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Common Crisis North-South: Cooperation for World Recovery (Book Review)

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graduate seminar in development policy, but is too narrowly focused for a general undergraduate course in economic development. Laypersons who want to know more about current issues in economic development would be better advised to read one of the Brandt Commission reports, *North-South* and *Common Crisis*, or a good text such as Michael Todaro's *Economic Development in the Third World*.

Banking on the Poor would be valuable reading for directors of church-related and private voluntary organizations engaged in development activities. Often such administrators have grass roots experience on mission fields, but little knowledge of development theory

or practice at the macro level. In the past, large national and multilateral agencies such as the World Bank tended to ignore small religious and private development agencies. As Ayres points out, there is great potential for fruitful cooperation between large public institutions and small private agencies. Leaders and members of groups concerned with promotion of public justice in international affairs will also find the book useful, but they should be forewarned that it presumes more than a passing knowledge of international development problems and issues. In summary, it is a well-written, useful book for a limited audience.

Common Crisis North-South: Co-operation for World Recovery, by the Brandt Commission. Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1983. 174 p. \$4.95. Reviewed by Edward Lotterman, Instructor in Economics.

Books written by committees or blue-ribbon commissions tend to have serious limitations. *Common Crisis* is no exception to this rule. Its prescriptions for change in the international economic order often are generalities which most intelligent people would readily support, but which are extremely difficult to implement in pragmatic political terms. Most readers will agree that developed nations should not enact more strenuous tariff barriers to imports of Third-World products. Neither should men beat their wives. The difficult part of either case is not setting a noble goal, but rather finding practical ways of achieving it. Nevertheless, this book is very useful and should be read by many Christians who are concerned with justice in the international order.

Common Crisis is a successor to the earlier Brandt Commission report, *North-South, A Program for Survival* first published in 1980. Readers familiar with that work will have a good idea of both the viewpoint and topics of the second. For those unfamiliar with the Brandt Commission, a brief bit of history is in order. The Commission was organized in late 1977 by former German Chancellor Willy Brandt with the task of studying current international development issues and presenting recommendations to the world community. The commission was made up of twenty international dignitaries including five former heads of state and thirteen former ambassadors or government ministers. Eleven were from developing countries; nine, including Brandt, were from developed countries. Only the USA had two representatives, Katharine Graham, publisher of the *Washington Post*, and Peter G. Peterson, Secretary of Commerce in the Nixon administration. The Commission convened periodically over the course of two years and in 1980 issued its first report, *North South*. That work examined the most pressing development issues of the late 1970's including food, population

growth, commodity trade, energy, transnational corporations, and development finance. It also issued a number of general and specific recommendations to the world community. One was a call for an international summit meeting of world leaders representing the developed "North" and the developing or less developed "South." This recommendation was fulfilled in the international conference held at Cancun, Mexico, in mid-1982. Unfortunately for the Brandt commission, the most tangible event at the Cancun conference was President Reagan's and Prime Minister Thatcher's rather blunt announcement that most of the other commission proposals were simply out of the question from the point of view of the developed countries. In the three years since Cancun, the economic situation of many developing countries has worsened due to the global economic recession and to the increasing constriction of servicing external debts. Though there has been no substantial effort to re-open multilateral talks between rich and poor nations, *Common Crisis* is an effort by the Brandt Commission to keep these issues before the international community.

It is a shorter work than its predecessor, 174 pages of large type as opposed to 304 pages of small type in *North-South*. *Common Crisis* also deals with a narrower range of subject matter. The first chapter reviews earlier Commission proposals and summarizes world events over the intervening years. The second chapter, dealing with international finance, is the heart of the book. Clearly the international debt crisis and the domestic effects of International Monetary Fund loan conditions are the most pressing politico-economic problems in the third world today. *Common Crisis* generally advocates greatly increased "soft" lending on the part of developed nations and multi-lateral agencies with much less stringent conditions placed on these loans. Shorter subsequent chapters deal with trade and

with food and energy. Both are largely recapitulations of earlier proposals. Written in 1983, the call to developed countries for increased receptivity to Third World exports already seems sadly dated by the wave of protectionistic rhetoric currently washing over the U.S. Similarly, the warnings of food problems in Africa have already been tragically fulfilled. A final chapter, which focuses on the negotiating process between North and South, contains more hope than reality. The report's principal proposals are summed up in eight pages, and a brief appendix outlines hearings and other actions taken by the commission.

