

The Space Age Work of the Church

By: Ernst Lehninger

The title of this paper is apropos to the age in which we find ourselves groveling. The title was suggested by your essayist as one that would be broad enough to cover the topics he wishes to present. I grant that it may be broader in scope than some of you had in mind. However, I believe that we need something this broad because of the ambivalence with which we have, through the years, been treating the specifics of the topics of Child Welfare, Chaplaincy, Mental Retardation, Blindness, Deafness, Campus Ministries, Lutheran Collegians and the like. The above should alert us to the diversity of projects to which our Synod hopes to have the newly formed Special Ministries Board address itself. At best we can only scratch the surface in most of these areas. We have been working as you know, with our young men and women in service and at our colleges. We have also begun to work with the pastor at our campuses.

We hope in this paper to dwell on many of the areas that our Synod, you, have asked us to be concerned with. This action goes back to 1963 when President Naumann, in his report to the convention, called attention to the needs for a specialized ministry department. "We must take the initiative," he reported, "and make it possible for our pastors called into this work (of specialized ministries) to consult with one another, to study their type of ministry to establish definite policies and set forth clearly the Scriptural principles underlying this work."

As you all know since that time some attention has been given to this problem. In the 1965 Convention at Watertown this report was given:

"Mindful of the Work of our Lord, 'To whom much is given, from him shall much be required,' we humbly submit these recommendations in the hope that the greatest possible assistance be given to the individual Christian, the congregation local groups and Districts (to whom these calls for 'specialized ministration' are most often addressed) with a minimum of Synodical involvement and expense.
Recommendations:

1. That the existing Lutheran Spiritual Welfare Commission be made an arm of the General Board for Home Missions and given a new assignment.
 1. That the new assignment to this arm be the Specialized Ministries!
 - A. Military; B. Student; C. Institutional; D. Inner Core; E. Blind;
 - F. Such other ministries which may fall into this field of work.
 2. That the Personnel of this Board be drawn from the enlarged District Fission Boards wherever possible.
 3. That the present full-time office of the Lutheran Spiritual Welfare Commission be assigned to a full-time director of Special Ministries. That the Executive Secretary for Home Missions be the coordinator of the whole Home Mission Program.
 5. That the Committee on Evangelism and the Committee on Soul Conservation be given a parent within this general framework.
2. That the Fifth Department of Synod—Benevolences and Pension—be given the assignment of assistance in those fields which are more 'welfare' in nature.
 1. Since a 'Bethesda'-like institution would be more Synodical than local in scope of work, that such an institution be made the responsibility of this department.
 2. Since homes for aged serve primarily local areas, that these be made the responsibility of local groups (congregations, federations, etc.) with this department of Synod lending advisory assistance, and gathering records and information.
 3. Since child placement is restricted by State regulations, that this work be made the concern of local groups (congregations, federations, Districts, etc.) with this department of Synod lending advisory assistance, and gathering records and information.

4. That the above and present related work be carried out with a minimum of readjustment within the department of Benevolences and Pensions.
5. That the ministry of Word and Sacrament to such above, and existing State, County and Private Institutions, be made the responsibility of the District Mission Boards.

This report was given to a floor committee. This committee then came in with the following recommendation:

“Whereas, The Synod is making a study of its mission administration and the relationship; between its various boards and committees, and
Whereas, Floor Committee Number 15 is bringing recommendations regarding this matter; therefore be it
Resolved, That action on the Report of the Committee on Specialized Ministries be deferred pending the outcome of the studies bring made.’

The same committee also came with a separate resolution regarding care of Mentally Retarded. I read this into the record at this time, Mr. Chairman, even though I will not specifically speak on it now, b’’: I do this for the sake of continuity of the actions taken.

Resolution No. 4

“Whereas, The Synod in Convention 1963 (Proceedings, 1963: p. 221 Resolution No. 5, Resolved (b). called for an orderly dissolution of work being jointly carried on with members of *the* Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and
Whereas, A properly-appointed committee urges the Synod at this time to establish its own program of care for the mentally retarded and set up a Board of Directors for such a program, and
Whereas, Our Synod has been requested by Bethesda’s Board of Directors to declare whether we will support an enlargement of Bethesda’s facilities or begin a new program of our own, and
Whereas, An offer has been made by the Wisconsin Lutheran Convalescent Corporation of Milwaukee to initiate this program through its recently acquired and proposed facilities, therefore be it
Resolved, (a) That a Board of Directors be initially appointed by the Conference of Presidents to plan, establish, and administer such a program, and be it further
Resolved, (b) That said Board be responsible to the Praesidium of the Synod, and be it further
Resolved, (c) That the Synod encourage this Board of Directors to work toward establishing a home or institution for the full-time care of the Mentally Retarded in need of such care, and be it finally
Resolved, (d) That this Board of Directors in consultation with the Praesidium and the Board of Trustees evaluate the offer of the Wisconsin Lutheran Convalescent Corporation of Milwaukee that a “Bethesda-type” institution be established in connection with its newly acquired facilities as a stepping-stone to a full program of care for the Mentally Retarded..”

The whole matter was subsequently placed into the hands of the Administration Survey Commission. They suggested that it was time, high time, I might add, to invest the studies with substance.

The Commission recommended the creation of a department of specialized ministries within the Division of Home Missions. The department should be under the direct supervision of an elected five-man board composed of two pastors, two laymen and one teacher, with the President of Synod empowered to make appointments for the first biennium and thereafter the Nominating Committee instructed to nominate candidates as the appointments expire.

