlled the flow of

Brotherhood rhetoric by using the official organ of the church to pub-

lish some annual reports of the movement.[3] He also served as general

editor for Amity Tracts, Brotherhood Leaflets, and Kingdom of God Pamphlets.

He personally wrote seven of the twenty-eight items which appeared in the

Kingdom of God series.[4]

Rauschenbusch was virtually a charismatic leader of the move-

ment. If Williams was the controlling bureaucrat, Rauschenbusch was

the inspiring prophet. The personality of the man was his most convincing

argument. Reminiscing some years after Rauschenbusch's death, Mitchell

Bronk wrote: "One of the brothers told me the other day that he likes

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[1]Ibid., p. 207.

[2]See pp. 67-68, above.

[3]See, for example, the "Report of the Seventh Annual Conference,"
in Amity, August-September, 1899, NRAB.

[4]See the Bibliography of this paper for a complete list of the
Kingdom of God Pamphlets.

to think of Marlboro as Rauschenbusch's Assisi."[1] In addition to his

personality, the young liberal's charisma resulted from other factors.

First, his father, Augustus Rauschenbusch, had already established a

reputation as a scholar during his years on the faculty of the German

department at Rochester Seminary. Further, the younger Rauschenbusch

was a personal friend of the eminent Baptist theologian Augustus Hopkins

Strong, the president of Rochester Seminary. Also, Rauschenbusch had

been privileged to study in Germany during a time when study abroad

was highly prized among American scholars, especially theologians.[2] Add

to his personality, his personal relationships, and his study abroad

his erudition and his intense interest in the Kingdom idea, and Rauschen-

busch's position of leadership in the movement is easily explained. He

appeared on the program of every conference, except when he was abroad;

on those occasions, his letters were read to the group and reprinted

as a part of the Report.[3]

The third position of leadership belonged to Samuel Zane Batten,

the man who actually suggested the idea of forming the movement. Batten

was a Philadelphia minister whose entrance into the social gospel was via

"a violent form of Prohibition."[4] While Williams worked quietly behind

the scenes on the organization of the movement, and Rauschenbusch pro-

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[1]Bronk, "An Adventure in the Kingdom of God," p. 23.

[2]See Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch; on Augustus Rauschenbusch,
pp. 1-58, passim; on Strong, pp. 47, 155, and 433; on Walter's study
abroad, pp. 26-39, 68-69.

[3]See, e.g., The Kingdom, I (September, 1907), which is a report
of the fifteenth annual conference.

[4]Bronk, "An Adventure in the Kingdom of God," p. 24.

claimed the ideas of the movement through available channels, Batten

agitated in behalf of the movement itself and probably was its most

enthusiastic recruiter.

Leadership of the movement was, on the surface, democratic. In

theory, the Executive Committee's function was merely to perform the

business assigned to it during the interim between conferences. Leader-

ship within the movement, however, was positively correlated with status

outside the movement. William Newton Clarke, eminent theologian, and

George Dana Boardman, influential pastor, remained leaders of the group

until their deaths. Schmidt, on the other hand, suffered a leadership

eclipse during his difficulty at Colgate, from which he never fully

recovered.[1] Nevertheless, he was an important voice in the movement. His

name appears on the annual conference program during the first few years

more often than any name.[2]

The movement actually became more democratic as it grew. With

more men who had impressive credentials appearing on the conference pro-

grams, the number of potential leaders mounted. The Executive Committee

was expanded from the original five to fifteen over a period of years.

Williams' name is seen every year that records are available, while

Rauschenbusch's appears less often after his general social-gospel

leadership role expanded. He remained the spiritual leader of the move-

ment, however, although he left the business of operating the movement to

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[1]See p. 66, above.

[2]See Brotherhood "Minutes," NRAB; and Reports of the annual con-
ferences, NRAB. No report is available for 1896, the year of the Colgate
crisis for Schmidt and the Tabernacle Church incident involving Williams.

other functionaries.[1]

In a real sense, one might say that Brotherhood leadership may
be measured by the number of contributions which various members made.
Boardman, Clarke, Williams, Schmidt, Rauschenbusch, and Batten appeared
on conference programs, wrote circular letters, and directly influenced
the movement more than any other men. Their influence when they came
into the movement gave them priority in leadership positions, and their
prestige within the movement--with Schmidt as a possible exception--
sustained them. But the interaction of the movement served other func-
tions in addition to building cohesion, defining ideology, and determining
leadership roles. In-group interaction had definite rhetorical purposes.

In-Group Interaction as Strategy

During the organizational years of the movement, the Brothers
used the conferences at Amity and Marlborough strategically. The approach
they followed presaged a strategy they were to employ in later years,
except in reverse. Whereas later the Brothers engaged in a strategy of
"infiltration"--entering other groups and disseminating Brotherhood ideas
within them--in the years from 1892-1897, they brought leading social
reformers into their meetings, inviting them to read papers and to inter-
act with the members. The strategy had a dual purpose: First, it broad-
ened the base of the Brothers' theological and social thought; and, it
enlisted manpower, or at least provided important contacts for the move-
ment. The Baptist circle was penetrated in 1894, when Archdeacon Charles
James Wood (Episcopal) addressed the Brotherhood on the subject, "The

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[1]Hudson, "Reign of the New Humanity," pp. 212-13.

High Priest's Prayer for Union."[1] The following year, William Dwight

Porter Bliss read a paper on "The Ideals of Professed Believers."[2] His

analysis of views concerning the Kingdom of God parallels almost completely

the analysis which the Brothers adopted. Although Bliss served on the

Executive Committee for one or more terms, he was only moderately active

in the Brotherhood, probably because "he had his own Christian Socialist

movement under way."[3] Two years later, Robert E. Carter, editor of The

Christian Union presented a paper on "Federation as a Step to Christian

Union."[4] Although Carter did not officially join the movement, the

Brothers believed that no harm could come from establishing friendly

relations with publishers. Also at the fifth conference were two repre-

sentatives of the Salvation Army, who, according to the "Minutes," were

substitutes for Commander Booth-Tucker.[5] The most important new name

on the program in 1897 was Richard Heath. From Rugby, England, Heath

was the founder of the Brotherhood in that country. Although Heath

was not present at the conference, he sent a paper on "Evangelical

Christianity and Socialism," which Rauschenbusch read.[6]

Thus, the Brothers employed a variety of communication methods

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[1]See Brotherhood "Minutes," p. 14, NRAB. Wood joined the movement.

[2]Report of the Third Annual Conference (1895), pp. 24-25, NRAB.

[3]Bronk, "An Adventure in the Kingdom of God," p. 25. Arthur S.
Cole, "The Brotherhood of the Kingdom," The Baptist Commonwealth (n.d.),
pasted in Brotherhood "Minutes," p. 89, NRAB, names Bliss on the Execu-
tive Committee.

[4]Report of the Fifth Annual Conference (1897), pp. 8-11, NRAB.

[5]Brotherhood "Minutes," p. 32, NRAB.

[6]Report of the Fifth Annual Conference (1897), pp. 17-19, NRAB.

to both stabilize their membership and increase it. Building and main-
taining cohesion within a group is an endless task. What the Brotherhood
did via in-group rhetoric to sustain and increase its membership after
1897 is the subject of the next chapter. For the present, consideration
must be given to the development of the movement's ideology.

The Movement's Ideology

The Kingdom of God

The comprehensive concept of the movement's ideology was the
Kingdom of God on earth. That idea brought the members together, requir-
ing no in-group persuasion to prove its importance. The Brothers' ob-
jective was to make the Kingdom the central concept not only of their
movement but of all Christian preaching. Although they were fully com-
mitted to the idea, however, they spent much of their time trying to
refine and develop their understanding of it. All of the papers at the
first conference were devoted to it.[1] At the second conference, Leigh-
ton Williams' paper on "The Gospel of the Kingdom" shows the influence
of Ritschl and F. W. Robertson in its definition of the Kingdom. Casting
metaphysical distinctions aside, Williams insists that the "Kingdom of
Heaven"--Matthew's term--and "Kingdom of God" are synonymous. He con-
cludes that the Kingdom is both spiritual and material, temporal and
eternal. While such a conclusion may have been objectionable to a more
orthodox audience, Williams' observation served only to reinforce that
which most liberal Christians believed already. Likewise, the rest of

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[1]See Brotherhood "Minutes," NRAB, since no transcripts of the
first papers have been preserved.

his address basically fortifies a conviction which his audience brought
to the meeting. "It is the loss of [the] . . . _social_ _aspect_ of the King-
dom," he says, "that is so disastrous to church life, and so deplorable
in its influence on the world at large." By repeating his theme again
and again, he builds to a climax when he says that the solution to the
problem will come only "when Christians admit that the Kingdom of God
is an all-inclusive social ideal, and social reformers come to see that
the gospel principles alone can effect the realization of that ideal."[1]
In his appeal, Williams implicitly points up two groups which the Brother-
hood wanted to change. As indicated earlier, the ideology of a group
identifies its enemies as well as its beliefs.[2] Unsocial Christians--
who do not see the Kingdom as a _present_ idea--and unchristian socialists--
who do not base their reforms on the Kingdom idea--are equally the enemies
of the movement.

No doubt some change in members' perception of the Kingdom idea
resulted directly from in-group rhetoric. Schmidt was recognized by the
group as a Semitic scholar. When he offered a new interpretation of Daniel
at the second conference, he had the weight of three authorities behind
him: his own academic credentials, the method of higher criticism, and
the Bible itself. Employing the same authoritative sources, Schmidt next
analyzed the synoptic gospels in comparison with John's gospel. The result,
he concluded, is that "in the apostolic church, we find remarkable spiritual
insight mixed with unavoidable error" concerning the return of Christ.

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[1]_Report of the Second Annual Conference_, pp. 15-17, NRAB.

[2]See above, pp. 60-62.

Three possible views of Christ's return result from the study of Scripture,

according to Schmidt: First, the return of Christ may have been an expecta-

tion of the disciples which was foreign to Christ's thought; second, Christ

may have shared their expectation; and third, the return may have been

symbolic, so that improved social conditions may be considered tantamount

to His return.[1] Arguing both from residues and authority, Schmidt con-

cludes that the last view is the legitimate one, thus reinforcing what

liberal Christians contended. Of importance, however, is that Schmidt's

presentation provided solid biblical basis for applied Christianity's

social position.

At the third conference, Bliss used the method of residues to

identify the most adequate view of the Kingdom. First, he outlined the

four current views concerning the Kingdom: Some considered it a spiritual

and evangelical kingdom, but Bliss argued that such a view was atheistic

because it assumed that the world was evil and matter was base, that

God's kingdom was only "in the spirit." In true Ritschlian fashion, Bliss

contended that the world cannot really be evil since a good God made it.

Further, going to the Bible for authority, Bliss said that Jesus' regard

for the body and His prayer that God's Kingdom might come on earth as in

heaven refuted this popular view. A second view was that God's Kingdom

is within the individual. Drawing an argument from Bushnell and contempo-

rary sociology, Bliss contended that such a view ignored the influence of

the home and the environment. Sounding a battle cry for social Christianity,

Bliss insisted that the poor be rescued not by saving them _in_ the slums,

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[1]_Report of the Second Annual Conference_, pp. 38-41, NRAB.

but by destroying the slums. A third view, the Catholic, was that the

Kingdom and the organized Church were synonymous, that no salvation

existed apart from the Church. Again, the speaker emphasized a rallying-

point. Not the Church, but the Kingdom, must be the center of the Chris-

tian life. By the method of residues, Bliss had only one conception of

the Kingdom left to offer--the true one: Christ's Kingdom is everywhere,

"in spirit and in body; in the individual and in society."[1] None of the

Brothers could argue with the speaker's position. Unfortunately, however,

when Bliss finished, the movement still had a nebulous, non-operational

concept.

When the Brotherhood finally settled on a definition of the

Kingdom, Rauschenbusch served as the author of the official statement.

Like Bliss, he first eliminated inadequate views: "the blessed life

after death--heaven"; "inner life of the Spirit"; and the "Church."

He also attacked the millennial view which restricted the Kingdom to

"the reign of Christ to be established after His return." Somewhat sur-

prisingly, Rauschenbusch also denied that the view of most social re-

formers was adequate. He said: "Men who are interested in movements

that extend beyond the existing work of the church, and are pushing out

under religious impulses into new fields of Christian activity, have

seized on this term as one large enough to include everything else plus

the work to which they are giving themselves. . . ." But, Rauschenbusch

concluded, each view is inadequate because defective.

> The Kingdom of God is larger than anything contained in any one
> of these ideas. It stands for the sum of all divine righteous

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[1]Report of the Third Annual Conference (1895), pp. 24-25, NRAB.

forces on earth. [And thus must be the superordinate goal for all Christians.] It embraces all pure aspirations God-ward, and all true hopes for the perfection of life. [Note that human perfectibility is considered a present hope.] It is a synthesis combining all the conceptions mentioned . . . and if we could combine them . . . it would prove to be like some chemical compounds, more powerful than the sum of all its parts.

. . . .

. . . finally, we must insist that the Kingdom is not only in heaven, but is to come on earth [Note the ambiguity: the Kingdom is already present, yet it _is to come_.]; that while it begins in the depths of the heart, it is not to stay there; that the Church does not embrace all the forces of the Kingdom and is but a means for the advancement of the Kingdom [a definite break with orthodoxy]; that while the perfection of the Kingdom may be preserved for a future epoch, the Kingdom is here and at work. The Kingdom means individual men and women, who freely do the will of God because they love it; who have fellowship with God, and who therefore live rightly with their fellow-men. . . . But the Kingdom means also a growing perfection in the collective life of humanity, in our laws, in the customs of society, in the institutions for education, and for the administration of mercy.[1]

In brief, the Brothers' idea of the Kingdom stressed three points: First, the Kingdom was of _this_ world; second, it was a "reign rather than a realm"; and third, it was a "force as well as an ideal."[2] The first point reinforced the optimism which the Brothers had concerning society. The second precludes the notion that the church is the Kingdom. It served as the basis of the Brotherhood's appeal for churches to be more social. The final point suggests that the Kingdom is not merely a social ideal; it includes the necessary _force_ (never physical in the Brotherhood's rhetoric) to implement the ideal.

Thus, the ideal of the Kingdom brought the Brothers together.

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[1]Walter Rauschenbusch, The Kingdom of God, Brotherhood Leaflet, No. 4, pp. 2-4, NRAB.

[2]For a fuller discussion of these points, see Jimmy R. Allen, "A Comparative Study of the Concept of the Kingdom of God in the Writings of Walter Rauschenbusch and Reinhold Niebuhr" (unpublished Th.D. thesis, Southwestern Baptist Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex., 1958), pp. 19-23.

Their search for its definition kept them together and provided the basic

ingredient of cohesion. Their arguments for it were based on authority,

including the Bible and modern scholarship. Their commitment to the

idea has been noted by Hopkins. Concerning the period following 1900,

Hopkins says: "With the outstanding exception of Walter Rauschenbusch

and others of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom, exponents of social Chris-

tianity . . . rationalized the new faith in terms of the social teachings

of Jesus rather than the kingdom ideal."[1] The Kingdom provided the Brothers

a basis for indicting the social order, identifying with socialism, re-

defining the function of the church, and re-interpreting theology.

<center>Indictment of the Social Order</center>

The Brotherhood's rhetoric included a rather consistent indict-

ment of the social order. Expressing the grand strategy of the movement,

Rauschenbusch told the assembled Brothers: "It is one of the special

tasks of our Brotherhood to wed Christianity and the social movement,

infusing the power of religion into social efforts, and helping religion

to find its ethical outcome in the transformation of social conditions."[2]

Such an appeal probably functioned as much to legitimize the movement as

to indict the social order. With such a lofty goal, the Brothers were

stimulated to pursue their task. Their indictment of existing conditions

rested on two convictions growing out of the concept of the Kingdom of God:

the conviction of the inherent worth of a human being and the conviction

that association was essential if social problems were to be solved.

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[1]Hopkins, Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 206.

[2]Report of the Third Annual Conference, pp. 26-28, NRAB.

Specific applications of these Kingdom principles appeared
regularly in Brotherhood rhetoric. Mornay Williams, the attorney-
brother of Leighton Williams, told the assembled conferees that the result
of "the pressure of self-interest among present conditions, both on the
part of employees and employers, is to diminish wages, increase hours,
and deteriorate conditions of labor." He had a ready solution to the
problem: "The Christian merchant who has to choose between an increase
of profit . . . and a decrease of wages or of proper conditions for his
employees . . . must, if he is to follow the principle of self-sacrifice,
decide in favor of the employees, rather than in favor of the profits."[1]
Interestingly enough, no merchants were present at the meeting. Admit-
tedly, this was in-group rhetoric, but it reflects a rather consistent
problem of the Brothers. They frequently addressed the strongest
arguments to the wrong audiences. Also, Williams did not speak for some
of the group. After other papers had been read, a lively discussion
ensued in which alternative solutions to the problem were suggested.[2]
Rhetorically, the importance of this interaction was not to produce
uniformity in public policy so much as to stimulate interest in the
social problem. The basic cause of the social problem, most Brothers
believed, was the inequity produced by a capitalistic system. Their
distaste for capitalism forced them to look favorably toward socialism.

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[1]Ibid., pp. 35-37.

[2]Ibid., p. 41; Eltweed Pomeroy, for example, said that less
profit was not the answer, but profit-sharing.

Identification with Socialism

Most members of the Brotherhood considered themselves Christian

Socialists. Wanting to apply the social ethics of the Kingdom to social

problems, the Brothers looked to socialism as a force powerful enough to

destroy the capitalistic system. They supported trade unions, consider-

ing them a rather conservative means of dealing with some problems of the

social order. They sympathized with strikers, while condemning the

"scabs" who tried to break strikes.[1]

Although the Brothers condoned many of the programs of socialism,

they were not political socialists. The meaning of socialism in the mid-

twentieth century is far different from the Brothers' use of the term.

