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Poland and the Free World

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ideas and theories on who or what is in control of technology. He maintained that the Christian idea of who should be in control should include participation of the common man. For example, professional city planners can make poor decisions concerning where a rapid transit system is to be built, how it should operate, and so forth. He gave an example of a city which profited from consumer input when a rapid transit system was built. For Hudspeth, one of the great questions of technological development is, "How can we bring the user back into the process?"

Van Wijk's lecture on evaluation and control was the last of the series. He claimed that modern day futurists have presented us with a secularized version of the Biblical promise of a new heaven and a new earth. In reality they bring bad news, not good news. In this context we are to bring the good news of Christ. Van Wijk interpreted some "coming of the Kingdom" Biblical passages in terms

of what Christians must do now.

Finally, Van Wijk presented "a modest proposal." He said that discussion should now lead to action. He suggested that Dordt College form an interdisciplinary studies center which would be devoted to the solving of problems, especially the problems of the third world. The third world needs clean drinking water; means of cultivating, raising, and storing food; human shelter appropriate to the climate; locally produced energy; and much else. Such a studies center could focus on one country. Some Dordt graduates could serve in that country. Although Van Wijk gave only the broad outline of his plan, it obviously intrigued many of his hearers.

The three-day lecture series was well attended and the source of many fruitful campus discussions. There is no doubt about it, the faithful Christian college must make Christ's claims in the area of technology.

Russel Maatman

Poland and the Free World

It was an unusual and pleasant experience for a Dordt audience to be faced by a guest speaker who was charming and graceful as well as learned. The occasion was a January lecture by Dr. Alice-Catherine Carls, adjunct professor of humanities at Sterling College, Kansas, on "Poland's Meaning for the Free World." Speaking with a delightful French accent (Carls is a native Frenchwoman, Ph.D. Paris-Sorbonne), she brought both the benefit of expertise in her major area of study and interest and a passionate concern which at times lifted her voice above the usual academic presentation.

Carls chose to avoid details about the current events in Poland, since these have been so much in the news that another recitation would be superfluous. Instead, she focused on the relevance of Poland and its woes for us, asking how they should concern us and what our response should be.

Two temptations are especially present,

said the speaker, both of which would be not only improper from a Christian viewpoint, but also historically unproductive of genuine solutions to the problems of Eastern Europe.

The first temptation is to answer violence with violence. Though this has to be a sore temptation to the frustrated Poles themselves, Carls praised the Solidarity union for resisting the urge to respond to the regime and its Soviet sponsors in kind. Solidarity's struggle for freedom has always been marked by non-violent actions, she pointed out. Roman Catholic leaders have also encouraged conscientious non-violent response to government pressures. Christians in the United States must follow the same path, urged Carls, in calling for support of the Poles. Keep talking about Poland, inform others, keep the record straight in resisting false propaganda, and give whatever aid you can, she said, but eschew a response of violence, as being both morally reprehensible

sible and bound to fail. As Poles themselves know that violence never gained them freedom in their past experiences with foreign aggressors, and Solidarity avoids it now, so we must stick to words as our weapons against the oppressions of the Soviet-backed regime.

Temptation two, in Carls' view is to do nothing, to forget about Poland. It would be easy to accept the Soviet line that the current crisis is strictly an internal Polish affair, in which Solidarity broke the known rules in a mad quest for power and must now pay the price. This temptation is a special American problem, for isolationism has been a rather common phenomenon in this country's history.

Several reasons were advanced against succumbing to this appealing temptation. First of all, Carls cited historical precedents to show that whenever America has ignored such moral issues it has had to pay a greater price later. She argued that for our own survival against future Soviet imperialism, we cannot ignore the issue. Second, Carls noted, we should care about Poland because it is a Christian necessity to care about justice and freedom for others. *We may not sit on the sidelines.* In the Third place, the United States is morally bound to defend human rights by its signature on the Helsinki Accord, which obliges us to respect and defend civil freedom in the world. Specifically, here, we are obliged to do something about violations of human rights

in Poland, a country which signed the same document. A fourth reason is the subtlety of the repression and propaganda in and about Poland. This subtlety requires a careful and constant concern for the truth, as well as a constant reiteration of it in order for us to avoid being manipulated by official Polish and Soviet media. Without care, we can soon fall into the trap of believing what the oppressors say about Solidarity, opposition, the church, or Polish history. So much of what they say sounds plausible but is a subtle distortion of the truth.

Finally, declared Carls, Americans must become consistent in denouncing atrocities wherever they occur. Critics of U.S. behavior in Viet Nam, for example, should be just as eager to denounce Soviet repression. Russian-Polish excesses, she insisted, are far more insidious. It is high time to restore the balance of consistent criticism, rather than let the critics always picture the U.S. as the only sinner.

Carls closed with a passionate plea to her listeners to respond to the crisis with concern, to keep the situation alive and in the public eye and to beware the siren song of Soviet propaganda. Poland is "entering its purgatory," she said, and must not be forgotten. The pressure of world opinion must be maintained in order to make the Soviets think twice before trying anything like this again.

Arnold Koekkoek

Dr. Emory Griffen

Under the title, "The Christian and Communication—a Perspective," Dr. Em Griffen lectured to Dordt College students and faculty about man communicating with a suffering world, involved in interpersonal intimacy, and receiving the messages of mass media.

Dr. Em Griffen, professor of speech at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, and author of *The Mind Changers: The Art of Christian Persuasion*, came to Dordt College as part of the Staley Distinguished Lecture

Program, established in 1967 by Thomas F. Staley to "provide scholarly evangelical speakers for religious emphasis programs at small Christian colleges.

More than 400 passages in Scripture speak about the poor, and it is harder, said Jesus, for the camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven. Griffen spoke in his first lecture on "The Struggles of a Bruised Camel," emphasizing that we in North America are the rich. He referred to the five humps of the camel: