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draw from the porous wells of the so-called natural law. It cannot remind itself of the true criterion of its own righteousness, it cannot move towards the fulfilment of that righteousness in its own strength. It needs the wholesomeness disturbing presence, the activity that revolves directly around the common centre, the participation of the Christian community in the execution of political responsibility. The Church is not the Kingdom of God, but it has knowledge of it; it hopes for it; it believes in it; it prays in the name of Jesus Christ, and it preaches His Name as the Name above all others. The Church is not neutral on this ground, and it is therefore not powerless. If it achieves only the great and necessary metabasis eis allo genos which is the share of political responsibility which it is enjoined to assume, then it will not be able to be neutral and powerless and deny its Lord in the other genos. If the Church takes up its share of political responsibility, it must mean that it is taking that human initiative which the State cannot take; it is giving the State the impulse which it cannot give itself. It is reminding the State of all those things of which it is unable to remind itself. The distinctions, judgments, and choices which it makes in the political sphere are always intended to foster the illumination of the State's connexion with the order of divine salvation and grave and to discourage all the attempts to hide this connexion. Among the political possibilities open at any particular moment it will choose those which most suggest a correspondence to, an analogy and a reflection of, the content of its own faith and gospel.

In the decisions of the State, the Church will always support the side which clarifies rather than obscures the Lordship of Jesus Christ over the whole, which includes this political sphere outside the Church. The Church desires that the shape and reality of the State in this fleeting world should point towards the Kingdom of God, not away from it. Its desire is not that human politics should cross the politics of God, but that they should proceed, however distantly, on parallel lines.

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It desires that the active grace of God, as revealed from heaven, should be reflected in the earthly material of the external, relative, and provisional actions and modes of action of the political community. It therefore makes itself responsible in the first and last place to God—the one God whose grace is revealed in Jesus Christ—by making itself responsible for the cause of the State. And so, with its political judgments and choices, it bears an implicit, indirect, but none the less real witness to the gospel.

Even its political activity is therefore a profession of its Christian faith. By its political activity it calls the State from neutrality, ignorance, and paganism into co-responsibility before God, thereby remaining faithful to its own particular mission. It sets in motion the historical process whose aim and content are the moulding of the State into the likeness of the Kingdom of God and hence the fulfilment of the State's own righteous purposes.

XV

The Church is based on the knowledge of the one eternal God, who as such became man and thereby proved himself a neighbor to man, by treating him with compassion (Luke 10:36 f.). The inevitable consequence is that in the political sphere the Church will always and in all circumstances be interested primarily in human beings and not in some abstract cause or other, whether it be anonymous capital or the State as such (the functioning of its departments) or the honour of the nation or the progress of civilization or culture or the idea, however conceived, of the historical development of the human race. It will not be interested in this last idea even if "progress" is interpreted as meaning the welfare of future generations, for the attainment of which man, human dignity, human life in the present age are to be trampled underfoot. Right itself becomes wrong (summi tus summa injuria) when it is allowed to rule as an abstract form, instead of serving the
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Limitation and hence the preservation of man. The Church is at all times and in all circumstances the enemy of the idol juggernaut. Since God Himself became man, man is the measure of all things, and man can and must only be used and, in certain circumstances, sacrificed, for man. Even the most wretched man—not man's egoism, but man's humanity—must be absolutely defended against the autocracy of every mere "cause." Man has not to serve causes; causes have to serve man.

XVI

The Church is witness of the divine justification, that is, of the act in which God in Jesus Christ established and confirmed His original claim to man and hence man's claim against sin and death. The future for which the Church waits is the definitive revelation of this divine justification. This means that the Church will always be found where the order of the State is based on a commonly acknowledged law, from submission to which no one is exempt, and which also provides equal protection for all. The Church will be found where all political activity is in all circumstances regulated by this law. The Church always stands for the constitutional State, for the maximum validity and application of that twofold rule (no exemption from and full protection by the law), and therefore it will always be against any degeneration of the constitutional State into tyranny or anarchy. The Church will never be found on the side of anarchy or tyranny. In its politics it will always be urging the civil community to treat this fundamental purpose of its existence with the utmost seriousness: the limiting and the preserving of man by the quest for and the establishment of law.