Rauschenbusch even used "communism" in a Christian sense, referring to the

home, the school, and the church as "communistic institutions."[2] The

Brothers not only did not join the Socialist party, but they also vigorously

attacked Marx's disciples because of their atheism, materialism, dogmatism,

autocratic discipline, and revolutionary methods.

Some of the Brothers, however, refused to bear the name socialist,

and in-group conflict resulted because of it. In what must have been a

lively discussion on the topic, several Brothers expressed individualist

biases.[3] As the discussion proceeded, the confusion mounted. A persis-

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[1]Bodein, The Social Gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch, p. 99.

[2]Rauschenbusch, Christianity and the Social Crisis, p. 390.

[3]Report of the Fifth Annual Conference (1897), pp. 14-16, NRAB.
A persistent minority in the movement dissented from Christian socialism.
H. H. Peabody, who devoted more attention to pastoral care than to radi-
cal reform, "distinguished between supporting the social attitudes of
individuals and intruding upon God's paternity by 'scheduling His king-
dom.'" Ernest Howard Crosby, an attorney, came to Peabody's defense. See
Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," pp. 162-63.

tent problem of the Brotherhood was its inability to resolve such con-
flicts. Much of the movement's energy which might have been devoted to
external programs was consumed in discussions of this sort. Those who
favored the Christian Socialist position were victorious in the struggle
and a few members left the movement as a result. The majority, however,
were either committed to socialism or willing to compromise on the issue
in the interest of the movement's superordinate goal: The Kingdom. One
point of agreement was "that a perfect individual cannot be produced in
an imperfect social order."[1] Since the Kingdom was to be a perfect
social order, most Brothers were willing to employ any legitimate means
of actualizing it. Certainly, the church was one of those means.

New Role of the Church

Those who did not join the Brotherhood because of their interest
in the Kingdom of God idea probably did so because of the movement's
advocacy of church union. Members of the Brotherhood accepted Gladden's
premise, although he was not a member: "The Church is not an end in
itself--it is an instrument--a means employed by God for promoting the
Kingdom of Heaven."[2] Those who joined the movement were generally famil-
iar with the core-group's position on church unity, having read the
series of articles which Leighton Williams published in 1892.[3] The Com-

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[1]Report of the Fifth Annual Conference (1897), quoting Brother
J. M. Whiton, p. 16, NRAB.

[2]See Thompson, Changing Emphases in American Preaching, p. 171.

[3]The articles were first published in The Standard (1892) and
The Canadian Baptist (1892); they were reprinted as Amity Tract No. 1:
The Baptist Position, available NRAB.

mittee on Church Union, appointed at the first conference and reporting

the next, increased the interest of the movement in unity. Addressing the

group on the subject, "The Relation of the Individual to His Denomination,"

Henry Harrison Peabody, Baptist pastor of Rome, New York, told his audience

that Christian unity is based on the presence of Christ, not on religious

position; not on agreement, but on "being obedient to our visions be they

alike or unlike." While such a suggestion may imply an ideological weak-

ness in the movement, it was also a strength in that it gave the movement

entree to individuals of other denominations instead of limiting the

group to Baptists. Peabody insisted that the old fellowship of doctrine

was no longer possible, and that uniformity was not the test of unity.[1]

In later years, the Brothers recognized that their openness during the

early years attracted many who were liabilities to their movement.

The Kingdom was the basis for church unity. Brothers believed

that disunion resulted from a narrow conception of the church, and the

abandonment of the primary Christian truth: the Kingdom of God on earth.

The former caused men to mistake the part for the whole and to build

strong church organizations instead of seeking the Kingdom. The latter

produced an exaggerated concern for polity at the expense of righteous-

ness. In order to sustain and support their arguments for church unity,

the Brothers turned to the doctrines of liberal theology.

The Re-interpretation of Theology

In the process of restating theological concepts, the Brothers

identified with four contemporary schools of thought: evolution,

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[1]Report of the Second Annual Conference (1894), pp. 28-31, NRAB.

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democracy, pragmatism, and higher criticism. In doing so, they attempted

to identify with what they considered to be the primary American culture.

Also, however, they established their "enemies." Accepting evolution,

they alienated conservative elements in Christianity, who regarded evo-

lution a threat to the Bible because of the discrepancy between the Genesis

account of creation and the evolutionary hypothesis. The Brothers' re-

fusal to accept the social implications of Darwinism also prompted enmity

from economic and social conservatives. Likewise, fundamentalists could

not accept the extreme view of democracy taken by the Brotherhood. Democ-

racy for the movement meant social, economic, political, and spiritual

democracy—making all men brothers. The orthodox position was that only

those who had directly experienced the work of grace were sons of God:

thus, brothers. Also, conservative Christians were hostile because of

the pragmatic way the Brothers interpreted Scriptures, considering

pragmatism antithetical to spirituality. Higher criticism repelled

orthodox Christians because they considered it a frontal attack on the

authenticity and validity of inspired Scriptures. Nevertheless, the

Brothers' stand was firm.

The Brothers did not define or defend evolution; they accepted it.

Then they proceeded to demonstrate the positive value which accrued from

an interpretation of religious experience along evolutionary lines. Their

optimism and their concept of human perfectibility were grounded in evolu-

tion.[1] Dillenberger and Welch have said: "The pattern of evolutionary

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[1]On various Christian reactions to evolution, see Commager,
The American Mind, pp. 80-90; and Dillenberger and Welch, Protestant
Christianity, pp. 200-06.

development . . . was extended to the expectation that the work of re-
demption initiated in Christ would . . . culminate in the achievement
of a truly Christian civilization."[1]

The most complete expression of liberal theology by one of the
Brothers was An Outline of Christian Theology, first published in 1894,
while William Newton Clarke was professor of Christian theology at
Colgate.[2] Throughout the book, Clarke identifies with evolution, con-
tending that the fact of God's creation of the universe is more important
than the mode.[3] After interacting with the Brotherhood, Clarke revised
the book extensively. The revision was generally taken to be an expression
of the Brotherhood's theology, marking the beginning just as A Theology for
the Social Gospel marked the end of the movement's theological thought.[4]

The most orthodox Christian could have accepted one of Clarke's
introductory comments, which probably disarmed many unsuspecting readers.

> We cannot here unfold the evidence of revelation, and . . . it
> is taken as fact that in the Christian revelation, culminating in
> Christ and recorded in the Scriptures, the clearest and fullest
> revelation of God has been made. He that has seen Christ has seen
> the Father. It is well, however, to indicate where the evidence
> of this great fact is found. We find it in the Old Testament, in
> Christ, and in Christianity.[5]

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[1]Dillenberger and Welch, Protestant Christianity, p. 206.

[2]Clarke, An Outline of Christian Theology, originally published
"for the use of students in Hamilton [Colgate] Theological Seminary"
(Cambridge, Mass.: J. Wilson and Son, 1894); revised in 1898. All
references are to the latter edition.

[3]Ibid., p. 70.

[4]On Clarke's Outline as a statement of Brotherhood rhetoric,
see Leighton Williams, The Brotherhood of the Kingdom and Its Work,
Brotherhood Leaflet: No. 10 (n.d.), NRAB.

[5]Clarke, An Outline of Christian Theology, p. 9.

Only a few pages later, Clarke affirms that "the heart of what we call

the Christian revelation is in Christ."[1] Between the two passages quoted,

however, he inserts a subtle shift of emphasis: "There are two great

sources for Christian theology. The Christian revelation is one, and

the universe (including man and nature) is the other."[2] As the book

proceeds, the Christian revelation and man's experience seem to merge,

so that little distinction is made, except in the revelation of Christ

himself. The Bible is taken to be, basically, a record of human exper-

ience.

In the book, Clarke explains the development of personality (one

might even suggest "the soul") as an evolutionary process, contending

that immortality is a logical consequence of such development. "If after

God's long work of evolution personality has at length been attained,

with its immeasurable possibilities of growth and progress, it is scarcely

credible that personal existence is to be limited to this brief mortal

life."[3]

In the ideology and strategy of the Brotherhood, evolution played

an important role. The Brothers stressed Christian nurture and religious

education rather than cataclysmic conversion. They preached progress, a

variable approaching a limit--perfection--which they did not expect to

realize fully in their lives, but toward which they believed it their

duty to strive. Acceptance of evolution, progress, and perfectibility

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[1]Ibid., p. 12.

[2]Ibid., p. 11.

[3]Ibid., p. 195.

not only defines an important, positive dimension of the Brotherhood's ideology, but also identifies an "enemy" and a "devil term": "millenarianism." According to Rauschenbusch, "much of the resistance encountered by . . . preaching of the kingdom is on millenarian lines."[1] Millenarians looked for the Kingdom only after the return of Christ and considered the present world beyond redemption. The Brothers criticized millenarians for their failure to provide answers to existing social problems, for their pessimism, and for their individualism.

As a reaction against millenarianism, the Brothers made their social gospel practical as well as spiritual. Showing the influence of pragmatism, Clarke wrote: "Christianity is not a book-religion, but a life-religion. It centres in a person, and consists in a life, and Scriptures are its servants, not its source." Then he asks: "Does the Bible give us Christ, or does Christ give us the Bible?"[2] Given Clarke's premises, the only logical conclusion is the latter. Juxtaposing Christ and the Bible was nothing new. Orthodox Christians probably could have accepted what Clarke affirmed if he had not, in the process, denigrated the Bible.

Another evidence of pragmatism's influence in social-gospel theology is the changed view of the person of Jesus. Social Christians were generally not interested in metaphysical questions concerning the nature of Jesus' person. They were more interested in the person himself. As Thompson says: "The Social Gospel wants to see a Personality able to

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[1] Report of the Second Annual Conference (1894), pp. 41-42.

[2] Clarke, An Outline of Christian Theology, p. 21.

win hearts and dominate situations, able to bind men in loyalty and make

them think like himself, and able to set revolutionary social forces in

motion."[1] Social Christians were not interested in debating fine distinc-

tions such as the difference between deity and divinity. The more impor-

tant question was the experiential one. If a man had a Christian exper-

ience, he could not consider Christ less than divine; but if he did not

have such an experience, the divinity of Christ made little difference.[2]

The significance of the death of Christ was also interpreted pragmatically.

Schmidt said that the "death of Jesus will remain an unique event in human

history. But," he maintains, "it is unique precisely because it is the

one great exponent of an universally applicable principle. That love is

a good thing had always been recognized by man; that love is the law of

life was Christ's discovery."[3] The strategic dilemma created by this

assumption was no small one. The Brothers might assert that "love is

the law of life," but they were at a loss to produce any empirical evidence

from the business community to prove that love is practical in economic

relations.

The bid for church union also had a pragmatic basis. With

churches divided, operating separate programs, covering the same areas,

and overlooking many areas, the work of the Kingdom would never be ac-

complished. The power to bring in the Kingdom was in the Cross, the

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[1]Thompson, _Changing Emphases in American Preaching_, p. 215.

[2]See Arthur C. McGiffert, _The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas_
(New York: The Macmillan Co., 1915), p. 238.

[3]Nathaniel Schmidt, _The Powers of the Age to Come_, Amity Tracts,
No. 2, a circular letter to the Brotherhood of the Kingdom, 1894, p. 6,
NRAB.

World of God, and the Holy Spirit, according to Schmidt; and these were available to all.[1] If the Brothers could not argue that the churches should unite because "Christ is not divided," they did argue that strength could come only from voluntary association. They considered association the starting point for answering many of society's problems. They also considered association the essence of democracy.

Pragmatism was the philosophy of democracy, and the Brothers were as committed to democracy as to pragmatism. As they used the term "democracy," they applied it to many Christian concepts. The doctrine of God's immanence was a democratic doctrine. Democracy's influence led to the concern for the historical Jesus, the concept of social salvation, and the loss of the notion of eternal punishment. The ultimate commitment to the democratic ideal may be found in the democratizing of God.

> Rauschenbusch believed that the aims of the social gospel--freedom, justice, and solidarity--must be clearly expressed in any theological conception of God. This means that the latter must be freed from any historic accretions of despotism and be democratized, that it must be released from any reflection of willing the unjust suffering of great social groups, and that God must be realized as the ground of social unity.[2]

Identification with democracy automatically precluded acceptance of a Calvinistic view of "election."[3] The Brothers considered any doctrine which circumvented human will fatalistic.[4] Thus, they re-interpreted

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[1]Ibid., pp. 1-12, passim.

[2]Bodein, The Social Gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch, p. 106.

[3]The concept suggests that some are predestined to salvation and others to condemnation.

[4]Clarke, An Outline of Christian Theology, p. 85.

the doctrine of "election" to mean "God's choice to service rather than to salvation."[1] The next logical step was to develop a doctrine of "social salvation." Dombrowski says that "the most prominent feature of the Social Gospel is its emphasis upon the saving of society rather than upon the salvation of individuals."[2] The Brothers, however, considered individual salvation important, but viewed it as a means to Christianizing the social order.[3]

Correlated with a doctrine of "social salvation" were the concepts of the "brotherhood of man," and the "Fatherhood of God." While conservative Christians argued that only "Christians" were "sons of God," and, therefore "brothers"; social Christians claimed universal brotherhood. Yet, social Christians confronted the same problems when they argued for universal brotherhood that they faced when they argued for progress. The existence and increase of an inferior class made arguments for progress incongruous. Ironically, at the same time that social Christians were establishing "institutional churches" among the people in the slums, the elite were moving their churches to the suburbs and ignoring their "brothers."

Although the Brothers found many of their arguments for democracy in Scripture, an unorthodox interpretation was necessary to support many of their conclusions. They found the justification they needed for their new interpretations in the method of higher criticism. As a pre-eminently

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[1]Ibid., p. 393.

[2]Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism, p. 17.

[3]Bodein, The Social Gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch, p. 116.

Christian movement, the Brothers did not forsake the Bible as a result

of the findings of biblical scholarship. Instead, they found a new

freedom to interpret the Bible in the light of their own experience

and in the light of scientific discoveries.[1] Whether they embraced

higher criticism because they considered it intellectually sound or

pragmatically expedient is a moot point. Nevertheless, they believed

that higher criticism made it possible to interpret or eliminate many

of the accretions which tradition had imposed on the Scripture and to

return to the basic precepts as they understood them.

Summary of the Movement's Ideology

By 1897, the Brotherhood's ideology was relatively complete and

stable. The changes which appeared during the next two decades were

subtle and were as much tactical adjustments as ideological modifications.

In 1907, Rauschenbusch wrote a letter from Marburg, Germany, to his

"Dear Comrades." In it, he summarized much of the Brotherhood's ideology.

> I am impressed with the amazing changes in public thought since
> the Brotherhood was founded. All those things for which we then
> stood, . . . have come to the front and fill more and more of the
> horizon. . . . We stood for Christian union, and to-day that senti-
> ment has spread so that kindred groups of churches are coalescing by
> formal vote. . . . We stood for an historical study of the Bible, and
> to-day that method is triumphant among all Biblical scholars, and
> reactionary movements against it show at every point how completely
> they rest on the inertia of past convictions only. We stood for purer
> politics, for the abolition of privilege, for the rights of the people
> against the corporations, and to-day the United States are moving with
> almost revolutionary speed toward a new political era. We stood--
> though not unanimously--for Christian Socialism, and to-day that is
> capturing the heart of the intellectual and moral aristocracy of our
> people. We stood for the pre-eminence of the Kingdom of God in

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[1]See, e.g., Clarke, Sixty Years with the Bible, p. 160-61, and
The Use of the Scriptures in Theology, pp. 20-43.

Christian thought, and . . . tended to substitute a power, more ethical, more synoptic, more Christian . . . for the old "scheme of salvation," and all theology is drifting that way.

With optimism tempered by modesty, Rauschenbusch assessed the role of the Brotherhood in effecting the changes wrought.

It would be folly for us to claim that we created these changes, but . . . we did help to create them. And where we supposed we were losing our lives, we found them. These great aims vitalized our thought, put us in contact with the right movements and men, and so made men of us. It would be interesting to enumerate the men who have . . . been active members of the Brotherhood and sum up their part in making of the new day. We ourselves have gained immensely in clearness of vision by these years of work and fellowship.[1]

In these paragraphs, Rauschenbusch engaged in "mythication." That is, he provided supra-rational support for the movement's ideas and actions. The writer told his "Comrades" that God, history, theology, social science, and the trend of the times were all on the side of the movement.[2] Having developed an ideology, a group must provide some such means for keeping morale high, enlisting new members, and conducting its program. What the Brotherhood did to make itself a primary reference group for its members is the subject of the next chapter.

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[1]The Kingdom, I (September, 1907), 1.

[2]On "mythication," see Arthur L. Smith, Rhetoric of Black Revolution (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1969), pp. 34-40.

CHAPTER VI

STRATEGY: I. DEVELOPMENT OF GROUP COHESION

Introduction

The Brotherhood of the Kingdom had become a stable social move-
ment by the end of 1897. From that point, the group faced two fundamen-
tal rhetorical tasks. First, they had to devise strategies for securing
and holding members. Second, they had to formulate strategies for effect-
ing change in society. The former problem is the subject of the present
chapter; the latter is the subject of the chapter which follows. In both
cases, however, the Brotherhood used persuasion, not coercion, in pursuit
of its objectives. Members had much faith in both the printed and the
spoken word. Every conference was filled with speeches. The Executive
Committee's primary task was publishing speeches or essays, releasing
news items, publicizing and reporting conferences, and distributing
circular letters. When funds were not available to publish their own
materials, the Brothers secured the services of sympathetic periodicals
such as Amity, The Watchman, The Evangelist, and The Church Union. The
group used "Brotherhood Leaflets," "Kingdom of God Pamphlets," and "Amity
Tracts" both to propagandize for the movement and to provide an integra-
tive function within the movement. Circular letters also played a role
in integrating the movement, as did The Kingdom, which the Brothers

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published during 1907 and 1908.[1] The group employed other means of per-
suasion as well, and considered none more important than personal contact.
Rauschenbusch said: "I believe in the miraculous power of human personal-
ity. A mind set free by God and energized by a great purpose is an incom-
putable force."[2] Thoroughly convinced of the potential for changing pub-
lic opinion through persuasion, Rauschenbusch asserted that the greatest
contribution an aroused citizenry could make to the establishment of the
Kingdom of God was to engage in personal persuasion.[3]

Faith in persuasion through personal influence was a product of
the Brothers' belief in the solidarity of human society. As Rauschenbusch
put it: "This power . . . rests on the social cohesion of mankind."[4]
Social Christians were attracted to socialism because it recognized this
cohesive force. The Brothers were convinced that they could learn much
about persuasion from the socialists.

> 1. The Socialists go to the people. They have no fine churches,
> and very few buildings of any kind.
> 2. They are at their business all the time. . . . Not on one
> set day set apart only, but on all the days of the week they will
> utter themselves when they have a chance.
> 3. The Socialists aim at conversions. . . .
> 4. It follows that the Socialist speaks with burning passion.
> That passion is grounded on the conviction that the world as now
> constituted is a city of Destruction.

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[1]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 132.

[2]Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order, p. 460. Compare
Beecher's definition of "oratory": "The art of influencing conduct with
the truth sent home by all the resources of the living man"; Henry Ward
Beecher, Oratory (Philadelphia: [National School of Elocution and Ora-
tory], 1876), p. 20.

[3]See Allen, "A Comparative Study of the Concept of the Kingdom,"
p. 136.

[4]Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order, p. 461.

5. The Socialists, in so far as we have heard and read their addresses, speak directly to their listeners. They do not read their addresses.

6. The Socialists are proud of their creed. No Socialist tries to disguise himself. The Socialists converse about Socialism.

7. So far as the Socialists have real influence, they practice what they profess.[1]

That simple seven-step lesson in persuasion includes largely approaches to "out-group" rhetoric, having little to say about a fundamental rhetorical problem of any movement. The Brotherhood was simultaneously concerned with rhetoric within the movement and rhetoric for a larger public. Failure to hold a group together and to solve interpersonal disputes within the movement precludes projecting a positive image to outsiders.

Maintenance of a group involves strategies for enlistment and cohesion, the latter including "indoctrination," "legitimation," and "mythication." Cohesive strategies are interrelated and often difficult to differentiate. Material designed to indoctrinate members also includes elements of "mythication" and "legitimation." A reference to the group's success—an aspect of "mythication"—may be planned to exhort members to greater activity which will, in turn, produce greater success.

Likewise, differentiating between "in-group" and "out-group" rhetoric is sometimes difficult. George Dana Boardman's The Kingdom is a good example. Published in 1899, the book purports to be an extensive exegesis of the Kingdom idea throughout the Bible. The work was probably a product of Boardman's fifteen-year, full-Bible exegetical study—presented in his church in Philadelphia—and of the author's

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[1] The Kingdom, II (August-September, 1908), 12-13; reprinted without comment from the British Weekly.

interaction with members of the Brotherhood. Members of the movement

generally considered Boardman's work a statement of their own views.[1] The

form of the work indicates that it was published for a larger audience.

The style, however, is almost unreadable. The book amounts to little

more than a reprint of hundreds of verses of Scripture tied together

with brief, explanatory and transitional paragraphs. As a sourcebook

for the Brotherhood, however, it offered an abundance of biblical sup-

port for the movement's ideas. Before indoctrination begins, however,

new members must be secured.

Extending the Movement

Any movement which expects to survive and perpetuate itself must

attend to the business of enlisting new members, of proselyting, of

convincing the unconvinced of the value of the cause. The handful of

Baptists who created the Brotherhood of the Kingdom began at once to

enlist members from outside the Baptist fold. Even during the organi-

zational period (1892-1897) the group had secured a few converts, using

two simple strategies: personal contacts and invitations to read

papers at the conferences.[2] During the stable phase of the movement

(1897-1912), the same techniques were successfully employed. Among the

reformers who enlisted in the Brotherhood after having presented a paper

was Rudolph Binder, co-editor with W. D. P. Bliss of the Encyclopedia of

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[1]George Dana Boardman, The Kingdom (Basileia); an Exegetical Study
(New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899); Leighton Williams identifies
the study as the Brotherhood's thought in The Brotherhood of the Kingdom
and Its Work, Brotherhood Leaflet: No. 10, p. 4, NRAB.

[2]See pp. 111-13, above.

Social Reform.[1] Binder, a leader in the American Institute of Social

Service, became active in the Brotherhood after his first address to the

group.[2] His presence added a new dimension to Brotherhood work: first,

because he was Episcopalian, as was Bliss; and second, because he had a

personal reputation as a reformer.

Through personal correspondence, the Brothers established contact

with liberal Christians abroad, many of whom became members of the move-

ment and established similar organizations in their own countries as

Richard Heath had done in England.[3] Hugh H. Lusk of New Zealand came to

Marlborough in 1899 to read a paper on "Tendencies in American Democracy."

He told the group that "one tendency of American democracy which stands

out as the fruit of social evil is the worship of Success."[4] Equating

success with selfishness, Lusk struck a responsive chord in the Brother-

hood. Other international figures who appeared at Marlborough in response

to the Brothers' invitations were Elmer Ernest Count of Sofia, Bulgaria;

J. L. Dube of Zululand; C. S. Eby of Toronto, Canada; M. Paul Sabatier,

who did not attend the conferences but sent letters; and C. S. Williams

of Granville, Ontario, Canada.[5] The Brothers did not wait for international

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[1]William D. P. Bliss and Rudolph M. Binder, eds., The Encyclopedia
of Social Reform (Rev. ed.; New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1908).

[2]Binder became a "secondary leader" of the Brotherhood after 1908,
according to Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 414.

[3]See pp. 112-13, above.

[4]"Report of the Seventh Annual Conference," Amity, II (August-
September, 1899), 10-11.

[5]See Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," pp. 413-24.

visitors to come to them, however. Almost every year from 1896 to 1910, one or more members carried the cause to Europe. Unofficially, Leighton Williams was the envoy to England, Louise S. Houghton to France, and Rauschenbusch to Germany.[1]

At home, the Brotherhood employed three strategies for the extension of the movement: infiltration of existing reform organizations,[2] special emphasis on laymen,[3] and the organization of local chapters. In the original group, Mornay Williams was the only laymen. Soon, however, Ernest Howard Crosby, another able attorney, joined the group and was a mainstay until his death in 1907.[4] After 1900, George Coleman and Roger Babson of Boston became Brothers. Coleman was director of the Ford Hall Forum (begun in 1908) and, for many years, the publisher of The Christian Endeavor World. As director of the Forum, he provided a platform for many social gospel spokesmen including Rauschenbusch, and other reformers such as Louis Brandeis and Lincoln Steffens.[5] Coleman also initiated and largely controlled the Sagamore Sociological Conferences, which provided a more solid sociological foundation for many social-gospel programs. Concerning the Sagamore Conferences, Hopkins has said: "A register of the conferences would provide a directory of progressive American social

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[1]Ibid., p. 277.

[2]See ch. vii, pp. 195-97, below.

[3]See Rauschenbusch, Wanted! a New Type of Layman, Kingdom of God Pamphlet, No. 18 (n.d.), NRAB.

[4]Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, p. 125.

[5]Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 267.

leadership in this period [1907-1917]."[1] Prominent members of the Brotherhood also appearing on the programs at Sagamore were Leighton Williams and Josiah Strong. In addition to his other achievements, Coleman cooperated with Babson, director of the Babson Institute of Boston, in the establishment of the Brotherhood's local chapter in that city.

Samuel M. ("Golden Rule") Jones, reform mayor of Toledo, Ohio, was at some of the Marlborough conferences, although he was not really active in the movement. In Toledo, Jones "introduced the eight-hour day and minimum wage, gave vacations with full pay [to municipal employees], and abolished child labor." He also introduced the merit system for police and public works, opened kindergartens and playgrounds, sponsored free concerts, and fought for "home rule" for the cities.[2] While he was never a leader in the Brotherhood, it was important to the movement to be able to identify with a man of Jones's stature.

Other prominent laymen responding to the call and adding their influence to the movement were Robert Hunter, author of Poverty (1904); Helen Montgomery, translator of the New Testament in modern English; and W. Howe Tolman, secretary of the New York City Vigilance League. John Scott King of the Orange County Grange and Alexander Law, secretary of the Christian Working Men's Institute, although lesser lights, added to the thrust of the movement in its effort to enlist the services of laymen.[3]

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[1]Ibid., pp. 270-71.

[2]Harold U. Faulkner, Politics, Reform and Expansion, The New American Nation Series, Torchbooks (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 45.

[3]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," pp. 413-24.

Additional laymen as well as clergymen came into the Brotherhood

via local chapters. Since social movements, by definition, transcend

local limits, some organization for expansion is essential. Branches or

chapters are usually established in areas where leadership is strong; but

the creation of local chapters cannot take place until "membership expan-

sion [is] sufficient to support them."[1] Therefore, local chapters repre-

sent both a means of extension and an indication that extension has al-

ready taken place. Although membership was of some importance to the

Brotherhood, as it is to any movement, Batten asserted that "the extension

of the Brotherhood is not the extension of an organization, but the dis-

semination of the idea of the kingdom of God."[2] Rauschenbusch apparently

established the first local chapter shortly after he went to Rochester.[3]

He told the assembled Brothers at the twelfth conference that additional

chapters were needed. These, he said, "would draw our members together,

draw in new men and bring them under the influence of the Kingdom idea,

and create influential local bodies which could act according to local

need."[4] Further, he prepared a tract of "Suggestions for Organization of

Local Chapters of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom," in which he praised

the movement because it had made so little propaganda for itself and so

much for the Kingdom of God. "Nevertheless," he continued, "we must

frankly admit that the range and strength of its [the movement's] influ-

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[1]King, Social Movements in the United States, p. 44.

[2]Report of the Fifth Annual Conference (1897), pp. 13-14, NRAB.

[3]Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 127-28.

[4]Report of the Twelfth Annual Conference (1906), p. 29, NRAB.

ence have been checked by the deficiencies of its organization."[1] The

remedy he prescribed sounds strangely evangelical—one by one, "winning"

and enlisting men in local chapters. The movement's stringent member-

ship requirements probably kept more men out of the movement than the

deficiencies of its organization.

> First, a man must be devout; he must have his religion by experience
> and not by hearsay and rote. [How this was to be judged is not clar-
> ified in the tract.] Second, he must have an earnest interest in the
> social welfare of the common people. Third, he must be capable of
> enthusiasm for a great cause and of self-sacrificing work. The first
> . . . rules out those social reformers who have no religious life.
> The second rules out churchmen whose interests are confined to
> ecclesiastical progress. The third rules out men who are intellec-
> tually interested in social and religious problems, but who are
> selfish at heart and would seek association for personal ends and
> be a drag on the Brotherhood by timidity and cowardice.[2]

The tract urges that non-ministers, especially young men, be included,

and that doctrinal differences be of no concern. The desire for church

unity pervades the suggestion that local chapters engage in private

meetings for the reading of papers, review of books, discussion of cur-

rent topics, and fellowship.[3]

In addition to the Rochester Chapter, local groups organized in

New York City at Amity, in Boston, and, according to W. H. Gardner, in

California.[4] Outside Rochester, the most influential and durable local

organization was the Boston Chapter. In addition to its founders, Cole-

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[1]Suggestions for Organizations of Local Chapters, Brotherhood
Leaflet (n.d.), NRAB.

[2]Ibid., as reprinted in The Kingdom, I (August, 1907), 4.

[3]Ibid.

[4]W. H. Gardner, "A Unique Religious Body: The Brotherhood of
the Kingdom," reprinted from the Evening News (Newark, N. J.), July,
1906.

man and Babson, the chapter included such notables as O. P. Gifford and

E. Tallmadge Root. Gifford was also a member of the Society of Christian

Socialists and an associate editor of The Dawn. Root, author of "The

Profit of the Many," served for a time as field secretary of the New Eng-

land office of the National Federation of Churches and Christian workers.[1]

Thus did the Brotherhood expand its movement. Although no more

than fifty members usually attended the conferences at Marlborough, the

group used personal communications, invitations to prominent reformers,

infiltration into other groups, concerted appeals to laymen, and local

chapters to enlarge its membership in the United States and to maintain

reciprocal relations with similar movements abroad. Numerically, the

movement was not large, but the quality of its personnel made it one of

the most influential social Christian movements during the quarter-

century of its existence. Gaining converts to the Brotherhood was a

less significant concern of the members than keeping the fellowship in-

tact and propagandizing for the Kingdom. Before concerted efforts could

be made in the latter regard, attention turned to group morale.

Achieving Cohesion

If a movement is to operate at maximum levels of efficiency,

it must maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships and must build

a spirit of enthusiasm for its major objectives. The Brotherhood used a

variety of rhetorical methods to achieve group cohesion. Although the

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[1]On Gifford, see Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel. Also,
see E. Tallmadge Root, "The Profit of the Many": The Biblical Doctrine
and Ethics of Wealth (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1899).

objectives are interrelated, for purposes of analysis, three goals may be
defined: first, indoctrination of new members in the faith; second, legi-
timation of the movement's program and goals; and third, glorification
of the movement itself--mythication.

One purpose of local chapters was to indoctrinate members. Many
members of the Brotherhood never made the trip to Marlborough or Amity,
so the movement had to be taken to them. Circular letters and informal
fellowship also played large roles in the instruction of initiates.
Most of the Brotherhood Leaflets and Kingdom of God Pamphlets were de-
signed for in-group orientation rather than out-group appeal. For two
years, The Kingdom provided the major vehicle of indoctrination.

"Legitimation" is a term referring to the efforts of leaders to
convince members that the movement's goals and objectives are realistic.
Where no actual needs exist, leaders must create them. Even the "timing"
of rhetorical transactions is an aspect of "legitimation." The rhetoric
of legitimation seeks to explain, vindicate, and justify the movement's
activities.

Similar to "legitimation," but with even more affective connota-
tion for the in-group is "mythication." Arthur L. Smith says of this
strategy that it involves "language that suggests the sanction of supra-
rational forces [to create] . . . a spiritual dynamism for [the] . . .
movement."[1] Whereas the strategy of "legitimation" attempts to give
objective validity to the movement's goals and external relations,
"mythication" glorifies the movement itself. Members speak in opti-

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[1]On "mythication" and "legitimation" as strategies in a revolution-
ary movement, see Smith, Rhetoric of Black Revolution, pp. 34-42. The
terms have been adapted to a reform movement for the present study.

mistic terms about such matters as growth and success. The sanction

of God and history, of society and the times, rests on the movement.

Another function of in-group rhetoric is "exhortation": an

appeal to activity. While one cannot deny the pragmatic value of simply

belonging to a group such as the Brotherhood, the movement would have

accomplished little if it had devoted all of its energies to developing

group morale. Running through most rhetorical products which major on

"indoctrination," "legitimation," or "mythication" are persistent appeals

for members to act upon their convictions. Therefore, while "exhortation"

is legitimately a different rhetorical objective, it has not been treated

separately.

Indoctrination

The Brotherhood used a variety of methods to instruct its mem-

bers in "the faith." Interpersonal communication at conferences, cor-

respondence, and official movement publications provided indoctrination.

Although some of the movement's publications may have appeared in forms

designed for larger audiences, they had value as instructional material

within the group.

Data are unavailable concerning the number of Brothers who wrote

a tract or article to explain the Brotherhood's work and the meaning of

the Kingdom idea. In the Kingdom of God series, the majority of the

pamphlets were related to one of the two objectives. Several Brothers

shared the responsibility for writing the pamphlets.[1] A consistent

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[1]The Kingdom of God series includes: Rauschenbusch, The Kingdom
of God (No. 1); The Brotherhood of the Kingdom (No. 6); The Ideals of
Social Reformers (No. 25); Discipling versus Proselyting (No. 26); and

emphasis of this instructional material was that the movement made

propaganda for the Kingdom of God and not for the group.[1] Similarly,

members insisted that they were not proselyting, since they cared more

for the "spirit" than for numbers.[2] They readily admitted that the

Brotherhood had done "little direct work of general agitation," and

that they had intentionally limited their membership.

> The attempt has been made to create a small and compact body for
> propaganda purposes. Now that a goodly number of believers in the
> Kingdom have found one another out and have come into general
> agreement [however], it is proposed to begin a more active and
> united propaganda in behalf of the Kingdom of God on earth.[3]

Leighton Williams authored several papers which were basically

instructional. He told members that they must ever keep in mind the

difference between the Christian and pagan conception of life. The

latter, he declared, is self-centered and materialistic, while the former

is characterized by self-sacrifice. Ethical programs of Christianity

must be constructed on the principle of self-sacrifice. Drawing heavily

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The New Evangelism (No. 28); Leighton Williams, The Brotherhood of the
Kingdom and Its Work (No. 3; rev., No. 4); The Programme of Christianity
(No. 12); and The Need of a Positive Program (No. 27); W. H. Gardner,
A Unique Religious Body: The Brotherhood of the Kingdom (No. 8); H. H.
Peabody, An Address before the Brotherhood of the Kingdom; Batten, The
Brotherhood of the Kingdom (No. 21); What Is the Kingdom of God? (No. 24);
Divine Meaning of the State (No. 22); Mitchell Bronk, An Adventure in the
Kingdom of God (No. 13) — not the same as the article by the same title
which is often referred to in this study— and The Pilgrimage to Marlborough
(No. 14). The pamphlets were either reprints of articles written or papers
read; or they were later printed in magazines or journals in most cases.

[1]Charles S. Carhart, "The Brotherhood of the Kingdom," May 1,
1904; copy pasted in Brotherhood "Minutes," p. 84, NRAB.

