

## 2 Mission to Latin America

### 2.1 The Historical Context

#### 2.1.1 Early Encounters

Since the early 19th century, U.S. citizens have been engaged in missionary and religious activities in Latin America. In organized, long-term fashion or spontaneously, religious organizations and individuals pursued missionary work, aided victims of natural disasters, sent technical equipment, and provided developmental resources.<sup>1</sup> The motives and underlying interests of these international endeavors were heterogeneous and not always purely humanitarian and benevolent. Christian missions account for a large amount of these operations. Current international relief and social service operations of religious organizations from the United States or Europe are partially grounded in missionary movements. Some of the same societies still exist and continue with their religious and social activities, albeit goals, methods, and understandings have changed. In the 1980s, approximately ten percent of the world's religious NGOs derived from missionary societies that were founded between 1798 and 1912.<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter, I will briefly outline the history of U.S. faith-based Latin America missions in the 19th and early 20th century. From the 19th century until the early Cold War period U.S. Christian missionary work in Latin America was closely connected with the economic and cultural expansion of the United States.<sup>3</sup> The roots of U.S. missionary enterprises in Latin America will give a better understanding of the changing face of missionary work in the later parts of the 20th century, its relationship to U.S. foreign policy, and role for civic foreign policy toward Central America in the 1970s and 1980s. Religiously inspired endeavors do not only have religious reasons. They can also be considered as "private giving for public

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<sup>1</sup> Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad* gives a detailed description of the early mission and relief work of the U.S. private sector. An account for the period until the early 1980s can also be found in Landrum R. Bolling, *Private Foreign Aid: U.S. Philanthropic for Relief and Development* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1982). See also Merle Curti and Kendall Birr, *Prelude to Point Four: American Technical Missions Overseas, 1838-1939* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1954) and James Maddox, *Technical Assistance by Religious Agencies in Latin America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956).

<sup>2</sup> Brian H. Smith, *More Than Altruism: The Politics of Private Foreign Aid* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 29.

<sup>3</sup> The Christian missionary enterprise has to be seen in the context of the imperialist expansion of Europe and North America. It can be seen as the religious-cultural expression of this expansion. Nevertheless, the two aspects should not be equated.

purposes.<sup>4</sup> Throughout this study, we will come to see how the underlying public purposes of U.S. religious endeavors regarding Latin America changed, with implications for the foreign societies that were targeted and for the United States.

It can be argued that U.S. foreign aid abroad goes back to initiatives by U.S. churches and their missionaries. One observer holds that the "missionary effort laid the groundwork for American government and nonprofit international assistance programs."<sup>5</sup> Christian missionaries were the first and prime promoters of U.S. private foreign aid in the 19th century. Decades before the U.S. government created the Peace Corps program or the Agency for International Development (AID), U.S. religious groups had already worked abroad, set up ties with foreign religious and local communities, and provided medical services and education. According to historian Winthrop Hudson, the beginning of U.S. overseas expansion at the end of the 19th century was actually triggered by the foreign missionary activity of U.S. churches in Asia and the Pacific.<sup>6</sup> Others hold that missionaries belonged at least to the most enthusiastic expansionists.<sup>7</sup>

While European or U.S. churches have originally sent their missionaries to another country regardless of the interests and wishes of the other society, most of today's Christian missions are only pursued by invitation.<sup>8</sup> Generally, Christian missions and religious overseas programs were understood as "natural extensions of their basic programs for spreading the Christian gospel."<sup>9</sup> Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, or Mormons opened missions or created hospitals, clinics, schools and colleges in Africa, Latin America, India, and

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<sup>4</sup> Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, viii. The historian Merle Curti concludes that engagement for people abroad is comparable to private initiatives for the benevolence of fellow-citizens at home. "Overseas aid", he further writes, "is an extension of the social gospel" or of "the techniques of the social worker in the urban slum..." (ix) Private foreign relief and aid, however, faces the same dilemma as governmental foreign aid. The social investment for the improvement and future of a foreign society underlies a sensitive code. History has all too often proven that foreign aid was rather in the interest of the donors than the receivers.

<sup>5</sup> O'Neill, *The Third America*, 128.

<sup>6</sup> Winthrop S. Hudson (ed.), *Nationalism and Religion in America: Concepts of American Identity and Mission* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 110.

<sup>7</sup> Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 28.

<sup>8</sup> George B. Cressey, "Mission to Everywhere: The Religious Agencies," in Harlan Cleveland and Gerard Mangone (eds.), *The Art of Overseamanship: Americans At Work Abroad* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1957), 53-63, 56; "Missions" in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 9 (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 563-579, 576. At the end of the 20th century, local churches of Catholic and mainline Protestant denominations are responsible for the transfer of personnel, not foreign mission operations.

<sup>9</sup> Bolling, *Private Foreign Aid*, 2.

the Far East.<sup>10</sup> Apart from ordained ministers, a large number of missionaries were female religious workers.<sup>11</sup> While, especially in the beginning, the missionaries' prime task centered on evangelizing and proselytizing, many continued their work abroad as an expression of their religious convictions despite being unsuccessful in gaining converts.<sup>12</sup>

Although similar in goals, U.S. missionary societies operated in a different political climate than their European counterparts. Because of the separation of state and church in the United States, U.S. missions put much more emphasis on voluntary contributions than their European colleagues who could partly rely on subsidies from the state churches.<sup>13</sup> U.S. Protestant ministers and Protestant missionary societies turned toward U.S. enterprises and wealthy individuals as a funding source. Over time, merchants, missionaries, and diplomatic representatives cooperated in many of their international endeavors.<sup>14</sup>

The U.S. industrialist and founder of the Standard Oil Company, John D. Rockefeller, was the largest contributor of the business sector to the missionary movement.<sup>15</sup> There were other alliances with diverse interests.<sup>16</sup> The Massachusetts carpet manufacturer and President of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Samuel B. Capen, believed

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<sup>10</sup> O'Neill, *The Third America*, 128; Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*.

<sup>11</sup> "Missions" in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 576.

<sup>12</sup> In the 19th and early 20th century, the number of Protestant converts in Latin America was relatively small. See José Miguez Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 5.

<sup>13</sup> Since the early 16th century, European religious orders and congregations had been sending missionaries and resources to the Americas, Africa, and Asia. Given the unity of church and state in the Portuguese and Spanish empires or the direct mission funding by governments in Great Britain, the Netherlands, France, and Germany missions were even considered to be an extended arm of the government. Kenneth Scott Latourette, *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age: A History of Christianity in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries-The Twentieth Century Outside Europe*, Vol. 5 (New York: Harper and Row, 1962); Smith, *More Than Altruism*, 27-29.

<sup>14</sup> Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, 139.

<sup>15</sup> Rockefeller and his aides were aware that, given its interest in educational and technical assistance, Christianity could foster U.S. commerce. John Rockefeller's chief philanthropic aide, former Baptist minister Frederick Gates, stressed the positive effects of foreign technical assistance for U.S. business and the U.S. economy: "The fact is that heathen nations are being everywhere honeycombed with light and with civilization, with modern industrial life and applications of modern science, through the direct or indirect agencies of the missionaries...Missionaries and missionary schools are introducing the application of modern science, steam and electric power, modern agricultural machinery and modern manufacture into foreign lands. The result will be eventually to multiply the productive power of foreign countries many times. This will enrich us as importers of their products. We are only in the very dawn, with all its promise, to the channels opened up by Christian missionaries." Frederick Gates in a letter to Rockefeller quoted in P. Collier and D. Horowitz, *The Rockefellers: An American Dynasty* (New York: Holt et al., 1976), 101.

<sup>16</sup> The endowment of the Syrian Protestant College (the later American University of Beirut) was augmented by gifts of New Yorker merchant families in the 1870s. Some ministers like James M. Thoburn were very successful in raising large sums for their missionary institutions in India and Southeast Asia. See Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, 148, 151.

money to be the fundamental basis and necessity for evangelization. While he noted the positive effects of the evangelizing business for the U.S. economy, especially the increasing demand for U.S. products, he warned against excessive materialism. By supporting the missionary movement, Capen thought that the business community could save itself spiritually from the U.S. commercial drive.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the relationship with the business sector, the missionaries never regarded themselves as agents of U.S. interests or commerce, according to historian Merle Curti.<sup>18</sup> Indirectly, however, many of them were. In some cases, the relationship between U.S. business interests and the missionary endeavor was quite obvious. John D. Rockefeller grandson, Nelson Rockefeller, did not only continue his grandfather's exploration in the field of missions in Latin America but expanded the cooperation with one of the largest U.S. missionary agency's, the evangelical<sup>19</sup> Summer Institute of Linguistics, in order "to secure resources and 'pacify' indigenous peoples in the name of democracy, corporate profit, and religion."<sup>20</sup>

In the case of Latin America, the motif of the U.S. Christian missionary as evangelizer seems rather farfetched noticing the ubiquitous Christian population, the result of the missionary conquest by European countries and the Roman Catholic Church. Still, the history of the U.S. religious community's efforts in Latin America has to be seen in the general context of U.S. mission history. Due to Latin America's predominantly Roman Catholic background, U.S. Protestants' missions in Latin America were never as prominent as their undertakings in Asia. Yet, the missionary effort in Latin America became more forthright at the beginning of the 20th century. The belief in the blessings of the fusion of U.S. political and religious ideals for the rest of the world was one of the dominant driving forces:

If we look at our missionaries abroad and witness the smiles of Heaven upon their efforts, our confidence that it is the purpose of God to render our nation a blessing to the world will be increased...If we consider also our friendly relations with the South American states and the close

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 150,

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>19</sup> In this study, the term "evangelical" is used in its U.S. dimension referring to those churches and denominations of the Protestant community that adhere to a stricter interpretation of the Bible. In Europe and Latin America, evangelical is often used synonymously for Protestant, in general referring to mainline Protestant denominations such as Lutheran, Presbyterian, or Episcopal.

<sup>20</sup> Gerard Colby with Charlotte Dennett, *Thy Will Be Done: The Conquest of the Amazon: Nelson Rockefeller and Evangelism in the Age of Oil* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995). Colby's book is investigative journalism based on documentation, field research, and interviews.

imitation they are disposed to make of our civil and literary institutions, who can doubt that the spark which our forefathers struck will yet enlighten this entire continent?<sup>21</sup>

The emergence of Protestant churches and communities in Latin America is coupled with influences from North America, especially after 1914.<sup>22</sup> While Latin American Catholicism is grounded on the European, particularly the Spanish and Portuguese conquest, the comparatively small Protestant community of Latin America was founded due to U.S. Protestant missionaries' activities. European Protestant influences existed as well. Protestant communities in the early 19th century emerged because of German or Scandinavian immigration. The Argentine theologian José M. Bonino attributes the religious opening of the Catholic continent to British influence and pressure.<sup>23</sup> European churches sent early Protestant missions but they concentrated on serving their own small communities. Since the mid-19th century, however, U.S. Protestants "emerged as the principal source of missionary energy in Latin America."<sup>24</sup>

In the beginning, missions focused on the *Cono Sur* countries of South America like Chile, Argentina, or Brazil.<sup>25</sup> Among the first U.S. Protestant communities and missionary societies that founded Latin American divisions were the Methodist Episcopal Church in Argentina and Brazil in 1836, the American Bible Society that distributed Spanish bibles since 1820, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, which began a mission in Mexico in 1870, and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., which sent its first missionaries to Colombia in 1856. By the end of the 19th century, U.S. Protestant organizations, including the Quakers and Mennonites, had established missions and schools, hospitals and theological seminaries in almost every Latin American country.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Lyman Beecher, "The Memory of Our Fathers," a sermon delivered at Plymouth, Massachusetts, 22 December 1827, in: Winthrop S. Hudson (ed.), *Nationalism and Religion in America: Concepts of American Identity and Mission* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 104.

<sup>22</sup> Latourette, *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age*, 168f.; Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Protestantismos y modernidad latinoamericana: Historia de unas minorías religiosas activas en América Latina* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1994), 182ff.; Daniel S. Greenway, "Protestant Mission Activity in Latin America," in Daniel R. Miller (ed.), *Protestantism in Contemporary Latin America* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994), 175-204, 183.

<sup>23</sup> Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism*, 3.

<sup>24</sup> Greenway, "Protestant Missionary Activity," 183.

<sup>25</sup> See Committee on Cooperation in Latin America (ed.), *Christian Work in South America; official report of the Congress on Christian work in South America at Montevideo, Uruguay, April 1925* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1925), 6: "Behind this gathering at Montevideo was also seventy-five years of missionary history....in Brazil, in Argentina and the West Coast, and [in] Tierra del Fuego..."

<sup>26</sup> See David Shavit, *The United States in Latin America: A Historical Dictionary* (New York: Greenwood, 1992).

In the early 20th century, U.S. Protestants tried to coordinate the promotion of their faith in Latin America through an organization.<sup>27</sup> In 1913, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America agreed to a special conference on Latin America to explore the problems for going to an already Christian region. The permanent body that emerged out of the meetings was the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America (CCLA), with the goal of managing the common interests of the various denominational Boards.<sup>28</sup> By 1925, Protestants were self-confident in intermingling with a Catholic region and assured of the righteousness of their missionary goals in South America:

All help from without, economic, moral and religious, is welcome in South America if it is offered in the right spirit and in true recognition of the rights of the South American people...Only ignorant people can speak of Protestant missions in South America as an intrusion.<sup>29</sup>

The first U.S.-dominated Congress of Christian Work in Latin America had divided the Latin American continent into "spheres of influence" for the various tasks of evangelism between the different denominations.<sup>30</sup> Central America was "given" to the American (Northern) Baptists, the Methodists, and Presbyterians. While the Baptists worked in El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, the Methodists went to Panama and Costa Rica, and the Presbyterians to Guatemala. The prevailing mission theory of the Protestants was conversion, education, and the creation of schools, directed toward the middle and upper class.<sup>31</sup> The emphasis on education has to be seen in the context of the original mission goal, i.e. in order to teach the gospel people had to be taught to read and write.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> There were diverse opinions among Protestants worldwide regarding missionary activism in Catholic Latin America. Latin America, e.g., was excluded from the first World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 because of the Christian background of the region. See Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, *Christian Work in South America*, 6.

<sup>28</sup> Participating members of the Congress were approximately 200 delegates with one-half of the national churches, one quarter from the foreign missionaries in South America and one quarter representing the mission boards at the home base. In addition, Christian educators from North as well as South America that were not affiliated with any mission Board were invited to the Congress.

<sup>29</sup> Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, *Christian Work in South America*, 21f.

<sup>30</sup> The first Congress of Christian Work in Latin America, which comprised some 60 Protestant organizations, met in Panama in February 1916. It included only 21 native Latin Americans out of 304 participants. The subsequent convention, also organized by the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, took place in Montevideo in April 1925. The President and Chairman of the second Conference was the Brazilian Erasmo Braga. In comparison to Panama, the official language was Spanish, not English, and all the reports were printed in English, Spanish or Portuguese. See Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, *Christian Work in South America*, 20.

<sup>31</sup> In 1900, three-fourth of the Latin American population was illiterate. According to Roger Greenway, the mainline Protestants from the United States "tended to produce middle and upper class churches that were not in a good position to enfold Latin America's masses when their hour of receptivity to the gospel arrived." Greenway, "Protestant Missionary Activity," 187.

<sup>32</sup> Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, 158.

The so-called mainline Protestant denominations were not the only U.S. Protestants attempting to evangelize Latin Americans. In the late 19th century and early 20th century, evangelical and, theologically speaking, more conservative churches from the United States founded faith missions in various Latin American countries.<sup>33</sup>

The missionary work of the U.S. Catholic Church has a different history than its Protestant counterparts because of the later arrival of numerous Roman Catholic immigrants from Europe, the Church's linkage to the Vatican, and its more unified structure. U.S. Catholic missionary work abroad only developed after the Church had built a more solid and substantial base in the United States. Until the beginning of the 20th century, the Catholic Church in the United States still had the status of a missionary church itself. But the U.S. Catholic community grew rapidly after the Civil War.<sup>34</sup> Catholic congregations in Europe supported their brethren overseas by providing personnel as well as financial assistance that helped to expand the programs and the work of the Catholic Church in the United States. On 29 June 1908, Pope Pius X removed the Roman Catholic Church in the United States from the dominion of the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, ending its missionary status.<sup>35</sup>

In the early 20th century, the shift from a mission-receiving to a mission-sending Church became also apparent in economic terms. Because of World War I, the mass immigration from Europe came to a halt. Assistance from abroad was, therefore, less important. After the war, the U.S. Catholic Church started to co-finance institutions abroad like the Society for the

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<sup>33</sup> The Central American Mission (CAM), a non-denominational agency, began its missionary work in Costa Rica in 1891. In the following years, missions were set up in Honduras (1896), El Salvador (1896), Guatemala (1899), Nicaragua (1900), Panama (1944), and Mexico (1956). The most well known active member of the organization is William C. Townsend. CAM developed from a small-scale operation into a large institution. Among CAM's main activity was the translation of the bible into various Indian language. Bible distribution and translation was highly subversive activity in 19th century Latin America. It was forbidden by decree of the Pope and king, having experienced the consequences of bible distribution to common people in Europe as a revolution and crisis to the Roman Catholic Church. British evangelicals were the first to introduce Bible sales between 1820 and 1850. They were largely welcomed with the spirit of revolution in the air in many Latin American regions as a means of modernizing Latin America, opening it to cultural and economic development. At the end of the 19th century, the American Bible Society entered the stage and replaced the British Society in Mexico and parts of Central America. Bible distributors smoothed the way for missionaries in locating new areas and regions. Bible distribution and translation is still widely used today by many evangelical Protestant churches as a means of evangelization. See Greenway, "Protestant Mission," 179. See Shavit, *The United States in Latin America*.

<sup>34</sup> The number of Catholics rose from four million in 1870 to six million in 1880 and twelve million in 1900. Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America: An Historical Account of the Development of American Religious Life* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, <sup>3</sup>1981), 249.

<sup>35</sup> Hudson, *Religion*, 249ff.; Statements by Chicago's Archbishop James E. Quigley and Boston's Archbishop William H. O'Connell at the Missionary Conference of 1908, in: Edwin S. Gaustad (ed.), *A Documentary History of Religion in America Since 1865* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983), 163-166.

Propagation of the Faith.<sup>36</sup> The U.S. Church became one of the Catholic Church's financial powerhouses. By 1937, the U.S. Catholic Church already supplied half of Rome's income. In 1957, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith was funded by gifts from the United States by about 65 percent.<sup>37</sup>

The first U.S. Catholic missionaries went abroad in the late 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century.<sup>38</sup> The Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, or more commonly known as the Maryknoll Fathers (and Brothers), was the first Catholic order in 1911 to be established as a foreign mission enterprise. It was intended to be the official U.S. Catholic mission society.<sup>39</sup> The Maryknoll Sisters, officially known as the Foreign Mission Sisters of St. Dominic, followed in 1912.<sup>40</sup> After the Vatican approved the Maryknoll Sisters as a missionary congregation under the Archbishop of New York, the first Maryknoll Sisters set out for China in 1921. In 1927, already some 300 Sisters were engaged in the Middle and Far East.<sup>41</sup> By 1960, nine percent of all Roman Catholic missionaries worldwide were U.S. citizens.

As noted above, the rather late start of U.S. Catholics in missionary politics abroad was caused by its newer immigrant status within U.S. society. As soon as the Maryknoll order was founded, the church was eager to compete with its Protestant fellows in the race of religious, cultural, political, and economic expansion. Cardinal James Gibbons, an early supporter of the Catholic missionary enterprise abroad, viewed Maryknoll as a means to compete with the Protestants. "The prestige of our country has become widespread," he wrote, "and Protestants, especially in the Far East, are profiting by it, to the positive hindrance of Catholic missionaries."<sup>42</sup> A speech of Boston's Archbishop O'Connell at the Missionary Conference in Chicago in 1908 reflected the feeling of superiority of the "English-speaking race" toward other cultures of the time. His speech also revealed a notion of competition with the missionary activities of secular America:

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<sup>36</sup> In 1922, the Society moved from France to Rome and became an official pontifical organization.

<sup>37</sup> Hudson, *Religion*, 396.