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XVII

The Church is witness of the fact that the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost. And this implies that—casting all false impartiality aside—the Church must concentrate first on the lower and lowest levels of human society. The poor, the socially and economically weak and threatened, will always be the object of its primary and particular concern, and it will always insist on the State's special responsibility for these weaker members of society. That it will bestow its love on them, within the framework of its own task (as part of its service), is one thing and the most important thing; but it must not concentrate on this and neglect the other thing to which it is committed by its political responsibility: the effort to achieve such a fashioning of the law as will make it impossible for "equality before the law" to become a cloak under which strong and weak, independent and dependent, rich and poor, employers and employees, in fact receive different treatment at its hands: the weak being unduly restricted, the strong unduly protected. The Church must stand for social justice in the political sphere. And in choosing between the various socialistic possibilities (social-liberalism? co-operation? syndicalism? free trade? moderate or radical Marxism?) it will always choose the movement from which it can expect the greatest measure of social justice (leaving all other considerations on one side).

XVIII

The Church is the fellowship of those who are freely called by the Word of grace and the Spirit and love of God to be the children of God. Translated into political terms, this means that the Church affirms, as the basic right which every citizen must be guaranteed by the State, the
freedom to carry out his decisions in the politically lawful sphere, according to his own insight and choice, and therefore independently, and the freedom to live in certain spheres (the family, education, art, science, religion, culture), safeguarded but not regulated by law. The Church will not in all circumstances withdraw from and oppose what may be practically a dictatorship, that is, a partial and temporary limitation of these freedoms, but it will certainly withdraw from and oppose any out-and-out dictatorship such as the totalitarian State. The adult Christian can only wish to be an adult citizen, and he can only want his fellow citizens to live as adult human beings.

XIX

The Church is the fellowship of those who, as members of the one Body of the one Head, are bound and committed to this Lord of theirs and therefore to no other. It follows that the Church will never understand and interpret political freedom and the basic law which the State must guarantee to the individual citizen other than in the sense of the basic duty of responsibility which is required of him. (This was never made particularly clear in the classic proclamations of so-called “human rights” in America and France.) The citizen is responsible in the whole sphere of his freedom, political and non-political alike. And the civil community is naturally responsible in the maintenance of its freedom as a whole. Thus the Christian approach surpasses both individualism and collectivism. The Church knows and recognizes the “interest” of the individual and of the “whole,” but it resists them both when they want to have the last word. It subordinates them to the being of the citizen, the being of the civil community before the law, over which neither the individuals nor the “whole” are to hold sway, but which they are to seek after, to find, and to serve—always with a view to limiting and preserving the life of man.

XX

As the fellowship of those who live in one faith under one Lord on the basis of a Baptism in one Spirit, the Church must and will stand for the equality of the freedom and responsibility of all adult citizens, in spite of its sober insight into the variety of human needs, abilities, and tasks. It will stand for their equality before the law that unites and binds them all, for their equality in working together to establish and carry out the law, and for their equality in the limitation and preservation of human life that it secures. If, in accordance with a specifically Christian insight, it lies in the very nature of the State that this equality must not be restricted by any differences of religious belief or unbelief, it is all the more important for the Church to urge that the restriction of the political freedom and responsibility not only of certain classes and races but, supremely, of that of women is an arbitrary convention which does not deserve to be preserved any longer. If Christians are to be consistent there can be only one possible decision in this matter.

XXI

Since the Church is aware of the variety of the gifts and tasks of the one Holy Spirit in its own sphere, it will be alert and open in the political sphere to the need to separate the different functions and “powers”—the legislative, executive, and judicial—as much as those who carry out any one of these functions should not carry out the others simultaneously. No human being is a god able to unite in his own person the functions of the legislator and the ruler, the ruler and the judge, without endangering the sovereignty of the law. The “people” is no more such a god than the Church is its own master and in sole possession of its powers. The fact is that within the community of the one people (by the people and for the people) definite and different
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services are to be performed by different persons, which, if they were united in one human hand, would disrupt rather than promote the unity of the common enterprise. With its awareness of the necessity that must be observed in this matter, the Church will give a lead to the State.

XXII

The Church lives from the disclosure of the true God and His revelation, from Him as the Light that has been lit in Jesus Christ to destroy the works of darkness. It lives in the dawning of the day of the Lord and its task in relation to the world is to rouse it and tell it that this day has dawned. The inevitable political corollary of this is that the Church is the sworn enemy of all secret policies and secret diplomacy. It is just as true of the political sphere as of any other that only evil can want to be kept secret. The distinguishing mark of the good is that it presses forward to the light of day. Where freedom and responsibility in the service of the State are one, whatever is said and done must be said and done before the ears and eyes of all, and the legislator, the ruler, and the judge can and must be ready to answer openly for all their actions—without thereby being necessarily dependent on the public or allowing themselves to be hurried. The statecraft that wraps itself up in darkness is the craft of a State which, because it is anarchic or tyrannical, is forced to hide the bad conscience of its citizens or officials. The Church will not on any account lend its support to that kind of State.

XXIII

The Church sees itself established and nourished by the free Word of God—the Word which proves its freedom in the Holy Scriptures at all times. And in its own sphere the Church believes that the human word is capable of being the free vehicle and mouthpiece of this free Word of God.

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By a process of analogy, it has to risk attributing a positive and constructive meaning to the free human word in the political sphere. If it trusts the word of man in one sphere it cannot mistrust it on principle in the other. It will believe that human words are not bound to be empty or useless or even dangerous, but that the right words can clarify and control great decisions. At the risk of providing opportunities for empty, useless, and dangerous words to be heard, it will therefore do all it can to see that there is at any rate no lack of opportunity for the right word to be heard. It will do all it can to see that there are opportunities for mutual discussion in the civil community as the basis of common endeavours. And it will try to see that such discussion takes place openly. With all its strength it will be on the side of those who refuse to have anything to do with the regimentation, controlling, and censoring of public opinion. It knows of no pretext which would make that a good thing and no situation in which it could be necessary.

XXIV

As disciples of Christ, the members of His Church do not rule: they serve. In the political community, therefore, the Church can only regard all ruling that is not primarily a form of service as a diseased and never as a normal condition. No State can exist without the sanction of power. But the power of the good State differs from that of the bad State as potestas differs from potestas. Potestas is the power that follows and serves the law; potestas is the power that precedes the law, that masters and bends and breaks the law—it is the naked power which is directly evil. Bismarck—not to mention Hitler—was (in spite of the Daily Bible Readings on his bedside table) no model statesman because he wanted to establish and develop his work on naked power. The ultimate result of this all-too-consistently pursued aim was inevitable: "all that draw the sword shall perish by the
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sword. Christian political theory leads us in the very opposite direction.

XXV

Since the Church is eccumenical (catholic) by virtue of its very origin, it resists all abstract local, regional, and national interests in the political sphere. It will always seek to serve the best interests of the particular city or place where it is stationed. But it will never do this without at the same time looking out beyond the city walls. It will be conscious of the superficiality, relativity, and temporariness of the immediate city boundaries, and on principle it will always stand for understanding and cooperation within the wider circle. The Church will be the last to lend support to more parochial politics. \textit{Paxa sunt servanda? Paxa sunt conclusenda!} All cities of the realm must agree if their common cause is to enjoy stability and not fall to pieces. In the Church we have tasted the air of freedom and must bring others to taste it, too.

XXVI

The Church knows God’s anger and judgment, but it also knows that His anger lasts but for a moment, whereas His mercy is for eternity. The political anology of this truth is that violent solutions of conflicts in the political community—from police measures to law court decisions, from the armed rising against a regime that is no longer worthy of or equal to its task (in the sense of a revolt undertaken not to undermine but to restore the lawful authority of the State) to the defensive war against an external threat to the lawful State—must be approved, supported, and if necessary even suggested by the Christian community—for how could it possibly contract out in such situations? On the other hand, it can only regard violent solutions of any conflict as an \textit{ultima ratio regis}. It will approve and support them only when they are for the moment the ultimate and only possibility available. It will always do its utmost to postpone such moments as far as possible. It can never stand for absolute peace, for peace at any price. But it must and will do all it can to see that no price is considered too high for the preservation or restoration of peace at home and abroad except the ultimate price which would mean the abolition of the lawful State and the practical denial of the divine ordinance. May the Church show her inventiveness in the search for other solutions before she joins in the call for violence! The perfection of the Father in heaven, who does not cease to be the heavenly Judge, demands the earthly perfection of a peace policy which really does extend to the limits of the humanly possible.