[2]Batten, The Brotherhood of the Kingdom, Kingdom of God Pamphlet,
No. 21, NRAB.

[3]Ibid.

on the "Spirit and Aims" of the Brotherhood, Williams both in-
structed and exhorted the readers of the first issue of The Kingdom.
The first aim of the group was that "every member shall by personal
life exemplify obedience to the ethics of Jesus." That high ethical
standard was incumbent upon any man who desired membership. Second:
"Every member shall propagate the thoughts of Jesus to the limits of
his or her ability, in private conversation, by correspondence, and
through pulpit, platform and press." As he continues to instruct and
exhort members, Williams offers a legitimizing reason for expecting
self-sacrifice.

> We do not content ourselves with the hope of merely disseminating
> juster and more liberal opinions. We desire to arouse men to
> nobler and less individualistic and selfish purposes and actions;
> not only to enlighten the intellect, but to enkindle the emotions
> and energize the will.
> Fellowship and Self-sacrifice are therefore with us watch-
> words of our crusade.
> Love and self-sacrifice form the bond and the fruits are joy
> and peace. Society becomes one great family, held in the unity of
> love, and enjoying all things freely and in common.[1]

In addition to explaining the nature of the movement, indoctrina-
tion provided explication of the movement's ideas. The literature serving
this purpose is voluminous and has been cited frequently throughout this
study. Virtually every leader wrote one or more tracts or articles on
subjects such as "The Kingdom of God," "The New Evangelism," "The Role
of the Church in the Social Crisis," or "The Critical Use of the Bible."
Two full-length books which were considered statements of the Brother-
hood's philosophy and theology were Boardman's The Kingdom and Clarke's

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[1]Leighton Williams, "The Brotherhood of the Kingdom and Its
Work," The Kingdom, I (August, 1907), 5-7.

<u>Outline of Christian Theology</u>. When Rauschenbusch wrote <u>Christianity and</u>

<u>The Social Crisis</u>, he used materials taken from discussions at Marlborough,

and the Brothers viewed the book as a statement of the movement's position.

Of slightly less value for indoctrination were Batten's <u>The Christian</u>

<u>State</u> and <u>The Social Task of Christianity</u>, and Strong's <u>The Challenge</u>

<u>of the City</u>.[1] The last book was significant largely because of its prac-

tical emphasis on the work of "socialized churches" and "social settle-

ments."[2]

Indoctrination also took the form of preparing members to engage

in persuasive campaigns directed toward outsiders.[3] The Brothers were

conscious, even when they claimed success, that theirs was an incomplete

task. Therefore, they searched for new materials and methods of propa-

gandizing for the Kingdom. Their general program of advance was often

repeated. Batten told members that they must uphold the <u>ethos</u> of the

movement, which included the personality and character of individuals as

well as the public reputation of the movement as a whole. The personal

life of the individual had to demonstrate the Kingdom ideal. Also Bat-

ten admonished the Brothers to make more "systematic and continuous use

of the public press" as well as religious papers and reform journals.

Batten exhorted members to engage in supportive tactics: commending

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[1]Samuel Zane Batten, <u>The Christian State</u> (Boston: The Griffith
and Rowland Press, 1909); Batten, <u>The Social Task of Christianity</u> (New
York: Fleming H. Revell, 1911); and Josiah Strong, <u>The Challenge of</u>
<u>the City</u>.

[2]Strong, <u>The Challenge of the City</u>, pp. 197-308.

[3]Although out-group rhetoric is suggested in this section, the
material needs to be considered at this point, since part of the in-
group task was to prepare members for larger rhetorical efforts.

those who speak out and defending those who are attacked. Further, he said: "When we find that error is printed we should, as far as circumstances warrant and our power permits, overcome the error by presenting the larger truth." Finally, he called for the adaptation of the Brotherhood's rhetoric to the larger public in the formulation of an official statement: "This statement and appeal should not be so radical as to offend needlessly any earnest and inquiring soul; but it should not be so commonplace as to provoke no dissent on the part of the 'standpatters' in the churches. It should be conservative in spirit, but in substance it should be as radical as truth."[1]

Two other methods of indoctrination have been implied in the previous discussion. First, indoctrination takes place by "repetition." Second, although they may function more in the development of morale, slogans contribute to indoctrination. To a considerable extent, ideas often repeated may be considered slogans. However, certain phrases were consciously adopted by the Brotherhood as rallying points. Among these were terms such as "The Kingdom of God," "The New Evangelism," "The New Humanity," and the "social movement." In addition, the Brotherhood borrowed from other Christian socialists when they used such phrases as "religion, the life of God in the soul of man." The ideas, often repeated, had learning value. The slogans, on the other hand, were

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[1]Batten, "The Duty of the Hour," part of a symposium entitled "What Is the Next Work to Be Done to Further the Kingdom Idea?" Other papers in the same series include: E. Tallmadge Root, "Convict Churches of Sin"; Leighton Williams, "Build Local Chapters," Harrie R. Chamberlin, "Great Subject of Preaching"; Louise Seymour Houghton, "Distribute The Kingdom"; and Charles L. Carhart, "Explain, Study, and Practice [the Kingdom Idea]," The Kingdom, I (January, 1908), 1-3.

"short-cut formulas . . . of the aspired-to goals,"[1] designed not only

to motivate members but to identify those who were in sympathy with the

group. Slogans not only provided a cohesive force and identified mem-

bers, but were, to a considerable extent, their own legitimation of the

movement's goals. Some specific rhetoric, however, served the function

of "legitimation."

<div align="center">Legitimation</div>

"Legitimation," as the term is employed here, is an in-group

rhetorical problem. The legitimacy of a movement, however, can be

demonstrated only with regard to the larger society. Whether the movement

is justified, whether its actions are timely, whether it is designed to

meet real needs, and whether its program is capable of meeting those

needs are questions which must be answered with reference to the total

environment. For many Christians, the pilgrimage to the Kingdom of

God concept and to the social application of Christianity was a lonely

one. Rauschenbusch's fellow ministers, including his closest friends,

assailed him because he preached that "social stuff" which had nothing

to do with religion. Thompson says that this personal oppression drove

Rauschenbusch back to the Bible to see whether his ideas were right.[2]

At this point, "legitimation" and "mythication" overlap. Rauschenbusch's

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[1]Sherif and Sherif, An Outline of Social Psychology, p. 726.
See also, pp. 721, 740, and 742 for the importance of "slogans" to
a revolutionary movement. Although the position taken by this paper
is that the Brotherhood falls on the reform-side of a revolutionary-
reform continuum, the group had many features of a revolutionary
movement.

[2]Thompson, Changing Emphases in American Preaching, p. 187.

appeal to the Bible served the "legitimizing" function of proving the

social nature of religion. As Rauschenbusch studied the ethics of Jesus,

he determined that the church did have a social role to play. Moreover,

he determined that the church must play its social role. Having proven

the legitimacy of his position, he used the Bible to provide supra-

rational sanction for his program.

The Brothers also demonstrated the timeliness and validity of their

movement by showing its relationship to the "new science," "new art,"

"new ethics," and "new theology."[1] Once again, the reciprocal relation

between "legitimation" and "mythication" is apparent. Christianity had

to adapt to changing conditions, so the Brothers' social program—which

was an adaptation—was legitimate. On the other hand, however, changing

conditions proved that history was on the side of the movement—"mythi-

cation."

Virtually every page of every Report, every pamphlet, and every

issue of The Kingdom devoted some space to "legitimizing" the movement.

The most cogent analysis of the social crisis and of the need for a

program such as the Brotherhood's was Rauschenbusch's Christianity and

the Social Crisis (1907). Those who remained faithful to the movement

were jubilant when the book was published. Bronk saw the book as a

verbal reproduction of talks and papers given at Marlborough.[2] In it,

the author presented the social teaching of the prophets, the prevalence

of the Kingdom idea in the life and teachings of Jesus, the radical social

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[1]Nathaniel Schmidt, "The Kingdom of God in Modern Life," Report
of the Fifth Annual Conference (1897), pp. 4-6, NRAB.

[2]Bronk, "An Adventure in the Kingdom of God," p. 24.

organization of the early Church. He severely criticized the inequities

of capitalism and emphasized the need for a revitalized church. Also,

in the spirit of the movement, he endorsed higher criticism, evolutionary

and organismic concepts, and the use of statistical and institutional

analysis. He affirmed the sacredness of human personality, the timeli-

ness of Christian Socialism, and the harmony of theocratic and democratic

concepts.

Often, a movement must use negative means of "legitimation":

supporting the new by disparaging the old. Clarke found the traditional

concept of verbal dictation of Scripture unbelievable; therefore, he

found the method of higher criticism a boon rather than a curse. Social

Christians discovered that denominationalism was dividing Christianity

in more ways than doctrine; therefore, they contended that unity at

least to the extent of federation was imperative. Liberals indicted

conservative evangelicalism because it failed to produce changes in

business and social practices; therefore, liberals affirmed their faith

in a Christianity which had implications for all areas of life.

> The Christian religion, in the form in which our forefathers
> transmitted it . . . furnished no really effective religious con-
> ception of redemption for the organic life of human society. It
> presented no working program by which the social institutions might
> be transformed in accordance with the will of God and the mind of
> Christ.
> . . . .
> The Kingdom of God is the first and the most essential dogma of
> the Christian faith. It is also the lost social ideal of Christen-
> dom. No man is a Christian in the full sense of the original
> discipleship until he has made the Kingdom of God the controlling
> purpose of his life, and no man is intellectually prepared to under-
> stand Jesus Christ until he has understood the meaning of the King-
> dom of God.[1]

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[1]Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order, pp. 48-49.

Thus, in the process of disparaging the old order, Rauschenbusch justifies

the proposed order. But he did more: He argued that a man does not

really understand Jesus Christ until he has taken the new approach. He

glorified the Kingdom idea and the movement which stood for it. This

leads to a rhetoric of "mythication."

Mythication

Probably nothing contributes to cohesion and morale as does

"mythication." If members assume that God has ordained their movement

and that history demands it, few obstacles could deter the group in the

pursuit of its goals. Some sense of frustration is inevitable, of course.

Without it, no group would have existed to begin with; nor would sufficient

incentive exist for the movement to continue. However, some sense of

success, some cause for optimism is equally essential. When a movement's

goal is as indefinite as "the Kingdom of God on earth," the group cannot

await the coming of the Kingdom in its fullness to claim success. Favor-

able legislation, reception of a new book, enlargement of social programs,

or the formation of a new chapter may be indications of success.

The Brotherhood greatly rejoiced at the establishment of the

Federal Council of Churches, although that organization contributed to

the demise of the Brotherhood by preempting many Brotherhood functions.

Also, members included high-level myth content in their sermons, addresses,

and publications. They especially appealed to the Bible for divine sanc-

tion. In this, the Brotherhood distinguished itself from many other

social Christian movements. Both from the Bible and from the discoveries

of sociology, social gospelers proclaimed their message of racial solidarity.

The Brotherhood, however, relied as heavily on the Bible as any social
Christian movement, although the movement's interpretation of the Bible
was liberal.[1] The myth content in Brotherhood messages served two func-
tions: for the members, it provided incentive; for the out-group, it
suggested that the movement was successful enough to deserve notice.

"Mythication" is similar to "group optimism." As children of
their time, the Brothers could not have avoided a note of optimism
even in the midst of social crisis. It was a characteristic of the
day in America. It was part of the "American Dream."[2] A noticeable
shift occurs in Brotherhood rhetoric from crisis and despair to unmiti-
gated hopefulness after the turn of the century. Whereas young men
fretted because the task could not be accomplished quickly enough, as
more mature men they began to affirm that the "Kingdom of God idea" was
being accepted, both at home and abroad.[3] One of the Brothers, Charles
Carhart, went so far as to say that the movement was suffering from
too much success.[4] Leighton Williams expressed the same idea in Decem-
ber of 1907.

> We may regard ourselves as having fairly won the day in our
> effort to establish the social nature of Christianity.
> . . . .
> We have held our ground and are today perhaps the oldest and

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[1]See Clarke, Sixty Years with the Bible.

[2]On the "American Dream" as it affected the churches and the social
gospel, see Latourette, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, III, 202-24.

[3]See W. H. Gardner, "The Kingdom Idea Becoming Acceptable," The
Kingdom, I (February, 1908), 5; and Leighton Williams citing Rauschenbusch's
"Letter from Marburg," The Kingdom, I (September, 1907), 1.

[4]The Kingdom, I (January, 1908), 5.

best-established organization in the country of similar aims. The
distinguished Belgian publicist, the Count d'Anella, has deemed us
worthy to be enrolled among the more noteworthy of modern Christian
movements, and has called us the "Paulists of Protestantism."[1]

Nor was the sanction on the movement's work only from those who were their

contemporaries. Precedents could be found in the New Testament.

> The apostles and prophets of that first bright day of the Christian
> epoch proclaimed a glorious gospel of social enlightenment and en-
> franchisement, which spread with marvellous rapidity over the then
> known world, affecting all classes and nationalities. And with
> them also this outer envelope of social opinion and new humanitarian
> spirit and attitude held enshrined a new experience of wondrous
> nature and transforming power.[2]

The extent to which the movement emphasized its success is revealed in

another passage from the same address in which Williams avers that two

goals of Christianity have already been achieved: Christian manhood and

Christian civilization.[3] Herein lay a dilemma which the Brotherhood was

never fully able to resolve. While they insisted that man is essentially

good, that Christian manhood had been realized, man also comprised the

world in which resided the "kingdom of evil." Even after the movement

collapsed, Rauschenbusch wrote that the church itself was "of the world"

to the extent that it was not working for the Kingdom of God.[4] Thus, the

myth which the members lived by was of value because it reinforced the

members, not because it expressed objectively the results of their work.

Apart from such grand visions, however, some reasons for optimism

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[1]The Kingdom, I (December, 1907), 1.

[2]Ibid., p. 3.

[3]Ibid., p. 8.

[4]Rauschenbusch, A Theology for the Social Gospel, pp. 143-44.

actually existed. The Brotherhood idea had spread abroad.[1] Local feder-

ations of churches had brought the churches into cooperation. In time,

the Federal Council became the basis for a wider unity which transcended

municipal, state, and even denominational fellowships.[2] Colleges and

seminaries were offering courses or full departments to study social

problems.[3]

The optimism so essential to the group's morale was not untempered,

however. Rauschenbusch saw many obstacles to progress: "(1) the innate

conservatism of human nature; (2) the active opposition of the dominant

social classes to any change that would affect adversely the interest of

their own class; . . . (3) the psychological conservatism of age--includ-

ing the most influential section of the population; (4) the power of

institutionalized tradition; (5) and too often the influence and weight

of the Church."[4] Nevertheless, optimism, a feeling of success, and the

sanction of God and history played a significant role in stabilizing

the Brotherhood and in making it one of the most durable and influential

Christian social-reform movements in the nation.

Summary

Having spent from 1892 to 1897 defining its ideology, the Bro-

therhood of the Kingdom turned to the task of extending its movement.

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[1]"The Progress of the Brotherhood Idea in France," Report of the Sixteenth Annual Conference (1910), p. 29, NRAB.

[2]Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order, pp. 11-13.

[3]Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism, pp. 60-73.

[4]Thompson, Changing Emphases in American Preaching, p. 203.

After 1897, the movement continued to use personal contacts, correspondence, circular letters, and invitations to Marlborough to publicize the movement. It also created or engaged other channels of propaganda, including local chapters and its own paper, The Kingdom. The movement's goals were subjects for sermons, articles, tracts, books, and speeches. Having won a few converts, the Brothers provided materials of indoctrination, introducing the values, ideas, and goals of the movement to new members. By calling attention to biblical and historical precedent and present need, the movement "legitimized" itself, offering an alternative to both unsocial Christianity and unchristian socialism. In order to hold the group together and provide incentive for work, the movement invoked the sanction of God, history, and modern scholarship in its behalf. It made much of success and little of weakness. All this labor to keep the movement intact, however, would have been in vain if the movement had not developed and implemented strategies for correcting problems in their environment. The following chapter focuses on those strategies.

CHAPTER VII

STRATEGY: II. EVOLUTIONARY REFORMATION

Introduction

The preceding chapter presented an analysis of the Brotherhood

of the Kingdom's in-group rhetoric. The purpose of the present chapter

is to offer an analysis of the rhetorical strategy of the movement in

relation to society. In-group rhetoric is integrally related to the exter-

nal rhetoric of the movement. When the movement succeeded in its external

efforts, the success contributed to the "mythication" of the movement.

When the movement attacked an opponent, the rhetoric of disapprobation

brought aid and comfort to the group. The books of Boardman and Clarke,

while reproduced for external consumption, contributed materials of indoc-

rination for the in-group. Thus, in-group and out-group strategies are

so integrally related that it is not always possible to say unequivocally

that a rhetorical product or strategy is exclusively in-group or out-group

oriented. Basically, however, the present chapter will provide an analysis

of the Brotherhood's rhetoric as it was directed toward the out-group.

The basic rhetorical approach of the Brotherhood varied little

over the years. Having emerged as a stable social movement by 1897, the

Brotherhood had several rhetorical choices to make. One choice had been

made earlier. The Brotherhood elected to be an interdenominational move-

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ment rather than maintain its identity as a body of Baptist liberals.

After 1897, the Brothers engaged in numerous local, regional, and

national social and ecclesiastical reforms. Caught up in this pro-

liferation of interdenominational or non-religious social movements,

the Brothers risked their status within their various denominations.[1]

After 1907, the Brothers began to look back toward their denominations.

Those who were Baptists found several channels of service still open

to them. During this period, however, most of the recognition went to

individuals rather than to the movement. Men such as Batten, Rauschen-

busch, Williams, and Warren H. Wilson, a Presbyterian, devoted much

time to the Federal Council of Churches.

A point to be remembered in the analysis which follows is that

the Brotherhood's rhetoric was in a particular historical context in

which many other social-gospel groups were proclaiming similar messages.