<sup>38</sup> "Domestic" missionary enterprises directed towards U.S. citizens and Native Americans were common among Protestant and Catholic congregations all throughout the 18th and the 19th century. See Hudson, *Religion*, 145ff; Bruce Nichols, *The Uneasy Alliance: Religion, Refugee Work and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 24-28.

<sup>39</sup> Mary McGlone, *Sharing Faith Across the Hemisphere* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 67f.; Angelyn Dries, *The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History* (New York: Maryknoll, 1998), 74.

<sup>40</sup> John O'Grady, *Catholic Charities in the United States* (New York: Arno Press, 1971), 365.

<sup>41</sup> O'Grady, *Catholic Charities*, 365; Penny Lernoux, *Hearts on Fire: The Story of the Maryknoll Sisters* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993), xxix.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Lernoux, *Hearts on Fire*, xxviii.

All our indication point of our vocation as a great missionary nation...Our country has already reached out beyond her boundaries and is striving to do a work of extension of American civic ideals for other peoples. Shall it be said that the Church in this land has been outstripped in zeal and energy by the civil power under which we live?<sup>43</sup>

Despite its supranational claim, Maryknoll stressed the economic, technological, and democratic contributions of the United States. In the isolationist atmosphere of the 1920s, the Maryknoll order proclaimed its vision of modern trade and the possibilities it offered for missions:

The acceptable time to convert the world has come. ...The marvelous development of practical science and interventions has multiplied the individual missionary's efficiency many times over...The heathen, too, are more favorably disposed than ever before. International trade with its consequent interchange of ideas has broadened their minds...the missionary is less feared, his doctrine is given a fairer hearing, and the road is open to numerous conversions.<sup>44</sup>

Once it had established its own missionary society, the U.S. Catholic Church operated from a similar ideological basis as the Protestant churches. Both fused religious and national sentiments.

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Despite competition and differences in religious outlooks, U.S. missionaries and their churches shared one important goal and force of motivation: a civic pride in the United States, its democratic traditions, liberty, regard for the individual, and a belief in its universality. Religious historian Winthrop Hudson holds that the missions abroad "introduced a new element into America's sense of national vocation" "to redeem the world by high example."<sup>46</sup> U.S. missionaries were, therefore, driven by a universalistic vision that combined religious and U.S. values for the benefit of all, a vision that was also common in secular circles.

Scholars in the field agree on the complimentary role of NGOs or missionary societies and their activities for U.S. governmental foreign policy interests. While missions and private technical and relief assistance in the 19th and early 20th century did not openly cooperate with the U.S. government, religious groups nevertheless transported and in some cases even tried to infuse specific U.S. principles into other societies.<sup>47</sup> Historian Rosenberg describes U.S.

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<sup>43</sup> Archbishop William H. O'Connell at the Missionary Conference of 1908, in: Gaustad, *A Documentary History*, 166.

<sup>44</sup> *The Field Afar* 14 (February 1920), 303.

<sup>45</sup> On U.S. Catholics and Americanism, see Hudson, *Religion*, 324ff. and 402ff. See also Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 122.

<sup>46</sup> Hudson, *Nationalism*, 94.

<sup>47</sup> Harold Snyder writes that private voluntary agencies "even those working at the 'grass roots' ...are also carriers of American policy despite their verbal efforts to remain nonpolitical." (71) In the interest of the nation, they either understood themselves as agents of democratic values and institutions, and as

Protestant missionaries of the late 19th century as "the most zealous and conspicuous overseas carriers of the American Dream."<sup>48</sup> Believing in the transferability of cultural values and in Anglo-Saxon racial superiority, religious activities became the U.S. economic expansion's cultural counterpart.<sup>49</sup> In this period, private citizens such as missionaries played a greater role in shaping U.S. policies abroad than the U.S. government.<sup>50</sup> Apart from the teachings of the gospel, a belief in the advantage of democratic freedom and democratic institutions, and the notion of self-help drove the U.S. missionary enterprise. According to Robert Bellah, the prevalent conception among the missionaries was the understanding that "Americans in foreign lands, American policy toward foreign nations, should be helping others to help themselves."<sup>51</sup> Early missions were rooted in the assumption that once people were exposed to the truth, they would choose the foreign and/or religious truth on their own free will. Apart from their humanitarian element, educational and health improvement programs in other societies for instance were thought to increase worker productivity, to promote industrialization, and to introduce modern agriculture, and thereby, the demand for goods including U.S. products. According to historian Emily Rosenberg, the idea of the marketplace "permeated liberal-developmentalism."<sup>52</sup>

Nonetheless, U.S. policy toward Cuba after the Spanish-American-Cuban War of 1898 also generated criticism among U.S. missionaries. Many church leaders shared the spirit of Senator Beveridge that "[God] has made us the lords of civilization that we may administer civilization. Such administration is needed in Cuba. Such administration is needed in the Philippines. And Cuba and the Philippines are in our hands."<sup>53</sup> Some influential churchmen who had first supported the conflict with Spain as a war of liberation became critical of U.S. foreign policy, as a mere expression of U.S. imperialist interests.<sup>54</sup> The opinion of Presbyterian minister Henry Van Dyke represents the new skepticism about realpolitical endeavors of his

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demonstrators of the U.S. humanitarian tradition in action abroad or they unconsciously communicated these principles. Harold Snyder, "People to People: The Voluntary Agencies," in Cleveland and Magone, *The Art of Overseasmanship*, 65-79.

<sup>48</sup> Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 28.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>51</sup> Robert Bellah, "Religious Influences on United States Foreign Policy" in Michael P. Hamilton (ed.), *American Character and Foreign Policy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 50-59, 55.

<sup>52</sup> Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 11.

<sup>53</sup> Albert J. Beveridge, "For the Greater Republic, Not for Imperialism," An Address before the Union League Club of Philadelphia, February 15, 1899, in: Hudson, *Nationalism*, 118.

<sup>54</sup> Hudson, *Religion*, 321.

government. It was skepticism, however, that was still coupled with the traditional belief in the benevolent U.S. mission of enlightenment:

...a signal victory...has been granted to our country's arms in a war undertaken for the destruction of the ancient Spanish tyranny in the Western Hemisphere and the liberation of the oppressed people of Cuba....The cause of liberty was the only cause for which they [Americans] would have fought...But this Thanksgiving day...is...an immensely serious day because it finds us suddenly and without preparation, face to face with the most momentous and far-reaching problem of our national history....Are the United States to continue as a peaceful republic or are they to become a conquering empire?...Have we set the Cubans free or have we lost our faith in freedom?...We surely owe the Filipinos the very best we can give them...but it is far from certain that the best thing we can do for them is to make them our vassals...The chief argument against the forcible extension of American sovereignty over the Philippines is that it certainly involves the surrender of our American birthright of glorious ideals...God save the birthright of the one country on earth whose ideal is not to subjugate the world but to enlighten it.<sup>55</sup>

In the aftermath of the war, Christian pacifist organizations emerged and an increasing number of Protestants began to enlist as volunteers for foreign mission work inspired by the Christian ideal of human brotherhood and pacifism.<sup>56</sup> Some scholars see these historical movements as forebears of religious peace activism and Central America solidarity in the later part of the 20th century. Historian Van Gosse, for example, maintains that the roots of the anti-war movement and peace activism within religious circles from the 1960s to the 1980s date back to the opposition of U.S. Protestant church leaders against U.S. intervention in Mexico during its revolutionary era.<sup>57</sup>

In the course of the 20th century, the role of missionaries in U.S. foreign policy shifted. With the emergence of World War II, religious agencies became directly linked to the U.S. government by carrying out official overseas relief programs in the name of the U.S. government.<sup>58</sup> Until the late 1960s, most religious NGOs adhered to the Cold War consensus. At the end of the 1960s, the critical and pacifist wing of the religious community, however, found a new voice. Among them were many missionaries who had been stationed in Latin America. Reviewing 19th century as well as late 20th century international citizen activism,

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<sup>55</sup> Henry Van Dyke, "The American Birthright and the Phillipine Pottage," A Sermon preached on Thanksgiving Day, 1898, in: Hudson, *Nationalism*, 121-123.

<sup>56</sup> Hudson, *Religion*, 321.

<sup>57</sup> The Committee on Cooperation in Latin America was opposed to U.S. intervention in Mexico. Van Gosse, *Where the Boys Are: Cuba, Cold War America and the Making of a New Left* (New York: Verso, 1993), 15. Historian Deborah J. Baldwin stresses that U.S. Protestants in Mexico used their position as foreign missionaries to support the rebellion and the post-revolutionary government. Deborah J. Baldwin, *Protestants and the Mexican Revolution: Missionaries, Ministers and Social Change* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 26.

<sup>58</sup> Nichols, *Uneasy Alliance*. Between 1919 and 1939 70 percent of the total U.S. governmental contribution to voluntary organizations for overseas work was channeled through religiously based groups, i.e. Protestant, Catholic and Jewish organizations. See Smith, *More Than Altruism*, 37f.

O'Neill argues that "sometimes the missionaries became part of a heavy-handed imposition of American culture; at other times they joined local guerrilla forces to fight against military regimes supported by the United States."<sup>59</sup> In the next chapters, we will look into the changing agenda of U.S. missionaries in Latin America during the 1960s and 1970s.

### 2.1.2 U.S. Christian Missions and Development Programs in the 1960s

By mid-century the overwhelming majority of foreign Protestant missionaries in Latin America were from the United States.<sup>60</sup> While the number of mainline U.S. Protestant missionaries in Latin America dropped significantly during the 1960s and 1970s, evangelical Protestants experienced a considerable growth, both in foreign missions, and new members and churches abroad.<sup>61</sup> The U.S. Catholic missionary endeavor in Latin America reached its peak in the 1960s.<sup>62</sup> The 1960s mark the beginning of the end of traditional missions of Catholics and mainline Protestants. While the story of U.S. foreign mission enterprises in the 20th century is not "a history of decline but of displacement,"<sup>63</sup> the changing face of mission generated a new approach toward religions' public role in the foreign affairs of the United States.

The following chapter examines the relationship of the U.S. Catholic Church and mainline Protestant denominations<sup>64</sup> with "Latin America" from 1960 to the early 1970s. In general, both, Catholic and mainline Protestant churches went through institutional and conceptual changes. Missions were still one main area of international activity. In addition to the educational outlook of earlier missions, "development programs" were integrated in the mission scheme of some orders and congregations. Many of the education and development programs reflected the traditional missionary impulse of "wanting to help" while (intentionally or

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<sup>59</sup> O'Neill, *Third America*, 128.

<sup>60</sup> Latourette, *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age*, 168.

<sup>61</sup> Despite the growth of U.S. missionaries abroad in the 1960s and beyond, historians of foreign relations seem to have neglected the study of U.S. mission history for the later part of the 20th century. An entrance regarding "missionaries" in the *Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Relations* from 1997 reflects this lack. The article jumps from 1949 to the 1990s without giving any further information for the time between. See *Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Relations*, Vol. 3 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 154.

<sup>62</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 215.

<sup>63</sup> Patricia Hill, "The Missionary Enterprise," in *Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience: Studies of Traditions and Movements*, Vol. 3 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 1683-1696, 1694.

<sup>64</sup> I will put emphasis on the mainline Protestants' representative body, the National Council of Churches (NCC).

unintentionally) ignoring the cultural and socio-political context in which they were operating.<sup>65</sup> In the late 1960s, however, various individuals and groups within religious institutions, albeit few, took first steps toward a new relationship between the U.S. Christian community and Latin America.

### **The U.S. Catholic Church**

Between the two world wars, the majority of U.S. Catholic missionaries were sent to Asia, particularly China.<sup>66</sup> World War II and, subsequently, the emergence of a communist and hence, atheist regime in mainland China forced missionaries to leave and missionary agencies to reassess their work abroad. Yet, the Catholic Church did not consider the "Catholic continent" of Latin America a mission field.<sup>67</sup> Latin America did not play a large role in the "international" agenda of the U.S. Catholic church.<sup>68</sup> The booklet *Call for Forty Thousand* published in 1946 by John Considine, a Maryknoll priest who had traveled throughout Latin America for the Vatican, first introduced the larger Catholic community in the United States to various Latin American countries, their societies, and culture. The book was widely distributed throughout

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<sup>65</sup> See Dan C. McCurry, "U.S. Church-Financed Missions in Peru," in Daniel A. Sharp (ed.), *U.S. Foreign Policy and Peru* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972), 379-415, 379f. Ivan Illich, director of the U.S. Center for Intercultural Formation in Mexico during the 1960s, articulated the first full-range and radical criticism on the U.S. side about the implications of well-meant missionary work. The center was set up to train and "inculturate" U.S. missionaries who were sent to Latin America. Illich presented his radical assessment of the U.S. churches' mission in Latin America in an article in the Jesuit magazine *America*, causing an uproar in the Catholic community. Illich attacked the Church for sending personnel and money to Latin America and thereby continuing a "colonial system." See Ivan Illich, "The Seamy Side of Charity," *America* 116:3 (21 January 1967), 88-91. McGlone, *Sharing Faith*, 107, 113 gives further information on Illich's and some Latin American bishops' criticism of U.S. missions. On mission as development see Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 208-212.

<sup>66</sup> See Dries, *Missionary Movement*, chapter 6.

<sup>67</sup> Latin America was and still is considered "the Catholic continent." At the time of World War II, the number of Catholics was even greater than it is today. In order to avoid presumptuous generalizations about the region, a close look at the diversity and differences between the individual countries is necessary. In most Latin American countries, the percentage of Catholics ranges between 87 percent (Bolivia) to 94 percent (Nicaragua). Again, one needs to distinguish between those that practice their religion on a regular basis (app. ten percent) and those that merely claim to be Catholics. Many also practice their religion by combining Catholic and non-Christian beliefs and folklore. Some examples demonstrate the diversity. In Uruguay, only half of the population is Catholic and in Guatemala, Chile, or Brazil the percentage of Protestants has been growing rapidly in recent decades. In Brazil, the Lutheran community (800,000) is the biggest mainline group of Protestants and half of Latin America's Jewish population lives in Argentina. See Jeffrey Klaiber, *The Church, Dictatorships, and Democracy in Latin America* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), 6; *American Jewish Yearbook* Vol. 85 (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1984); Hans-Jürgen Prien, "Protestantische Kirchen und Bewegungen im gesellschaftlichen Umbruch Lateinamerikas" in *Ibero-Amerikanisches Archiv: Zeitschrift für Sozialwissenschaften und Geschichte* 20:1-2 (1994), 166ff.

<sup>68</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 180, 188.

Catholic seminaries and schools and among those that went to Latin America in the 1950s. In 1943, Central American bishops called upon their Northern colleagues to overcome the lack of priests in Latin America. In his book, Considine also asked U.S. priests to go south in order to meet the spiritual needs of Latin American countries. Former missionary and theologian Mary McGlone indicates that Considine's book was "the opening volley in a campaign to move vast numbers of U.S. clergy to serve the Latin American Church."<sup>69</sup>

Another motion in this early "campaign" was a new mission model, the so-called diocesan mission. In the United States, the St. James Society, formed in 1958 developed out of this new mission movement, trying to improve "continental apostolic coordination" by encouraging priests from any diocese eager to serve on a short-term basis in Latin America.<sup>70</sup> In 1962, already 70 U.S. priests were operating in Latin America under the auspices of the Society. The fact that the number of missionaries working in Latin America almost doubled between 1950 and 1960 can partly be traced back to these early projects.<sup>71</sup>

After 1960, however, the sporadic engagement "for Latin America" turned into an institutional project of the U.S. Catholic Church. The Church took a growing interest in the Latin American Church and in the social and political affairs of the region. The establishment of new institutions solely dedicated to Latin America reflected this shift. The U.S. Catholic Church's Latin America project, however, has to be seen in the broader political and religious context of the time. Let us first take a look at the institutional changes of the Catholic Church that spurred the new Latin America activism.

After an era of a conservative and monolithic Roman Catholicism, the Roman Catholic Church as a whole embarked for a renewed understanding of its theology and its application in the modern world under the leadership of John XXIII and Paul VI. The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) legitimated new theological currents that reflected a growing openness toward modern philosophy and the social sciences.<sup>72</sup> The Roman Church had realized that it

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<sup>69</sup> McGlone, *Sharing Faith*, 83. Considine later became the head of the U.S. Catholic church's Latin America Bureau.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>71</sup> Gerald Costello, *Mission to Latin America: The Successes and Failures of a Twentieth Century Crusade* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1979), 39.

<sup>72</sup> Michael Löwy, *The War of Gods: Religion and Politics in Latin America* (London: Verso, 1996), 40.

needed to change its own role within a changing world and its social realities.<sup>73</sup> Generally speaking, Vatican II paved the way for the Church's breakaway from its social isolation and for a series of institutional and theological reforms. On the one hand, Vatican II laid the foundation for an opening of the Church toward political liberalism by recognizing the separation of church and state as well as the principles of religious pluralism and religious freedom. It also provided new space for the local churches. On the other hand, the section *Gaudium et Spes* renewed the church's traditional skepticism of economic liberalism. In addition, the papal social encyclicles of 1961 (*Mater et magistra*), 1963 (*Pacem in terris*), and 1967 (*Populorum progressio*) framed the discourse for the church's social doctrine by stressing human rights, basic needs of all human beings, the priority of economic equity before property, and the responsibility of the international order to address the poverty in the developing world.<sup>74</sup> The agenda of Vatican II left its mark on the United States.

The U.S. Catholic community and U.S. Catholicism experienced profound transformations in the 1960s. The Church moved further into the public sphere. This development had two main reasons. Referring to the influence of Vatican II, José Casanova defines these changes as a "radical reform from above coming from abroad."<sup>75</sup> Yet, influences "from below" or from the midst of the U.S. society added to the new character of the Church and the community. Changing social conditions of the U.S. Catholic community had launched the opening and a greater self-confidence of the religion within the predominantly Protestant-shaped U.S. society. The "mainstreaming" of U.S. Catholics since the election of John F. Kennedy and the jump of a largely immigrant working class into the middle-class in the 1960s fostered their feeling and reception of being full and respected members of U.S. society.<sup>76</sup>

A number of principles of the Second Vatican Council introduced reforms that affected the structure of the Church in the United States and subsequently its more visible role in the society. The Council encouraged the emergence of national hierarchies as additional

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<sup>73</sup> Klaiber, *The Church*, 13; Margaret Crahan, "Catholicism and Human Rights in Latin America," in Irene Bloom et al. (eds.), *Religious Diversity and Human Rights* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 262-277, 263.

<sup>74</sup> Othmar Noggler, "Das erste Entwicklungsjahrzehnt: Vom II. Vatikanischen Konzil bis Medellín," in Hans-Jürgen Prien (ed.), *Lateinamerika: Gesellschaft, Kirche, Theologie*, Vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), 19-70, 20ff.

<sup>75</sup> José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 184.

<sup>76</sup> The traditional immigrant and working class culture of the first generation of Italian-American, Irish-American, and Polish-American Catholics had become more affluent by 1950.

ecclesiastical political actors.<sup>77</sup> Traditionally, each bishop is only accountable to the Papacy. Vatican II initiated a decentralization of the Church by suggesting national bishops' conferences. Accordingly, the National Catholic Welfare Council (NCWC) became the United States Catholic Conference (USCC) of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) in 1966.<sup>78</sup> The national conferences are supposed to determine a common policy of the Church in each country.<sup>79</sup>

Apart from their specific national role, the national bishops conferences have an important transnational aspect. They represent new channels of intercommunication between the different national or regional bishops' conferences beyond the Vatican.<sup>80</sup> Even though, Rome maintains its dominant position and control over Catholic Church affairs, the increase in international ecclesiastical contacts between bishops' conferences and adjunct organizations proved to have a decisive political significance.<sup>81</sup> The result of this "international ecclesiastical system" were new and intensified "relations within the church and ...relations between the church and other domestic and international societal and political actors..."<sup>82</sup> The Catholic Church in the United States and in Latin America experienced such a new relationship with religious and political consequences for both regions.

The first Inter-American bishops' meeting, i.e. bishops from Latin America, the United States, and Canada, had taken place in 1959.<sup>83</sup> It symbolized a "keystone for the years of joint inter-American church efforts"<sup>84</sup> of the 1960s that culminated in the Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program (CICOP). CICOP is the best example of the "new international

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<sup>77</sup> Eric O. Hanson, *The Catholic Church in World Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 13.

<sup>78</sup> The USCC is the administrative and public policy arm of the NCCB.

<sup>79</sup> The legal character of the bishops' statements remains unclear. Bishops are still under the authority of the church in Rome. The decisions of the bishops' conference are therefore not binding to each bishop. Despite Vatican II and the decentralization process, Rome still has an effective authority over the direction of a particular national Church through key appointments, removals of bishops, special directives, or warnings. The dependency of the national Church on the Vatican varies from issue to issue and country to country. In the case of the United States, the bishops' position on aspects touching faith and moral questions remained very close to Rome's standpoint. In regards to socio-economic and foreign policy, however, the U.S. bishops found a position quite independent and different from the Pope especially in the 1980s. Smith, "Religion," 21. For a general analysis of the positions of the U.S. Catholic bishops since the 1960s, see Casanova, *Public Religions*, 184-193.

<sup>80</sup> Hanson, *The Catholic Church*, 13.

<sup>81</sup> Brian Smith analyzes the influence of the West German and U.S. Catholic churches and their bilateral financial aid on the situation in Chile: Brian Smith, *The Church and Politics in Chile: Challenges to Modern Catholicism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982).

<sup>82</sup> Hanson, *The Catholic Church*, 14.

<sup>83</sup> The new Pontifical Commission on Latin America (CAL) of the Vatican had pushed for the meeting.

ecclesiastical system" between the United States and Latin America. Another institutional result of the first inter-episcopal meeting that proved to be decisive for the Latin America policy of the U.S. Catholic Church was the establishment of a Latin America Bureau (LAB) within the National Catholic Welfare Council in 1959. Both institutions will be further discussed in chapter 2.3 for their role in promoting closer Latin American-U.S. religious ties. Other official Catholic inter-American meetings were initiated at the end of the decade. The first official meeting of Latin American, U.S. American, and Canadian nuns, brothers, and priests took place 1971 under the theme "The integration of North American Religious in the Church of Latin America."<sup>85</sup>

The face of the relationship between the U.S. and Latin American Catholic communities was altered beyond these institutional innovations. The Vatican as well as the U.S. administration revitalized the missionary impulse among Catholics, especially U.S. Catholics, in the 1960s. Both institutions were preoccupied with finding the "right" solution for Latin America's socio-economic and political problems and launched new Latin America projects.

In 1960, the Vatican announced a program called Papal Volunteers in Latin America (PAVLA) in which a little over one thousand U.S. citizens participated throughout the 1960s.<sup>86</sup> A year later, in August 1961, Pope John XXIII called upon the U.S. Catholic Church to send ten percent of its personnel to its Southern neighbors.<sup>87</sup> Although the ten percent calculation was never met, a few thousand U.S. Catholics took part in the new missionary programs. According to Costello, the Pope's appeal became "the blueprint for the United States' full-scale mission involvement in Latin America."<sup>88</sup>

Only a few months before the papal appeal, in March 1961, the newly elected U.S. President John F. Kennedy had announced the establishment of the Peace Corps and the Alliance for Progress. The Peace Corps' purpose was to send a "pool of trained American men

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<sup>84</sup> Costello, *Mission*, 42. See also McGlone, *Sharing Faith*, 85.

<sup>85</sup> Thereafter, meetings took place in 1974, 1977, and 1981. See Inter-American Meeting of Religious, *Witnessing to the Kingdom in a Dehumanizing World* (Canadian Religious Conference, 1975) and *Religious in the Local Church* (Canadian Religious Conference, 1981).

<sup>86</sup> Between 1960 and 1963, 245 U.S. volunteers had participated in the program. See *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 10 (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967). Dries gives data for the years 1965 (400) and 1967 (251). The program was terminated in 1970/1971. See Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 193 and 196. The overall number of Catholic lay missionaries in the 1960s was roughly 3,000: Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 274.

<sup>87</sup> "Appeal of the Pontifical Commission to North American Superiors," 17 August 1961, in: Costello, *Mission*, Appendix I.

<sup>88</sup> Costello, *Mission*, 44.

and women...overseas by the U.S. Government or through private organizations and institutions to help foreign countries meet their urgent needs for skilled manpower.<sup>89</sup> The Alliance for Progress was designed to tackle the economic and political instability of Latin America. Conceived by the economic and modernization theories of the 1960s, both programs symbolize the political spirits and fears of the time. Although different in their purposes and focus, the programs of the Vatican and of the U.S. government shared basic reasons for their establishment: the specter of Latin America turning communist that was perceived to threaten the influence and power of the United States on the one hand and the Catholic Church on the other.<sup>90</sup> The Papal appeal to North American Superiors in 1961 features the concern regarding the influence of Marxist ideas in Latin American societies.<sup>91</sup> Similarly, President Kennedy viewed the Alliance for Progress as "an alliance of free governments" as a counterforce against such tyrannical governments as Fidel Castro's Cuba.<sup>92</sup> One scholar concludes that "[t]he twin motives of social reform and fear of Marxism, especially Castro-style guerrilla movements, mobilized tremendous international and national Catholic resources during the period. For the United States and the Vatican, the great counter-model to Cuba was the victory of Chilean Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei in the election of 1964."<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Kennedy's Proposal for the Alliance for Progress, March 13, 1961 in Henry Steele Commager and Milton Cantor (eds.), *Documents of American History*, Vol. 2 (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, <sup>10</sup>1988), 660-662.

<sup>90</sup> Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*, 357; Kennedy's Proposal for the Alliance for Progress, 13 March 1961, in: Commager and Cantor, *Documents*, 660-662. See also Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America* (New York, <sup>2</sup>1993), 151 and Penny Lernoux, *Cry of the People: The Struggle for Human Rights in Latin America-The Catholic Church in Conflict with U.S. Policy* (New York: Penguin, 1980), 24f.

<sup>91</sup> "Appeal of the Pontifical Commission to North American Superiors," 17 August 1961, in: Costello, *Mission*, Appendix I. A meeting of the newly established Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM) in Colombia in 1959 also dealt with "communism" as its principal subject. The final declaration of that meeting addressed questions regarding the transformation of the social structure as a means to foster social justice. It explicitly named "communism" as one of the reasons for the churches' social position. See François Houtgart, "CELAM: The Forgetting of Origins," in Dermot Keogh (ed.), *Church and Politics in Latin America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 65-81, 70.

<sup>92</sup> Kennedy's Proposal for the Alliance for Progress, March 13, 1961 in Commager and Cantor, *Documents*, 662. The Kennedy administration had tried to formulate its Latin America policy according to Latin American conditions and needs. The consequences, however, did not look different from the early Cold War strategies of the Eisenhower era. While the Alliance for Progress introduced an increased aid package for the economic and political development of the subcontinent, the Kennedy administration also launched a counter-insurgency training program for the Latin American military in order to fight communist and leftist guerrillas. In the context of the Cold War, the fight against communism was always more important for the geo-political and economic interests of the United States than the promotion of democratic principles and the law of non-interference.

<sup>93</sup> Hanson, *The Catholic Church*, 72.

The Alliance for Progress and the Catholic program of the 1960s were two separate programs but generated out of a very similar view and attitude.<sup>94</sup> Missionary societies and relief organizations working abroad reflected the Cold War mentality prevalent in the 1950s and early 1960s. A leaflet about the Maryknoll Fathers' programs in Guatemala for example announced, "...from 1950 until 1954, the Communists strongly influenced a government which finally was overthrown by rebel forces. Since then the Communists have been kept under control in Guatemala, but they are trying to stage a comeback. Their objective is to gain a strategic foothold in Latin America, on the doorstep of the Panama Canal and within short flying distance of the United States."<sup>95</sup> Accordingly, there was close cooperation in some cases. The church agencies worked with the U.S. governmental agencies and programs such as the Alliance for Progress, AID and the Peace Corps.<sup>96</sup>

Both, the Roman Catholic and the U.S. program, departed from earlier policies regarding the emphasis of money, people, and ink spent on "developing" Latin America. While the Catholic Church was concerned about the structural difficulties of the Latin American Church and potential threats such as Protestantism, secularism, and communism, the idea behind its appeal was a ten-year "plan of aid to Latin America," consisting of personnel and financial support. Similarly, the Alliance for Progress, also envisioned for ten years, represented the new engagement and preoccupation of the U.S. government with the economic development of Latin America.<sup>97</sup> The program was driven by the idea that Latin America needed U.S. financial and technical help in order to launch economic and political reforms to eliminate poverty. While millions of U.S. public dollars poured into the Latin American economies during the 1960s to encourage private investment and lift the economies, much of the money never reached the great majority of the people in Latin America, and especially Central America.<sup>98</sup> The increase of U.S. development aid for example coincided with the highest economic growth rate in Central America. Yet, aid also bolstered the military or military

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<sup>94</sup> McCurry, "U.S. Church-Financed Missions," 380.

<sup>95</sup> Leaflet by Maryknoll Fathers on Guatemala [1959] in: MMA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 1, Folder: Guatemala History/Background 1962-1979.

<sup>96</sup> The director of the Latin America Bureau of the NCWC, John Considine, for example, served on the advisory board for the Peace Corps. Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 200.

<sup>97</sup> For a general assessment of the Alliance for Progress in the context of U.S. foreign policy see Stephen Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

<sup>98</sup> LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*, chapter 3.

regimes that were to maintain an unequal social structure and prevent distribution.<sup>99</sup> U.S. planners and administrators were more familiar with a "mechanized, commercial agriculture" than the question of land distribution and other far-reaching structural reforms needed in Latin America.<sup>100</sup> The commercialization of the agricultural economy, however, meant cooperation with groups in power.<sup>101</sup> According to Walter LaFeber, Kennedy's Alliance for Progress "meant painfully slow evolution. [Kennedy] desired more democratic societies in...[Latin America] as rapidly as possible, but without the radical changes those desires entailed. [He] wanted the military-oligarch elites, long nourished by and dependent upon the United States, to share power and distribute their wealth more equitably, but [did not] want[...] to lose U.S. power and influence that had always worked through those elites."<sup>102</sup>

The Church as well as the governmental program magnetized many U.S. citizens. At the end of the 1950s, roughly 8,000 Protestant and Catholic missionaries of the United States were active on behalf of their churches and agencies in Latin America. At that time, Protestants still outnumbered Catholics as missionaries on the Latin American continent. 6,076 were Protestants while only 1,944 were Catholics. The situation, however, looked very different only a decade later.<sup>103</sup> The dominantly Catholic Latin American continent experienced an unknown influx of U.S. Catholic missionaries ready to "bring the good news" to a region lacking local priests and religious.<sup>104</sup>

In 1967, approximately 5,000 U.S. Catholics served as missionary laypersons, priests or members of orders in all of Latin America.<sup>105</sup> In fact, there have never been as many U.S.

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid. See chapter 3 of this study for further analysis of the role of the military in maintaining social inequity.

<sup>100</sup> Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area*, 168-170.

<sup>101</sup> LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*, 155.

<sup>102</sup> In some cases aid also helped multinational corporations to do pre-investment analyses. In other cases, aid was rejected for Central American businesses that competed with North American-owned companies. Ibid., 212.

<sup>103</sup> See Gerard J. Mangone, "Dungaree and Grey-Flannel Diplomacy," in Cleveland and Mangone, *The Art of Overseasmanship*, 11-29, 18. It should be noted that far less U.S. citizens working in public agencies of the United States (3,454) were employed for overseas work in Latin America in the 1950s. See Ibid., 16. This, of course, changed with the initiation of the Peace Corps.

<sup>104</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 155. Although U.S. Catholic missions to Latin America became a primary goal, the increase in personnel sent to Latin America mirrors the overall growth of U.S. Catholic overseas missions in the two decades after World War II. The search for new mission areas after World War II was accompanied by a steady growth of U.S. Catholics entering the missionary field. With the growing affluence of U.S. Catholics more money was being donated to the Church.

<sup>105</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 189. The numbers of Peace Corps volunteers can serve as a good comparing ground for the religious mission movement. From 1961 to 1969, 54,214 Peace Corps volunteers served for their government, of whom 19,186 were sent to Latin America. See Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 263.

Catholics engaged in missions worldwide as in the year 1968. In the same year the number of Catholics going to Central and South America also reached its peak.<sup>106</sup> While in 1960, 981 missionaries were stationed in South America, the region hosted 2,455 in 1968.<sup>107</sup> In the 1920s, almost no U.S. Catholic missionary worked in Central America - compared to approximately 300 Protestants. In 1960, 433 U.S. Catholics worked in Central American missions but by 1968 the number had increased to 936.<sup>108</sup> The increasing significance that U.S. Catholics attributed to Latin America, and subsequently their Latin America policy, becomes apparent when relating the numbers of missionaries working in Latin America with those living in other continents. In the 1950s, approximately 33 percent of the overall Catholic missionary personnel worked in Latin America. Until 1967, this percentage had expanded to 56 percent.<sup>109</sup>

The reasons for the attraction of the Catholic and governmental development and mission programs in the 1960s are manifold. On the one hand, U.S. citizens' enthusiasm for missions - or, correspondingly, for the new governmental small-scale foreign development program in which citizens could participate, the "Peace Corps" - was influenced by a patriotic spirit or "civic pride" that was not uncommon at the time. In an analysis about the Peace Corps, Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman stresses to what extent the Peace Corps volunteers "spearheaded a generation that believed deeply in its potency."<sup>110</sup> The same can be said about the religious missions. For U.S. Catholics, there was yet another important aspect that contributed to their eagerness to go abroad. The historian Costello concludes that "[t]he timing of the papal call was tailor-made for the young and adventurous in the vibrant U.S. Catholic community, brimming with pride at the election of the United States' first Catholic president..."<sup>111</sup> After decades of finding its niche, acceptance, and position in the U.S. society, the immigrant Catholic Church had made its way into mainstream America in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>112</sup> It did not outnumber Protestants, but because of its nature as a united church it was (and still is) the largest

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<sup>106</sup> See *Mission Handbook 1991-1992* (Washington, DC: U.S. Catholic Mission Association, 1992), 46.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 189.

<sup>110</sup> Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 1.

<sup>111</sup> Costello, *Mission*, 49.

<sup>112</sup> McGlone, *Sharing Faith*, 100; Jo Renee Formicola, *The Catholic Church and Human Rights: Its Role in the Formulation of U.S. Policy 1945-1980* (New York: Garland, 1988), 95.

denomination in the United States.<sup>113</sup> The children of the first generation of South and Eastern European immigrants that had come in the late 19th century and early 20th century had come of age and slowly moved into the middle-class. The election of the first Catholic president in 1960 seemed to confirm the pluralist, liberal, and democratic system of the United States.<sup>114</sup> Most of the missionaries were eager to bring their "Americanism with them as much as ...their Christianity."<sup>115</sup> In 1962, the Catholic bishops emphasized the liberal current of the United States that had allowed the Catholic Church to grow and succeed in an otherwise Protestant environment:

But whatever the limitations of the Church in this country...we know, first of all, the advantages which we have...from living and growing in an atmosphere of religious and political freedom. The very struggle which the Church here has had to face has been responsible in large measure for the vitality which it has developed as it grew to maturity, unaided by political preference but unimpeded by political ties.<sup>116</sup>

Both, the religious missionary movement and the eagerness with which U.S. citizens participated in President Kennedy's Peace Corps program depict a sense of "good citizenship" as it was understood in the early 1960s. It was accompanied by a Cold War mentality that was eager to counteract communism with a Christian democratic ideal.

### **Mainline Protestant Churches**

U.S. Protestantism is highly diverse and pluralistic. In order to classify the various groups, it is possible to distinguish them on the basis of religious doctrine and historical origin. Some scholars stress religious and cultural traditions and take class and race, and political philosophy into account. It is, however, common to associate U.S. Protestants with the so-called mainline<sup>117</sup> (or liberal) Protestant community and evangelical (or conservative) Protestant community.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Currently roughly 25 percent of the U.S. population is Roman Catholic. See Fowler and Hertzke, *Religion and Politics*, 35.

<sup>114</sup> Edward T. Brett, "The Attempts of Grassroots Religious Groups to Change U.S. Policy Towards Central America: Their Methods, Successes, and Failures," *Journal of Church and State* 36 (Fall 1994): 773-794, 776.

<sup>115</sup> Costello, *Mission*, 49.

<sup>116</sup> Quoted in McGlone, *Sharing Faith*, 100.

<sup>117</sup> They are also referred to as "mainstream", "ecumenical", or "old" Protestant churches.

<sup>118</sup> Activities on an international level resemble this divide as well. The mainline or ecumenical movement's international base is the World Council of Churches. It is engaged in a dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church. The second movement, however, centers on the evangelical churches or

In 1952, half of all Protestant foreign missionaries in the world came from the United States.<sup>119</sup> Yet, the mainline Protestant missionary endeavor, rooted in the missionary drive of the 19th century, was declining after 1945. New forces within Protestantism replaced traditional church missions. In 1961, only 37 percent of the 27,000 U.S. Protestant missionaries abroad were affiliated with the mission boards of the mainline churches belonging to the National Council of Churches (NCC). By 1965, the number of volunteers of the Peace Corps program even exceeded the number of Protestant missionaries from denominations affiliated with the NCC.<sup>120</sup> Since the late 1960s, the number of evangelical Protestant missions has been on the rise. The majority of today's non-Catholic religious communities in Latin America belongs to the "evangelical movement."<sup>121</sup> By the 1980s, almost 90 percent of U.S. Protestant missionaries were from fundamentalist or Pentecostal denominations.<sup>122</sup>

The NCC's member denominations still seek missionary programs abroad. Yet, since World War II, mainline Protestant ministries abroad have refrained from maintaining large

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fundamentalist denominations. Theologically as well as on public policy issues they are more conservative oriented. The evangelical churches generally emerged as a fundamentalist reaction to the Social Gospel movement at the beginning of the 20th century in the United States. Evangelicalism is generally identified with personal conversion, a rigorous moral life, an emphasis on the literal meaning of the Bible, and a priority of mission.

<sup>119</sup> Angelyn Dries, "Mission von Nordamerika aus," in Karl Müller and Werner Ustorf (eds.), *Einleitung in die Missionsgeschichte: Tradition, Situation und Dynamik des Christentums* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1995), 210-230, 222.

<sup>120</sup> Roger D. Armstrong, *Peace Corps and Christian Mission* (New York: Friendship, 1965), 66-68, 80.

<sup>121</sup> U.S. financed religious enterprises such as World Vision, the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the "Church Growth" movement, Gospel Outreach and others started to reach out to Latin America since the 1950s. They are especially interested in the evangelization of the last non-Christian Indians in remote areas. The World Evangelical Fellowship functions as the international sister organization of these denominations. In Latin America, these churches are linked to the association CONELA while in the United States the National Association of Evangelical Churches unites most of them. See Prien, "Protestantische Kirchen," 166f.; Samuel Escobar, "The Promise and Precariousness of Latin American Protestantism," in Miller, *Coming of Age*, 3-35, 9f.; Roger Greenway, "Protestant Mission Activity in Latin America," in Miller, *Coming of Age*, 175-204, 191. Regarding the recent growth of Protestant movements in Latin America see David Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990) and Clayton L. Berg, Jr., and Paul E. Pretiz, "Latin America's Fifth Wave of Protestant Churches," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 20:4 (October 1996): 157-159. Excellent surveys about the history of Protestantism in Latin America are Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Protestantismos y modernidad latinoamericana: Historia de unas minorías religiosas activas en América Latina* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1994); Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* and Miller, *Coming of Age*.