The responsibilities of the Lutheran Spiritual Welfare Commission and the Board for the Mentally Retarded would be transferred to this new-board for specialized ministries. The new board shall also be responsible for counsel and service to the institutional ministry, social welfare ministries and other specialized ministries as they may from time to time be authorized by the Synod.

The Commission also recommends that the board for specialized ministries be authorized to call a full-time director. Since the General Board for Home Missions will be the primary budgeting agency, the director should report on his day to day operation to the General Board's executive director and chairman of the specialized ministries Board shall be advisory member of the General Board for Home Missions. (R & P7 p. 119) (1969)

The action of the last Synod Convention, held in New Ulm in August 1969, brought about the birth of the Committee plus instructions to the Committee on Constitutional Matters to initiate the necessary constitutional changes.

This should be sufficient background regarding the whys and wherefores for the establishment of the Special Ministries Board. Before getting into the various facets of the work let me give you the names of the members and their specific assignments. Your essayist was appointed Chairman of the Board by the President in consultation with his Vice Presidents and the Conference of Presidents. The other appointments are: Pastor Arnold Schroeder, Professor Alfons Woldt, Doctor Darold A. Treffert, Mr. James Albrecht and Pastor Norman Berg as an advisory member from the Home Mission Board. Pastor Arnold Schroeder has been appointed to head the Military Services Committee. Professor Alfons Woldt and Doctor Darold Treffert have been assigned to the Special Education Services Committee. Mr. James Albrecht is to head the Student Services Committee and Pastor Norman Berg is temporarily heading our Mission for the Blind Committee.

Let us now first of all consider with one another the work of our Military Services Committee. I would like to introduce this with these remarks.

Shortly before his life was taken in Rome, the Apostle Paul wrote a letter to the Philippians- containing a challenging philosophy of life. In substance he said, "This one thing I do; forgetting the hardships of the past, and looking to the future, I shall strive to follow the ideals of Christianity." Philippians 3; 13,14 In these words there are three thoughts which provide a significant living philosophy. They may determine whether life is to be a futile experience or a great adventure.

In the first place, when one says, "This one thing I do," it indicates that he has made an important decision. A positive and unmistakable choice is evident. The ability to make up one's mind—to suit straddling—to decide—is one of the essentials in a vital philosophy of life. It means choosing between the wise or the foolish, the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, the virtues and the vulgarities of life.

Every hour we are confronted by decision. Of course we will make the right decision when they are easy. But will we have the courage to make decisions that meet the tests of our religious faith when these decisions are difficult and even unpopular?

Many times decisions are not easy. Albert Schweitzer, living in a hut in Africa for his ideals; Abraham Lincoln carrying on his shoulders the terrible burden of a nation engaged in civil war; our own President for his stand on Cambodia and student unrest—these men could and do testify to the price men pay for courageous decisions. Small minds, lazy minds, weak minds always take the easiest way—always make the easiest decisions.

Life is the sum total of all the decisions one makes. Nothing more—nothing less. There is no such thing as indecision. Life is made up one way or the other. When you fail to decide, you are deciding. Life gets made up. Life gets lived one way or the other.

You will remember the Prodigal Son, who said to his father, "Give me now the share of goods that I am to inherit later." The father gave it to him and the young man left for a far country where he squandered his entire estate. He was destitute. He was hungry. He had no friends. He might have said bitterly, "My father was too indulgent. He was mature, I was a boy. He should have known better and insisted to guide me better. He should not have been so foolish as to give me my estate." But this young man had learned a hard lesson, and he made a great decision. He said, "I will go to my father and say to him, 'Father, I was wrong, and am no more worthy to be called your son; make me one of your hired servants.'" Of course his father accepted him, and with that courageous decision, the young man found the life he had lost.

Secondly when a person says, "This one thing I do," he states in unmistakable terms that his life is to have a singleness of purpose. One thing is to have first place in his life.

Many of us would like to do great in our field, but are we really willing by the hardest work, the longest hours and the greatest sacrifice to achieve that ambition? We dilly dally, unwilling to pay the price demanded of pursuing a single great objective. Walt Whitman said, "I am simmering, simmering, simmering,; Emerson brought me to a boil." Many of us in life succeed in our goals to where we almost reach the boiling point. Nearly, you see, almost, but not quite.

It takes struggle in life to make strength. It takes fight for principles to make fortitude. It takes crises to drive courage. Suffering to make sympathy. Pain to make patience. It takes singleness of purpose to place the highest ideals of one's religious faith first in life.

Finally, then, this is the decision, and this is the single objective in life; To take whatever occupation or profession one may be in—doctor, pastor, businessman, farmer, dentist, banker, attorney, teacher, housewife—and to strive each day to live in accordance with the high ideals of one's religious faith. Consider how this living philosophy may be practically applied.

If you demand good government in your city, your state and your country, you will discharge your full responsibilities as a good citizen.

If you demand that crime be in the cell and not in the saddle in your community, you will support honest law enforcement without any personal privileges or exceptions for yourself.

If you demand special advantages, government bonuses, subsidies and privileges for your business, your church, your city or your state, you will remember that the price of such selfishness is the deterioration of a nation's character. If you demand freedom of worship for yourself, your church and your Synod, you will respect the rights of other creeds.

If you demand that the government give you complete economic security, you will not forget that a nation's strength comes when each person first does his best by work and self-denial to stand on his own feet. If you profess Christianity, you will in the spirit of humility earnestly endeavor to make your own life an inspiring example of its ideals in your home, church, business and community.

You may remember the play, "Green Pastures". In that play Noah said to the Lord, "I ain't very much, but I'm all I've got."

Well, you're all you've got! I'm all I've got! What are we doing with what we've got? Are we striving to attain those ideals of our faith which lead to a great and good life?

Someone may say that this living philosophy is the counsel of perfection. And so it is. As the days and weeks and years of life go by, the person who lives it will be able to say with joy, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Now, my dear brethren, we hope and pray that our stand on the whole chaplaincy matter accomplishes the high ideals for which we stand. We believe that in a great measure we have succeeded. Not in the eyes of the world, but certainly in the Savior's eyes. Consider with me what, by the grace of God, we have succeeded in doing. Through our testimony and firm stand on our conviction the government has opened doors to us that we were told would be closed unless we went into a governmental supported chaplaincy program. Our present chaplain in Vietnam has free and easy access to any battle field where he needs to visit one of our men.. Let us consider this phase of it historically.

For a number of years our Synod has been contacting its members in the armed services in this country through contact pastors stationed near military installations, and those in Southeast Asia through a civilian chaplain, called, commissioned, assigned, salaried and maintained entirely, by our Synod with the full consent and approval of the Armed Forces Chaplains Board of the Department of Defense in Washington, D. C. In 1965 our Synod received the approval of this Board for placing civilian chaplains and contact pastors near military installations throughout the world to serve the members of our Synod in the armed forces wherever they may be stationed.

This arrangement has proved very successful. Our civilian chaplains succeed in contacting personally many more of our own members in this manner than would be possible through military chaplains attached to a military unit. Such chaplains have often complained to our civilian chaplains that they have few or no members of their own church body in the unit they serve. Their freedom of movement is limited, and they must serve all

protestants in the unit they are assigned to. In addition to this they are permitted to hold their own denominational services, but these are rarely attended by as many as five men of their own faith.

Contrast with this the contents of the monthly reports sent by our civilian chaplain, Pastor Waldemar R. Hover, who has been in Vietnam since November 1969, to our Synod's Department of Specialized Ministries. Pastor Hover is happy to report that he is receiving splendid cooperation from the military chaplains he has met and from the commanding officers of the military bases he visits. He has complete freedom of movement throughout Southeast Asia. Through special arrangements with the military authorities he has access to military air transport. The chaplain's cross pinned to his cap identifies him, and his presence in the Far East is becoming known to military chaplains throughout the area, many of whom have proved very helpful to him in locating individual men in the large military installations.

Soon after his arrival in the Far East, he applied for and received invitational travel orders which "authorize and invite him to travel via U.S. Military Aircraft from Bangkok, Thailand, to all U.S. Forces Posts, Camps and Stations in Thailand during, January 1, 1970 through July 31, 1970, to provide services, rites and ministrations to U.S. Military Personnel at locations to be visited, through the courtesy of the Assistant Adjutant General in charge in the area." A call went out to all military chaplains in the area that Pastor Hover would visit their bases and would like to contact all members of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod known to be stationed on these bases, a list of which was forwarded to the respective chaplains. Through these military chaplains these individuals were notified of his coming, and as a result he succeeded in contacting personally 38 of the 44 men, women and children known to be stationed in Thailand that belong to our Synod, plus one contacted by telephone who is stationed in Laos. This would have been utterly impossible for a military chaplain to accomplish because of the regulations under which he must work.

I now quote from one of his letters: "After my first flight the crew (experienced in II World War B52 flying) [editor's note: the author is here mistaken. The B-52 was a jet aircraft which did not exist during WWII.] invited me to fly up front from where I got a wonderful view of Thailand and observations of clouds and military craft on the radarscope. The first men who looked at my travel orders reminded me that I was flying on space available. But when I got to the space available counter a Sgt. reminded me that I was number one on his list. In a few minutes he came to me and said I was already confirmed. It was indeed a tour taken in space available with the risk that no space would be available, but I found that my Lord had given His ambassador the highest priority and that's better than protocol. It seemed in every instance the Lord had one appointed to take care of me. I was up front by invitation of the crew when Captains and Colonels sat in the back seats. Many questions were asked and many conversations begun because of the cross on my cap. There was much interest in our Civilian Chaplaincy work.

At Ubon I stayed overnight at a downtown hotel and here most of all did I feel the fiery darts of the wicked one. Not only did the taxi drivers and the bellhops suggest they get me a Mamma San for the night, but the Thai girls themselves, as unashamed as asking for candy, offered to sleep with me. They understood not the sign of the cross and only after presenting my calling card picturing Christ crucified did they understand the strange American who slept alone. In Thailand and in Vietnam officers and enlisted men shack up with native women for 200 Ps a month for their instant sex. I see now more clearly how the righteous soul of Lot was vexed from day to day in Sodom and Gomorrah. (Read 2 Peter 2, 6-15) In this connection, speaking to chaplains who have counseled with GI's and their wives on both sides of the Pacific, there is a new unforgiveable sin that accompanies a new incurable disease. The GI's wife says: 'My husband is only human, I can forgive him his infidelity while he was in the Service, but when I discovered that he infected me with his incurable VD, I cannot forgive him.' All the character training lectures and color pictures of victims of VD and all the warning is not cure for the worst disease: 'Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin.' How grateful we should be that our men and women have not left God's Word at home, but continue in His Word and with that Word are able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

The confessions I have heard from our men, and thank God more often the testimonies of our men who have overcome all temptation, and have been able to bring their testimony to those who have no hope, should keep us all humble. The Christian education of our young men and their testimony is paying rich dividends. Our

Northwestern graduates or rather dropouts as well as those who failed in Latin and perhaps history, are over here as Apostles of Jesus Christ. The words of their professors are going out into all the world, as they speak of the hope that is in them. Many are going back to our school to finish the course. We should do everything in our power to get these men into our pulpits and classrooms. They have already more theology than some chaplains here will ever get in their lifetime. Let us not despise these gifts of God because they have not all gifts of God and give them the academic advice to return to their farms because they were weak in Latin. In this respect the Heads of our Institutions could help our Manpower Commission by writing a letter of encouragement to their former pupils.

I have on various occasions talked with men of other denominations who sing the highest praise of our Lutheran Educational system. Certainly here in this war-torn country a man's education is put to a test. Yes, our men too may stumble and fall, but when we see those Americans who wallow in the mud and are not ashamed of the dirt, then we realize that education without the fear of God is good for nothing. The fear of God is still the beginning of wisdom. May God bless our schools and lead our members to sacrifice to establish many more so that our Lord will say of our Synod as He said to Mary: 'She has chosen the good part that shall never be taken away from her.'

Speaking of rest and relaxation and to the Chaplains and men who enjoy them with their wives, this is a wonderful institution for the preservation of marriages. I can give the Commission some theological, biological and humanitarian reasons for including a rest and relaxation in the tour of every Civilian Chaplain.

I am constantly answering questions about our Civilian Chaplaincy ministry and getting into many a conversation with the GI generally with whom I travel and with whom I wait for the next plane or "chopper." They talk to me freely and frankly. They tell me what's on their mind. How they use dope and speak of their sex life. Perhaps the average GI or let's say the typical GI gets his sexual satisfaction wherever and with whomsoever and whenever he can. One GI estimated that 75% of the men have tried dope, at least "grass." He thought that 40% use it regularly. At Phu Bai a GI was murdered the night before I slept there and at Vung Tau a GI was murdered with a baseball bat by his own roommate while under the influence of marijuana. And there are those who wish to legalize the selling of it! Every base tells the story of the menace of dope and especially around the fire bases and men in the combat zone.

Two GI's at the Hotel there questioned me about what I thought of the new morality. The one belittled his buddies who go to town every week end and take any bar girl that they may find. He was more respectable and went to a Hotel on occasions. The other GI said most of his buddies were married as was he. His wife is an Apache Indian and she lives in Saint Louis. Their marriage does prevent them from making trips to Saigon for sex. They invited him to do likewise, but he refused.

Quite a few have questioned me about the new morality. I tell them it is the old immorality. Men can try to scrap the Ten Commandments, but it is evident that men's conscience is still based on the Ten Commandments, the Holy will of God for all people for all times.

I gave these two men at the Hotel there each a copy of the LSWC devotion for Ascension and Pentecost. They asked many questions about Pastor Schewe's wonderful sermon and the power of the Holy Ghost active in the Holy Scriptures and the Sacrament in the hearts and lives of men. A strange but wonderful place to have a Bible class and to witness to the hope that is in us. The one promised to attend my next Vesper Service. I told him in the meanwhile to read John, chapter 4, to see how Jesus dealt with the sinful Samaritan woman and led her to drink of the living waters that spring up unto eternal life.

Sunday evening we had four men from the American Embassy attend our Service. Our American Ambassador Bunker attends the Episcopal Service in the French Church in the morning. This Vesper Service is the only Lutheran Service conducted in Vietnam, except on the military bases where some Lutheran Services are held. We have a mission in Vietnam today, not to mention the future opportunity to preach the Gospel to the children sired by the American GI. Thus far from Chaplain Hover's letters.

In Vietnam as of March 1 he had already contacted 93 of our men in the many various military installations in that country personally. He holds regular services for all who can reach him every Sunday, usually in Saigon. He has visited the hospital ship, Repose as well as several base hospitals to minister to the

wounded. He has done personal counseling and brought Word and Sacrament to more members of our Synod in this short time than a military chaplain could possibly have done. Here too he can travel by military air transport whenever space is available on a flight and has received splendid cooperation from the military personnel and officers. By mail he is attempting to contact every member of our Synod whose name and address are forwarded to him by our Military Service Committee of the Special Ministries Board. Our men in the armed services sincerely appreciate the efforts of their Synod to serve them with the means of grace under these difficult circumstances.

Mr. Chairman I bring you this rather lengthy report of our work on foreign soil because I personally feel that we should be informed on what is happening, and secondly that we thank God on bended knee that we are privileged to support such a program with our prayers and gifts which He so bountifully showers upon us. Naturally we are doing work with some of the Military bases stationed here in America. I mention that soldier of the cross, Pastor Luther Voss, who is in the seventies, and actively engaged in making many contacts with our men in the Eastern sector of our beloved land.

All of us need to pray fervently that God will continue to open the hearts of men who will sacrifice comfort and luxuries to serve our servicemen stationed in various parts of the globe. We need to find a replacement for Pastor Hoyer. If you have names of men to suggest you may make them to me or send them to our Military Services Committee in care of Pastor A. Schroeder.

I would now like to move on to another phase of the program to be undertaken by your Special Ministries Board. We call this the work of our Special Education Services Committee. The work assigned to us especially is that of Mental Retardation.

What does mentally retarded mean? First, it does not mean mentally ill. A broken arm can be set so that it will mend; an inflamed appendix can be removed; a mentally ill person can be restored to mental health. Mental retardation is altogether different. As a midget will remain stunted physically, a mentally retarded person will remain stunted mentally.

Mental retardation is one of the most complex and serious problems facing society today. Its greatest impact is felt in the home of the retarded individual and his family, where there is a lifetime of striving to attain as normal a life as possible. The problem reaches into every sector of community life—into churches; schools; public, private and voluntary agencies; and professional groups, all of which have to deal with the problem as it directly affects them. And it poses economic and administrative problems for many branches of local and state government.

New developments in the medical and behavioral sciences and education have demonstrated that the retarded are capable of physical, intellectual and social achievements. With training and education, the majority of them can become contributors to, rather than dependents of, society. Most important, the retarded are citizens who are entitled to the same inalienable rights afforded to all citizens.

Whereas the universal declaration of human rights, adopted by the United Nations, proclaims that all of the human family, without distinction of any kind, have equal and inalienable rights of human dignity and freedom;

Whereas the declaration of the rights of the child, adopted by the United Nations, proclaims the rights of the physically, mentally or socially handicapped child to special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition.

NOW THEREFORE

The International League of Societies for the Mentally Handicapped expresses the general and special rights of the mentally retarded as follows:

Article 1 - The mentally retarded person has the same basic rights as other citizens of the same country and same age.

Article 2 - The mentally retarded person has a right to proper medical care and physical restoration and to such education, training, habilitation and guidance as will enable him to develop his ability and

potential to the fullest possible extent, no matter how severe his degree of disability. No mentally handicapped person should be deprived of such services by reason of the costs involved.

Article 3 - The mentally retarded person has a right to economic security and to a decent standard of living. He has a right to productive work or to other meaningful occupation.

Article 4 - The mentally retarded person has a right to live with his own family or with foster parents; to participate in all aspects of community life, and to be provided with appropriate leisure time activities. If care in an institution becomes necessary, it should be in surrounding and under circumstances as close to normal living as possible.

Article 5 - The mentally retarded person has a right to a qualified guardian when this is required to protect his personal well being and interest. No person rendering direct services to the mentally retarded should also serve as his guardian.

Article 6 - The mentally retarded person has a right to protection from exploitation, abuse and degrading treatment. If accused, he has a right to a fair trial with full recognition given to his degree of responsibility.

Article 7 - Some mentally retarded persons may be unable, due to the severity of their handicap, to exercise for themselves all of their rights in a meaningful way. For others, modification of some or all of these rights is appropriate. The procedure used for modification or denial of rights must contain proper legal safeguards against every form of abuse, must be based on an evaluation of the social capability of the mentally retarded person by qualified experts and must be subject to periodic reviews and to the right of appeal to higher authorities.

Above all – The mentally retarded person has the right to respect.

We would naturally add to this that each child has a right to Christian care and Christian love.

As citizens, the retarded must be provided the necessary services that will, insofar as possible, enable them to live a satisfying and meaningful life, whether that be in their own home, in their community or in an institution. The retarded are entitled to the same services provided to all citizens of a state. In addition, they are entitled to specialized services designed to meet their particular needs. Both general and specialized services should be provided as close as possible to their home communities so that they can continue living with their families while receiving services.

This large order calls for a philosophy of shared responsibility by all levels of government, private and voluntary agencies, and the general public.

Communities must accept responsibility for developing, securing and supporting services for their retarded residents. The citizens of any state have a responsibility for making known their support or recommendations. As citizens and as families and friends of the retarded, they have the additional responsibility of making future needs of the retarded known so that action can be taken. Even more basic, it is the responsibility of the general public to remain informed about mental retardation and the programs in this field.

It is essential that all these resources unite and coordinate efforts to meet the wide variety of problems presented by different age groups and differential degrees of retardation. As with all individuals, the needs of the retarded change with their age. Programs have to deal with associated problems and needs from birth through infancy, childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Within each age group, provisions must be made for dealing with each degree of retardation and its associated physical and behavioral problems. The mildly retarded seldom have major associated physical handicaps and with special education and training can learn to function independently in society. The moderately retarded can learn to care for themselves and, with training, can contribute to their own support in a sheltered environment. The profoundly and severely retarded are totally dependent; they usually have major physical impairments and need constant care to survive.

Statistically it is said that there are six million Americans who are afflicted with mental retardation. One out of every 33 births will turn out to be retarded. That is about 2,100 children every week at today's birth rate. This is as many people as populate the cities of Chicago and Los Angeles.

Causes for mental retardation? Biomedical research has been able to identify 25 of every 100 cases of mental retardation as associated with faulty genetic constitution or resulting from virus infections, accidents and diseases before birth or in early infancy. The body processes bringing about mental retardation in the other 75% of cases are still unknown, although nutritional, intellectual and cultural-environmental factors are often clearly at work.

Since our Lord says: "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me," we want to learn how our Synod and local churches can best lead these "special children" to their Savior.

What have we as a Synod done? We, I am certain, have been most diligent in our prayers for these children. If need be we have sent them to Bethesda or some State Institution. This certainly is not altogether negative. Our children at Bethesda have and do receive a wonderful Christian training. However, is this consistent with our Synod's decision of 1961 and 1963? At this time our Synod called for an orderly dissolution of work being carried on with members of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. I would like to refresh your memory by reading Resolution 4, found on page 198 of the 1965 "Proceedings".

"WHEREAS, The Synod in Convention 1963 (Proceedings, 1963: p. 221, Resolution No. 5, Resolved b), called for an orderly dissolution of work being jointly carried on with members of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, and
WHEREAS, A properly-appointed committee urges the Synod at this time to establish its own program of care for the mentally retarded and set up a Board of Directors for such a program, and
WHEREAS, Our Synod has been requested by Bethesda's Board of Directors to declare whether we will support an enlargement of Bethesda's facilities or begin a new program of our own, and
WHEREAS, An offer has been made by the Wisconsin Lutheran Convalescent Corporation of Milwaukee to initiate this program through its recently acquired and proposed facilities; therefore be it
RESOLVED, (a) That a Board of Directors be initially appointed by the Conference of Presidents to plan, establish and administer such a program and be it further
RESOLVED, (b) That said Board be responsible to the Praesidium of the Synod, and be it further
RESOLVED, (c) That the Synod encourage this Board of Directors to work toward establishing a home or institution for the full-time care of the mentally retarded in need of such care, and be it finally
RESOLVED, (d) That this Board of Directors in consultation with the Praesidium and the Board of Trustees evaluate the offer of the Wisconsin Lutheran Convalescent Corporation of Milwaukee that a "Bethesda-type" institution be established in connection with its newly acquired facilities as a stepping stone to a full program of care for the mentally retarded."

The Conference of Presidents did appoint a Board. This Board functioned under great handicaps due to the change of its personnel. They did, however, make some beginnings. You will recall that they sent out a questionnaire to all pastors. The number returning the questionnaire was anything but encouraging. There might be legitimate reasons, such as (1) not understanding the questions (I add parenthetically that this could very well have been the case since I had grave misgivings regarding the judgment asked of our professional people in this field in the first four questions), (2) normal lackadaisical attitude toward questionnaires, (3) doesn't apply to our congregation, plus many other and sundry reasons.

One of the real positive suggestions of the original Board has not been carried out. This suggestion was simply that our Teachers' Training College in New Ulm and our Seminary invite competent speakers to address the student bodies offering practical suggestions as to effective ways of reaching the minds and hearts of mentally retarded with the Gospel. This is the least that could be done at these two schools.

The one school, not listed before, that did something about it, is the school that we have now closed, namely, Wisconsin Lutheran College. These students were involved in active experience with mentally retarded Sunday Schools, plus doing work with the emotionally disturbed child. It is high time that we insist on our young people going into the teaching and preaching professions to get some practical knowledge and actual

experience. She simply can't take the attitude that one is equipped to handle these specialized matters because of having received a diploma. I feel very strongly about this as you can gather. I personally have been privileged to work with these problems in a professional manner since 1956. Also, Mr. Chairman, we speak of the dangers of using materials published by other Synodical bodies and individuals. Who would say that there aren't dangers involved. What have we done in this area? The answer can be given in one word: Nothing. I feel that we must inaugurate immediately actions with our verbiage. In order to be consistent we should be feverishly working on getting out as a minimum, Sunday School materials. As of this date our Board of Education hasn't assigned anyone specifically to prepare materials. True, some of our regular Sunday School materials can be adjusted. However, it still takes a skilled teacher to make effective use of it.

In our Milwaukee area our Wisconsin Synod Federation of Churches has a Committee which meets with the teachers of our thirteen Sunday Schools established to instruct the Mentally Retarded. We also will be conducting for the 4th year in a row a Day Care Center for 10 weeks during the summer. This class meets once a week from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Presently we are studying the feasibility of conducting such a class the year around. We also know that many other congregations throughout Synod are conducting Sunday School classes for these special children, but where they are and what they are doing, no one in our Synod knows. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could get all of this pulled together so that we could really know what is the best road to travel? Our Committee, I am certain, will be coming out with a questionnaire trying to establish some basic facts. We hope that we will have a much better percentage of response than the one in 1965. Incidentally the response to that one was only 47%. Initially I am inclined to say that this is shameful, but after studying the questionnaire, I realize that the majority of us were not, and are not, qualified to answer the first three or four questions. I wish to conduct a pilot project with you men on a proposed questionnaire which I have brought along.

Our Committee, understandably, is not prepared at this juncture to make any definite recommendations. I have some personal thoughts on the matter which I will share with you. I do not believe that we should go into a brick and mortar type institution. I am very much inclined to believe that it would be better to set up Day Care Centers in our various Districts. Some will say that sounds reasonable for the State of Wisconsin, but what about those Districts where we are scattered around? This is a good question and one that I am not prepared to answer at this time, but one that our Board will have to grapple with when the time comes for action. I don't feel that we should overlook the use of our State Institutions entirely. Many of these programs are excellent except that they fail to have the one big plus that we must insist upon, namely the good news of the forgiveness of sins. Now this isn't such a tremendous hurdle to conquer either. My recommendation would be to call men to serve congregations in the area of these institutions who have the special educational requirements to deal with these children of God. Is there so much wrong with having clinically trained pastors in our Synod? A special field needs special education with specially trained men. I am not going to get into the field of the doctrine of the Call and how the Holy Spirit guides and directs these matters. Our Synod has spoken on this. Our Synod also has acted on this matter in many different ways when calling non for special fields of labor. My suggestion to have such men strategically placed is merely a suggestion that should, I believe, be considered.