XXVII

These are a few examples of Christian choices, decisions, and activities in the political sphere: examples of analogies and corollaries of that Kingdom of God in which the Church believes and which it preaches, in the sphere of the external, relative, and provisional problems of the civil community. The translation of the Kingdom of God into political terms demands Christian, spiritual, and prophetic knowledge on every side. The points of comparison and the decisions we have quoted are in no sense equivalent to the paragraphs of a political constitution. They are merely intended to illustrate how the Church can make decisions on a Christian basis in the political sphere. We might have taken twice or three times as many or only half as many examples or just one example to make the vital point clear. We used examples because we were concerned to illuminate the anological but extremely concrete relationship between the Christian gospel and certain political decisions and modes of behaviour. The only more concrete way of discussing the relationship would be to refer to individual historical decisions. The reason why we mentioned many examples
was that we wanted to demonstrate that the essence of Christian politics is not a system or a succession of immediate brain waves but a constant direction, a continuous line of discoveries on both sides of the boundary which separates the political from the spiritual spheres, a correlation between explication and application. The list of such explications and applications that we have offered here is naturally incomplete. And it is of the very nature of all such points of contact and decision as have been or could have been mentioned that the translations and transitions from the one sphere to the other will always be open to discussion as far as the details are concerned, will only be more or less obvious and never subject to absolute proof. What we have said here needs to be extended, deepened, and particularised. The more one studies the problems of translation from one sphere to the other, the more one will realise that it is not possible to deal with everything in this way. But the clarity of the message of the Bible will guarantee that all the explications and applications of the Christian approach will move in one unswerving direction and one continuous line. What we were concerned to show was the possibility and the necessity of comparisons and analogies between the two spheres and of the decisions which have to be made in the transition from one to the other.

XXVIII

Let me add a comment on the constancy and continuousness of the line of Christian political thought and action that we have indicated. We have argued not from any conception of "natural law" but from the gospel. It cannot be denied, however, that in the list of examples quoted we have more than once made assertions which have been justified elsewhere on the basis of natural law. We bear no grudge against anyone who may have been reminded of Rousseau—and who may have been pleased or angry on that account. We need not be ashamed of the affinity. We have seen that the divine ordinance of the State makes it perfectly possible for theoretical and practical insights and decisions to be reached, which are objectively right, where one would inevitably expect only errors and false steps, in view of the turbid source from which they derive. If our results really did coincide with these based on natural law, it would merely confirm that the polis is in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ even when its officeholders are not aware of the fact or refuse to admit it, and therefore are unable to use the insight into the nature of the polis which this fact suggests. Why should it be impossible that, in spite of the State's blindness, objectively correct insights have been and are being reached again and again? The pagan State lives because such leadership of the blind has repeatedly made its stability and its functions possible. All the more reason, surely, why the Church cannot and must not withhold its witness to an insight based on clearly defined and consistently applicable facts.

XXIX

A further comment on the constancy and continuity of the Christian approach in politics: it may be remarked (again, with pleasure or annoyance) that the Christian line that follows from the gospel betrays a striking tendency to the side of what is generally called the "democratic" State. Here again, we shall be careful not to deny an obvious fact, though "democracy" in any technical meaning of the word (Swiss, American, French, etc.), is certainly not necessarily the form of State closest to the Christian view. Such a State may equally well assume the form of a monarchy or an aristocracy, and occasionally even that of a dictatorship. Conversely, no democracy as such is protected from falling in many or all of the points we have enumerated and degenerating not only into anarchy but also into tyranny and thereby becoming a bad State. It must be admitted that the word and the concept "democracy" ("the rule of the
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people") are powerless to describe even approximately the kind of State which, in the Christian view, most nearly corresponds to the divine ordinance. This is no reason, however, why it should be overlooked or denied that Christian choices and purposes in politics tend on the whole towards the form of State, which, if it is not actually realised in the so-called "democracies," is at any rate more or less honestly clearly intended and desired. Taking everything into account, it must be said that the Christian view shows a stronger trend in this direction than in any other. There certainly is an affinity between the Christian community and the civil communities of the free peoples.

XXX

In conclusion, we propose to discuss the problem of how Christian decisions in the political sphere may be put into action.

The first method that suggests itself is the formation and activity of a special Christian party. This has long been adopted in Holland and later in Switzerland (Evangelical People's Party), and in recent times especially in France (Mouvement Républicain Populaire) and Germany (Christian Democratic Union). On the Protestant side it has been deemed possible and necessary to join forces with Roman Catholic fellow citizens with the same political views. But parties are one of the most questionable phenomena in political life; they are in no sense constitutive elements, and it is possible that from the very outset they have been pathological or at least no more than secondary phenomena. I wonder if the Christian community is well advised to add one more to the number of these organisations in order to fulfill its own share of political responsibility? Can there be any other "Christian" party in the State but the Christian fellowship itself, with its special mission and purpose? And if what we want is a political corollary of the Church in political life, can anything else be permissible and possible