The underlying assumption of this study is that the Brotherhood may be

considered a microcosm of social Christianity. A few social Christians

were more conservative and a few more radical, but the mainstream of

social-gospel reform is manifest in the Brotherhood of the Kingdom.

The movement was unique in its adherence to the Bible, in its durability,

and in its attraction for men of high quality. In the first connection,

the Brotherhood distinguished itself among social Christian groups, relying

heavily on all parts of the Bible which they considered "Christian."[2]

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[1]Most, of course, were Baptists. The group also included Metho-
dists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and Salvationists.

[2]See William Newton Clarke, The Use of the Scriptures in Theology,
pp. 50-80, for a discussion of what the Brothers meant by "Christian"
elements in Scripture.

Other social reformers used isolated passages such as the "Golden Rule,"

or only the ethical aspects of Jesus' teaching. Also, the Brotherhood

endured longer than most social-gospel organizations.[1] Finally, the

group boasted an outstanding roster of social Christians. In general,

however, the Brotherhood of the Kingdom was more similar to rather than

different from other progressive social-gospel organizations.

In 1907, Arthur S. Cole succinctly stated the two rhetorical prob-

lems confronting the Brotherhood. Concerning the "Difficulties of Pre-

senting the Kingdom Idea," Cole told the assembled Brothers that diffi-

culties were of two classes: "(1) Difficulties in the idea itself, and

(2) Difficulties in those to whom the idea is to be presented."[2] The years

spent in formulating the movement's ideology were devoted to solving the

first problem. Actually, the Brotherhood was never able to operationalize

the Kingdon idea. They fostered several reforms, however, and the con-

cern of this chapter is with the strategy they employed to effect those

reforms. Part of the movement's strategy involved the determination

of those to whom messages were to be sent.

Identification of the Out-Group

Every movement must have an "enemy." Theoretically, the term

"out-group" refers to those who are the enemies of the "in-group." Both

group solidarity and enthusiasm are dependent in part on the group's

identifying its enemies. Complete polarization of groups is fully

possible only in theory, however; viewing groups or individuals as rang-

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[1]Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, pp. 131-34.

[2]The Kingdom, I (September, 1907), n.p.

ing along a continuum from members to enemies is more realistic. Between

the extremes, a number of positions exist, although probably not all mem-

bers of a movement could agree concerning which position a given individ-

ual or group occupies. In the first position are those who are openly

sympathetic with the movement, although not active members. These are the

most likely converts to a movement. In the Brotherhood's case, this group

included those invited to Marlborough or Amity, those encouraged to attend

meetings of local chapters, and those holding similar views, but already

involved in other movements. A second position includes reformers motivated

by a concept other than the Kingdom of God, but seeking many reforms in

common with the Brotherhood. Non-militant socialists were in this cate-

gory, as were many progressives. The Brotherhood's objective for this

group was to Christianize their reform programs. They attempted this

largely by infiltrating the organizations and preaching Brotherhood doc-

trines from within. A third group, outside the Brotherhood but not really

enemies, were those unaware of the social crisis. Youth from middle-class

homes, young men preparing for the ministry, and Americans in less-

industrialized sections of the nation comprised this group. The Brother-

hood was especially interested in youth. Several members became college

or seminary professors, believing that their ideas would bear fruit more

quickly if disseminated through academic channels. Workers were the

fourth group. Although the Brothers probably considered workers as sev-

eral different groups, they were homogenous in the sense of being the

"oppressed." While virtually all the Brotherhood's rhetoric called for

improved conditions for the poor, the movement actually assumed an

ambiguous posture in its relationship to the masses. Except for Rausch-

enbusch's addresses to small audiences of socialists or laborers and
the work of institutional churches and social settlements, the Brother-
hood had little direct contact with the working people--and probably
little perceptible effect on them. On the negative (enemy) side of the
continuum were two general classes. The Brothers heaped opprobrium
upon unsocial churches and a materialistic society. In the former category
were the "millenarians," who longed for the second coming of Christ while
ignoring deplorable social conditions, and the "denominationalists," who
were more concerned with growing churches than building communities and
the Kingdom. In the latter category were capitalists, whose only con-
cern was profit; politicians, whose concern was power; and unchristian
socialists, who ignored spiritual realities.

Implicit in the foregoing discussion is the problem of audience.[1]
During the early years of the movement, the Brotherhood was aware that
it either had no audience or the wrong audience. In pre-organization
days, Rauschenbusch realized the futility of attempting social reforms
through the pulpit of Second German Baptist Church. The editors of For
the Right soon discovered that the working people themselves were un-

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[1]Several factors complicate the study of audience. First, the
number of rhetorical transactions makes intensive analysis of speaker-
audience interaction impossible. Consequently, only generalized state-
ments are applicable to the whole movement. Second, is the problem of
the heterogeneity of audiences. A safe generalization is that few mes-
sages were received by all segments of the movement's audience with unan-
imity. Various subgroups within society responded according to the util-
ity the Brotherhood's proposals had for the subgroup's goals. Friendly
audiences, on the other hand, responded positively because the Brother-
hood's goals were compatible with their own. As the movement's goals
became more accepted in the general society, its messages were better
received. Also, converts came more easily. On the "differential recep-
tiveness of subgroups," see King, Social Movements in the United States,
pp. 92-106.

willing to respond. The Baptist Congress showed only slight evidence of liberalism and worked much too slowly to satisfy the young reformers. Therefore, they had to look elsewhere for their primary audiences.

The Brotherhood found its audience largely among middle-class intellectuals. The movement's books and articles were designed for limited audiences composed of college students, seminarians, clergymen, and reformers, although the Brothers did make appeals to other groups. While the Brothers attacked capitalism, they seldom spoke directly to capitalists. While they expressed concern for the masses, they seldom addressed audiences of workingmen.[1] When they did, the tone and content of their messages were altogether different from the tone and content of their writings. They encouraged workingmen to be patient, to be temperate, to live wholesome lives, and to expect improvement; but they did not marshal the forces of workingmen or prepare them for battle against their oppressors. In general, the Brothers spoke critically of the churches while addressing audiences of laborers. Once they received a hearing, however, they indicated that the churches were better than they were generally considered to be. The purpose, of course, was to establish rapport with workingmen, who were generally apathetic if not hostile toward the churches, and then to attempt to place the churches in a favorable light. Whatever their problem or their audience, the Brotherhood had one grand rhetorical strategy which called for gradual change in social conditions.

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[1]Rauschenbusch did address an appreciable number of audiences comprised of laborers or socialists, especially after 1907. He encouraged them in their work, but offered no systematic program of social reform.

The Basic Strategy: Evolutionary Reformation

The key to the Brotherhood's rhetorical strategy was "evolutionary reformation of society." They applied this strategy, however, with what seemed to many to be revolutionary zeal. Both the theology and philosophy of the movement were predicated on evolutionary concepts. Their allegiance was not to Darwin, but to a general theory of gradualism. Nor did they feel compelled to demonstrate the validity of evolutionary hypotheses. Acceptance of evolution led to the rejection of cataclysmic experiences as basic determinants of human destiny. Emphasis on evolution also meant a change in the concept of religious experience--especially conversion. Whereas conservative evalgelicals were concerned with the salvation of the individual, without regard for his social context, liberal Christians concluded that salvation must take place by means of a gradual reformation within a regenerate society. Inherent in the evolutionary hypothesis was a theory of "the unilinear and upward development of the course of human affairs"[1]--the notion of human perfectibility--which guided and inspired most of the reform movements during the quarter-century of the Brotherhood's existence. According to Rauschenbusch, "The swiftness of evolution . . . proves the immense latent perfectibility in human nature."[2] The Brotherhood's goal was the creation of a society which would move rapidly toward human perfection.

The rhetorical position which the movement assumed was not ideal.

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[1]Waldo Beach and John C. Bennett, "Christian Ethics," in Arnold S. Nash, ed., Protestant Thought in the Twentieth Century, as quoted by Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 83.

[2]Rauschenbusch, Christianity and the Social Crisis, p. 422.

On the one hand were the uneducated masses who were neither interested in

nor able to discern the fine theological or philosophical distinctions

among contemporary social theories. Organized workers were more inter-

ested in change than in theory, seeking that change through strikes and

boycotts.[1] Nor was the movement's position favorable with all the

clergy. Southern Baptists, who had interacted with liberals in the Bap-

tist Congress, rejected the evolutionary hypothesis and higher criticism.

Northern Baptists were not unanimous in their acceptance of changing

intellectual currents. "Some reacted against them. Others made partial

adjustments to them."[2] Fortunately for the Brotherhood, intellectuals of

many faiths--including some Baptists--accepted both the methods and many

of the conclusions of modern scholarship. Generally, Baptists stayed a

step behind Congregationalists, both in theological thought and in social

practice.[3] Obviously, the position taken by the Brotherhood was not

welcomed by capitalists. Also, many socialists viewed them as "churchy"

reformers rather than thoroughgoing radicals. The Brotherhood developed

a rhetorical strategy designed to overcome most of these barriers to

their social goals.

The movement's rhetorical approach involved four basic phases.

First, the movement evaluated various segments of the larger society in

terms of the ethics of Jesus. Also, they assessed their own rhetorical

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[1]Nicholas Paine Gilman estimated that 22,793 strikes, and 1,005 lockouts occurred from 1881-1900, during which time 6,6100,000 men were thrown out of work; see Methods of Industrial Peace as cited in Rausch-enbusch, Christianity and the Social Crisis, p. 239n.

[2]Latourette, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, III, 180.

[3]Ibid.

problem in relation to audiences which might be able to effect the desired

social changes. Second, the Brothers identified with values and goals of

some portion of society, so they could be in a position to criticize and

recommend change. In general, except for problems such as alcoholism,

gambling, and excessive wealth, the Brothers did not criticize ideas,

institutions, or conditions with which they had no direct experience.

Third, the Brothers played the role of Jeremiah,[1] tearing down before

they built again: They engaged in a rhetoric of "vilification," to use

Arthur Smith's term.[2] Their criticism was most severe toward capitalism

and unsocial churches, but few areas of American life escaped their

scrutiny. The final step in their rhetoric was to suggest change. The

modifications recommended included making churches more social, making

democracy more democratic, and distributing profits more equitably.

These strategies--evaluation, identification, vilification, and modifi-

cation--were designed to effect an evolutionary reformation of society.

Ecclesiastical Reformation

The Brotherhood of the Kingdom was a religious movement which

identified with the church and religion both as a matter of conviction

and of rhetorical necessity. The Brothers' concern for the state of

the church led Hudson to remark: "Their evangelical assessment of the

situation led them more into a reformation of the church's gospel and

strategy than into a reformation of social conditions." He states

further: "The primary thrust of the Brotherhood was theological

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[1]Jeremiah 1:10.

[2]Smith, Rhetoric of Black Revolution, pp. 26-29.

and ecclesiastical."[1]

Evaluation

As social Christians examined American churches at the turn
of the century, they found them generally conservative and remarkably
lacking in social concern.[2] They discovered that churches moved their
buildings from the inner city to the suburbs rather than minister to the
poor, that churches were more concerned with polity and doctrine than with
righteousness, and that the churches were supported by the same people
who operated the sweatshops, who owned the tenements, and who lived in
luxury while ignoring poverty.[3] In early years, the Brotherhood's
general strategy was "to work for the reformation of a few churches . . .
with the hope that whatever transformation took place would serve as
an example for . . . other churches."[4] Such a process was slow, how-
ever, and the Brothers accelerated their program of ecclesiastical
reform after 1897. Their primary audience was not the people of the
churches--except for the few laymen they enlisted in their movement--
but the pastors, leaders of the denominations, and young men preparing
for the ministry. Another favorite audience of the Brothers was col-
legians.

Identification

The Brotherhood identified with the churches in two ways. First,

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[1]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 180.

[2]See May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America, pp. 182-203,
passim.

[3]See Strong, The Challenge of the City, pp. 91-166.

[4]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 112.

as members of churches themselves, they established common ground with

other church leaders. Second, they attempted to demonstrate the validity

of the Kingdom of God idea. More of the Brotherhood's rhetoric was devoted

to identification with and modification of the church's function in society

than all other ideas combined. Nor did all their pronouncements sound

heretical. When Leighton Williams said, "The truly Christian life begins

only at the foot of the cross,"[1] he identified social Christianity with

traditional Christianity in both senses mentioned. The statement taken

alone, however, distorts the picture. In liberal theology, the cross

had different significance than it had for fundamentalists. When possible,

the Brothers attempted to minimize the differences and maximize the

similarities. In another message Williams said: "It is one of the

glories of our faith that it has so lifted up the worth of the *individual*

soul." And later in the same message, the speaker contended that the

individual must be converted before society can be changed.[2] With such

rhetoric, the Brothers related themselves closely to conservatives. Both

conservatives and these liberals, at least, were concerned with personal

salvation. If the Brothers were guilty of overemphasizing social salva-

tion, it was because they were convinced that personal salvation received

due attention, while social salvation was virtually ignored.

As the movement emerged from its organizational phase, Rauschen-

busch attempted to identify with churches along pragmatic lines. As a

pastor himself, he shared a problem with other pastors. In this message,

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[1]Williams, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 7.

[2]Williams, _Powers of the Kingdom_, p. 9. Italics are Williams'.

however, Rauschenbusch also showed the importance of the Kingdom idea. He

argued that the churches are part of society and that they have a stake in

the social problem. The audience for this particular message was probably

quite small since it appeared in the relatively new American Journal of

Sociology, but Rauschenbusch repeated the substance often. He said that

the churches "are institutions rooted in the national life; they will

flourish if their soil is fertile and good; they will decay if it is

barren and parched." The church, he continued, not only has duties, but

rights and interests which it ought to guard. Therefore, the church

must be concerned with the land question, the distribution of wealth,

the hours and conditions of labor, the morale of its members, its repu-

tation in the community, and the work of institutional churches. Appeal-

ing to the conservative reader, Rauschenbusch contended that "the mystic

spiritual life of the church, its trust in God and fellowship with him,

must suffer in the midst of social decay."[1] With such rhetoric, Rauschen-

busch identified himself with the churches and the churches with the

social problem. The goal, of course, was to lead the churches to identify

with the comprehensive social principle: the Kingdom of God.

In 1898, Clarke released An Outline of Christian Theology. Al-

though the book had been printed originally in 1894, the new edition was

a new book. It is the clearest and most cogent statement of Brotherhood

theology prior to Rauschenbusch's Theology for the Social Gospel. The

latter book, however, departs from traditional modes of expression. In

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[1]Walter Rauschenbusch, "The Stake of the Church in the Social
Movement," American Journal of Sociology, III (July, 1897), 18-30,
quotation on page 29.

Clarke's <u>Outline</u> a conservative finds himself at home. In retrospect, one

may easily identify the liberal theological elements in the book. However,

only an astute and perceptive reader could avoid being carried along by

the simple, yet elegant, organization and expression of arguments. The

conservative evangelical could find nothing objectionable in Clarke's

statement: "We cannot here unfold the evidence of <u>revelation</u>, and in

this course of study it is taken as a <u>fact</u> that in the <u>Christian revelation</u>,

culminating in <u>Christ</u> and recorded in the <u>Scriptures</u>, the clearest and

fullest revelation of God <u>has been made</u>."[1] What Clarke does not state

immediately is that this revelation, although the <u>clearest</u>, is neither

the only nor the final revelation. He weaves into his argument, using

traditional modes of expression throughout, the importance of Christian

experience, the "fact" of evolution, the solidarity of the race, and

the goodness of God. The book is not argumentative. The writer was,

apparently, finding as many common points of agreement as possible. The

more subtle arguments are those which maintain the "fact" of evolution

or ignore traditional expressions of "salvation" and "punishment."

Another area in which the Brotherhood related itself to the

churches was the use of Scriptures. The movement's popular discourse

is replete with direct references to the Bible. One of the most unique

characteristics of the movement when compared to other social Christian

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[1]Clarke, <u>An Outline of Christian Theology</u>, p. 9 [Italics added].
Note that the terms "revelation," "Christian revelation," "Christ," and
"Scriptures" are used initially in traditional manner. As Clarke pro-
ceeds with his argument, however, the term "experience" assumes a
position coordinate with "revelation." The break with orthodoxy is
easy to see, but Clarke's "conversational style" might cause one to miss
the break.

groups was its dependence on the Bible.[1] The Brothers did not use the

Bible merely to establish contact with the churches. The interpretation

of Scriptures by these social Christians demonstrated the validity of

the Kingdom of God concept. Arguing from the Authority of the Scrip-

tures, Rauschenbusch asserted the biblical foundation of the ethical reli-

gion he and his colleagues proposed. The religion of the prophets, he

said, was ethical and therefore social. The morality taught by the

prophets was public, not private. The capstone of his biblical argument

for applied Christianity was the centrality of the Kingdom of God con-

cept in the teaching of Jesus.[2] His arguments were tightly woven and

amply supported by the Bible. The validity of his argument, however,

depended on the audience's acceptance of his premises. Nevertheless,

the rhetorical purpose was to demonstrate to church-related audiences

the legitimacy of the Kingdom idea in the Scriptures.

The Bible was, of course, the center of religious education.

In harmony with their general strategy of evolutionary change, the

Brothers identified with the church's program of religious education.

They used it both as a point of contact with the churches--Amity, for

example sponsored a regular missionary conference--and as a means of

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[1]On the Brotherhood's use of Scriptures, see Parrott, "The Preach-
ing of Social Christianity," p. 88. For representative works by the Bro-
therhood, see: Batten, The Social Task of Christianity; Boardman, The
Kingdom; The Golden Rule; The Church; and The Ethics of the Body; and
Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order. Many of these works were
delivered in whole or in part as lectures.