In closing this portion of the Mentally Retarded Report I would, however, like to add an additional thought. Our Synod had appointed a special committee to study what we should do about the drive Bethesda is conducting for its new "His Too" building program. This committee reported at the last Synodical Council:

1. That the WELS consider it to be its moral obligation to support its patients at Bethesda Lutheran Home to the full extent of the cost for care and service, until such time as the Synod is able to provide its own type of care for them;
2. That the Department of Specialized Ministries be urged to step up its efforts to propose a program whereby the WELS will be able to care for its own;
3. That meanwhile a "restricted fund" for support of WELS patients at Bethesda Lutheran Home be established by the Synod, to which the congregations and members of the Synod shall be asked to make their remittances;

4. That a program for gathering offerings to this restricted fund from the Synod's congregations and members be initiated;
5. That the cost of care of WELS patients at Bethesda Lutheran Home – beyond what is paid by the families and relatives of patients to Bethesda directly be remitted from this fund to Bethesda annually by the treasurer of the Synod;
6. That, if contributions to this fund from the congregations and members of the Synod are not sufficient, the WELS meet the balance of the obligation for support of WELS patients at Bethesda from the regular Synod budget;
7. That Bethesda Lutheran Home be requested to prepare and submit to the Synod's Fiscal Office, at the close of every fiscal year, a complete financial accounting of the cost of care for WELS patients at Bethesda, this accounting to include the actual, annual per-patient cost of care and a record of monies Bethesda Lutheran Home has received from relatives and friends of WELS patients for their support, as well as gifts Bethesda may have received directly from the congregations and members of the WELS;
8. That the Synod's Board for Information and Stewardship be asked to prepare publicity materials (brochures, envelopes, etc) for the use of our congregations in enlisting their whole hearted support for this new program, if adopted; and finally,
9. That Bethesda Lutheran Home be requested to discontinue its publicity program in our congregations and among our members.”

This Committee holds the belief that this recommended program for support of WELS patients at Bethesda would not confuse or militate against the Synod's confessional position nor imply any unionistic involvement in the operation of Bethesda Lutheran Home as such, while at the same time it would testify of the Synod's willingness and readiness to live the Truth by meeting an obligation of love towards those of its own membership who are receiving care at Bethesda.

Furthermore, this Committee feels that its suggested program would provide for an orderly accounting of all gifts and contributions coming from our Synodical membership for support of WELS patients at Bethesda, and it would enable the Synod's Fiscal Office to report annually to the pastors and congregations of the Synod the amount of such support received and expended.

I feel very strongly that we as a Synod should pay our fair share. The Synodical Council action was to refer the whole matter back to the Conference of Presidents. This might be well and good, but I reiterate I feel we should let our Conference of Presidents know that we ought to pay our way. If confessionally we can't work together we shouldn't expect nor desire to use their funds for those who rightfully fall under our Christian responsibility. We hope that Christian justice will prevail.

Another area of the work to be done under the direction of the Special Ministries Board is that of the Student Services Committee.

In a land where a liberal spirit prevails over against Holy Scriptures in regard to doctrine and life, in an age when the ecumenical movement has taken over much of the student work of the churches and when disorder and rebellion characterize the life in numerous colleges, our gracious Lord has opened many avenues for service to and by the students of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

We have pleaded with our pastors to send us the names of their young men and women attending one or the other of our colleges. In fact, we have asked, in order that we lose track of no one, that the name be sent to the Campus pastor and to our office. It is a bit difficult to understand that we should be getting names as late as April for students who left in September. These are years when we should be concerned about their spiritual welfare, Many are leaving, as it were, the roost for the first time. It does make a difference whether they are in the fold or left to roam willy-nilly. With the onset of “feeling your oats” completely and the possibility of being swallowed up by a certain minority that operates on all campuses, we need to exert every ounce of fiber within us to lead, guide and direct on the right way. To simply give the advice my sainted father gave me, namely

choose your friends well but wisely, evidently isn't enough for today's youth. I wonder! Someone may say that there are many more temptations flouted in the face of our young people. Perhaps different variations but the one basic fact remains—all stem from our flesh. The sinful nature within each of us, if given free reign and not held in check by God's Holy Word will tip to the left entirely. We need desperately to have our Campus pastors exert every ounce of strength they have in leading our men and women on the way Christ would have us travel. As an aside, I would like to read to you a letter written by three men who permitted reason to conquer their frame of mind. The 3 men in question were taking issue with an editorial written by President Toppe of Northwestern College entitled, "God and Soldiering."

"We reject the concept that Christians "have no business" protesting the war in Vietnam. Further we feel we must raise our voices against this perversion of the Bible to support the reactionary policies of our church.

We believe not only is it a Christian's right but his duty to object to the unconstitutional, illegal, immoral war in Vietnam. It is unconstitutional because Congress never exercised its right to declare war. It is illegal because the UN charter, the Geneva Accords and innumerable international agreements (i.e. biological weapons) have been flagrantly ignored. Most important, it is immoral because we come from a foreign soil and massacre, murder and maim human beings for the sake of a tyrannical government supported only by our country's massive military might. No church on earth can condone such an obscene carnage without prostituting its basic beliefs.

In endorsing 'Soldiering' in general and this indefensible War in particular, the Wisconsin Synod Lutheran Church reaches the lowest possible level of theology, perverting the Bible to rationalize and explain its policies. The Bible instead of being the guiding light for us becomes a whipping boy to support murderous actions of our government.

We believe the kind of thought which precedes writings like these stems from the close-minded attitude of the authoritarian mentality. To justify government acts, dedicated followers will, with blind faith, abort all precepts of decency. This was true of Nazi Germany. Is this so called Christian call to 'draw your sword and fight in God's name' symptomatic of a more encompassing abortion of principle?