What impact can a report which so bravely and optimistically ignores political realities have? *Common Crisis's* most important functions may be symbolic and educational. Its proposals will serve as a goal toward which wealthy non-superpower Western nations such as

Sweden and the Netherlands will work. The efforts of these nations, as in the past, will serve at least to prick the consciences of the larger Western nations. The book may also be very useful as a primer on international development issues for concerned laypersons. One need not be an expert in economics or international relations to digest either of the Brandt reports, and their price would allow them to be used, for example, by adult church discussion groups. It would also be useful as a supplemental reading in undergraduate courses dealing with economic development, international economics, or even international relations. Some of the proposals may be naive, or even contradictory, but as a whole should spark substantial interest in the issues at hand. In summary, *Common Crisis* is a readable book which may be useful as long as its limitations are kept in mind.

When The Kings Come Marching In: Isaiah And The New Jerusalem, by Richard J. Mouw, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983. \$3.95. Reviewed by Rockne McCarthy, Coordinator of the Dordt College Studies Institute.

When The Kings Come Marching In makes an important contribution to the discussion begun by H. Richard Niebuhr concerning the relationship between Christ and Culture. The phrase "Christ and Culture" has come to stand for a number of interrelated issues. Of central importance to Mouw's study is the question of "how ought Christians to understand the proper patterns of their cultural involvement?" (p. x).

This question is explored by examining the biblical theme of the Holy City, particularly as it comes to expression in the book of Isaiah. Prepared originally as a series of Bible-study lectures for delivery at a Baptist college, the work often skirts significant philosophical and theological issues as it retains its Bible-study character.

The book is organized around four main features of the Holy City: (1) "the wealth of the nations" is gathered into the city; (2) the "kings of the earth" march into the city; (3) people from many nations are drawn to the city; (4) Jesus is the light that illuminates the city.

At the outset Mouw sets forth the central message of his study: "The Christian life is directed toward a City, a place in which God's redemptive purpose for his creation will be realized" (p. 6). He points out that if we think of the future life as a "disembodied existence in an ethereal realm," then it is difficult "to think of our present cultural affairs as in any sense a positive preparation for heavenly existence. But if we think of the future life in terms of inhabiting a Heavenly City, we have grounds for looking for some patterns of continuity between our present lives and the life to come" (p. 6). In this judgment Mouw correctly points out that a particular eschatological perspective can shape one's view

of the nature and task of the Christian life in society.

From the biblical perspective of Isaiah, the Holy City is the perfection of the earthly city and not its rejection. It is for this reason, according to Mouw, that Isaiah pictures the Holy City as a center of commerce, a place which receives vessels (ships from Tarshish), goods (costly lumber imported from Lebanon), currency (gold and silver), and frankincense. And the presence in the Holy City of the flocks of Kedar and the rams of Nebaioth leads Mouw to speculate on whether animals have a place in heaven.

Isaiah's Holy City is a transformed city. The prophet sees the items of "pagan culture" as being put to the service of God and his people. In addition, in Isaiah's vision of the Holy City, temporal "corporate structures" and "cultural patterns" are not destroyed, but they too are transformed into proper instruments of service. The political, social, and other aspects of life are brought to perfection in God's new order. The fulfillment that God brings to his creation thus takes historical development into account. The Bible begins with a Garden and ends with a City made up of differentiated institutions and many nations or peoples.

The Lamb of God is the lamp that illuminates the Holy City. The redemptive ministry which Jesus accomplished by his life, death, and resurrection constitutes the crucial transition from the earthly to the heavenly city. It is exactly this truth, Mouw argues, that has been denied in recent years by two different traditions. He puts it this way: "It is one of the sad and puzzling facts about recent understandings of the person and work of Jesus Christ that those who profess a 'high Christology' have seemed to care very little about a