[2]Rauschenbusch, Christianity and the Social Crisis, pp. 1-92.
This book was the Brotherhood's crowning achievement, although the move-
ment itself received no publicity for it. Bronk, "An Adventure in the
Kingdom of God," noted that the arguments were taken almost verbatim
from discussions at Marlboro; see p. 24.

disseminating Brotherhood ideas. The Brothers considered the young

special targets for their rhetoric; consequently, the members took

advantage of opportunities to write Sunday School lessons, speak for

youth groups, and prepare special study materials for discussion by

youth.[1] Perhaps nothing demonstrates the Brotherhood's strategy of

gradual change via education quite like the vocational positions of so

many members. While personal ambition and intellectual satisfaction were

no doubt salient motives in their decisions to accept positions in col-

leges and seminaries, the rhetorical goal of changing society by changing

the minds of young men was probably only slightly less important. Nathaniel

Schmidt left New York City for Colgate even before the Brotherhood was

organized. William Newton Clarke taught in Toronto Baptist College

(1883-1887) and in Colgate Divinity School from 1890-1912.[2] Rauschenbusch

spent the last twenty years of his life on the faculty of Rochester

Theological Seminary.[3] Other members of the movement who engaged directly

in Christian higher education were Woodman Bradbury, professor of homi-

letics at Andover-Newton; Frank C. Porter, Yale Divinity School; John H.

Strong, Rochester Theological Seminary; Charles P. Fagnani, Union Theo-

logical Seminary; and John Alfred Faulkner, Drew Theological Seminary.[4]

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[1]Strong, The Challenge of the City; and Rauschenbusch, The Social Principles of Jesus are representative works.

[2]On Schmidt and Clarke, see The Colgate-Rochester Divinity School Bulletin, III (October, 1930), xxxiv-xxxv.

[3]See Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 141-90; or Dictionary of American Biography, XV, 392-93.

[4]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," pp. 413-24.

Identification with religious education was a necessary outgrowth

of liberal Christianity's concept of Christian nurture. While the

Brothers did not deny the validity of personal conversion experience,

they contended that conversion would take place more often by gradual

process in the context of a regenerate society. The failure of the

church to preach and practice the precepts of Jesus, as the Brothers

understood them, caused the movement to castigate the churches for their

neglect.

Vilification

Since they were members of churches themselves, the Brothers

felt qualified to criticize the church for its failures. They labelled

as weaknesses in the churches some of the same points which they con-

sidered strengths of their own movement. For example, the Brotherhood

used the Bible as a source of religious authority, but it reproved the

churches which relied solely on the Bible to the neglect of Christian

experience. They desired to set up the Kingdom of God, but reproved the

churches which looked to a spiritual kingdom while neglecting social

problems. The Brothers tempered their rhetoric by indirection, however,

condemning false ideas and impoverished institutions, but avoiding ad

hominem attacks on specific pastors or local churches.

Use of the Bible. The Brothers vehemently attacked the practice

of interpreting the Bible literally in all points and of using it as

the sole guide for Christian experience. Most of their attacks were

made through scholarly addresses, articles, and books designed for cleri-

cal audiences. When they addressed local congregations, they usually

quoted freely from Scripture without making their liberal interpre-
tations unnecessarily obvious. To their peers in the ministry, however,
they spoke plainly. And to young men preparing for the ministry, their
message was no less plain.

William Newton Clarke, the preeminent Bible scholar of the move-
ment, devoted several works to the relationship of higher criticism to
biblical interpretation.[1] His best-constructed argument appears in The
Use of the Scriptures in Theology, a course of lectures on the Nathaniel
William Taylor Lectureship at Yale (1905). First, Clarke criticized
the indiscriminate use of the Bible by those who considered all of it
equal in importance. The Old Testament, he told his young audience,
"has been given disproportionate weight," and "the words of Jesus have
not been prized above those of the disciples." Concluding the argument,
Clarke said: "It is the prime need of theology to distinguish the
Christian element in the Scriptures from everything else that lies be-
side it there."[2] Next, he defended biblical criticism, assuring his
audience that "criticism is nothing but competent and candid exami-
nation." The final topic of the first lecture was a defense of Christian
experience beyond the Bible as a guide to conduct. Clarke concluded:
"If God has here in the Bible given truth that no more truth may be
given, and granted light that no more light may be granted, this is
the only place where he has acted so."[3]

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[1]See Clarke, An Outline of Christian Theology (1898); The Chris-
tian Doctrine of God (1909); and Sixty Years with the Bible (1909).

[2]Clarke, The Use of the Scriptures in Theology (1905), pp. 12-18.

[3]Ibid., p. 43.

Clarke's first lecture probably sounded radical enough to inspire the young, liberally-oriented students at Yale. His vilification of unwarranted Bible use, however, was apparently a means to an end. In subsequent lectures, Clarke not only supported the Bible but demonstrated that its Christian use was the basis for developing Christian theology. Audience data are unavailable, making absolute conclusions about such rhetoric impossible. Given Yale's relatively liberal theological orientation, however, the young seminarians probably responded favorably to the speaker's message, though some may have considered it conservative. After the lectures were published, however, conservatives probably filtered most of the orthodoxy out and saw only the "heretical" elements in the message.[1]

Unsocial Churches. With vigor equal to that with which they disparaged improper use of the Bible, the Brotherhood attacked unsocial churches. According to Landis, Rauschenbusch did not change the tone of his speaking or writing in this regard from the 1880's to the end of his life. Rauschenbusch contended that "the churches . . . were cultivating personal piety, while discounting the need of social reconstruction."[2] In 1902, Rauschenbusch said: "The church has failed in that it does not in general try to change the conditions and institutions of life but confines itself to making men good inside these bad conditions." In this instance, the opprobrium served a dual function. Rauschenbusch

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[1]On the nature of "filtering" in communication, see Scheidel, Persuasive Speaking, pp. 62-65.

[2]Benson Y. Landis (compiler), A Rauschenbusch Reader (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), pp. 102-03.

was addressing his remarks to laborers, many of whom had little use

for the churches. Having used vilification of the churches to estab-

lish common ground with the laborers, the writer continued: "The

shortcomings of the Church are only such as are shared with human

nature generally, hence the Church is not altogether useless and bad,

as some represent it." Instead, the writer suggests some instances

in which the church has been helpful to labor.[1]

Not all Brotherhood rhetoric was as temperate as Rauschenbusch's.

Leighton Williams accosted the churches because they were unspiritual,

materialistic, and guilty of mammon worship. Further, he said, the

churches abused the Scriptures and preached a gospel of evangelicalism

which ignored present social conditions. "Character," he affirmed,

"is not the root but . . . the indispensable fruit of a genuine Chris-

tian experience."[2] Nathaniel Schmidt was even more denunciatory in his

evaluation of the churches when he spoke before the Philadelphia Ethical

Society. Once again, vilification of the churches may have been used

to establish rapport with an audience unrelated to the churches, but the

attack was severe. Having accused the churches of indifference, if

not hostility, toward the moral movement in America, Schmidt concluded:

"In the social revolution we are passing through the church cannot lead;

it has no great message to utter, no ideal with which to fire men's

hearts; it sees not the distress of their souls; it hears not the

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[1]Walter Rauschenbusch, "The Church and Its Attitude to the Labor Movement," The Iron Molders' Journal, as cited in Bodein, The Social Gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch, p. 33.

[2]Williams, Powers of the Kingdom, p. 13.

cry of the little ones; it offers them stones for bread."[1]

The Brothers did not accuse the churches without cause. Their analysis of the reasons that the churches were not actively engaged in social reconstruction was revealing: First, millennial interpretations of the Scripture caused the churches to focus on heaven instead of earth, and on salvation of the individual instead of society.[2] Moreover, emphasis on the second coming of Christ and heaven made difficult the comprehension of the Kingdom idea. Finally, ministers were guilty of respecting wealth more than righteousness.

Modification

The Brotherhood had no intention of overthrowing the church. They recognized its weaknesses but considered the church the key to the reconstruction of society, provided that it worked in proper relationship with the state, the home, and other organizations of reform.[3]

The first adjustment the Brothers sought was in the general social attitude of the churches. The Brothers called upon churches to work for the Kingdom rather than the church's aggrandizement, to become aware of the social problem and the role the church had in it. They pleaded with the churches to broaden the theological and social base of their operations, to live according to the precepts of Jesus, rather than the archaic and

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[1]Nathaniel Schmidt, "The Religion of the Unchurched," Ethical Addresses, XIII (September, 1905), 263-84.

[2]See "Millennium," and related articles in The Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955), II, 738.

[3]See Batten, The Christian State, pp. 281ff.

traditional doctrines of denominationalism.[1] The Brothers who continued

in pastorates, and the majority did, preached these ideas to their own

parishioners; but the main thrust of the Brotherhood's rhetoric was toward

church leaders. The people in the pews apparently made little direct

response to social Christianity.

A second adjustment was in the churches' concept of evangelism.

If churches were to grasp the Kingdom idea, they must be aware of "the

new evangelism," which included personal redemption but went far beyond

it. This "new evangelism" sought the redemption both of the individual

and the society. As Rauschenbusch put it: "Conversion is the transition

from an unsocial to a social mind."[2] The new evangelism formulated its

gospel in relation to a changed character, not merely a "saved soul."

The Brotherhood also called for such seemingly insignificant

changes as the addition of hymns on the theme of the Kingdom. Right

or wrong, they contended that the hymns sung in the churches had in-

estimable effect, since "no truth is popularized until it is sung by

the people." "Any defect, therefore, in the hymns of the Church both

indicates and perpetuates a corresponding failure in its life."[3] To the

end of providing more hymns on the Kingdom, the Brotherhood resolutely

devoted itself. Serving as co-editors, Mornay Williams and Walter

Rauschenbusch published Hymns of the Kingdom of God around 1902.

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[1]See Rauschenbusch, Christianity and the Social Crisis, pp. 143-52.

[2]"Social Motives in Evangelism," as quoted by Sharpe, Walter
Rauschenbusch, p. 397.

[3]"A Message to the Churches," copy taken from "Brotherhood Minutes,"
p. 89, NRAB. Original source of publication unknown.

Summary of the Movement's Rhetoric

for Ecclesiastical Reform

In spite of Rauschenbusch's pessimism in 1917, social Christianity was instrumental in effecting a number of significant changes in the social attitudes of the churches. What those changes were has been chronicled many times.[1] More churches engaged in institutional church work and in sponsorship of social settlements. Religious education expanded to include both enlarged programs at the local church level and college and seminary courses devoted to a study of social issues. To a much greater extent than previously, churches responded in behalf of labor. Also, churches were able to rise above some of their self- or denominational-centeredness in cooperative ventures such as the Federal Council of Churches.

The more important consideration for the present study is not what happened, but why it happened. Several inferences are possible from the data. First, the Brotherhood was a religious--basically Christian-- movement, which readily identified with the churches. Thus, they were able to operate within the context of the churches, rather than attacking churches from outside as some reformers were doing. Second, their basic attack was reasonable, involving, for the most part, unquestionable weaknesses in the churches. Certainly, some conservatives contended for the verbal inspiration of the Bible, the primacy of personal salvation, and eschatological views of the Kingdom. However, on other points of criticism, the unsocial churches took an indefensible position and liberal views

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[1]See, e.g., Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel; Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism; and other works listed in the Bibliography of this essay.

prevailed. Even when handling disputed points, the Brothers were gen-
erally tactful, thus avoiding unnecessary alienation of the churches.
Third, the Brotherhood made its primary appeal to ministers, who were in
positions to alter the attitudes of their congregations or at least to
advocate change. Fourth, the Brothers emphasized the social role of the
church and underscored that role by specific appeals to laymen. George
Coleman, Mornay Williams, Clinton R. Woodruff, Ernest Howard Crosby, and
Alexander Law were a few of the laymen who, while actively engaged in
the Brotherhood, also agitated for a change of the church's attitude
toward social conditions. Finally, the Brothers were patient. While
as younger men they may have been impetuous, their commitment to evolu-
tionary change made them more patient as years passed. An example of
their patience was their confidence in religious education. Genuine
revolutionaries would have devoted less time to training and more time
to agitating. The Brotherhood saw their movement as one which proposed
revolutionary change in the same sense as Jesus was a revolutionary;
but they believed that Jesus' method was gradual transformation, and
they adopted the same method.

Social Reformation

Evaluation

The Brotherhood did not confine itself to the reformation of
the churches. As members evaluated social conditions in American society,
they realized that the churches could not assume direct responsibility
for some problems. Nor were the churches capable of effecting the desired
changes. In the movement's early years, the Brothers' social analysis

derived from early Christian Socialists, George, Bellamy, or from con-

temporary sociologists such as Albion Small. Also during early years,

their understanding of social problems was a result of direct experience

for some. Near the turn of the century, Josiah Strong and Robert Hunter

(the author of Poverty [1904]) joined the movement, strengthening its

sociological base. Other social movements provided a further source of

enlightenment and the Brothers participated in many of them.

With all these resources, the members of the movement considered

themselves qualified to criticize social conditions in the country, as

well as the institutions or practices which fostered those conditions.

The movement had several different audiences to appeal to in its effort

to change social conditions. Perhaps its greatest rhetorical problem

was finding a position in which they could appeal to all their audiences

simultaneously.

Identification

In pursuance of their goals, the movement identified with several

contemporary ideas. The majority of the Brothers referred to themselves

as Christian Socialists, while identifying with many of the basic pre-

cepts of American democracy. In their zeal for social reform, the Bro-

thers subscribed to most of the theories of the nascent social sciences

and most of the programs of progressivism. They were active in peace

movements, temperance movements, municipal reform movements, and a plethora

of other social reform movements.

Socialism. Apart from their commitment to Christianity, the core

group of the Brotherhood was more zealous for socialism than any other

ideology. Identification with socialism was both a source of inspira-

tion and weakness. Those who heartily subscribed to Christian Socialism

considered it the purest manifestation of Christianity. Even within their

movement, however, identification with socialism caused divisions. Like-

wise, outside the movement, clergymen who might have joined forces with

the Brotherhood rejected socialism. The Brothers could not have foreseen

the path which socialism would follow in the United States. They were

not committed to militant socialism. As Dillenberger and Welch have

said: "Those who sought to make common cause with socialism refused to

identify the Christian social ideal with any specific "socialist" programs,

and socialism was a means to a social and religious end rather than as

an end in itself."[1] Nevertheless, social Christians were unable to

dissociate themselves from the stigma which attended socialism in the

United States both in their own day and in the decades immediately fol-

lowing the World War. If they had been satisfied with the name social

Christianity or social gospel, they possibly could have avoided some

of the negative reactions from both the business and clerical communities.

The question of the Brotherhood's relationship to socialism

arose early. In 1894, Rauschenbusch told a reporter that the Brother-

hood did not officially endorse socialism, although most members favored

Christian Socialism. Their basis for socialism was the Sermon on the

Mount.[2] Rauschenbusch said, however, that the Brotherhood was not in

harmony with the general socialistic movement. Instead, they sought to

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[1]Dillenberger and Welch, _Protestant Christianity_, p. 250.

[2]Matt. 5-7.

wed social reform, social righteousness, and religion, without identifying

themselves with a political movement. Accordingly, the Brotherhood was

never viewed by political socialists as <u>true</u> socialists.[1] Nevertheless,

the Brothers were convinced that social reforms would fail unless they

contained religious elements.[2] What they meant by Christian Socialism

was a program of "non-competitive democratic structures and functions

within and among all social institutions, [brought about] through peace-

ful . . . persuasion."[3] Christian socialism was a theological <u>approach</u>

to social questions rather than a specific program of political reform.

Rauschenbusch presented a defense of socialism before the Baptist

Congress as early as 1898. Shortly afterward, the same message, with

only minor adjustments of style and a few alterations of supporting

material, appeared in <u>The Standard</u>. The topic was "State-Help Versus

Self-Help, or Paternalism in Government." Rauschenbusch offered a third

alternative: socialism. "Socialism," he argued, "is not paternalism.

Common ownership is not State interference." Having asserted that the

era of <u>laissez faire</u> (self-help) was gone forever, Rauschenbusch illus-

trated the extent to which state-help (paternalism) was already in effect.

Then, he suggested other areas which required state interference. Near

the end of his address, he stated his thesis: "If it is our industrial

[1]See Albert T. Mollegen, "The Religious Basis of Western Socialism,"
in Donald Drew Egbert and Stow Persons, eds., <u>Socialism and American Life</u>
(2 vols.; Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1952), I, 119-21.

[2]Reporter's interview, "Christian Socialism and the Brotherhood
of the Kingdom, <u>New York Press</u>, June 3, 1894; as quoted by Bodein, <u>The
Social Gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch</u>, p. 25.

[3]Hudson, "Reign of the New Humanity," p. 159.

destiny to submit to industrial centralization and its evils anyway, let

us at least have the profits of centralization too, and the sense of

ownership which public proprietorship would awaken in the people."[1] His

concluding remarks indicate the moderate view of socialism which Rausch-

enbusch held.

> . . . I would offer three suggestions to those who are afraid of
> socialism, dissatisfied with paternalism and desirous to retain the
> largest possible measure of industrial individualism:
> 1. See that lingering inequalities in our laws are purged out,
> so that if the workingman is to fight for himself, he will, at least,
> not have to fight with one hand strapped to his back. . . . But until
> there is equality of law, self-help is unfair.
> 2. Help self-help. Help co-operative stores and profit-sharing
> along. Offer your services for the peaceful settlement of labor dis-
> putes. Extend the organization of labor. Back up just strikes. . . .
> 3. Strengthen public opinion in its demands for justice and
> humanity. . . . Remember that every great strike that fails, strength-
> ens the impression that self-help is futile, and that salvation comes
> only by State help or socialism. If you wish to stave off socialism,
> stiffen the public opinion which backs up the labor movement. And
> that, gentlemen, is not done by silence.[2]

In this setting, Rauschenbusch's espousal of socialism may be interpreted

as having "shock value." His later works indicate that he accepted the

tenets of socialism, with Christian interpretations; but before the

Baptist Congress, he apparently used socialism to stimulate conservatives

to become involved in social reform. He was not attempting to sell

socialism, per se.