<sup>122</sup> Daniel Levine and David Stoll, "Bridging the Gap Between Empowerment and Power in Latin America," in Susanne Hoerber Rudolph and James Piscatori (eds.), *Transnational Religion and Fading States* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997), 71. Pentecostalism, which has been the largest growing Protestant denomination in Latin America in recent years, is sometimes referred to as an evangelical outgrowth and sometimes identified as a movement independent of the evangelical movement. Approximately 75 percent of Latin America's 50 million Protestants are affiliated with Pentecostal churches. Apart from religious and missionary issues mainline and evangelical churches often have opposing viewpoints on political aspects.

foreign mission stations abroad. Since the 1970s, missionaries sent abroad usually go as fraternal workers under the supervision of the local church.<sup>123</sup>

The NCC is a coordinating institution that gives mainline, Eastern Orthodox, and peace Protestant denominations a unified voice in questions regarding their faith and public policy positions. The membership of the NCC has been fairly stable since its foundation.<sup>124</sup> Mainline Protestant churches, however, have been facing a declining constituency since the 1960s. At the end of the 1980s, a little less than one-fourth of the U.S. population, were members of so-called liberal and moderate Protestant denominations.<sup>125</sup> Among the member denominations of the NCC are the largest mainline Protestant churches like United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ (UCC), and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).<sup>126</sup> Through its various subdivisions, the NCC maintains relations with Protestant councils and organizations in other countries. The NCC's Division of Overseas Ministries could be described as the mainline Protestants' "foreign ministry" or "international relations department."

The mainline Protestants' Latin America programs underwent a slow process of reorientation during the 1960s. While mainline Protestant missions lost their public attention, their international social service and relief programs broadened.<sup>127</sup> Like many other religious relief and development agencies in the 1960s Church World Service (CWS), the social service and relief organization of the NCC, did not only engage in immediate, first-hand, humanitarian support but integrated developmental policies into its service.<sup>128</sup> Through its own service and

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<sup>123</sup> Hill, "Missionary Enterprise," 1693.

<sup>124</sup> Some denominations left while others joined.

<sup>125</sup> White evangelical churches have surpassed the mainline denominations and now make up roughly one fourth of the population. African-American Protestants are approximately one-tenth of the population.

<sup>126</sup> See <http://www.nccusa.org/members/index.html> for a current membership list. United Methodists constitute seven percent, Lutherans six percent, Presbyterians four percent, Episcopalians two percent, members of the UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples) each two percent of the overall U.S. population. See Fowler and Hertzke, *Religion and Politics*, 35.

<sup>127</sup> Hill, "Missionary Enterprise," 1695.

<sup>128</sup> CWS's mission purpose is to "feed the hungry, close the naked, heal the sick, comfort the aged, shelter the homeless." See Stenning, *Church World Service*, 16. Before CWS was integrated into the NCC in 1950 when NCC was established, it had operated as an "independent" relief and resettlement organization for various Protestant churches. Due to the increase of relief organizations during the War, CWS was established on 4 May 1946 in order to serve as the relief and coordinating arm of Protestant churches' service abroad. It was the first ecumenical and coordinating body for overseas relief for the Protestant churches of the United States. In 1946 alone, CWS provided 80 percent of all relief goods from American voluntary agencies to Europe and Asia, the main areas of operations. While its earlier refugee work concentrated on Europe, the program expanded to developing countries in the 1950s and 1960s. The NCC's

material aid programs, CWS, like the U.S. Catholic organization Catholic Relief Services, cooperated with U.S. AID programs in implementing U.S. development goals in Latin America.

In the late 1960s, the NCC's Latin America policy responded to the changing moods within the institution and U.S. society. Returning missionaries from Latin America took posts in the various departments in the NCC focusing on relief, missions, and Latin America, some of whom inaugurated new projects and groups. In 1965, the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America (CCLA) with its early 20th century roots was dissolved and succeeded by the Latin America Department of the NCC.<sup>129</sup> In 1967, Robert Bilheimer of the NCC argued for the necessity for changing the programs in order to move away from the notion of doing something "for Latin America."<sup>130</sup> Instead, the churches should rather respond to the situation through education in the United States.

The changing attitudes in parts of the church leadership generated discussion and at times, conflicting goals within the NCC.<sup>131</sup> The later director of NCC's Latin America Department, William Wipfler, had spent eleven years as an Episcopal missionary in the Dominican Republic and in Costa Rica. He represented the new, and still few, progressive voices within the NCC, who started to succeed the Niebuhr realists and the Christian defense of "godless communism" among mainline Protestant leaders.<sup>132</sup> A 1972 article by Wipfler titled "Latin America: U.S. Colony" stands for the new policies and paths that a group of former Latin America missionaries tried to promote after their return. Analyzing U.S. military and economic assistance to Latin America in detail, he came to the conclusion that U.S. attempts to promote quiet and stable countries is "in benefit of our own interests," not "for the sake of the freedom" of other citizenry.<sup>133</sup> He criticized U.S. missionaries' cooperation with the U.S. government's goals, whether in the late 19th century or during the Cold War. His plea to restrain U.S. power

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outreach to developing countries generally focuses on countries where the mainline Protestant missionaries went in the 19th and 20th century.

<sup>129</sup> The director of CCLA, Dana Green, eventually became the director of the LAD.

<sup>130</sup> Robert Bilheimer, 26 January 1967, in: Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS), NCC, Record Group 8, Latin America Department (LAD), Series IV, Box 54, Folder 1.

<sup>131</sup> For further information, see chapter 3.1.2.

<sup>132</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, a U.S. Protestant theologian, formulated a faith-based political approach that is situated between the liberal interpretation of the Bible, like the Social Gospel, and an orthodox interpretation. His theory of "Christian realism" centers on the social reality and acknowledges the inevitability of political decisions that do not present the ideal. For further information on Niebuhr's theology, see Gary Dorrien, *Soul in Society: The Making and Renewal of Social Christianity* (Minneapolis, MI: Fortress Press, 1995), chapter 3.

<sup>133</sup> William Wipfler, "Latin America: U.S. Colony," *Christianity and Crisis* 32: 5 (3 April 1972), 68-75.

for the sake of "the legitimate aspirations of the Latin American people" revealed the aspirations of the liberal internationalist and progressive current of the U.S. religious community.<sup>134</sup> In the following years, they contested discrepancies between U.S. ideals and realistic possibilities.

## 2.2 Transformations in Latin America's Religious Community

The 1960s unleashed new Catholic missionary activism in the United States. At the end of the decade, however, Catholic congregations and orders in the United States that had made experiences in missionary or development work desired changes in U.S. policy toward Latin America, similar to their Protestant colleagues.<sup>135</sup> Many of them were influenced by the "new" Catholic Church in Latin America.

### 2.2.1 The Catholic Church in Latin America

Political and social developments in many Latin American countries in the 1960s and 1970s set free religious energies that created a new type of civic engagement and participation.<sup>136</sup> By the mid-1970s, the mission work of some groups and individual missionaries had been influenced by the new social-religious activity in Latin America. U.S. missionaries and individual religious activists - albeit few - became part of a growing network of "hitherto unknown forms of organization, including networks of small groups, so-called base ecclesial communities or CEBs (from the Spanish for *comunidades eclesiales de base*), priests' associations and groups of study centers, some affiliated with the Jesuits, some independent."<sup>137</sup>

While Vatican II symbolizes the Church's new self-understanding universally, the second Latin American episcopal conference of Medellín stands for an even more radical shift towards social reform and (civic) responsibility of the Latin American Catholic Church in 1968.

<sup>138</sup> After a long period of cooperation and mutual understanding between the Catholic Church

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Berryman, *Stubborn Hope*, 220.

<sup>136</sup> Levine and Stoll, "Bridging the Gap," 63-103.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>138</sup> The role of the Catholic Church in Latin America as a force for social change varies substantially, depending on the country and context of study. During the 1960s through 1980s, the Church can be perceived as a contributing and dynamic, a moderate force, or an obstacle on the way to social

and the political and economic elites in Latin America, the Latin American episcopate addressed the prevalent socioeconomic inequities in Latin America and called for political and economic reforms.<sup>139</sup> The bishops declared themselves to be the voices of the poor and the marginalized, and of those whose voices were not heard amongst the pressure from various interest groups and dictatorships.<sup>140</sup> The renewed interest in evangelization, translating liturgy, encouraging bible readings, and internal democratization in the Church opened the Latin American Catholic Church to greater popular participation.<sup>141</sup> Yet, Medellín is not so much the beginning of the new social thinking and activism within religious circles in Latin America but a result of developments and movements that had taken place in various episcopates and among priests and layworkers at the grassroots.<sup>142</sup> Liberation theology was the theoretical companion of the practical attempts for social change and democratic participation.<sup>143</sup> However, it placed strong emphasis on the linkage of analysis and activism.<sup>144</sup>

Only after the Latin American bishops' conference in Medellín in 1968, a growing number of Latin American clergy and Catholic missionaries began to move from educating the wealthy and middle-class to pastoral and community work in the marginal urban and rural areas.<sup>145</sup> Indeed, the period between 1968 (Medellín) and 1979 (the subsequent Latin American bishops' conference in Puebla) comprised new pastoral ministries and approaches that sought justice in human relations and regarding social structures.<sup>146</sup> While many endorsed

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reforms. In those countries where the episcopate was not supportive of social reforms or human rights policies like in Guatemala, groups within the Church were. On religion and politics in Latin America, see Daniel H. Levine, "The Catholic Church and Politics in Latin America: Basic Trends and Likely Future," in Dermot Keogh (ed.), *Church and Politics in Latin America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 25-48; on the diversity of the Christian left, see Michael Dodson, "The Christian Left in Latin American Politics," in Daniel H. Levine (ed.), *Churches and Politics in Latin America* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1980), 111-134.

<sup>139</sup> Medellín Declaration (1968), in: Robert S. Leiken and Barry Rubin (ed.), *The Central American Crisis Reader: The Essential Guide to the Most Controversial Foreign Policy Issue Today* (New York: Summit, 1987), 124.

<sup>140</sup> Bruno Schlegelberger, "Religionen und Kirchen, Staat und Gesellschaft in Lateinamerika," in Knud Krakau (ed.), *Lateinamerika und Nordamerika: Gesellschaft, Politik und Wirtschaft im historischen Vergleich* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1992), 209-220, 213.

<sup>141</sup> Levine and Stoll, "Bridging the Gap," 69.

<sup>142</sup> The Jesuit priest and sociologist Renato Poblette interprets Medellín as well as its subsequent conference at Puebla, Mexico, in 1979, as culmination points of processes of intra-ecclesial maturing which were end points as well as beginnings. Renato Poblette, "From Medellín to Puebla," in Levine, *Churches and Politics*, 41-54.

<sup>143</sup> Gustavo Gutiérrez is considered the theoretical father of liberation theology. Liberation theologians explain poverty in structural terms. In their critical social analysis, they combine biblical sources with Marxist categories of class, conflict, and exploitation.

<sup>144</sup> Daniel H. Levine, *Popular Voices in Latin American Catholicism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 39-44.

<sup>145</sup> McGlone, *Sharing Faith*, 142.

<sup>146</sup> Poblette, "From Medellín to Puebla," 47.

the new ecclesiastical direction of the Latin American Catholic Church, criticism of or lack of interest in these changes existed at all levels of the Church.<sup>147</sup> Margaret Crahan points out that disagreement within the Church centered on the debate between reformists and socialists.<sup>148</sup> The bishops' conference in Puebla in 1979 sought to bridge the divide. Its emphasis on "liberation through evangelization" manifested the changing interpretation of Christian "mission." Instead of simply proselytizing to expand the Church and one's own religion, the Catholic Church attempted to ask how it could pronounce the gospel to those who live in different social, cultural, and economic settings.<sup>149</sup>

Similar theological shifts were taking place among mainline Protestants in Latin America. Theologians like José Míguez Bonino and Rubem Alvez introduced liberation theology in Protestant circles. The Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI), which was founded provisionally in 1978, endorsed the principles of liberation theology.<sup>150</sup>

The reform development in the Latin American Catholic Church influenced U.S. church circles. With the ascendance of the new thinking in Latin America, local churches started to criticize the traditional missionary work of foreign missionaries for their cultural insensitivity.<sup>151</sup> A handful of theologians in the U.S. Catholic and mainline Protestant community called for alternative theologies. In the Protestant community, former Latin America missionary Richard Shaull proposed a departure from Reinhold Niebuhr's realist model to principles inspired by liberation theology that would not support the "dominant social order."<sup>152</sup> In Catholic circles, the orders and their missionaries were most closely exposed to the emerging theories.

Religious orders such as Maryknoll and the Society of Jesus were among the first to support the new theological thinking. They attempted to see issues through the eyes of the poor by sharing their conditions and living with them - important themes of liberation theology. By 1978, the Maryknoll Sisters understood missionary work as an attempt to transform people's values and initiate structural change of the socio-economic and political system (in the spirit of

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<sup>147</sup> Crahan categorizes supporters and critiques according to the various analytical approaches. See Crahan, "Catholicism and Human Rights," 266f.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 266.

<sup>149</sup> Prien, "Protestantische Kirchen," 156.

<sup>150</sup> CLAI was fully established in 1982. Its counterpart, the umbrella organization of the evangelical and fundamentalist churches in Latin America (CONELA) was also founded in 1982. CONELA rejected liberation theology and the emergence of leftist ideologies. See Escobar, "The Promise and Precariousness of Latin American Protestantism," and Prien, "Protestantische Kirchen."

<sup>151</sup> Dries, "Mission," 223.

<sup>152</sup> Doerries, *Soul in Society*, 163f.

the Gospel) - in order to reach the Christian ideals of a just and humane world.<sup>153</sup> The Maryknoll order is the topic of the next chapter in order to explore the transnational religious developments of the 1960s and beyond.

### 2.2.2 Maryknoll<sup>154</sup> and the Missionary Experience

Both, the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers and the Maryknoll Sisters were two of the most active U.S. Catholic orders in Latin America. Among the many priests, sisters, and laypeople that were killed deliberately during the Central American civil wars in the late 1970s and early 1980s were also three U.S. Maryknoll missionaries. Other Maryknollers died, were kidnapped, and harassed because of the general situation of conflict, danger, or suspicion. During the crucial period of the 1960s and 1970s the orders' outlook on mission and development work changed significantly. The society became, deliberately as well as unintentionally, increasingly involved in the public sphere. Maryknoll is a concrete example of an institution that was affected by the various socio-political developments in Latin America and the United States as well as the structural and conceptual changes of the Catholic Church described above. As a consequence, Maryknoll became a "mediator of renewal" of international politics.

According to the language of modern political science, Catholic religious orders are among the oldest international NGOs.<sup>155</sup> Being part of the universal Roman Catholic Church, they are international in character. Still, there are orders (or congregations) such as Maryknoll that work internationally and whose membership is open for people from all around the world

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<sup>153</sup> *Maryknoll Sisters in Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: December 1978), 14: "We understand evangelization means bringing the Good News of salvation into all strata of humanity and, through its power, transforming persons as well as structures and systems of our contemporary world. We must bring the influence of the Gospel to bear on the values, criteria, sources of inspiration and models of life in modern societies. The purpose of evangelization is the conversion of persons and societal structures which will transform our milieu into a just and peaceful world..."

<sup>154</sup> In this study, the term Maryknoll (or Maryknoll society/institution) refers to the female and male congregations as well as the laity associated with Maryknoll missionaries. All of them are separate entities but belong to the Maryknoll family (also including the Maryknoll Affiliates).

<sup>155</sup> Similarly, Charles Chatfield identifies the World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations (1855) as a 19th century international NGO that demonstrated increasing citizens' participation at a time when states became more complex and formal. Charles Chatfield, "Intergovernmental and

but that have a very specific national background. Within the Catholic Church, the religious orders have a distinct role and voice. Their place outside the Catholic bureaucratic structures in Rome or, in the case of the U.S. Church, in Washington, and their direct linkage to people in local communities, schools and parishes also "provide an interface with the more formal elements of politics."<sup>156</sup> In the United States, Maryknoll and other orders sometimes appear as "lobbyists"<sup>157</sup> for the interests of "common people," i.e. not only citizens from one country but from all around the globe.<sup>158</sup>

Authors note the relative independence and autonomy of religious orders within the Church.<sup>159</sup> Eric Hanson writes that "[s]ince the Middle Ages religious orders have played critical roles in the internal struggles of the Catholic Church...Religious orders...form parallel hierarchical structures from their generals in Rome to their provincial superiors who head various geographical jurisdictions."<sup>160</sup> They are thus less subject to the direct control of the local bishop than, for example, the secular (diocesan) clergy.<sup>161</sup> The religious clergy are primarily committed to their orders or congregations, which transcend diocesan boundaries. While working within a given diocese, these clergy must adhere to the bishop's decisions in matters of public worship but enjoy otherwise considerable discretion in their work or ministry.<sup>162</sup> The community character of orders along with their distinct histories and idealistic Christian aims produces an *esprit de corps* and adds to a feeling of liberty. Hence, in certain instances the position of an order can be distinct from the Vatican and from its national church.

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Nongovernmental Associations to 1945," in Jackie Smith et al. (eds.), *Transnational Social Movements and World Politics: Solidarity Beyond the State* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 19-41.

<sup>156</sup> Smith, *Transnational Social Movements*, xiv.

<sup>157</sup> In its narrow meaning, lobby groups are only the officially registered interest groups that attempt to influence legislation in Washington or in the respective state government. Lobbyists are the agents of a particular interested group. According to the Lobbying Act from 1946, professional lobbyists are required to register. The Lobbying Disclosure Act from 1995 further tightened the requirements. Often, interest groups, also the vast number of unregistered ones, are referred to as lobbyists or lobbies. Most of the groups examined in this study are not lobbies in the narrow sense. In general, this study uses the terms interest group or advocacy group. Robert Wuthnow e.g. identifies missionary societies as "another prominent example of special purpose groups." According to Wuthnow, the first special purpose groups in the United States were devoted to religious causes. The earliest and most prominent ones were the missionary groups of the Protestant faiths. See Wuthnow, *The Restructuring*, 102f.

<sup>158</sup> According to the Maryknoll Sisters, foreign policy should reflect the interests and rights of "all." The Maryknoll Sisters stated in 1982: "Is it not conceivable that we might base our policies, both foreign and domestic, upon the legitimate rights of all peoples...?" Statement of the Central Governing Board on 29 January 1982, in: Maryknoll Sisters Archives (MSA), A10 OSC, Box 7, Folder: International Fast for Peace and Justice in El Salvador and Central America, 1982.

<sup>159</sup> Löwy, *The War of Gods*, 43; Hanson, *The Catholic Church*, 85.

<sup>160</sup> Hanson, *The Catholic Church*, 85.

<sup>161</sup> In Roman Catholicism, the religious clergy comprise members of the religious orders. The secular clergy staff the parishes of the dioceses where they serve as pastors under the local bishop.

There have been cases when certain orders developed a highly critical judgment of governmental policies and became involved in national politics. Missionary groups' engagement in public policy questions can be identified as regular advocacy work when performed in their home country. While abroad, however, a critical judgment of the host government's policies is often known as foreign, albeit nongovernmental, interference in domestic matters. In the chapters to come, the Maryknollers serve as an example that demonstrates in how far faith-based work abroad can affect the outlook of such a NGO and its interest in foreign policy.

Catholic orders, their priests, and friars were the first religious agents of the missionary and material conquest of "the new world". Christopher Columbus' crew on board of his second crossing of the Atlantic Ocean included twelve Franciscan friars. Catholic orders were very important "in bringing Christianity to Hispanic America" during the first centuries of the Spanish and Portuguese conquest of the new world.<sup>163</sup> Indians in nowadays Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and the island of Haiti and the Dominican Republic were evangelized and used as work force with the help of especially Franciscans, Dominicans, and later Jesuits. Yet, when protest against the inhumane methods of the conquest, against forced labor and slavery, rape and discrimination occurred, it came from missionary orders.<sup>164</sup> Only in the mid-20th century, U.S. Catholic orders joined their colleagues from Europe in Latin America.

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<sup>162</sup> The same is true for sisters and brothers, who are members of orders but not clergy.