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but—please do not be scared!—a single State party excluding all others, whose programme would necessarily coincide with the tasks of the State itself, understood in the widest sense (but excluding all particularist ideas and interests)? How can there be a special Christian party alongside other political parties—a party to which some Christians belong, whilst others do not—a party opposed by other non-Christian parties (which it must nevertheless recognize as legitimately non-Christian)? To institute special Christian parties implies that the Christian community as such has no claim on the support of all its members for its own political line. It implies that it cannot help but allow the non-Christians in the State to consolidate themselves in a non-Christian bloc in order to enforce their own anti-Christian line. The Church's supreme interest must be rather that Christians shall not mass together in a special party, since their task is to defend and proclaim, in decisions based on it, the Christian gospel that concerns all men. They must show that although they go their own special way, they are not in fact against anybody but unconditionally for all men, for the common cause of the whole State.

In the political sphere the Christian community can draw attention to its gospel only indirectly, as reflected in its political decisions, and these decisions can be made intelligible and brought to victory not because they are based on Christian premises but only because they are politically better and more calculated to preserve and develop the common life. They can witness only to Christian truths. The claim to be witnesses to Christian truths does not necessarily make them such, however! Surely it will be inevitable that the Christian qualities for which it can have no use in the political sphere will become an embarrassment to a Christian party? And will not the aims and methods which it needs if it is to be effective as a political party (the winning of majorities and political strongholds, propaganda and the benevolent toleration and even encouragement of non-Christian or problematically Christian sympathisers and
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even leaders; compromises and coalitions with "non-Christian" parties and so on) compel it to deny the specifically Christian content of its policy or at any rate obscure rather than illuminate it? Will such a party not inevitably be compromising the Christian Church and its message all the time? In the political sphere Christians can bring in their Christianity only anonymously. They can break through this anonymity only by waging a political battle for the Church and by so doing they will inevitably bring discredit and disgrace on the Christian name. In the authentically political questions which affect the development of the civil community, Christians can only reply in the form of decisions which could be the decisions of any other citizens, and they must frankly hope that they may become the decisions of all other citizens regardless of their religious profession. How can Christians mass together in a political party at all in these circumstances? The thing is only possible—and the suspicious alliance of the Protestants with the Romans in the French M.R.P. and the German C.D.U. shows that it becomes successful only where the Kingdom of God is interpreted as a human goal founded on natural law, where an allegedly Christian law, which is in fact a mere amalgam of humanitarian philosophy and morality, is set alongside the gospel in the political sphere. When it is represented by a Christian party, the Christian community cannot be the political salt which it is its duty to be in the civil community.

XXXI

The opportunity that it is offered to fulfil this duty is simply the one that lies nearest to hand: the preaching of the whole gospel of God's grace, which as such is the whole justification of the whole man—including political man. This gospel which proclaims the King and the Kingdom that is now hidden but will one day be revealed is political from the very outset, and if it is preached to real (Christian and non-Christian) men on the basis of a right interpretation of the Scriptures it will necessarily be prophetically political. Explanations and applications of its political content in an unmistakable direction will inevitably take place (whether in direct or indirect illumination of the political problems of the day) where the Christian community is gathered together in the service of this gospel. Whether this happens or not will depend on the preachers, but not only on them. It is a bad sign when Christians are frightened by "political" sermons—as if Christian preaching could be anything but political. And if it were not political, how would it show that it is the salt and the light of the world? The Christian Church that is aware of its political responsibility will demand political preaching; and it will interpret it politically even if it contains no direct reference to politics. Let the Church concentrate first, however, on seeing that the whole gospel really is preached within its own area. Then there will be no danger of the wider sphere beyond the Church not being wholesomely disturbed by it.

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XXXII

The Christian community acts within the meaning and limits of its own mission and competence when it speaks, through the mouth of its presbyterial and synodal organs, in important situations in political life, by making representations to the authorities or by public proclamations. It will be careful to select, as wisely as possible, the particular situations in which it deems it right to speak, and it will have to choose its words very prudently and very definitely if it is to be heard. It must not give the impression that it never wakes from the sleep of an otherwise non-political existence until such matters as gambling or the abuse of alcohol or the desecration of the Sabbath or similar questions of a religious and ethical nature in the narrower sense are under discussion, as if such problems were not in fact only on the verge of real political life. The Church must see that
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it does not make a habit of coming on the scene too late, of entering the fray only when its opinions no longer involve any particular risk and can no longer exert any particular influence. It must see above all that the idea of the Church as the representative of a definite class-conditioned outlook and morality is not allowed to gain ground, thereby confirming those who already loyally believe in this "law" and thus the disapproval of those who are, on the contrary, unable to regard such a "law" as in any sense eternal. All this applies just as much to the Christian journalism and writing that are carried on with or even without the authority of the Church. Christian publicists and writers must place themselves honestly in the service of the gospel which is intended for all men and not devote their gifts to some Christian fad or another.