Rauschenbusch presents a different image before the Labor Lyceum

of Rochester in 1901. His address is important for several reasons:

First, he took the Brotherhood's message directly to laboring men; second,

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[1] Report of the Baptist Congress (1898), pp. 107-16 NRAB; The Stan-
dard, December 24, 1898, p. 4 and elsewhere -- pages in Rauschenbusch "Papers"
are unnumbered.

[2] Report of the Baptist Congress (1898), pp. 115-16, NRAB.

he presented a cogent analysis of the differences between "Dogmatic" and

"Practical Socialism"; third, the speech is a model of the use of argu-

ment from residues and of speaker-audience identification; and finally,

the speaker's moderate position caused the editors of the Rochester

Democrat and Chronicle and The Post Express (Rochester) to acknowledge

the validity and desirability of the speaker's proposals.[1]

Rauschenbusch identified with laborers when he said: "I take it

that the great majority of us would be classed as socialists." He then

indicated a number of points on which both speaker and audience probably

agreed. By the next paragraph, the points had become acknowledged "facts,"

leading to the common belief "in replacing the competitive system of pro-

duction and distribution by a system in which not only the production of

wealth, but its distribution shall be social." Explaining the difference,

between Dogmatic and Practical Socialism, the speaker said that it was

primarily a difference of tactics. Dogmatic Socialists were more inter-

ested in theorizing and "dogmatizing" until conditions of society became

such that socialists could simply take over. For them, "the only thing

that will do is the complete expropriation of the capitalist class by

the working class and the ownership of all the means of production by

the people." With a touch of sarcasm, Rauschenbusch compared Dogmatic

Socialists and Millenarians, both of whom view the present world as being

evil, so that the only hope is to await a catastrophe which will, in one

stroke, change it all.

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[1]Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, February 25, 1901; and The
Post Express (Rochester), February 25, 1901. The former recorded the
full text of the address. The latter reported it and analyzed it, in-
dicating that the speaker was a bit radical in some respects.

Arguing from residues, the speaker demonstrated that tactics of

Dogmatic Socialism had not succeeded and that they were not likely to do

so. The conclusion of his argument led him into a defense of Practical

Socialism.

> What I am trying to show is this: That the plan of just holding
> off from reforms and letting the present order go to pieces by its
> own weight and rottenness, means that the people in the course of
> the years will be weakened in body and mind and will, and be less
> fit for the task they will have to face; and they will be without
> social organization and experience when the time comes. On the other
> hand steady improvement by reforms will better the health and intel-
> ligence of the people, will train them in social organization, and
> will weaken the opposing forces.[1]

Following his advocacy of "Practical Socialism," the speaker presented

briefly a seven-point program of reform which, except for the element

of Georgeism, sounds much like a combination of progressivism and the

New Deal.[2] The speaker began by establishing common ground with his

audience; he concluded by suggesting an end--a program--which would be

mutually beneficial to his audience and society at large.[3]

Nor was Rauschenbusch the sole spokesman for socialism within

the Brotherhood. Leighton Williams declared: "This modern movement to

which the name of Socialism is usually given is itself a manifestation

and outgrowth of the Christian faith and teaching, and as such should be

welcomed and supported by intelligent and loyal Christians."[4] And a Bap-

tist pastor from Newark wrote: "Socialism as a movement is more and more

partaking of Christian purposes, ideas and content." So compatible did

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[1]*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, February 25, 1901.

[2]The text of the reform program appears on p. 194, below.

[3]See also, Rauschenbusch's "Address at Men's Guild of St. Paul's Episcopal Church," February, 1902, in Rauschenbusch "Papers," NRAB.

[4]Williams, *The Powers of the Kingdom*, p. 8.

he find socialism that he virtually defined "the new evangelism" as

Socialism with a Christian emphasis.[1] Batten also joined in the praise

of Socialism when he wrote: "It is not too much to say that the remark-

able growth of socialism is the most significant sign of the times." A

few pages later he said: "It is probable that whatever may be the form

of society in the . . . future, it will more and more approximate the

socialistic type."[2]

The moderate position taken by the Brothers toward socialism was

rhetorically important in short-run situations, requiring immediate re-

sponse or appraisal by members of an immediate audience. In the long-run,

however, their identification with socialism became so complete that

it was impossible for them to communicate the distinctions they recognized

to their audiences.[3] Ultimately, conservatives reacted more against

their commitment to socialism than to their social programs, which were

not unique, but rather commonplace. It should be obvious by now that

a basic thesis of this study is that the disintegration of the social

gospel as it was preached by moderate progressives in pre-War America

was the result, in great measure, of the movement's identification with

socialism.

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[1]W. H. Gardner, "The Kingdom Idea Becoming Accepted," Newark Eve-ning News, January 4, 1908, as reprinted in The Kingdom, I (February, 1908), n.p.

[2]Batten, The Christian State, pp. 90 and 96; see also, Batten, The Social Task of Christianity, pp. 9-10.

[3]See a letter from Batten to Rauschenbusch, October 19, 1912, in which Batten mentions that an editor called him a socialist. Also, let-ters from Rauschenbusch to A. G. Breckenridge, a Binghamton Socialist, January 15, 1914; and to Levi M. Powers, editor of Unity, August 3, 1917. In both letters, Rauschenbusch emphatically denies having joined the Socialist party. "Papers," NRAB.

<u>Democracy</u>. In addition to identification with religion and

socialism, the Brotherhood aligned itself with democracy, a term which

the group considered little different from socialism. One might even

say that true democracy, as the Brothers viewed it, was the expression

of practical Christian socialism. Their commitment to democracy was

predicted on their religious heritage and their perception of the trend

of the times. Most of the Brothers were grounded in the Baptist faith,

including a democratic church polity.[1] They were also steeped in Ameri-

can tradition, involving the theory, at least, of "government of the peo-

ple, by the people, and for the people." Further, the Brothers' con-

fidence in democracy reflects the humanistic tendencies in the social

gospel, epitomized in the idea of universal "brotherhood." Rhetorically,

identification with democracy gave the Brothers a middle path between

extreme evangelical individualism and State Socialism. The Brotherhood's

strongest case for democracy is presented in <u>The Christian State</u>. In

it, Batten attempts to demonstrate that true Christian democracy is

another step above socialism and is probably the ultimate form of Chris-

tian and human government. Having analyzed the basic nature of three

types of government--"anarchistic," "individualistic," and "socialistic"--

Batten moves on to the ultimate goal--"the fraternal type,"[2] which most

nearly corresponds to democracy. In democracy, the Brothers sought the

"wedding of social reform and Christianity," which was the heart of their

program.

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[1]See Rauschenbusch, "Why I Am a Baptist," <u>Rochester Baptist Mon-
thly</u>, November, 1905, pp. 2-3; December, 1905, pp. 85-88; January, 1906,
pp. 106-08; February, 1906, pp. 134-36; and March, 1906, pp. 156-59.

[2]Batten, <u>The Christian State</u>, pp. 80-99.

<u>Modernity</u>. The Brothers identified with religion in order to
secure a hearing from the church people. They identified with socialism
in their appeal to the workers. They attempted to wed Christianity and
socialism in their interpretation of democracy. But they also endeavored
to establish their credibility through identification with modernity--
social, physical, and theological sciences, and the philosophy of prag-
matism. This they did in order to establish their credibility with
other reformers and with the intellectual community. Many members of
the Brotherhood were genuine scholars who accepted the new sciences as
valid in their own right, but identification with the new sciences was
rhetorically important as well.

Vilification

Identification with evolution, biblical criticism, social sciences,
and progressive reforms meant that the Brothers also singled out their
enemies: capitalists, social Darwinists, exponents of <u>laissez faire</u>,
and quasi-democratic institutions and practices. In many ways, the move-
ment's criticism of the socio-political status of the country was re-
lated to its criticism of the churches. They sought change, but they
sought it by natural processes rather than revolution. As they were dis-
satisfied with the pace of change within the churches, they were dis-
content with democracy's progress. Rauschenbusch noted three impediments
to change: "the conservative stupidity and stolidity of human nature";
"the power of institutionalized tradition"; and "the power of a reaction-
ary Church."[1] The Brothers did not desire to overthrow institutions, but

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[1]Rauschenbusch, <u>Christianizing the Social Order</u>, pp. 30-33.

to Christianize them. They did not expect change to come quickly. As

Allen says: "Rauschenbusch does not expect persuasion to be an effective

means for securing the renouncing of privilege by groups which profit

from injustice."[1] Rauschenbusch himself put the problem thus: "There

is no historical precedent for an altruistic self-effacement of a whole

class."[2] Nevertheless, the Brothers were compelled to effect change in

so far as possible.

While the Brotherhood's primary attack--apart from the churches--

was against capitalism, their rhetoric in regard to capitalism was not

all negative. As they employed a general pattern of identification with

movements and ideas they were to use in their rhetorical appeals, so

also they identified with capitalism at least to the point of praising

its material productivity. Rauschenbusch called American industry "the

most efficient . . . for the creation of material wealth which the

world has seen."[3] But the Brothers found the inequities of capitalism

intolerable.

> The men who have spent their lives in useful toil, increasing the
> world's commodities, inventing its machinery, discovering its laws,
> healing its diseases, teaching its youth, soothing its sorrows with
> heavenly strains, administering justice, and preaching its gospel
> of peace, must shift for themselves, and may pray for death to
> deliver them from the day of the soul's ripeness, if fortune cared
> as little for their fate as the people they serve. And those qual-
> ities which ought to guarantee to a man an hour of rest at the end
> of his day ere he passes into the night--honesty, justice, fairness,
> moral courage, generosity, kindliness, self-control, and truthful-

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[1]Allen, "A Comparative Study of the Concept of the Kingdom of
God," p. 140.

[2]Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order, p. 468.

[3]Ibid., p. 235.

ness--are often just the elements of character which will prevent
him from successfully running in the race with the men of selfish
ends and unscrupulous methods, who follow fast the chariot wheels
of fortune.[1]

Schmidt attempted through such rhetoric to appeal to ministers, and through

them to their parishioners. He aligned workers, lawyers, doctors, teachers,

social workers, jurists, and ministers--the servants of the world--against

capital. Unfortunately, however, not all those classes were able to see

the evils of capitalism.

One of the most despicable aspects of the problem was the effect

the money power had on the churches. The Brothers had some problem in

determining whether to attack captialism or churches which fostered it.

Among themselves, the Brothers regularly attacked both. Riley A. Vose,

a Baptist minister from Owego, New York, told the Brothers that the

"New Idolatry" was responsible for many of the church's problems: Men

enter the church in the hope of being able to worship God and Mammon

simultaneously. Vose condemned churches for providing so little place

for the poor and for failing to take seriously society's problems. He

castigated ministers who worked as "hired" servants instead of providing

leadership for the church.[2] Professor Thomas C. Hall of Union Seminary

blamed capitalism for the creation of class consciousness in America. He

called the "capitalist system . . . hateful, with its dreary record of

child exploitation, waste of womanhood, economic inefficiency; its

luxury and poverty, its foulness, corruption and injustice."[3] If one

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[1]Schmidt, The Republic of Man, p. 13.

[2]The Kingdom, I (October, 1907), n.p.

[3]Ibid., I (June, 1908), n.p.

assumes that these men spoke the same messages in their pulpits

or classrooms, they may have had some effect. However, the limited

circulation of The Kingdom outside the immediate circle of the Brother-

hood probably meant that their rhetoric made little impression--unless

it stimulated other members of the movement to engage in similar ef-

forts in their local areas.

Rauschenbusch carried the Brotherhood's message to the platform

of the Northern Baptist Convention meeting in Chicago. In his message,

he attacked both capitalism and unsocial churches. Having contended

that Paul compared the old religion and the new and found the old lack-

ing because it shut the doors it should have unlocked, Rauschenbusch

said: "What more terrible judgment can be leveled against any insti-

tution than this: that it undoes what it is set to do?" Following

that question, Rauschenbusch launched his attack.

> If a system of national economy makes living dear instead of cheap,
> and keeps millions of people underfed in the midst of wealth; if
> schools render pupils incapable of mental concentration and indif-
> ferent to intellectual ideals; if the State, instead of being the
> great protector of the weak, becomes an organ of oppression; if
> the law, instead of getting justice done, frustrates justice, and
> fortifies inherited injustice; and if religion, instead of reveal-
> ing God, obscures his will and love, and keeps men from a clear
> experience of their heavenly Father, what greater condemnation is
> there?[1]

In the address, Rauschenbusch sets true democracy and Christian socialism

on one side and contrasts them with quasi-democracy, capitalism, and

unsocial Christianity on the other.

Rauschenbusch's arguments probably received some attention both

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[1]"The Freedom of Spiritual Religion," preached before the Northern
Baptist Convention, Chicago, May 8, 1910. The sermon was published by
request for free distribution by the Convention.

during and after the convention. Two years before he spoke, the Northern

Baptist Convention had appointed a Social Service Committee, on a motion

by Samuel Zane Batten. The "committee was appointed to investigate what

Baptist churches were doing in the field of social service, to report its

findings 'from time to time to the churches through the religious press,'

and to bring in a report and recommendations to the convention of 1909."[1]

When the committee returned the following year with its report, it revealed

that "Baptist churches were doing very little in the way of social service,

although a sense of need for knowledge was apparent among pastors and

churches."[2] By 1910, when Rauschenbusch spoke, no more authoritative

voice for social Christianity could be found in the nation. As a fellow

Baptist, renowned professor in Rochester Seminary, and author of Chris-

tianity and the Social Crisis, Rauschenbusch brought impressive cre-

dentials with him to the Northern Baptist Convention.

Two years later, Rauschenbusch released the most cogent and com-

prehensive attack on capitalism to be produced by one of the Brothers. In

Christianizing the Social Order, the rhetorical approach which has been

presented throughout this chapter is demonstrated in miniature. Most of

the book was first delivered in two lecture series: first at Pacific

Lutheran Seminary, 1910; and later at Ohio Wesleyan, 1911. The student

newspaper of Ohio Wesleyan indicates something of the respect which

student groups had for Rauschenbusch by 1912.

> In Professor Walter Rauschenbusch, of Rochester Theological Sem-
> inary, this year's Merrick Lecturer, the University is privileged to
> listen to a man whose words have in them the authority of long re-
> search in his chosen field. As a writer as well as a lecturer, he

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[1]Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 295, quoting the
Northern Baptist Convention Annual (1908), p. 79.

[2]Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 296.

he has brought to the fore, practical Christianity, with the accent on the practical.[1]

In optimistic tones, Rauschenbusch first identified with the churches and traced briefly evidences of their social awakening.[2] Yet he called for still greater concern on the part of churches for social reform, stating that it was the "revolutionary destiny of Christianity" to provide social redemption as well as individual salvation.[3] Later, the author identifies with other cherished values: the family, education, and the political system. The arrangement of his discussion is based on the degree to which each of those institutions is Christianized and democratized: the family being the most Christian and most democratic institution of all.[4] Having acknowledged that even these institutions are not so Christian as they might be, Rauschenbusch proceeds to attack the economic order, declaring that "business" is the unregenerate section of our society. Possibly Rausch-enbusch's most radical expression is his indictment of capitalism and his recommendation that control be placed in the hands of the workers. Yet he does not recommend the use of violent means. His indictment is that speculative risks produce waste and inefficiency, that the stakes of the "law of tooth and nail" are too high for human safety, that money takes precedence over honor, that repression by capitalists causes the violence of working classes. He assails the power of private ownership of natural resources and of space, insisting that both must belong to all people.[5]

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[1]The Ohio Wesleyan Transcript, April 13, 1911, p. 380.

[2]Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order, pp. 1-39.

[3]Ibid., pp. 40-122.

[4]Ibid., pp. 123-155.

[5]Ibid., pp. 156-234.

Rhetorically, the significant thing about Rauschenbusch's presentation of social problems is that he offered his analysis without bitterness or malice. The editors of The Ohio Wesleyan Transcript refer to the addresses with little comment, but they viewed the lectures as expressions of practical Christianity, not radical revolution.[1] Conservative evangelicals, both in his day and since, have refused to accept most of Rauschenbusch's arguments; but by 1912, the intellectual middle class to which he was appealing apparently accepted most of it.[2]

Capitalism was not the only object of the Brotherhood's attack, however. Social Darwinism, economic laissez faire, and quasi-democratic institutions received their share of rhetorical venom from the movement.[3] While the Brothers spoke to or wrote for any audience which would give them an opportunity, as a movement, they concentrated most of their energies on college students, seminarians, and the clergy.

Modification

The Brotherhood's program of modification is another evidence that they identified with what they perceived to be the trends of the times. The movement did not have a unique program of social reform. Instead, they adopted programs which various political parties or groups espoused. In his address to the Labor Lyceum, Rauschenbusch outlined what he considered to be a Christian reform program:

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[1]See The Ohio Wesleyan Transcript, April 13, 1911, pp. 375, 380, and 384; and April 20, 1911, pp. 395, 403-405.

[2]See Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, pp. 280-302.

[3]As examples of this rhetoric, see Batten, The Christian State, pp. 54-78, where he attacks laissez faire; and Strong, The Challenge of

(1) appropriation of economic rent by the taxation of ground values apart from improvements; (2) appropriation of some of the chief sources of profit by municipal ownership of natural monopolies, e.g., water, gas, electric light and power and surface roads; (3) extension of the industrial machinery and capacity of the organized people by control of the express and telegraph business through the machinery of the post office; (4) by the income derived from these sources, extension of education, libraries, museums, parks, playgrounds, baths, etc., to promote the welfare of the people; (5) breaking up the accumulations of great capital by a steeply graduated income tax; (6) organization of trades, partly to maintain wages and improve the condition of labor, and partly to create a social organization of the people, on which the social management of industry can devolve when it becomes necessary; (7) labor legislation to shorten the working time, improve the sanitary conditions of labor, prevent child labor, restrict female labor, etc.[1]

Although this particular platform was designed to appeal to labor, it is typical of social Christianity's program of reform. It was not a unique program, but social Christians gave it a different interpretation by emphasizing more than the economic aspects of such reforms. The Brotherhood wanted to create public interest in the problems so that the people could find solutions of their own. They offered specific reforms merely because they seemed to be the best available solutions for the moment. The movement had no guarantee that the proposed reforms would bring the Kingdom in, but they were convinced that the proposals would bring the Kingdom a little closer.