<sup>163</sup> The reasons for the dominance of the mendicant orders in the missionary conquest are multiple. They generated the greater missionary zeal, their numbers of workers was more manageable, and they formed the church's strategic reserve. See Josep M. Barnadas, "The Catholic Church in Colonial Spanish America" in *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge, GB: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 511-540, 519ff. The Spanish secular clergy of the time was not as interested in missionary work in the "new world." The Spanish crown also prevented the secular clergy from becoming too involved in the conquest. See Horst Pietschmann, "Kirche und Mission in Amerika unter dem Patronat der spanischen Krone," in Bruno Schlegelberger and Mariano Delgado (eds.), *Ihre Armut macht uns reich: Zur Geschichte und Gegenwart des Christentums in Lateinamerika* (Berlin: Morus, 1992), 926, 19. For a general assessment of the Christian and Spanish conquest of the "New World," see Beate Rüdiger, "Das 'Heilige Experiment' - der Gott der Weißen. Über die Christianisierung der Neuen Welt," in: *Amerika 1492-1992, Neue Welten-Neue Wirklichkeiten: Essays* (Braunschweig: Westermann, 1992), 53-60; H. McKennie Goodpasture (ed.), *Cross and Sword: An Eyewitness History of Christianity in Latin America* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1992), 5-6.

<sup>164</sup> Because of the blending of church and state in Spain, the few voices of protest were able to influence the colonial policy to some extent. Dominicans were the ones who pressured for the prohibition of Indian slavery in 1530. The prohibition of Indian slavery, however, caused a new kind of slavery, which was not further considered in the ethical debates. In the following years, Black Africans substituted Indians as a labor force. In a power struggle between the religious and political institutions, the wealth and independence of the orders were always a matter of dispute. In fear of losing political and financial influence, Charles III of Spain expelled the Society of Jesus from the Spanish colonies in 1767. By that time, the Jesuits had the most numerous convents, churches, and educational centers among the Indians. It was especially their direct loyalty to the pope causing opposition against the society. As a consequence of

By tradition, Maryknoll is one of the largest Catholic mission-sending societies in the United States. It ranges on top of the Catholic women's religious congregations sending missionaries abroad. In fact, it was the first Catholic congregation that sent women overseas. Among men's congregations and orders in the United States only the Jesuits have sent more personnel abroad than the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers.<sup>165</sup> The Franciscans, Redemptorists, Divine World Missionaries, Capuchins, Marist Missionaries, Medical Mission Sisters, Sisters of Mercy, and School Sisters of Notre Dame are the other major missionary societies in the United States. In the 1960s and afterwards, these groups were accompanied by missionaries from Roman Catholic dioceses, lay mission societies, and agencies or congregations that were not particularly founded as mission agencies.<sup>166</sup>

Half of the Maryknoll members were operating in war zones in the 1940s. Like other U.S. mission groups the order had focused on China and was, therefore, especially affected by the new Chinese government's oppression of those religions and religious groups that did not want to cooperate with the state's ideology. By 1951, most of China's Catholic foreign missionaries had been expelled. Like the Roman Catholic Church's hierarchy, the Maryknollers had been in fierce opposition to Mao Tse Tung and were one of the loudest voices to denounce the communist regime.<sup>167</sup> Being expelled from China, its main mission field, the Maryknoll order had to look for new mission regions. Slowly, Latin America became the order's main area of concern.

The Maryknoll Fathers began their missionary work in Latin America in 1942. They first went to Bolivia, soon followed by some Maryknoll Sisters in 1943. The Fathers established

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Charles' order of 1767 approximately 2,200 priests had to leave Latin America. Rüdiger, "Das 'Heilige Experiment'," 56; Goodpasture, *Cross*, 2-3.

<sup>165</sup> See Costello, *Mission*, 210. From 1912, the year of its foundation, until 1966 the number of professed Maryknoll Sisters climbed from a handful members to 1,430. Today, the Sisters have 710 members. See Lernoux, *Hearts on Fire*, 269; See also [http://www.maryknoll.org/MARYKNOLL/SISTERS/ms\\_missn.htm](http://www.maryknoll.org/MARYKNOLL/SISTERS/ms_missn.htm) (2 March 2000). The number of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers was at the highest in the mid 1960s with 1,190 priests and 185 brothers. Today, the male order has 650 members. Mission-sending groups are financially assisted by so-called mission-funding agencies. Alongside numerous small mission circles and groups, the Catholic Church hierarchy itself founded offices like the National Committee on Missions (1968) or more regionally focused ones like the Latin American Bureau (1959) to promote missions overseas.

<sup>166</sup> Dries' book about the history of the American Catholic missionary movement provides a detailed description of events and developments. Dries, *Missionary Movement*.

<sup>167</sup> Lernoux, *Hearts on Fire*, 14.

more missions in Peru and Chile in 1942, in Ecuador, Guatemala and Mexico in 1943 and in El Salvador in the 1950s.<sup>168</sup> The Sisters opened additional missions providing health service, education, and leadership formation in Panama, Nicaragua, Chile, and Peru throughout the 1940s and early 1950s.<sup>169</sup>

Maryknoll seemed to move between two ideological currents in the 1940s. On the one hand, its mission work among Latin American Indians reflected early notions of missionary philosophy. An article in the society's magazine testifies the interest in conversion:

The task of the Maryknoll missionaries among these Indians will undoubtedly be like that of the early missions and the method being attempted in the neighboring missions today; namely, to win over the children, to remove them from their pernicious home atmosphere, away from bad example, and to educate them in the mission.<sup>170</sup>

In 1993, Maryknoll Sister Bernice Kita noted that her predecessors of the 1940s and 1950s "brought with them a strong, naive patriotism. Their convents, their religious habits, and their vows separated them from the daily lives of those they came to serve."<sup>171</sup> Letters by Maryknoll Sisters from the early 1940s demonstrate their patriotism and bias toward their host countries.<sup>172</sup>

On the other hand, the words of General Superior James E. Walsh indicated Maryknoll's, at least, theoretical willingness to "go to South America - not as exponents of any North American civilization."<sup>173</sup> Alonso Escalante, one of the first priests assigned to the mission in Bolivia in 1942, stressed religion not only as a unifying and contributing element for an improving relationship between North and South America.<sup>174</sup> In a radio address, he highlighted

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<sup>168</sup> See Shavit, *The United States in Latin America*.

<sup>169</sup> Bernice Kita, "Maryknoll Sisters in Latin America, 1943-1993" in *Missiology: An International Review* 26:4 (October 1998), 421f.

<sup>170</sup> *The Field Afar* 36 (April 1942), 5.

<sup>171</sup> Kita, "Maryknoll Sisters," 422.

<sup>172</sup> "We are beginning to realize more and more what one of the Sisters meant when she said, 'You will find out - here you are in the last corner of the earth;'" "We insist that our hearts are here in Nicaragua, but I fear that many times our minds are with our country in the midst of its war." Estelle Coupe to Mother Mary Joseph, Maryknoll, 8 November 1944, in: Maryknoll Mission Archives, Maryknoll Sisters, H3.4 Nicaragua, Box 1, Folder: Sister Estelle Coupe's Letters/Reports from Nicaragua, 1944-1978. Or "There seems to be an inherent moral weakness in almost every individual coupled with two other vices: instability and a temperamental disposition." in "Some Marriage and Family Problems in Nicaragua" by Sister M. Virginia Theres, 25 March 1947, in: MSA, H3.4 Nicaragua, Box 1, Folder: Background/History of the Sisters in Nicaragua 1941-1994.

<sup>173</sup> Walsh quoted in Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 181.

<sup>174</sup> "...all Americans are neighbors...But only religion, the deepest and most forceful element of civilization and culture, can give to this relationship the bloodbeat of brotherhood." Alonso Escalante, radio address, in: *The Field Afar* 36 (May 1942), 15.

the superior understanding of South Americans regarding religion, i.e. Catholicism, and its role for a nation: "We of North America are still confused, as a nation, on the fundamental issues of religious truth. South America is not confused."<sup>175</sup> In his assessment of future tasks, he went a step further. He saw North Americans and South Americans as one people sharing and promoting the same values: "We Americans must show the others a way of life and religious living in which there may be suffering but never sadness; justice but never tyranny; liberty but never license."<sup>176</sup>

Once the Maryknollers were in Latin America, the theoretical perception of their host societies as being "superior" in their understanding of religion made room for quite opposite assessments. In fact, descriptions of the situation that the missionaries find in their host country reveal the underlying philosophy of any kind of mission: an all-encompassing belief of holding the (religious and moral) truth. In contrast to Father Escalante's interpretation of the role of religion in Latin America, a Maryknoll Sister who worked in Nicaragua in the 1940s said, "[t]he people are very ignorant of the truth and requirements of their religion..." She thought of her village inhabitants as morally "weak" and criticized their lack of family values, as she knew them from the United States.<sup>177</sup>

When the Vatican began to redirect many of the Catholic Church's mission and development funds and programs toward Latin America in the late 1950s and 1960s, Maryknoll's connection to Latin America had been well established. In 1961, at the time when Pope John XXIII appealed to U.S. Catholics to send ten percent of their personnel to Latin America to overcome the lack of priests and laypeople, 25 percent of Maryknoll's missionaries were already living in that region.<sup>178</sup> Most of the other orders did not give Latin America special

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid. His pronouncement corresponds to the so-called Western Hemisphere concept underlying the official U.S. policy toward Latin America throughout the centuries. Its essential point constitutes the idea that all the American states build a community of shared and common values and principles (*Wertegemeinschaft*) that are based on the same democratic-republican traditions. On the U.S. side, one fundamental principle is the "missionary" vision of spreading the U.S. version of democracy throughout the world. See Knud Krakau, "Die Lateinamerika-Politik der USA," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 9 (1986): 31-42, 31.

<sup>177</sup> "Some Marriage and Family Problems in Nicaragua" by Sister M. Virginia Theres, 25 March 1947, in: MSA, H3.4 Nicaragua, Box 1, Folder: Background/History of the Sisters in Nicaragua 1941-1994.

<sup>178</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 181. The numbers of the Maryknoll Sisters had risen from seven in 1943 to 191 in 1961. They worked in seven different Latin American countries: Bolivia, Guatemala, Chile, Nicaragua, Mexico, Panama, and Peru. See the report "Maryknoll Sisters in Latin America" (Maryknoll Sisters, NY [1962]), in: MSA, H3.4, Middle American Region: Bx 1, Folder: Middle America History - Survey of Sisters 1943-1962 (Central and Latin America).

attention. The first U.S. Jesuits, for example, arrived in Chile in 1959.<sup>179</sup> Maryknoll's membership grew during the 1960s. After the Holy See's call for additional U.S. personnel, the numbers of the Maryknoll Sisters climbed by 50 in only one year from 1961 to 1962.<sup>180</sup>

In the following two decades, the order's mission underwent a profound change, theoretically and practically. Throughout its history Maryknoll has placed strong emphasis on education. Primary or secondary schools were established, operated, or staffed with Maryknoll missionaries in cooperation with the Latin American host governments, other Catholic orders, or U.S. or local voluntary agencies.<sup>181</sup> The U.S. embassies provided educational material in some cases. In other cases, especially during the 1950s, U.S. corporations such as the United Fruit Company gave financial assistance to the building of additional school buildings in Central American countries.<sup>182</sup> In Central America, Maryknoll was most present in Guatemala where the Maryknoll Sisters alone operated 14 schools, mainly elementary but also three secondary and one teacher's training college called Monte Maria by 1966.

The last-mentioned Colegio Monte Maria that was set up by Maryknoll Sisters in 1953 symbolizes the changing mission scheme and the different approaches in the late 1960s. During the 1950s and 1960s, the school for girls from the upper class integrated a "Social Apostolate" program where the social teaching of the Gospel played a center role including student volunteer work. It was aimed at establishing a "relationship between the gospel and daily living."<sup>183</sup> Classes for people from Guatemala City's poor neighborhoods were added. In an annual report in late 1967, Sister Mary Mildred portrayed Central American countries' chief problems, signaling the order's opening toward socio-religious analysis of inequity at the end of the 1960s:

Chief among the problem of the countries of Middle America are a history of exploitation by outsiders; a narrow commerce which is subject to the whims of foreign markets, a distribution of

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<sup>179</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 181.

<sup>180</sup> Costello stresses, "Maryknoll's interest in Latin America was genuine, but it was part of a wider, global concern." Costello, *Mission*, 68. Maryknoll rendered its services to those that were on their first mission assignment.

<sup>181</sup> *U.S. Non-Profit Organizations: Voluntary Agencies, Missions and Foundations participating in Technical Assistance Abroad: A Directory 1964* (New York: TAICH, 1964), 504f.; "Guatemala: Country Information [1964]," in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 1, Folder: Guatemala History/Background 1962-1979; "The Work of the Maryknoll Sisters in Guatemala [1961]," in: MSA, H3.4, Middle American Region: Box 1, Folder: Middle America: Sisters in Guatemala - Background History 1961-1966.

<sup>182</sup> "Middle America Region," 7 January 1959, in: MSA, H3.4, Middle American Region: Box 1, Folder: Middle America Paper by Sister Francis Cristine 1959.

<sup>183</sup> Sister Agnes Jay, "Survey of Maryknoll Sisters, Central America: 1943-1967," 29f. in: MSA, H3.4, Middle American Region: Box 1, Folder: Middle America History – Survey of Sisters 1943-1962.

wealth so unequal as to create extreme poverty and great affluence; and above all, an increase in population which is dangerously out of proportion to the countries economic growth.<sup>184</sup>

Instead of blaming the *campesinos*' (small farmers) for their "ignorance," "indifference," and "natural inclination...to apathy," Maryknoll started to see them as victims of political and economic oppression.<sup>185</sup> The order's mission goal increasingly centered on the development of a person's worth and human dignity in order to trigger an awareness of the socio-economic and political conditions and his or her own role in taking an active part in society. In 1965, one Maryknoll Sister who worked in Guatemala formulated her congregation's desire to engage and participate in civic life: "The time for withdrawing from the world, of disassociating ourselves from it in order to sanctify ourselves, is past. We must prepare ourselves and our people to be in the world..."<sup>186</sup> Despite new forms of activism, the ultimate goal of establishing God's kingdom on earth remained.<sup>187</sup> Some missionaries came to the conclusion that Maryknoll's envisioned role as a catalyst for social reforms and personal responsibility was too ineffective and slow. Their work abroad shifted to revolutionary activities.

In late 1967 six Maryknoll missionaries stationed in Guatemala, decided that an alliance with guerrilla forces was a legitimate course for Christians in the struggle against the desperate

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<sup>184</sup> Sister Mary Mildred, "1967: Middle America Region: Annual Report for the Year Ending December 31, 1967," in: MSA, H3.4, Middle American Region: Box 1, Folder: Middle America History – Survey of Sisters 1943-1962

<sup>185</sup> Estelle Coupe's Christmas letter, 12 December 1968: "Our program of formation for adult leaders has continued busily through the year. We have some 200 couples who have followed the initial course, and are now active members of the community...It is from these leaders that we hope to form better Christian families, and watch as their zeal, enthusiasm, energy and true dedication to others show forth in real community development...in the betterment of local conditions, the improvement of living standards, a deeper respect for human dignity...responsibility for making a new and better world...Their natural inclination is to apathy, an acceptance of the 'status quo' which has existed over such a long period of time. This means, too, the acceptance of their own state of misery and dire poverty, illness, disease, premature death - but always with something of a struggle to rise above the sub-human level in which they are held by so much injustice and inequality." In: MSA, H3.4, Nicaragua, Box 1, Folder: Sister Estelle Coupe's Letters/Reports from Nicaragua, 1944-1978. See also Maryknoll sisters' description of their work in Managua, Nicaragua in the 1970s. Sister Maura Kathleen Kelly states: "Because of years of exploitation and oppression, the 'campesino' has subjected himself to his environment with resignation because he sees no other recourse. His misery has reduced him to a state of inferiority and indifference as a result of false promises on the part of his 'superiors'. The 'campesino' is unaware of his own rights and lives in a microcosm of ignorance, poverty and futility...Our role as promoters of social change is one of 'animator' in the process of liberation of the campesino....'concientizacion', wherein ...discovers his own dignity as a man, becomes critically aware of the world ...", in: MSA, H3.4 Nicaragua, Box 1, Folder: Sisters Ministry in Managua, Nicaragua 1967-1977. See also Sister Melinda Roper in *Maryknoll* 67:7 (July 1973), 58.

<sup>186</sup> Sister Agnes Jay, "Survey of Maryknoll Sisters, Central America: 1943-1967," 33 in: MSA, H3.4, Middle American Region: Box 1, Folder: Middle America History - Survey of Sisters 1943-1962.

<sup>187</sup> "...and strive to restore it to Christ...": Sister Agnes Jay, "Survey of Maryknoll Sisters, Central America: 1943-1967," 33, in: MSA, H3.4, Middle American Region: Box 1, Folder: Middle America History - Survey of Sisters 1943-1962.

socio-economic conditions in the country.<sup>188</sup> They sought to support revolutionary political violence "in the name of the cross" in order to bring justice to the majority of the people in Guatemala. "If the government and oligarchy are using arms to maintain them [i.e. the Indians] in their position of misery," one of the missionaries said, "then they have the obligation to take up arms and defend their God-given rights to be men."<sup>189</sup> The incident led to the suspension of five Maryknoll priests and nuns by the order on 20 January 1968.<sup>190</sup> According to the missionary policy of Maryknoll, missionaries and lay workers are prohibited to interfere in the internal and political affairs of a host country.<sup>191</sup>

Sister Marjorie Bradford took the leading role in the group's decision to join a Christian guerrilla group. Bradford had been working in the Sisters' Colegio Monte Maria in Guatemala since the mid-1950s. In the beginning, she had taught the usual classes at the school but, later, she also worked in two public schools. In addition, she began to work with a Jesuit priest in so-called *cursillos*. These *cursillos* were set up for female students from Monte Maria and for male students from another school in Guatemala City in which they studied social problems of Guatemala during weekends, also doing volunteer work, going to mountain villages, and sharing life with people there.<sup>192</sup> According to an annual report from 1967 by Sister Mary Mildred, Bradford's "leadership courses in small towns and villages in the mountains" helped to form new

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<sup>188</sup> Lernoux, *Hearts on Fire*, 152.

<sup>189</sup> Thomas Melville quoted in Costello, *Mission*, 197.

<sup>190</sup> The five Maryknollers who left the order were Fathers Arthur and Thomas Melville who were brothers, Sister Marian Peter who later went by her original name Marjorie Bradford, Sister Catherine Sagan, and Father Blase Bonpane. Bradford and Tom Melville as well as Sagan and Art Melville later got married. Sister Marian Pahl stayed with the order. See Report by Marian Pahl, 18 June 1988, in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 4, Folder: Sister Marian Pahl's Story and Csp. about Maryknollers Joining Christian Guerrilla group in Guatemala (The Bradford - Melville - Case 1967-1995); Report by Mildred Fritz (1991), in: MSA, H3.4, Middle America Region: Box 1, Folder: Mexico-Guatemala-El Salvador History Project from 1955-1991/Dated 1991-1993. See further Francis X. Gannon, "Catholicism, Revolution and Violence in Latin America: Lesson of the 1968 Guatemala MaryKnoll Episode," *Orbis* 12:4 (1969), 1204-1225; *The New York Times*, 19, 21 January 1968; Ralph Clark Chandler, "Guerrilla Priests," *Commonweal* 88 (9 August 1968), 525-528; Father Blase Bonpane, the other expellee, is described in "A Priest on Guatemala," *The Washington Post*, 4 February 1968, Sunday Outlook Section; "Bonpane Screams at U.S. Arms Role," *National Catholic Reporter*, 2 February 1968.

<sup>191</sup> *The New York Times*, 19 and 21 January 1968.

<sup>192</sup> Sister Mary Mildred, "1967: Middle America Region: Annual Report for the Year Ending December 31, 1967," in: MSA, H3.4, Middle America Region: Box 1, Folder: Middle America History - Survey of Sisters 1943-1962; Report by Mildred Fritz (1991), in: MSA, H3.4, Middle America Region: Box 1, Folder: Mexico-Guatemala-El Salvador History Project from 1955-1991/Dated 1991-1993.