XXXIII

Perhaps the most important contribution the Church can make is to bear in mind in the shaping of its own life that, gathered as it is directly and consciously around the common centre, it has to represent the inner within the outer circle. The real Church must be the model and prototype of the real State. The Church must set an example so that by its very existence it may be a source of renewal for the State and the power by which the State is preserved. The Church's preaching of the gospel would be in vain if its own existence, constitution, order, government, and administration were not a practical demonstration of the thinking and acting from the gospel which takes place in this inner circle. How can the world believe the gospel of the King and His Kingdom if by its own actions and attitudes the Church shows that it has no intention of basing its own internal policy on the gospel? How can a reformation of the whole people be brought about if it is common knowledge that the Church itself is bent on self-preservation and restoration—not even that? Of the political implications of the

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ology which we have enumerated, there are few which do not merit attention first of all in the life and development of the Church itself. So far they have not received anything like enough attention within the Church's own borders.

What nonsense it is, for example, that in a country like Germany which has diligently learned the rudiments of law, freedom, responsibility, equality, and so on, that is, the elements of the democratic way of life, the Church considers it necessary to act more and more hierarchically and bureaucratically and becomes a refuge for nationalism in a situation in which it ought supreme to appear as the holy Catholic Church, and thereby help to lead German politics out of an old delusion. The Church must forget that what it is rather than what it says will be best understood, not least in the State.

XXXIV

If the Church is a Christian community it will not need a Christian party. If it is a true fellowship it will perform with its words and its whole existence all the functions which the disastrous enterprise of "Christian" parties is evidently intended to fulfill. There will be no lack of individual Christians who will enter the political arena anonymously, that is, in the only way they can appear on the political scene, and who will act in accordance with the Christian approach and will thereby prove themselves unassuming witnesses of the Gospel of Christ, which can alone bring salvation in the political sphere no less than elsewhere. Any fame that they acquire will not be founded on the fact that they are "nice, pious people" but simply that from their own distinctive point of view they will know better than others what is best for the civil community. It is not the presence and cooperation of "Christian personalities" that helps the State. One thinks of Bismarck again: assuming for the moment that he was something like the "Christian personality" that legend describes him to have been, what difference did it
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make to the unfortunate tendency of his politics? What help was it to poor Germany? The way Christians can help in the political sphere is by constantly giving the State an impulse in the Christian direction and freedom to develop on the Christian line. Let it not be said that there are too few of such Christians and that these few in their isolation are helpless. How much one individual can do whose heart and soul are really wrapped up in the cause! And in any case Christians are not asked to do something in their own strength, but only what they are required to do by the grace of God.

What does it matter if they are isolated and if—since there are such things as parties—they are members of different parties, that is, of one of the various “non-Christian” parties? They will take the party programme, party discipline, party victories, and party defeats in which they are involved as seriously and humorously as the cause deserves. In every party they will be against narrow party policies and stand up for the interests of the whole community. By that token they will be political men and women in the primary meaning of the word. Scattered in different places, and known or unknown to one another, in touch with one another or out of touch, they will all be together—as citizens—and will make the same distinctions and judgments, choose and desire one cause, work for one cause. Let us pray that the Church may supply the State with such Christians, such citizens, such political men and women in the primary meaning of the word! For in their existence the Church will be fulfilling its share of political responsibility in the most direct form.

XXXV

Let me remind you once again of the fifth thesis of the Theological Declaration of Barmen, which I have quoted from several times already: “The Bible tells us that, in accordance with a divine ordinance, the State has the task of providing for law and peace in the world that still awaits redemption, in which the Church stands, according to the measure of human insight and human capacity, and upheld by the threat and use of force. The Church acknowledges the benefaction of this divine ordinance with a thankful, reverent heart. It reminds men of God’s Kingdom, God’s Commandment and justice, and thereby of the responsibility of governors and governed alike. It trusts and obeys the power of the Word by which God sustains all things.”

I think that I have dealt with “The Christian Community and the Civil Community” within the terms of this thesis, and therefore in accordance with the mind of the Confessional Church in Germany. Some things would be different now if the Church had itself given more attention to this section of the Declaration in good time. But it cannot be too late to return to it now with a new seriousness, deepened and strengthened by experience.