The Brotherhood had the same basic message for all of society: Christian socialism, which to the Brothers was the purest democracy. In presenting their message, however, the movement had to offer a different

the City, which includes an attack on municipal governments which were undemocratic because unresponsive to the will of the people. Also, see the Boston Post, the Boston Transcript, or the Morning Globe (Boston), February 1, 1915, which report Rauschenbusch's lecture in Ford Hall. The speaker told his audience that even "private schools are undemocratic."

[1]Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, February 25, 1901.

image to various audiences. To the churches, they were churchmen. To the laborers, they were socialists. To the intellectuals, they were sophisticated reformers. To capitalists—whom the Brothers seldom addressed directly—they were social Christian democrats, insisting on the rights of the people. The limited number of Brothers could have accomplished little in the context of their own organization. Rather than increase their formal membership, the Brotherhood disseminated its message by carefully selecting channels of communication.

Channels of Communication

The rhetorical influence of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom as an organization can never be determined exclusively by an investigation of speeches given, articles and books written, or programs conducted in the name of the movement. Their strategy included gradually altering the character of other reform movements which Brothers joined, thus giving the other movements something of the leaven of the Kingdom. Their practice was to cooperate with any organization which did Christian work, even if the organization itself could not be called Christian.[1] During the early years of the movement, the Brothers organized their own Christian Socialist society, which cooperated with Bliss's Boston society and the Nationalist clubs of New York.[2] Leighton Williams was active in the New York Kindergarten Association, the Collectivist Society, the Fabian Society, and the Intercollegiate Socialist Society.[3] In cooperation

[1]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 243.

[2]Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism, p. 101.

[3]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 31.

with Josiah Strong, Williams assisted with the establishment of the
"Open and Institutional Church League."[1]

What was characteristic of the early years persisted in later
years. In 1900, eight members of the Brotherhood appeared on the pro-
gram of the New York State Conference of Religion, in cooperation with
such illustrious social Christians as Lyman Abbott and R. Heber Newton.[2]
The Conference became a substitute for the Baptist Congress in later
years, serving the dual function of providing an opportunity for the
Brothers' ideas to be heard and of enriching their own understanding
of religion's role in the social problem.[3] Meanwhile, Batten served in
the New York Christian Endeavor Union (1894-1895), the Nebraska Anti-
Saloon League (1903-1908) and on the Social Service Commission of the
Northern Baptist Convention and the Baptist World Alliance.[4] Rauschen-
busch, who worked largely through movements, was especially interested
in the Men and Religion Forward Movement.

> All the varied departments of the movement found their spiritual
> center and unity in the idea of the Kingdom of God, which is the
> doctrine of social Christianity.
> . . . .
> The movement has probably done more than any other single agency
> to lodge the social gospel in the common mind of the Church. It has
> made social Christianity orthodox.[5]

The Brothers did not limit themselves to infiltration of other

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[1]Hopkins, *The Rise of the Social Gospel*, pp. 303-04.

[2]Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 233.

[3]*Ibid.*, pp. 240-41.

[4]"Samuel Zane Batten," in *Who Was Who in America*, I (1897-1942), 69.

[5]Rauschenbusch, *Christianizing the Social Order*, pp. 19-20.

movements. They sought and secured places of leadership, which give

them more powerful voices in the policies of these movements. E. Tal-

madge Root became Field Secretary of the New England Federation of

Churches.[1] Bolton Hall, Henry D. Lloyd, Samuel M. Jones, and Edwin

Markham were all officers in Bliss's Social Reform Union.[2] Boardman

was President of the Christian Arbitration and Peace Society, while

Mornay Williams served on the National Council of Charities and Cor-

rections.[3] The examples listed are hardly a beginning; the Brothers

spread the word through every movement which had utility for their goals.[4]

Another channel of importance to the movement was that of corres-

pondence. In early years, they sought reform through letter-writing cam-

paigns, including an effort to secure sand hills for the parks of New

York. Members wrote to congressmen in Albany, to the Park Board, and

to influential people in New York City. Their efforts were rewarded

by a donation of land and money by Mrs. Astor and the cooperation of such

influential citizens as Seth Low, President of Columbia University.[5]

The letters had twofold purposes. The first purpose was either

to recommend a minor reform or to commend some official for his perfor-

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[1] The Kingdom, I (January, 1908), 6.

[2] Bliss, "The Social Reform Union," The Arena, XXII (July-December, 1899), 273.

[3] On Boardman, see Who Was Who in America, I (1897-1942), 69; on Mornay Williams, see the same volume, p. 1354.

[4] Hudson, "The Reign of the New Humanity," p. 310.

[5] See letter from Paul R. Reynolds of the New York City Park Commission to Rauschenbusch, June 10, 1897, NRAB: and Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, p. 78.

mance of duty. Second, the Brothers attempted to establish an audience

with men of influence. Rauschenbusch corresponded with such notables as

Theodore Roosevelt, while the latter was police commissioner of New York

City; James M. E. O'Grady, member and twice Speaker of the New York State

Assembly; Jacob Riis, author of How the Other Half Lives; and Henry George,

originator of the "Single Tax Movement," author of Progress and Poverty,

and candidate for the Mayorality of New York.[1] Apparently, correspondence

was an effective means of building ethos, at least for Rauschenbusch.

Although Christianity and the Social Crisis was not published until near

the end of Teddy Roosevelt's second term in office, the President con-

sulted Rauschenbusch on social issues.[2]

Another use of dictamen was that of publicizing forthcoming

books. Prior to the preparation of Christianizing the Social Order,

Rauschenbusch wrote letters to leading officials of many churches, in-

cluding Lutherans, Catholics, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians,

expressing interest in what was being done in the various churches in

behalf of the social cause. The purported intent was to gather informa-

tion for the book. The subtle purpose was to generate interest in the

book even before its release.[3]

Books were perhaps the most important channel for the dissemination

of Brotherhood ideas after 1907.[4] The publication of Christianity and the

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[1]Letter from Roosevelt, July 5, 1895; also November 21, 1896; from O'Grady, March 13, 1895; from Riis, January 27, 1896; from Henry George, April 15, 1897, NRAB.

[2]Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 413-415.

[3]Several letters in Rauschenbusch "Papers" (1910-1911), NRAB.

[4]See Bibliography appended to this study.

Social Crisis was so well received that Rauschenbusch received several

requests to permit translation of the book. He hesitated because of the

book's style, feeling that the idiom might be lost in translation. In

time, however, the book was translated into French, Russian, German,

Finnish, Norwegian, Swedish, Chinese, and Japanese.

While style may not be the most salient factor in a rhetorical

situation, Rauschenbusch and Batten were keenly aware of its importance.

In the books which he intended for general audiences, Rauschenbusch used

vivid, and often colloquial style, as this example illustrates: "We

saw the bribed voters of respectable counties in the Middle West startled

by sudden publicity, as a lot of cockroaches in a dirty kitchen scamper

when the light is turned on."[1] While Batten worked with the American

Baptist Publishing Society, he often conferred with Rauschenbusch about

matters of style. Even the titles given to books were altered to fit

Rauschenbusch's thinking. Also, writers were selected according to

Rauschenbusch's opinion.[2]

During its existence, the Brotherhood utilized the pulpit, the

press, the lecture platform, the classroom, correspondence, personal

contact, leading journals, and books to propagate its message. Also,

it infiltrated other movements, endeavoring to alter programs from within.

As a consequence, much of the rhetoric of the Brotherhood is buried in

the work of those movements and cannot be analyzed in the context of the

Brotherhood itself. Also as a consequence, members of the Brotherhood

[1]Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order, p. 4.

[2]Letter from Batten to Rauschenbusch, December 27, 1912, NRAB.

eventually became so involved with other movements and social-gospel pro-
grams that the movement lost its unique sense of identity.

Summary

This chapter has summarized the Brotherhood of the Kingdom's
rhetorical strategy with reference to social and ecclesiastical reform-
ation. The movement employed an evolutionary strategy, involving four
basic steps: evaluation of existing conditions and of the Brotherhood's
relationship to that segment of society which might be able to alter
those conditions; identification with selected ideas, values, and groups,
both for the purpose of establishing common ground--thus making allies--
and for the purpose of pointing up those areas in society where basic
Kingdom goals were already acceptable; vilification of weaknesses within
the existing system, while avoiding ad hominem attacks on specific in-
dividuals; and suggestions for modification of the existing order. Having
attempted to create an appropriate image with various subgroups in their
society, the Brotherhood utilized several channels for the diffusion of
their message. First, they infiltrated other social reform movements,
endeavoring to influence their programs by the infusion of the Kingdom
idea. Second, the Brothers appealed through channels such as the pulpit,
classroom, and press to selected audiences of the young or middle-class
intellectuals. In general, they employed a two-step approach, depending
upon ministers in churches, editors of magazines, and others to carry
their message forward.

The Brothers saw their role as similar to that of Jeremiah, who
first tore down in order to build again. In the process of their destruc-

tive rhetoric, the movement attacked unsocial churches, biblicism, capitalism, Social Darwinism, and quasi-democratic institutions, all of which they considered impediments to progress. Positively, they contributed to the formation of several cooperative movements or organizations and to the growth of religious education. In all their enthusiasm for cooperative ventures, however, the Brothers depleted the strength of their own movement. While they gained some momentum by utilizing the resources of other movements, they were unable to avoid the randomness of social program which was a natural result of such diversity. Ultimately, participation in so many different movements and so many personal projects, together with a rather widespread acceptance of social responsibility by the churches, precipitated the disintegration of the group.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The Brotherhood of the Kingdom arose in response to the social

crisis in America and to the appeal of the social gospel. Men who

united with the movement were theological liberals who encountered social

problems either directly, in their own ministries, or vicariously,

through the agitation of other social reformers. Prior to the move-

ment's organization, its founders interacted in a variety of communication

situations, during which they recognized the similarities in their social

and theological thought. Having experienced frustration in their in-

dividual and small-group reform efforts, several liberal Baptists or-

ganized the Brotherhood of the Kingdom. In its early years, the move-

ment developed its ideology, which expressed the group's goals, values,

and leading ideas. The Brotherhood extended its membership beyond the

original Baptist nucleus to include representatives from six denomina-

tions, nineteen states, and six foreign countries. The group developed

specific strategies for extending its membership, although it did not

seek members indiscriminately. The core group of the movement was com-

prised of a limited number of middle-class intellectuals most of whom were

clergymen.

In time, the Brotherhood designed strategies for building group

cohesion. Included in the cohesive strategies were several methods of indoctrinating new members: The movement's goals and ideology were explained in numerous publications; portions of each conference were devoted to the instruction of new members; and local chapters were organized to reach those who could not attend the annual sessions in Marlborough. Cohesion resulted also from strategies of legitimation and mythication. Members found justification for their movement in the social conditions of the day and sanctification in the Bible, history, and trend of the times.

Meanwhile, the Brotherhood engaged in rhetorical strategies to effect an evolutionary reformation of society. Specifically, the movement sought ecclesiastical and economic reforms. They attacked unsocial churches, unchristian socialists, and unethical capitalists. In general, however, they avoided ad hominem attacks on specific individuals, churches, or companies. Instead, they criticized social and religious ideas and practices which they found to be incompatible with the teachings of Jesus.

Evaluation of the movement's rhetoric is difficult because of the nature of its rhetorical problems. The Brotherhood was only one of many social-Christian movements which sought similar reforms. Therefore, the social changes which occurred cannot be attributed exclusively to the rhetoric of the Brotherhood. The group recognized that its direct role in social change was somewhat limited. However, in cooperation with other social Christians, the Brothers were instrumental in the generation of several ecclesiastical and social reforms: Churches were more social-conscious in 1915 than they had been in 1892; colleges

and seminaries were giving more attention to ethics in their curricula;
and numerous progressive reforms were adopted in America.

In some respects, the Brotherhood failed. It failed in its ef-
fort to realize the Kingdom ideal. Two ideological weaknesses caused
the failure. First, the movement was unable to make the concept of the
Kingdom operational. As a result, the group's public program had a
chameleonic character which varied according to the reforms being pro-
moted by one political group or another. The Brothers knew that cer-
tain conditions could not exist if the Kingdom were to be actualized,
but they were unable to formulate a specific social program which would
guarantee the realization of the Kingdom ideal. Second, the Brothers
had an unrealistic view of human nature. Optimistically, they believed
that a new society could be created through education and persuasion.
At the end of the era, Rauschenbusch wrote, naively, "If the people
were free they would stop exploitation."[1]

The Brotherhood failed in another sense also. Without accomplish-
ing its goal—the fuller realization of the Kingdom of God on earth—
the group ceased to exist. Either its in-group rhetoric was incapable
of holding the members together or the members were willing to consider
short-term successes indications that the long-term goal was being ac-
complished. Many of the movement's goals were adopted by the Federal
Council of Churches. After the founding of the Council, the Brother-
hood's in-group rhetoric failed to provide the integrative function
necessary to sustain the group. Individual members became more involved

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[1]Rauschenbusch, A Theology for the Social Gospel, p. 75.

in diverse social reform programs, and the men simply drifted apart.
The movement's disintegration did not occur until twenty years after
its organization, however, making the Brotherhood one of the most dur-
able social-gospel organizations in America.

As a rhetorical movement, the Brotherhood must be judged by
some standard other than the apparent success of failure of its social
program. The movement was significant because it was a microcosmic
manifestation of the mainstream of social Christianity in America. The
author of this essay believes that a study of the Brotherhood's rhetoric
reveals the fundamental patterns of persuasion which were characteristic
of the social gospel. Although many social Christians were more con-
servative and some were more liberal than the modal position in the
Brotherhood, the group provides a model for the study of other social-
gospel movements.

Further, the Brotherhood was important because it contributed
to the development of men such as Walter Rauschenbusch. What most
studies of Rauschenbusch have overlooked is that his social theories
and program developed in the matrix provided by the Brotherhood of the
Kingdom. Liberal theologians of the past offered a religious basis
for Rauschenbusch's social gospel, but the Brotherhood supplied the im-
mediate intellectual and spiritual stimulation necessary for Rauschen-
busch to refine his theology. Social Christians such as Ruskin, Maurice,
and Kingsley inspired Walter Rauschenbusch, but William Newton Clarke,
George Dana Boardman, Leighton Williams, Samuel Zane Batten, and other
Brothers, guided the development of Rauschenbusch's thought as they
interacted with him in the movement. Rauschenbusch's leadership was

essential to the movement, and the loss of his leadership was possibly

the most important cause of the group's demise. Apparently, however,

the movement was as important to Rauschenbusch as he was to the move-

ment. If it is true that men make movements, it is equally true that

movements make men--such as Walter Rauschenbusch, the greatest prophet

of the social gospel in America.

Martin Luther King, Jr., acknowledged his debt to Rauschenbusch

when he explained his own pilgrimage to nonviolence.

> Not until I entered Crozer Theological Seminary in 1948, . . .
> did I begin a serious intellectual quest for a method to eliminate
> social evil. Although my major interest was in the fields of theology
> and philosophy, I spent a great deal of time reading the works of
> the great social philosophers. I came early to Walter Rauschenbusch's
> Christianity and the Social Crisis, which left an indelible imprint
> on my thinking by giving me a theological basis for the social con-
> cern which had already grown up in me as a result of my early exper-
> iences. . . . Rauschenbusch had done a great service for the Chris-
> tian Church by insisting that the gospel deals with the whole man,
> not only his soul but his body; not only his spiritual well-being
> but his material well-being. It has been my conviction ever since
> reading Rauschenbusch that any religion which professes to be con-
> cerned about the souls of men and is not concerned about the social
> and economic conditions that scar the soul, is a spiritually moribund
> religion only waiting for the day to be buried.[1]

What King did not realize as he wrote those words is that the philosophy

which Rauschenbusch popularized in Christianity and the Social Crisis

was a product of interaction with the Brothers during annual conferences

at Marlborough.

Finally, the Brotherhood of the Kingdom is rhetorically important

because it is a case study in peaceful and orderly change. The rhetori-

cal approach of the movement offers an alternative to the tension-producing

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[1]Martin Luther King, Jr., Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery
Story (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 91.

rhetoric of many movements during the 1960's. The group developed genuine

cohesiveness, based on commitment to a comprehensive social ideal—the

Kingdom of God. Instead of advocating the revolutionary overthrow of

institutions and practices which failed to adhere to the Kingdom ideal,

the Brothers worked patiently toward their goal. They adopted strategies

which were consistent with their social and theological philosophy—

which precluded the use of militant, revolutionary means.

The Brotherhood attempted to identify with accepted norms and

values of large subgroups in society. Further, it attempted to demon-

strate the utility of the Kingdom concept for solving contemporary social

problems. The Brothers castigated churches for their unsocial behavior,

capitalists for placing profits above personality, and quasi-democratic

ideas for misleading the people. In the midst of their criticisms,

however, they were careful to praise the values of the institutions them-

selves.

In the process of addressing themselves to various audiences,

the Brothers utilized virtually every channel available to them. Their

favorite channel, or modus operandi, was that of infiltrating social

reform movements. In effect, they were using the same method when so

many of the Brothers became college or seminary professors. Such a

process is slow but social Christians who employed the evolutionary

strategy of the Brotherhood effected some rather revolutionary altera-

tions in the role of the churches and in America's business ethic.

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