"Christian civic leaders" who, then, taught others "their own dignity, learn how to read and write and understand basic concepts of hygiene and nutrition."<sup>193</sup>

The volunteer work with Indians in the countryside took place in the parishes of some Maryknoll Fathers. Apparently, one of the students joined the only existing guerrilla group of Guatemala at the time, the *Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes* (FAR). Due to a power struggle within the guerrilla group, the former student formed a new Christian type of guerrilla force. Sister Marjorie Bradford, the two Melville brothers, and the other three Maryknollers participated in a meeting for the formation of this guerrilla group in November 1967. According to a report by Sister Marian Pahl from 1988, the meeting "was the first time almost all of us gathered in one place to agree on principles and policies and tasks to be done before we disappeared into the jungles of Peten to begin to live as guerrillas."<sup>194</sup>

Apart from Sister Marian Pahl, the detected missionaries, who had all been committed to the order for a long time, left Maryknoll.<sup>195</sup> The paths of Pahl and the others in the following years demonstrate two different approaches undertaken by people within the religious sector in the United States concerning foreign policy issues in general and Latin American issues in particular. Pahl tried to work for her cause and beliefs through institutionalized religious and political channels, while the others allied themselves with groups and individuals outside those structures. The Melville brothers, Bonpane, and Bradford explained and publicized their actions and opinions in various U.S. journals and newspapers.<sup>196</sup> Thomas Melville and Marjorie Bradford eventually became involved in anti-Vietnam War grassroots activities.<sup>197</sup> In contrast, Sister Pahl tried to find support for her visions of a U.S. foreign policy based on long-term development for socio-economic progress in Congress.

In a letter titled "A Proposal for Development in Guatemala - U.S. Foreign Policy" to Congressman Thomas O'Neill<sup>198</sup> of Massachusetts, Pahl emphasized her responsibility as a

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<sup>193</sup> Sister Mary Mildred, "1967: Middle America Region: Annual Report for the Year Ending December 31, 1967," in: MSA, H3.4, Middle America Region: Box 1, Folder: Middle America History - Survey of Sisters 1943-1962.

<sup>194</sup> Report by Marian Pahl, 18 June 1988, in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 4, Folder: Sister Marian Pahl's Story and Csp. about Maryknollers Joining Christian Guerrilla group in Guatemala (The Bradford - Melville - Case 1967-1995).

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> *The Washington Post*, 4 February 1968, B1-2; *The Washington Post*, 18 February 1968, A20; Blase Bonpane, "The Brotherhood of Priestly Revolutionaries" *Jubilee* (July 1968); Excerpts of a statement by Thomas R. Melville which he presented on 20 January 1968 in Mexico is in: "Revolution Is Guatemala's Only Solution," *National Catholic Reporter*, 31 January 1968.

<sup>197</sup> *The New York Times*, 8 October 1968. See chapter 2.3.

<sup>198</sup> Congressman O'Neill was the nephew of a Maryknoll Sister.

U.S. citizen and Christian to act upon her beliefs. Because of the democratic principles and the wealth of the United States, she felt a pride regarding her country, telling her to review other people's criticism of the United States. As a citizen, she felt obliged to speak up and express her views:

Because of our educational background, we North Americans are at first somewhat insulted by the opinions expressed: for we have always known our country to be free, democratic, progressive, and generous. Out of pride for our homeland, we must investigate the theories held by others on our United States internal system and its foreign policy and practices. Because we are a rich, powerful nation, we have a great responsibility before God toward the poor nations. I, having lived one year with our Guatemalan brothers, having seen their hunger, their suffering, their being exploited, their dying, can't be silent and call myself a Christian. Being a North American, I am not in a position to tell the Guatemalan government that it's doing wrong; but as a citizen of the United States of America, I am conscientiously obliged to tell my government how I see our foreign policy as a threat to freedom and reform in Guatemala.<sup>199</sup>

Her concern is directed toward the official U.S. foreign policy which she believes to be "a threat to freedom and reform in Guatemala" and which "benefited the upper classes rather than the masses."<sup>200</sup> She linked her suggestions for U.S. foreign policy to one of the fundamental political traditions of the United States, the possession of inalienable rights, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence:

As a United States citizen who has lived and worked for eleven years in Central America, I am convinced that these fundamental changes must be made in our policy toward Guatemala in order that the Indians and oppressed Ladinos of that country may enjoy their inalienable rights.<sup>201</sup>

Her colleague and co-"guerrilla activist" from Guatemala, Blase Bonpane, explained his work and understanding of the role of U.S. missionaries in an article in the *Washington Post* in early February 1968. According to the *Washington Post*, his views "may prove startling to many Americans but are widely held among leading Catholic experts on the area."<sup>202</sup> Similar to Marian Pahl, Bonpane argued for the necessity of social justice in Guatemala. Yet, he believed, "[t]o take a nonviolent position in the face of such violence is to approve of violence."<sup>203</sup> Bonpane, Bradford, and the Melvilles believed that Christianity justified a violent fight for justice.<sup>204</sup> The anti-capitalist overtones of the group's position become evident in a statement by

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<sup>199</sup> Sister Marian J. Pahl, "A Proposal for Development in Guatemala-U.S. Foreign Policy," *Congressional Record* (23 April 1968), 10390.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, 10389-10391.

<sup>201</sup> Pahl, "A Proposal for Development," 10391.

<sup>202</sup> *The Washington Post*, 4 February 1968, B1.

<sup>203</sup> Blase Bonpane, "A Priest on Guatemala," *The Washington Post*, 4 February 1968, B1.

<sup>204</sup> Bonpane argued that "[t]he Latin American guerrilla of a Christian temper, taught by Pope Paul's Christmas message, agreed that Christianity is not pacifism and believes that the witness of his fighting is necessary at this time." *Ibid.*, B2. Accordingly, Bradford justifies her action with her religious beliefs: "...by

the Melville brothers: "[V]iolence, composed of the malnutrition, ignorance, sickness, and hunger of the vast majority of the Guatemalan population is the direct result of a capitalist system..."<sup>205</sup> In their eyes, the Christian wing in the armed movement was a "catalytic agent that will bring about revolution."<sup>206</sup> Consequently, they perceived their own role as a vanguard "teaching the Indians that no one will defend their rights if they do not defend themselves."<sup>207</sup>

The Melvilles', Bonpane's, and Bradford's viewpoints regarding the citizens' responsibility of becoming involved and correcting the policy of the United States and Pahl's position are comparable to some extent. Because of the involvement of the United States in the training of the Guatemalan military and, ergo, its co-responsibility for "the state of exploitation," the Melvilles were convinced that "we, as citizens of the United States, should struggle to correct this shocking situation."<sup>208</sup> In order to defend their action, they stressed a certain kind of patriotism in order to minimize criticism about their "radical" opinion. Bonpane for example wrote, "I am a patriot. It sickens me to see my country on the wrong side in Guatemala. I think the United States is the greatest country in the world, and I don't want to see it on a self-destructing course..."<sup>209</sup>

The main point of criticism from inside and outside the order against the group's undertaking concerned the seemingly autonomous foreign action on behalf of the native Guatemalan population.<sup>210</sup> The remaining 106 Maryknollers in Guatemala denounced the actions of their colleagues, stating that "[w]e have no right to answer questions before they are asked, nor to make their decisions for them."<sup>211</sup> Similarly, Pahl reported that a Brazilian Catholic told her in January 1968 that if Guatemala invited foreigners to stage an armed

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this involvement I am trying to live up to my ideals and to what my conscience demands of me." See "Nun Explains Aid to Guatemala Reds," Letter by Marjorie Bradford to friends (20 January 1968) in: *The Washington Post*, 18 February 1968, A20.

<sup>205</sup> Quoted in Costello, *Mission*, 197.

<sup>206</sup> Thomas Melville quoted in Costello, *Mission*, 197.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.* This position was especially criticized as being paternalistic. Bonpane writes: "Destitute people find it hard to think. We don't find revolutions beginning among the destitute. Revolutions are begun by people who 'turn on' the destitute..." Bonpane, "A Priest," *The Washington Post*, 4 February 1968, B1; Bradford explicitly sees herself as the vanguard: "There is a revolutionary beginning in civic society as well as in the church. The vanguard of any movement is fraught with danger...Circumstances have put us in the vanguard and we must march." *The Washington Post*, 18 February 1968, A20.

<sup>208</sup> Quoted in Costello, *Mission*, 197.

<sup>209</sup> Bonpane, "A Priest," *The Washington Post*, 4 February 1968, B1-2.

<sup>210</sup> Gannon, "Catholicism," 1215f.

<sup>211</sup> Report of the remaining Maryknoll missionaries in Guatemala (21 February 1968), in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 4, Folder: Melville Case – Background/Csp. 1967-1968.

revolution it was fine with her, but not if the foreigners themselves were the initiators of the revolution.<sup>212</sup>

For Maryknoll, a bad press, accusations of being preachers of communism and of showing paternalistic behavior were the negative consequences of the episode. The revolutionary path as promoted by the these six Maryknollers "was hardly representative of the work of Maryknoll."<sup>213</sup> Yet, the incident depicts the disagreeing forces within the Catholic Church quite vividly. In her history about the Maryknoll order, Lernoux concludes that the so-called "Melville Incident" "created an uproar within Maryknoll, invested both the Society and the Congregation with a politicized image it proved difficult to shake, and jeopardized the work of the church in Guatemala for years to come."<sup>214</sup> The incident revealed the inner-religious conflict over the direction of religious involvement in the public sphere. Social justice as a goal was relatively undisputed within the Catholic Church. Members of the Catholic Church were divided over its theological status and priority as well as the means of how to achieve social justice among the majority of the people.<sup>215</sup>

The radical wing was not alone in suggesting a different course of policies. At the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, orders and churches started to reevaluate the role of mission. The majority of the politically conscious missionaries, however, preferred a more silent way of "consciousness-raising." The identification with the poor, the necessity of listening and comprehending became one of the main pillars of missions such as Maryknoll's. The rest of the Maryknoll Guatemala missionaries who did not endorse the move of their six colleagues in 1967 also envisioned "change for improving the socio-economic situation." Maryknoll Sisters expressed their desire to "prepare a people to assimilate democratic ways" through "quiet" mission.<sup>216</sup> "It takes longer than a revolution," they wrote, "but it lasts longer."<sup>217</sup> The Maryknoll

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<sup>212</sup> Sister Pahl considered the former student of Marjorie Bradford's extra-curriculum student group, Juan Lojo, to be the initiator of the revolutionary idea. See Pahl's account (18 June 1988), in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 4, Folder: Sister Marian Pahl's Story and Csp. about Maryknollers Joining Christian Guerrilla group in Guatemala (The Bradford - Melville - Case 1967-1995).

<sup>213</sup> Lernoux, *Hearts on Fire*, 161. In an essay written shortly after the incident, the author Francis Gannon argues that the thinking of the parties involved, paralleled those of other U.S. missionaries. Gannon quoted a Maryknoll Sister who was stationed in Guatemala. It seems that Gannon did not know that this sister, Marian J. Pahl, was one of the three Maryknollers who were part of the "guerrilla episode."

<sup>214</sup> Lernoux, *Hearts on Fire*, 155.

<sup>215</sup> Crahan, "Catholicism," 266-268.

<sup>216</sup> Information sent out by the Maryknoll Sisters as a response to the extended news coverage after the Melville incident in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 3, Folder: Magazine/Newspaper Articles - Sisters Ministry in Jacaltenango Guatemala 1962-1992.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

missionaries who stayed in Guatemala after 1967 felt that change was necessary for Guatemala. Yet, they highlighted Maryknoll's role as catalytic.<sup>218</sup>

Their argumentation revealed the cultural trap underlying mission work, whether imposing solutions or wanting to generate indigenous solutions by acting as a catalyst. The Guatemala missionaries criticized their colleagues who favored violent means for their "paternalistic tendency to identify with the down-trodden and to champion the cause of the underdog..."<sup>219</sup> Instead, they proposed that Maryknoll should help "them to become themselves through self-realization and maturity."<sup>220</sup> This assertion implied the "immaturity" and "weakness" of other people and, therefore, the requirement of mission work. The missionaries argued:

[i]f we are to be sincere in our commitment to the highest Christian values of charity and liberty, then we may impose nothing, neither politics, nor pre-fabricated decisions, nor finalized options. We may provide education, open vistas, clarify options, we may make the people conscious of who they are, what is their value and dignity, where lies their rights and responsibilities. We have no right to answer questions before they are asked, nor to make their decisions for them.<sup>221</sup>

The role of promoter and catalyst that Maryknoll identified with in the educational field was also sought in other areas of mission work such as health, agriculture, and community development. In Guatemala, the Sisters had started a health program in a very remote rural area in 1954 (in the 1950s and 1960s, it was only accessible by a nine-hour horseback ride from the car trail). Initially, the Sisters had only provided medical care. Upon the request of the citizens of Jacaltenango, Maryknoll sent a physician (a Sister who belonged to the order) to the village.<sup>222</sup>

Slowly, however, the Sisters realized that the villagers needed to become their own health care educators. In 1963, the Sisters started a program for the education of village paramedics, i.e. health care promoters. In 1967, the Guatemalan Ministry of Health approved the courses.<sup>223</sup> Sister Melinda Roper, who later became the female order's Superior General

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<sup>218</sup> Report of the remaining Maryknoll missionaries in Guatemala, 21 February 1968, in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 4, Folder: Melville Case – Background/Csp. 1967-1968.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Report of the 106 missionaries who stayed in Guatemala in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 4, Folder: Melville Case - Background/Csp. 1967-1968.

<sup>222</sup> Those townpeople that could not write had signed their petition with thumb prints: Petition by the citizens of Jacaltenango from 10 December 1959, in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 3, Folder: Sister Ministry in Jacaltenango-History/Background, Csp. 1054-1987.

<sup>223</sup> Mary V. Annel, Director of the Health Care Promoters Program, Jacaltenango, Huehuetenango, Guatemala, "Rural Health Promoters' Program: Fifteen Years' Experience in Community Health Huehuetenango, Guatemala," Paper presented at the 2nd International Congress of the World Federation of

from 1978 to 1984, explained the link between health care provision and active civic participation in the order's work abroad. According to her, the provision of health care alone was an "isolated service to man's body."<sup>224</sup> The education of health care was, however, part of the development of a person in his or her own community. In the case of the Jacaltenango project of the 1960s and 1970s, the health promoters were native volunteers serving their village and elected by the community.<sup>225</sup> Their training took place in township centers. There was also a mobile teaching team that drove out to more remote areas.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, the Maryknoll Sisters' involvement with housing, health, and education projects in Central American countries stressed the capacities of the individual and the responsibility of the (educated) individual for his or her community. The missionaries tried to overcome paternalistic tendencies by "promoting" instead of "enforcing" change. By concentrating on "bringing to life the native strength" of each person," the Maryknoll Sisters' goal was not the evangelization through Maryknoll but through Latin Americans themselves.<sup>226</sup> The mission was still directed toward Latin Americans.

The motives of Catholic communities in the United States for starting missionary work in a predominantly Catholic region were slightly different from the Protestants' reasons decades earlier. The new missionary enterprise of St. James and other forms of Catholic aiding programs carried the general political spirit of the 1950s and 1960s. Saving Latin America from communism and from penetration of other religious philosophies had been among the reasons for the foundation of St. James, PAVLA, and other programs. The anti-communist attitudes were accompanied by a strong national pride in U.S. traditions and success.

Tending to be convinced to know how to run things, missionaries were still missionaries in the one-sided sense of somebody "who feels a mandate, a commission, a vocation to bring the vision and its benefits to 'all'."<sup>227</sup> The new missionaries might have helped the Latin American Catholic Church to overcome a lack of priests and laypeople but the motivation of "saving" the Church in Latin America carried an underlying "chauvinism" that created cultural

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Public Health Associations in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 3, Folder: Guatemala Mary Annel paper on Rural Health 1978-1983.

<sup>224</sup> *Maryknoll* 67:7 (July 1973), 58.

<sup>225</sup> Annel, "Rural Health," in: MSA, H3.4, Guatemala: Box 3, Folder: Guatemala Mary Annel paper on Rural Health 1978-1983.

<sup>226</sup> Talk by Sister Xavier, December 1965, in: MSA, H3.4, Chile: Box 3, Folder: Committee Meetings/Workshops 1965-1974.

clashes.<sup>228</sup> In fact, the papal call had initiated a "wave" of missionaries from congregations regardless of their training. Many stayed within the enclaves of their mission and left soon.<sup>229</sup> The papal appeal of 1961 stimulated a growing concern about Latin America among U.S. Americans but the lack of appropriate education and training often led to "negative cultural experiences." Unprepared lay missionaries and religious and priests who went to Latin America encountered social realities they had hardly envisioned.<sup>230</sup> According to the First Inter-American Conference of Religious in 1971, the U.S. mission movement of the 1960s was a failure. In fact, the meeting had been organized in order to analyze the situation of foreign pastoral agents in Latin America.<sup>231</sup> According to the Conference, people had been sent to help their own congregations rather than the Latin American Church, and had lacked an understanding of the needs of its local congregations.<sup>232</sup>

Despite Maryknoll's Father Walsh's warning that missionaries should expect to receive as much as they give, "(m)any missioners in the 1960s had gotten caught in the same trap that snared their sixteenth-century counterparts: they had not learned to differentiate sufficiently between the core of faith and its cultural expressions."<sup>233</sup> Due to missionaries' criticism of their own work, and the Latin American prelates' similar viewpoint, the interest in engaging in mission declined by the late 1960s and early 1970s. Even a traditional mission society like the Maryknollers lost members.<sup>234</sup>

Yet, Maryknoll had started to transform its mission work. In 1975, the Maryknoll Sisters understood evangelization as a "mutual, ongoing, integrating process in history with the Paschal Mystery as its core, reconciling nations and people one with another and with their God."<sup>235</sup> Their relation to local churches abroad was described as such: "In solidarity with them (i.e. local churches) we take direction from their leadership, at the same time challenging them

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<sup>227</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 9 (New York: MacMillan, 1987), 564.

<sup>228</sup> Fredrick Pike, "Latin America" in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 419-454, 431.

<sup>229</sup> McCurry, "U.S. Church-Financed Missions," 382f.

<sup>230</sup> Costello describes the encounter as "shock" or "memorable experience." See Costello, *Mission*, 63.

<sup>231</sup> Inter-American Conference of Religious, *Witnessing to the Kingdom in a Dehumanizing World* (Canadian Religious Conference, 1975).

<sup>232</sup> Ibid. and Costello, *Mission*, 69f.

<sup>233</sup> McGlone, *Sharing Faith*, 113.

<sup>234</sup> The Fathers and Brothers had reached a peak in 1967 with 1,350 people in mission work, stagnating around 1,000 by the mid 1970s. Costello, *Mission*, 135.

<sup>235</sup> "Maryknoll Sisters in Mission" [Mission-Operating Constitution of the Maryknoll Sisters] (December 1975), 14.

to discover and fulfill their own task of integral evangelization.<sup>236</sup> In the following chapters we will see how the new style of mission and church work abroad stimulated faith-based activism on behalf of social justice and human rights in U.S.-Latin American relations.

### 2.3 Transformations in the U.S. Religious Community

Missionary programs, the experience abroad, and changes in the religious and socio-economic sector of Latin America left an institutional imprint on the United States. In the 1960s, new forums and groups with a particular outlook on Latin America emerged in the U.S. religious sector. The U.S. Catholic Church created a forum for U.S. and Latin American clerical interaction in 1964, comparable to the mainline Protestant churches' "inter-American" coalition at the beginning of the 20th century. At the end of the decade, former Catholic and Protestant missionaries and officials and leaders of religious institutions founded yet new groups that sought cooperation, education, and intensified interaction between the United States and Latin America.

These groups' goals reflected a discrepancy with the Cold War consensus by the end of the 1960s. Very different positions about foreign policy in general and policies toward Latin America in particular emerged in the U.S. religious sector, ranging from moderate to liberal to progressive (in few cases radical-revolutionary) perceptions. The domestic Vietnam War debate strengthened and furthered ongoing attempts to re-frame policies regarding Latin America. Some of these new religious interest groups wanted to "keep the lines of communication open between the United States and Latin America,"<sup>237</sup> while other voices, attempting to educate the U.S. public "to favor revolutionary changes in Latin America," were already arguing from a more radical, anti-Vietnam War viewpoint.<sup>238</sup>

This chapter introduces some of the new organizations in order to disclose the growing faith-based interest in Latin America and, subsequently, changing attitude toward the region among the liberal leadership of the U.S. Christian community. It can be maintained that the creation of these forums and new interest groups symbolized the first footsteps of a new kind of

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>237</sup> Memorandum to the participants of the 1969 Inter-American Forum by Louis Colonnese, in: PHS, NCC, Record Group 8, LAD, Series IV, Box 54, Folder 1.

<sup>238</sup> *The Latin America Committee* 1:1, 18 January 1969, in: PHS, NCC, Record Group 8, LAD, Series IV, Box 54, Folder 15.

civic foreign policy toward Latin America. They provided a framework for religious activism concerned with Latin America in the United States and new means of inter-American communication between religious staff and leaders. They were the soil on which the more religious professional advocacy and interest group work of the 1970s grew and developed.

The establishment of the Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program (CICOP) in 1964 opened an era in which "domestic" Latin America programs were forged within the U.S. Catholic community. The first Catholic educational forum on issues dealing with Latin America in the United States "brought hundreds of Latin Americans [mainly South Americans] and North Americans together each year to discuss social, economic, and religious problems and design programs of mutual help."<sup>239</sup> CICOP served the liberal current within the official Catholic Church. While concentrating on Latin America, it paved the way for "social justice and peace issues" as an integral part of the Catholic Church's teaching in the United States. Although on a small-scale basis, CICOP's coordinators also tried to reach out to Protestant leaders of the NCC.<sup>240</sup>

Often it was the special engagement of only one or two people urging for a greater public involvement of the Church. The idea for the new inter-American dialogue grew out of the Catholic Church's Latin America Bureau (LAB) under the leadership of John Considine and William Quinn, LAB's co-director.<sup>241</sup> Latin American Catholic leaders who stressed that North Americans were unfamiliar with the Latin American situation influenced Bishop Quinn's position to promote a platform of exchange.<sup>242</sup> After additional informal talks between bishops of the two regions had taken place at the Second Vatican Council in 1962, the first CICOP conference took place in January 1964 in Chicago. Cardinals from both regions chaired the conference. Apart from members of the LAB, bishops, priests and religious of various Catholic

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<sup>239</sup> Smith, "Religion," 33, footnote 55.

<sup>240</sup> See correspondence between Bishop Coleman Carroll, U.S. Bishops' Committee for Latin America and Edwin Espy, General Secretary, NCC, February and March 1968, in: PHS, NCC, Record Group 8, LAD, Series IV, Box 54, Folder 1. Despite the attempt to cooperate, CICOP remained a mainly Catholic program. In the 1969 conference, only four Protestants attended the meeting according to a report by a NCC official. He also noted that very few Jews and no Latin American Protestants participated. See Report by Kyoji Buma, NCC, 24-26 January 1969, in: PHS, NCC, Record Group 8, LAD, Series IV, Box 54, Folder 1.

<sup>241</sup> McGlone, *Sharing Faith*, 85. The LAB functioned as an organizational and administrative center for different missionary and educational projects. At the end of the 1960s, the LAB was incorporated into the new public affairs organization of the bishops, the USCC, and became the Division for Latin America of the USCC.

<sup>242</sup> Costello, *Mission*, 113.

congregations took part in the planning committee and in the meetings.<sup>243</sup> The first meeting drew considerable attention.<sup>244</sup>

The outlook of the CICOP conferences changed during the tumultuous 1960s. While the first CICOP meeting wanted to inform the U.S. hierarchy on the role of the Catholic Church in Latin America, CICOP's later agenda pointed toward themes of social justice and the disclosure of socio-economic inequalities with the idea of proposing social reforms.<sup>245</sup> The Acting Chairman of the U.S. Bishop's Committee for Latin America, Bishop Coleman Carroll, summarized CICOP's agenda at the end of the 1960s. He stated that the interaction between Latin American and U.S. people was based on three themes: the need for change in Latin America, the need for change in U.S. attitudes and practices, and a common calling in Christ.<sup>246</sup>

CICOP demonstrated the early discord among the bishops, the missionaries, and the whole U.S. Catholic community about the positions regarding the content of missionary work and the emphasis on social development as part of the church's Latin America program. Originally anticipated as a forum for education from a rather moderate perspective, CICOP increasingly became a platform for progressive voices.<sup>247</sup> It reflected the struggle between the moderate and progressive wings of the Catholic Church in the 1960s regarding their institutions' position on such international issues as the Vietnam War, development aid, U.S. foreign and security policy. In addition, the Church faced a growing discontent among Catholics in Latin America and the question of how to offer alternatives for change, a theme that was debated at the 1968 CICOP conference.<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> See *ibid.*, 114

<sup>244</sup> The number of participants, press coverage and the mailing response were high. *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>245</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 201f. Although the church community was divided regarding the role of social justice in the church's mission and social programs, the Vatican itself had stimulated a reevaluation. Rome seemed to legitimize the concerns of those members of the U.S. church who endorsed CICOP's objective and sought to integrate issues of economic development in the missionary agenda of the U.S. Catholic church. After travels to Latin America, Asia, and Africa Pope Paul VI had published *Populorum Progressio* ("On the Development of Peoples") in 1967 in which he addressed aspects of economic development. According to the document, economic structures and aspects of life could not exist for their own worth. They rather serve the human being as such, his/her dignity and worth as well as spiritual development. The Roman Bishops' Synod of 1971 expanded this line of thought by formulating that "[a]ction on behalf of justice is a constitutive element of the gospel." All these formulations and attempts indicate the new thinking of "mission" that was slowly taking place. Penny Lernoux, *People of God: The Struggle for World Catholicism* (New York: Viking, 1989), 35; Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 211.

<sup>246</sup> Bishop Coleman Carroll to Edwin Espy, General Secretary, NCC, 22 February 1968, in: PHS, NCC, Record Group 8, LAD, Series IV, Box 54, Folder 1.

<sup>247</sup> By 1969, the meeting themes had included questions of human rights in the Americas and social justice. Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 201f.; Smith, "Religion," 33, footnote 55.

<sup>248</sup> Georgie Anne Geyer, "Catholic Revolution in Latin America," *The Progressive* 32 (1968): 33-36, 33.

After 1965, CICOP and LAB director Louis Colonnese came under attack by U.S. bishops and the "traditionalists." In an article about the 1968 CICOP meeting, the journalist Georgie Geyer described the old-style traditional priests as "horrified" by "the speeches on Christian violence, a Christian theology of revolution, and the Christian-Marxist dialogue."<sup>249</sup> Colonnese was dismissed as LAB director in 1971 after publishing statements on Latin America without obtaining clearance from the U.S. bishops.<sup>250</sup> For the church hierarchy, CICOP had moved too far to the left.

The U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) took a moderate standpoint. In a 1971 statement on missions, the bishops stressed the significance of spiritual as well as economic development and encouraged the financial and personal involvement in social programs. The idea was still grounded on the understanding of mission as charity work.<sup>251</sup> In 1973, the bishops dropped their support for CICOP.<sup>252</sup> At the time, CICOP's dismissal demonstrated an unwillingness on the part of the U.S. bishops "to maintain projects in Latin America which ha[d] controversial social or political effects and thus alienate sectors of the middle and upper classes."<sup>253</sup>

CICOP provided a forum for critics of the Catholic development policy toward Latin America in the 1960s within the Catholic community. Radical voices like Ivan Illich, a former priest of the archdiocese of New York and the director of the Center for Intercultural Information in Mexico City,<sup>254</sup> and a former Maryknoller of the Melville incident had "instrumentalized" CICOP meetings in order to communicate their visions to the Catholic community. Through the work of the LAB and CICOP, progressive Latin American Church

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<sup>249</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>250</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 202. Colonnese himself had noted the difficulties that such a forum would confront within the U.S. society. He wrote that "[t]he idea behind CICOP was to provide Latin American leaders with a platform where they could uninhibitedly express their own views to the American public without being threatened by reprisals, denials of aid, and the like. We knew it was going to be a painful experience for us because much of what they would tell us would be quite distasteful." Quoted in Costello, *Mission*, 113f.

<sup>251</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 212.

<sup>252</sup> Smith, "Religion," 33, footnote 55. See also Gary MacEoin, "Bishops Kill Mutual Aid Program" *National Catholic Reporter*, 31 August 1973, 1-2.

<sup>253</sup> Smith, "Religion," 21.

<sup>254</sup> The U.S. Catholic Church inaugurated the Center for Intercultural Formation in Mexico in 1961 in order to train incoming U.S. missionaries in mission and its cultural implications. The Center and its director were controversial. Illich's understanding to view mission not necessarily as a geographical relocation but as the ability to communicate with strangers was perceived as radical in those years. See Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 197-199.

leaders were able to establish contact with church members in the United States and vice versa. According to Dries, many of the U.S. participants of the 1965 meeting were for the first time exposed to an assessment of the harsh economic, political and religious conditions and the role of the United States in Latin America.<sup>255</sup> To a certain extent CICOP functioned as a "vehicle for North American familiarity with progressive Latin American bishops."<sup>256</sup> While CICOP was controversial and ultimately dismissed in 1972/73, it symbolized the first initiatives of Catholic inter-American interchange on the ecclesiastic leadership level.<sup>257</sup> Confined by the power of the hierarchy, individuals who envisioned more open debate and interaction with their Southern counterparts formed new groups.

More progressive voices dismissed the U.S. Catholic Church's bishops' power over CICOP programs and its discussion contents. In December 1967 Frederick Rex, the director of the NCC's education program, observed that Latin American and U.S. leaders did not talk "'with but 'at' each other."<sup>258</sup> Doubting the success of conferences and manifestos as the right communication vehicles for the churches' attempts to substitute "more complex images for a stereotype of what is Latin or Latin America," he argued for smaller channels of communication.

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Rex's observations seemed to coincide with the interests of certain returning missionaries or individuals working in church agencies. The formation of a small network of

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<sup>255</sup> Dries, *Missionary Movement*, 202.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid. Dom Helder Camara, the Archbishop of Olinda-Recife, Brazil, and leading advocate of the Catholic Church's protest against human rights violations in his country, spoke at the CICOP meeting in 1969. High-ranking members of the Brazilian Catholic Church were deliberately passing along information on human rights abuses to churches in the United States between 1968 and 1971. See Formicola, *The Catholic Church*, 107-108, 115-119.

<sup>257</sup> According to USCC insiders, later consultation at the level of the church hierarchy functioned as a framework for the formulation of the Latin America policies of the U.S. bishops. Tom Quigley, the Latin America specialist of the International Justice desk of the USCC, stresses the importance of the transnational structure of the Catholic Church for providing international contact and mutual influence of information for the relations between the Central American and U.S. church in the 1970s: "There was consultation between North and Central American bishops on a regular and informal basis for a long time. It's a general principle of the USCC that before we take a policy position, we check it out with the bishops of the region affected. We visit and consult together. I spent a lot of time in Central America, talking with bishops and coming back writing reports. There was a flow of information. There is also a structure of international meetings of bishops, who exchange experiences and what's on their minds. Then there is regular visiting that goes on, when Latin American bishops come up here." Tom Quigley quoted in Christian Smith, *Resisting Reagan: The U.S. Central America Peace Movement* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 405, footnote 5. Today, Quigley still serves as the USCC's Latin America expert.

<sup>258</sup> Rex referred to the general criticism of Illich's accusations about North American missionary imperialism, which, according to Rex, was considered "bad boy" behavior by a majority of the participants. Frederick Rex to Louis Colonnese, 29 December 1967, in: PHS, NCC, LAD, Series IV, Box 54, Folder 1.

individuals and groups linked to the Catholic and mainline Protestant community between 1967 and 1973 reflected the desire for smaller channels of institutional communication. Most of these groups consisted of individuals who worked for or had direct ties to the big church institutions, especially the USCC and the NCC.

The Inter-American Forum for example developed along with CICOP. Former missionaries and staff from the USCC and the NCC created it.<sup>260</sup> The Forum wanted to function more autonomously and ecumenically than the Catholic Church-affiliated CICOP.<sup>261</sup> Noticing a "breakdown in communications forming an atmosphere in which distrust, resentment, and saber-rattling increase in geometrical progressions...and a total absence of reliable information, dialogue or frank communication," it wanted to offer a meeting point for "many perspectives."<sup>262</sup> Its committee members or consultants were largely people from the religious sector such as former civil rights activist Brady Tyson from the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), Thomas Quigley from the USCC's International Justice and Peace office, Dana Green, a former missionary and NCC's Director of the Latin America Department, and former Episcopalian missionary Philip Wheaton, among others.

Within the circles of NCC-related churches, a handful of returning missionaries started to push for new inter-cultural projects for U.S. laypeople or priests in Latin America since 1967. In August 1967, the Division of Mission (DOM) of the NCC proposed a program for an interdenominational and interfaith discussion and action group for U.S. laypeople and the laity in Latin America, the Latin America Interfaith Cooperation Program (LAICO).<sup>263</sup> Another project attempted to educate U.S. citizens working in Colombia by sending two U.S. citizens experienced and familiar with the Latin American culture, language and society. In meetings with and correspondence to their U.S. colleagues, several Latin American ministers objected to the program's approach pointing out its paternalistic subtext. Reverend Ramon Bonachea found it "presumptuous and paternalistic" to send U.S. citizens to Colombia in order to help other

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<sup>259</sup> Frederick Rex to Colonnese, 24 January 1968, in: PHS, NCC, LAD, Series IV, Box 54, Folder 1.

<sup>260</sup> Van Gosse, "'The North American Front': Central American Solidarity in the Reagan Era," in Mike Davis and Michael Sprinter (eds.), *Reshaping the US Left: Popular Struggles in the 1980s* (London/NY: Verso, 1988), 11-50, 16f.

<sup>261</sup> Memorandum to the participants of the 1969 Inter-American Forum from Colonnese, in: PHS, NCC, Record Group 8, LAD, Series IV, Box 54, Folder 1.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> See correspondence and reports on LAICO (PIDALA) in: PHS, NCC, Record Group 8, LAD, Series IV, Box 55, Folder 1.

North Americans relate to Latin Americans instead of inviting Colombians to do the job.<sup>264</sup> Similarly, Antonio Welty wrote to William Wipfler of the NCC's Latin America Department that there were already "bastantes gringos en la America latina que estan tratando de interpretar para nosotros la problematica Latinoamericana."<sup>265</sup> He thought that a Latin American would be better equipped to explain the problems, aspirations, movements, dissatisfactions, and agonies of Latin Americans to U.S. citizens.<sup>266</sup> Apart from a changing course within the church agencies, the formation of small, ecumenical-oriented interest groups exemplify the undeniable shift at the end of the 1960s. They became the new means and channel of action for the growing discontent.

In December 1966, Fred Goff, writer of the newly created magazine North American Congress for Latin America (NACLA),<sup>267</sup> embraced the religious progressives' goals and arguments for a new relationship toward Latin America.<sup>268</sup> According to Goff, the roots of the Western Hemisphere's social disparity "are to be found here in our own country and that the place to begin tackling these problems is also right here."<sup>269</sup> He envisioned the churches as the only proper groups in the United States with the potential and independence to fill the gap of information regarding the situation in Latin America: "There are few groups in our society which have the freedom and commitment and resources for this type of work."<sup>270</sup> His words testify a common "activists'" belief at the time. They reflect the conviction of being able to influence the general direction of U.S. foreign policy. They also echo the belief of changing the course of directions in Latin America by changing U.S. policy.

Although unique in their individual development, the formation of new faith-based groups, focused specifically on Latin America, should be seen in the context of the civil rights

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<sup>264</sup> Letter by Philip Wheaton, EPICA, to Dana Green, LAD-NCC, 6 June 1969, in: PHS, NCC, Record Group 8, LAD, Series IV, Box 55, Folder 1.

<sup>265</sup> Letter by Antonio Welty to Bill Wipfler, 22 November 1968, in: PHS, NCC, Record Group 8, LAD, Series IV, Box 55, Folder 1.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> U.S. students and religious groups created NACLA in 1966. It is another example of the growing interest of the Christian community in Latin American affairs. Religious activists such as Daniel Berrigan were among its sponsors. The Protestant minister Richard Shaull, Reverend and civil rights activist Glenn Smiley, and Brady Tyson were religious representatives belonging to NACLA's board of directors. NACLA is a periodical with a progressive outlook. It was one of the first in the United States that concentrated solely on socio-political issues regarding Latin America.

<sup>268</sup> Fred Goff, "Some Reflections on the Role of the Churches in the Formulation of Foreign Policy," *NACLA* (7 December 1966).

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

and peace movements of the 1950s and 1960s. While the majority of U.S. Christians adhered to the early Cold War belief that the United States was "the major Christian defender against 'godless communism,'" some religious peace and civil rights activists had broadened their international outlook by 1955.<sup>271</sup> Nonviolence was not only a political and religious means used by Protestants, Catholics, and Jews fighting on the side of Martin Luther King, Jr. It was also popular among religious advocates at the end of the 1960s when protest against the war in Vietnam reached a climax.

In general, we can conclude that the Vietnam policy of the U.S. government caused the emergence of a broad spectrum of very critical foreign policy actors, including many members of the religious community.<sup>272</sup> Official church support for the Vietnam War was relatively strong in the early years. Criticism of the war by Catholic bishops, the NCC, and Jewish organizations emerged rather late in comparison to other societal opposition forces.<sup>273</sup> By that time, however, individual religious activists had already taken a much more radical stand against the war or had established new organizations.<sup>274</sup> Some accompanied the Jesuit Daniel Berrigan and his brother Phillip Berrigan, a Josephite, in the Catholic Peace Fellowship,<sup>275</sup> while others joined Clergy and Laity Concerned About Vietnam (CALC), an organization founded in 1965. Donald Anderson of the Lutheran Council in the United States described the change in sentiment among the leaders and members of the religious community regarding U.S. foreign policy in a letter to the U.S. ambassador in Vietnam in 1974:

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<sup>271</sup> Melvin B. Endy, Jr., "War and Peace," in *Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience: Studies of Traditions and Movements*, Vol. 3 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 1409-1428, 1425.

<sup>272</sup> See Mark Falcoff, "The Apple of Discord: Central America in U.S. Domestic Politics," in Howard J. Wierda (ed.), *Rift and Revolution: The Central American Imbrolio* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1984), 360-381.

<sup>273</sup> Endy, "War," 1425; A. James Reichley, *Religion In American Public Life* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1985), 251.

<sup>274</sup> Reichley, *Religion*, 252f. Historians generally distinguish between the liberal and radical currents of the peace movement even though such classification overshadows further fragmentation. The historian Charles Chatfield explains that the liberal view regarding the war concentrated on mobilizing the political center while the radical wing sought the transformation of the political system in cooperation with minorities. Charles Chatfield, *The American Peace Movement: Ideals and Activism* (New York: Twayne, 1992), 144. The general church member, however, was much more moderate than the clergy. In a letter to the U.S. Ambassador in Vietnam from April 1974, Donald Anderson of the Lutheran Council in the United States of America expressed the division within the single denominations and congregations quite vividly: "Our churches were deeply affected by the Vietnam war. Our sons also turned against their parents. Amnesty discussions 'pitted' churchman against churchman. Relationship to sister churches abroad have been strained by related debates within the ecumenical world...Both laity and clergy are readily labeled 'right' or 'left' even though their motive is loyalty to their 'callings.'" See Donald E. Anderson to Ambassador Graham A. Martin, 23 April 1974, in: Rutgers University, Manuscript Collection, American Council for Voluntary Agencies Abroad Papers (ACVAFS), 655, Box 29, Folder: CWS-Correspondence 1973-77.

<sup>275</sup> The Catholic Peace Fellowship was founded in 1964.

In the last decade more and more churchmen began wondering, quietly at first, then more openly, whether it was true that arrogance, pride and self-sufficiency had replaced traditional American humility, common-sense and wisdom. Others wondered whether we as a nation had changed from a people who stood for individual freedom and liberty to a people who now only coveted economic power and world political dominance - at the expense of the hopes and aspirations of millions seeking greater freedom in underdeveloped areas of the world.<sup>276</sup>

The emerging criticism of the lack of moral and democratic substance of their country's policy toward other nations in the context of the Vietnam War also shaped the religious human rights movement's civic foreign policy.<sup>277</sup>

The personal history and interconnection of some religious activists continued for several decades of U.S. post-1945 history,<sup>278</sup> demonstrating a history of civic engagement for "international justice and peace." A few examples will illustrate this point: On one hand, CALC was linked to activism on behalf of Latin America in the 1970s when it made human rights figure more prominently in its program, which was primarily concerned with the responsible use of U.S. military and economic power.<sup>279</sup> On the other hand, one of CALC's major activists, the Reverend William Sloane Coffin, chaplain of Yale University in the 1960s, took part in the Central America movement in general, and the Sanctuary movement in particular in the 1980s. When Coffin was Senior minister in New York City's Riverside Church between the late 1970s and late 1980s, his church was one of the city's only two sanctuary sites for Salvadoran and Guatemalan civil war refugees.<sup>280</sup> Other examples include the former Maryknoll missionaries Tom Melville and Marjorie Bradford (see chapter 2.2.2). They supported Daniel Berrigan's

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<sup>276</sup> Donald E. Anderson to Ambassador Graham A. Martin, 23 April 1974, in: ACVAFS, 655, Box 29, Folder: CWS-Correspondence 1973-77.

<sup>277</sup> Political scientist Lowell Livezey argues that the Vietnam War and Watergate were the prime factors for the religious sector's growing commitment to human rights and the establishment of such organizations as CALC, WOLA, or the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy. Livezey, "US Religious Organizations," 57. In the case of the churches' concern for human rights in Latin America, the war debate was only the greater context in which this development took place. As seen above, those that initiated new projects regarding issues such as poverty and human rights in Latin America drew their interest from former experiences, their work with, or ties to the religious Latin American community.

<sup>278</sup> Van Gosse argues that the radical movements of the 1960s were not an end in itself but continued to live on during the years thereafter. He views the movements as a conglomerate of an overall struggle across the field of race, class, gender, and empire beginning in the late 1950s and living on in the 1990s. He understands the movements as being linked together even though goals and strategies and motives were at times very dissimilar. For him, there was no climax of the peace and justice movement in 1969 or 1971 because the solidarity movements with South and Central America in the following two decades represent a direct, less noisy, continuation of the activism. See Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*, 8f.

<sup>279</sup> CALC is a grassroots organization with a national leadership in New York City and a network of local chapters throughout the country. As an organization opposed to "U.S. imperialism," it concentrates its activities on situations "where it believes US policy and power are contributing to human rights violations or where US institutions could provide a remedy to the violations." Livezey, "US Religious Organizations," 58.

<sup>280</sup> Personal interview with Cora Weiss, New York City, 17 March 1999.

movement opposing the Vietnam War and U.S. policy by destroying draft files and through other forms of civil disobedience.<sup>281</sup> Individual ministers with ties to pacifist organizations in the United States were part of the emerging Latin America and human rights movement of the 1970s. The history of the earliest religious advocacy groups for Latin America demonstrates the interrelationship.

Those who envisioned faster and more profound transformation founded Christian-based advocacy and grassroots groups with a special Latin America focus. The Ecumenical Program for Inter-American Communication and Action (EPICA) and the Latin America (Coordinating) Committee were among these early types of "advocacy groups," which sought to strengthen ecumenical, inter-group communication in the United States and with like-minded groups and people in Latin America.<sup>282</sup> The participants were mainly from the U.S. religious community. Some worked for the bigger church agencies like NCC and USCC and others for smaller NGOs with a religious or pacifist vision such as the Fellowship for Reconciliation (FOR).<sup>283</sup> For example, the Reverends Phil Wheaton and Bill Wipfler, who had both been Episcopalian missionaries in the Dominican Republic in the 1950s and early 1960s, created EPICA in 1968. After returning to the United States in 1967, Wipfler started to work in the NCC's Latin America Department, becoming director in 1971.<sup>284</sup> In its early years, EPICA engaged in advocacy work such as public campaigning for the elimination of the U.S. blockade against Castro's Cuba while maintaining ties with the traditional institutions.<sup>285</sup> Through the new

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<sup>281</sup> In May 1968, the group of nine Catholic anti-war protesters invaded Local Board 33 in Catonsville, Maryland, and seized 600 individual Selective Service Files, which they burned with home-made napalm. *The New York Times*, 8 October 1968; Endy, "War," 1426.

<sup>282</sup> Van Gosse identifies EPICA and North American Congress for Latin America (NACLA) as the earliest organizational roots of the Central America movement of the 1980s. Gosse, "The North American Front," 16. EPICA and its director, Phil Wheaton, were directly involved in the Sanctuary movement of the 1980s. See chapter five.

<sup>283</sup> The pacifist religious group FOR emerged during World War I. During the 1920s, its membership in the United States rose to 12,000 indicating the new pacifist movement within U.S. liberal Protestantism. The U.S. chapter, founded in 1915, is still one of the largest pacifist interfaith organizations in the United States. In 1998, the organization had 36,000 members and 80 local chapters throughout the United States. See *Encyclopedia of Association*, 1786.

<sup>284</sup> Personal interview with William A. Wipfler, West Seneca, NY, 28 March 1999 and Wipfler's C.V., by courtesy of William Wipfler.

<sup>285</sup> A planned advertisement against the blockade reveals the group's position. It emphasized the suffering of the Cuban and U.S. people and their deepened resentment toward each other. While the ad pointed out advances of the Cuban revolution in the field of education, agriculture, and industry, it stressed that the blockade "has become an important ideological tool used by Fidel as proof of Yankee revenge and domination..." Letter by Phil Wheaton, EPICA, to the Latin America Coordinating Committee, Philadelphia Action Groups, 4 April 1969, and attached draft of an advertisement, in: PHS, NCC, LAD, Record Group 8, Series IV, Box 54, Folder 15. On EPICA-NCC relationship, see Wheaton's correspondence with NCC personnel in 1969, in: PHS, NCC, LAD, Record Group 8, Series IV, Box 55, Folder 1.

groups, the interested parties and individuals were free to operate and forge programs without the consent of the church or institutions they represented. Still, the public arms of the Catholic or mainline Protestant churches partly funded these new religious-based advocacy groups because people responsible for the Latin America policy of their agencies were supporting and co-launching such new programs.<sup>286</sup> Both, new groups and the traditional agencies, began to inform each other about their activities and strategies, sought advice, and kept each other up-to-date about trips to Latin America, or significant events and developments there.

The link to a church, partner or umbrella organization in Latin America further facilitated interaction and the formation of new groups. Reverend Wipfler from the NCC and Thomas Quigley from the USCC started to coordinate their work after a CICOP meeting in 1969, realizing the similarity of the constant information they were receiving from missionary and church reports in Brazil.<sup>287</sup> The same year, Wipfler was asked by Brazilian students to publish an account of the human rights situation in Brazil. Wipfler, Quigley, Brady Tyson, and others formed the American Committee for Information in Brazil, distributing a dossier entitled "Terror in Brazil" to their constituencies.<sup>288</sup> They found support from others, as a wide range of people from the religious community endorsed the brochure. Among the supporters were representatives of such left-leaning Catholic NGOs as the Catholic Peace Fellowship and Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker, as well as spokespeople of church groups such as Bishop Lloyd Wicke of the United Methodist Church, Irene Jones, the Assistant General Secretary of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, John Bennett, the President of the Union Theological Seminary, Margaret Shannon, Executive Director of Church Women United, and Sterling Brown, President of the National Conference on Christians and Jews. Later members of the Carter Administration such as Andrew Young and Brady Tyson joined them as well.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>286</sup> Memorandum and Notes by Brady Tyson, NCC, and Glenn Smiley, 4 April 1968, in: PHS, NCC, Record Group 8, LAD, Series IV, Box 54, Folder 15.

<sup>287</sup> Formicola, *The Catholic Church*, 111. In addition, they distributed articles to *Commonweal*, *Christianity and Crisis* and the *Washington Post* to reach a wider audience.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, 113. Further advocacy groups on behalf of human rights, the Latin American Strategy Committee (LASC) and CARRIBE (Committee Against Repression in Brazil) were built in order to collect data and find channels of exchange.

<sup>289</sup> Young was Executive Vice-President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference at the time; Tyson was Professor at American University. Regarding their position in the Carter administration, see chapter three.

The activities of the former civil rights activist Reverend Glenn Smiley,<sup>290</sup> Associate General Secretary of the U.S. branch of the religious-pacifist International Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), are another good example of the transnational faith-based interaction. During the 1940s and 1950s, small chapters of FOR had been set up in Latin America with the help of the Methodist church's network and U.S. missionaries such as Earl Smith and Richard Chartier.<sup>291</sup> In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Smiley worked with U.S. Catholics connected to FOR in Latin America who had organized a first gathering of Latin American non-violent activists among church people in 1966. In 1971, Smiley co-organized the second of these meetings where yet another NGO was born, the "Service for Liberating Action in Latin America - Nonviolent Organization." In 1974, at the third Latin American meeting for non-violent activism, this NGO became the *Servicio para Paz y Justicia* (SERPAJ), an organization advocating human rights and the principle of non-violence in the Americas.<sup>292</sup> Influenced by a Christian-based union from the Dominican Republic, Smiley also founded the Latin America Committee (LAC) in 1968, also an educational program of non-violent action. In the United States, Smiley's newly formed LAC met and gathered many of the same individuals that were cooperating in other newly emerging faith-based groups and programs.<sup>293</sup>

An early stage of a religious, primarily Christian-ecumenical, non-traditional, and informal network in the hemisphere, existing alongside the older institutions, emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The political scientist Pagnucco identifies the history of the religious groups focusing on social justice and human rights in Latin America as "the development of transnational support networks in the United States and Western Europe."<sup>294</sup> His colleagues Keck and Sikkink have identified the same "human rights advocacy network."<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> According to historian Harvard Sitkoff, Reverend Smiley's influence on Martin Luther King, Jr., "furthered King's Gandhian approach." Smiley had gone to Montgomery in February 1956 to assist the Montgomery Improvement Association. Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality, 1854-1992* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 54. See also Martin Luther King, Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986 [1958]), 163.

<sup>291</sup> Ron Pagnucco, "The Transnational Strategies of the Service for Peace and Justice in Latin America," in Smith, *Transnational Social Movements*, 125.

<sup>292</sup> The Argentine Adolfo Perez Esquivel, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate of 1980, was the first director of SERPAJ in 1974.

<sup>293</sup> At the Roman Catholics' CICOP meeting in 1969, LAB and CICOP Louis Colonnese, Dana Green from the NCC, Tom Quigley from the USCC, Hispanic rights' activist Cesar Chavez, and former Methodist missionary Brady Tyson among others joined in.

<sup>294</sup> Pagnucco, "The Transnational Strategies," 126.

<sup>295</sup> Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, 89.

The regional and inter-American religious gatherings and conferences served as new channels of information and interaction, enhancing and linking existing programs while forging new groups. The network signified another, more autonomous form of the traditional church institutions' search for institutional reforms and the restructuring and reformulating of their international programs by the end of the 1960s. The traditional church institutions were influenced in the process. By the mid-1970s, they became increasingly involved in a national public campaign for human rights in countries such as Brazil and Chile, where violations of a person's right to life and integrity as well as other civil and political human rights violations had emerged rapidly.<sup>296</sup>

## 2.4 Conclusion

Until the mid-20th century faith-based private activities in Latin America were basically driven by a missionary impulse that combined religious and U.S. values.<sup>297</sup> The 1960s and early 1970s unleashed various new Latin America projects of U.S. Catholic and mainline Protestants' church institutions. In fact, we can talk about the dawning of an "ongoing, institutionalized attempt" by the Catholic and mainline Protestant denominations and interest groups "to affect

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<sup>296</sup> Formicola, *The Catholic Church*, 113ff.

<sup>297</sup> Curti writes: "A sense of religious duty dominated those who supported missionaries in their role as almoners and as pioneers of technical aid. Religion has also been a major factor in the support given to many nonmissionary agencies with overseas programs. ...At other times, especially in the twentieth century, Americans may have been coaxed between abundance in their own sense of guilt over the contrast between abundance in their own country and the misery and poverty in other areas. In still other cases, political sympathy has fed the springs of international philanthropy. At various times, one group or another - Greek patriots, Cuban rebels, Spanish loyalties - have been identified by sympathetic groups in the United States with American democracy." Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, x.

United States policy toward Latin America.<sup>298</sup> This interest of U.S. religious groups in U.S. foreign policy toward Latin America was new and unusual.<sup>299</sup>

After 1960, more U.S. citizens volunteered for mission, lay work and, after the introduction of the Peace Corps, engaged in U.S. development projects in Latin America.<sup>300</sup> The main aspects of the missions of the 1960s comprised the spread of the "gospel message" and the economic and political "democratization" of the whole continent according to a U.S. model.<sup>301</sup> In fact, they continued to contribute to earlier policies of interference and "practices of cultural insensitivity".<sup>302</sup> The overall theme of the U.S. missionary programs in the 1960s of "aiding Latin America" correlates with the "hegemonic tradition of U.S. policy" toward Latin America.<sup>303</sup> The underlying scheme of this tradition is the prevailing attitude "to act against 'chronic wrongdoing' in Latin America."<sup>304</sup> The Latin America missions of the churches during this time feature an attitude that combined religious and civic motives of serving "God and country."

While the Cold War consensus dominated the programs of the early 1960s, the U.S. Christian community's policy toward Latin America had diversified by the end of the 1960s. A broad range of traditional missionary and development, educational (for the U.S. and Latin American public), small-scale development and community work with emphasis on grassroots participation, and advocacy work were carried out by the early 1970s. Citizens working abroad during the 1960s and early 1970s were participants in development projects, missionaries, charity workers, radical revolutionaries, educators, foreign intruders, as well as promoters and advocates for closer Latin American - U.S. cooperation and a revised Latin America policy at home. They worked with the existing institutions, worked outside of them, or at the grassroots level. The religious missionaries of the 1960s, just like the Peace Corps

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<sup>298</sup> Schoultz, *Human Rights*, 48.

<sup>299</sup> Before 1960, religious groups' lobbying attempts were focusing on humanitarian issues but most efforts were sporadic. Milbrath's essay is one of the earlier studies on interest groups' involvement in and its significance for U.S. foreign policy. Milbrath defines the influence of these actors as "slight." Lester Milbrath, "Interest Groups and Foreign Policy," in James Rosenau (ed.), *Domestic Sources of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 231-251.

<sup>300</sup> There are a number of recent studies on the Peace Corps volunteers, their motivation, history and experience. Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman's *All You Need is Love* is a historical study that demonstrates U.S. citizens' sense of "American mission" in the 1960s. She argues that U.S. imperialism and U.S. idealism generally exist parallel in U.S. history and that citizens' idealism is greatest when imperial tendencies are most visible.

<sup>301</sup> Brett, "The Attempts," 776.

<sup>302</sup> McGlone, *Sharing Faith*, 113.

<sup>303</sup> Schoultz, *Beneath*, 363.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, 363f.

volunteers, demonstrate the "role of individual citizens of the United States as active participants in the process of foreign relations" and the "many forms" it can take.<sup>305</sup>

The educational, or paternalistic, behavior that is present in religious missionary philosophy is two-fold. While it can be paternalistic, it can also function as a mobilizing force for civic participation, depending on the context. When applied by foreign missionaries or lay workers abroad, it can develop more easily into paternalistic behavior, while this category usually does not apply in domestic contexts. It has been noted that the "religious" or "missionary" drive toward "spiritual guidance" or "social awareness" can help to generate "social capital"<sup>306</sup> or civic engagement. It can forge a community feeling with the idea of working toward a common goal. The analysis that "religion" can make an important contribution to civil society can be traced back to the French philosopher Tocqueville. Grounding his analysis on Tocqueville's argument, political scientist Corwin Smidt outlines the potential civic outreach of religious institutions and activism. He maintains that "religious beliefs can help to shape associational life by affecting the ways in which people view human nature, the extent to which members in one religious community may relate to those located outside their community and the priorities given to political life."<sup>307</sup>

Scholars exploring civil society in Latin America and in the United States have stressed the significance of religion in creating social activity. These studies usually refer to domestic contexts.<sup>308</sup> Scholars of U.S. religion, such as Robert Wuthnow or Allen Hertzke, argue that, in general, religious citizens are the more responsible citizens.<sup>309</sup> They are more likely to engage in community activities, give charity, or vote. Because of their involvement in church meetings and committees, they are also more familiar with civic skills such as leading meetings, serving as officers, establishing networks, and writing news stories.<sup>310</sup> Differentiating between various Christian denominations, Wuthnow finds distinct levels of civic engagement as well as different concepts regarding the understanding of community. Wuthnow writes that "[w]hat has not been sufficiently emphasized is the fact that mainline Protestant churches encourage civic engagement

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<sup>305</sup> Robert B. Marks Ridinger, "Peace Corps," in *Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Relations*, Vol. 3 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 364.

<sup>306</sup> Term according to Robert Putnam who discusses the concept of social capital in "Bowling Alone," 65-78.

<sup>307</sup> Smidt, "Religion," 177.

<sup>308</sup> For the Latin American context, see Levine, *Popular Voices*. For the U.S. context, see Wuthnow, "Mobilizing Civic Engagement."

<sup>309</sup> Wuthnow, "Mobilizing Civic Engagement;" Fowler and Hertzke, *Religion and Politics*, 32.

<sup>310</sup> Wuthnow, "Mobilizing Civic Engagement," 346.

in the wider community whereas evangelical churches apparently do not.<sup>311</sup> The next chapters will discuss how Catholics, mainline Protestants, and peace churches reached out beyond their own communities. They felt obliged to enter the foreign policy realm because people suffered on account of politics.<sup>312</sup> By doing so, they exemplified a politically engaged religion that followed, in the words of theologian Paul Tillich, their *obligatum religiosum*. In other words, they took the public implications of their moral principles seriously.<sup>313</sup>

On the whole, U.S. religions in the later part of the 1960s underwent a period of increasing politicization.<sup>314</sup> This development is very striking in the interest of the major Catholic and mainline Protestant groups in Latin America. Experiences and exchanges that had been made in the 1960s with "Latin America" and new channels of communication coincided with the Vietnam debate that had consumed the U.S. society in the late 1960s. The experiences of the civil rights and Vietnam anti-war movements that triggered a wave of participation within U.S. religious circles enhanced the shifting attitudes among Catholics and mainline Protestants and contributed to a growing diversity of opinions regarding the "right" kind of policy toward Latin America.

Individuals within the religious community began to question U.S. foreign policy and also their own missionary, development, and educational programs toward other peoples. The religious community was far from having an unanimous opinion about its "foreign policy positions." In the case of Latin America, the majority of missionaries and development workers embraced moderate or conservative foreign policy positions, but a growing faction reconsidered traditional attitudes. Experts of the big church institutions and various returning missionaries initiated a loose network that attempted to embark on revised and new grounds in the religious community's Latin America policy. The official Catholic and mainline Protestant positions on questions of human rights and development shifted and/or became more forthright.

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<sup>311</sup> Evangelical churches would rather generate "social capital" within their own communities. See Wuthnow, "Mobilizing Civic Engagement," 346. Similarly, Martin Marty interprets the U.S. Protestant history as a "two-party system." One group consists of liberals committed to the social gospel and the impact of religion on the public sphere, whereas the second group is the theologically conservative Protestants that concentrate on personal evangelism and faith. Martin Marty, *Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America* (New York: Dial Press, 1970).

<sup>312</sup> For a general discussion of this matter, see Gary Dorrien, *Soul in Society: The Making and Renewal of Social Christianity* (Minneapolis, MI: Fortress Press, 1995), 16.

<sup>313</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>314</sup> Reichley, *Religion*, 243f.; Wuthnow, *The Restructuring*, 172ff. Regarding the growth of religious interest groups in Washington, D.C., since the 1960s see Hertzke, *Representing God in Washington*; Fowler and Hertzke, *Religion and Politics*; Hofrenning, *In Washington But Not Of It*.

Thus, the churches became significant moral forces in the formulation of U.S. foreign policy. How and why sporadic attempts emphasizing social justice, human rights, and democracy in the policy toward Latin America developed into an "inter-American" web of faith-based human rights activism that generated new facets of civic foreign policy in the United States is the subject of the next chapter.