One of us has fought in Vietnam and rejects now his involvement in this crime against humanity. The others of us have not and will not regardless of the consequences, go in to the armed forces while the War in Vietnam is allowed to continue. We are presently members of the Lutheran Church Wisconsin Synod, but reject its immoral stand on war. Here we stand, we can do no other."

That's the letter. Need we comment any further except to say that these young men forget that the church in such matters is guided by the Bible in Romans 13. I might for our own edification, quote from Volume 3 of "What Luther Says", page 129, article 4599.

What is war but the punishment of wrong and evil? War is waged to maintain peace and obedience. Although slaying and robbing do not seem to be a work of love, and a simpleton, therefore, thinks it is not the Christian thing to do, yet in truth even this is a work of love. When a disease is so great and bad that a good physician must cut off a hand, foot, ear, or eye, or must let it decay, he removes the member in order to save the body. Considering only the member which he cuts off, he seems to be a cruel and merciless man. But considering the body which he intends to save by this removal, we find that in reality he is a fine and true man and performs a work which, so far as it goes, is genuinely Christian. In the same way I (Luther) look at the office of a soldier, how he punishes the wicked, slays the unjust and creates so much misery, he seems to be engaged in a very unchristian work and one entirely contrary to Christian love. But when I consider how he protects the good, and keeps and preserves wife and child, house and home, property and honor and peace, then it appears how precious and godly this work is and I realize that he, too, cuts off a leg or a hand that the whole body may not perish. For if the sword were not on guard to preserve peace, everything in the world would have to go to ruin because of bitter

dissension. Therefore such a war is only a tittle, brief lack of peace that prevents an everlasting and immeasurable lack of peace, a small misfortune that prevents a great misfortune.

Our young people are saying: "I don't want easy answers, but I want the right answers." It is for this reason that in addition to the ministrations which the local congregations and pastors can provide that the district mission boards have appointed 150 campus pastors who are serving or are ready to serve our young people. This is a tremendous task for these men when we consider that over 8,000 of our young people of our Synod are attending state colleges and universities in more than 250 schools in 30 states of our land. It is encouraging to note that we have 10 campus houses or student centers besides churches, houses and quarters on and off campus.

We hope to continue and increase our Campus Pastor's Workshops. We held one last April 21 in Milwaukee with over 50 pastors in attendance. This increase of workshops and materials designed especially for work with our young people awaits the day when we will have full-time men working in the area of Specialized Ministries. The day has come, we feel, to place the many functions of our specialized ministries into a more stable framework. We hope that the Synod Convention of 1971 will see the necessity to provide efficient and capable full-time hands to build the walls. With all of our talk about the dangers of growing bureaucracy, and we admit that such dangers are real, we can scarcely expect to work efficiently in the Kingdom in our day relying on the good will of busy men whose prime responsibilities are rooted elsewhere. If we are convinced that we have a job to do, let's do it in the best possible way. We sincerely hope that your district, together with the other eight will see the wisdom of establishing a fulltime office for this field of endeavor and then in 1971 officially establish a separate office.

Mr. President, there is still much more that could be said on various other areas that we are and must be concerned about, such as the Lutheran Collegians, the whole field of Social Welfare, Home for the Aged and the like. There is still much work to be done in this Space Age in which we are living. But whether we live in the Space Age or any other age, the work of the Church must continue. He must show man his sin and the way to salvation from his sins.

Several months ago I read an interesting item on the "Space Program and the Bible." In closing, I would like to share with you some of the interesting facts which I read.

Did you know that the space program is busy proving that what has been called "myth" in the Bible is true? Mr. Harold Hill, President of Curtis Engine Company in Baltimore, Md., and a consultant in the space program, relates the following development:

"I think one of the most amazing things that God has done for us today happened recently to our astronauts and space scientists at Green Belt, Md. They were checking the position of the sun, moon and planets out in space where they would be 100 years and 1000 years from now. We have to know this so we don't send a satellite up and have it bump into something later on in its orbit. We have to lay out the orbit in terms of the life of the satellite, and where the planets will be so the whole thing will not bog down! They ran the computer measurement back and forth over the centuries and it came to a halt. The computer stopped and put up a red signal, which meant that there was something wrong either with the information fed into it or with the results as compared to the standards. They called in the service department to check it out and they said, 'It's perfect.' The IBM head of operations said, 'What's wrong?' 'Well, we have found there is a day missing in space in elapsed time.' They scratched their heads and tore their hair. There was no answer.

One religious fellow on the team said, 'You know, one time I was in Sunday School and they talked about the sun standing still.' They didn't believe him, but they did not have any other answer so they said, 'Show us.' So he got a Bible and went back to the book of Joshua where they found a pretty ridiculous statement for anybody who has "common sense". There they found the Lord saying to Joshua, 'Fear them not; I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.'

(Joshua 10:8) Joshua was concerned because he was surrounded by the enemy and if darkness fell they would overpower them. So Joshua asked the Lord to make the sun stand still! That's right! 'The sun stood still and the men said, 'There is the missing day!' Well, they checked the computers going back into the time it was written and found it was close but not close enough! The elapsed time that was missing back in Joshua's day was 23 hours and 20 minutes—not a whole day. They read the Bible and there it said, 'about, (approximately) a day.'

These little words in the Bible are important. But they were still in trouble because if you cannot account for 40 minutes you'll be in trouble 1000 years from now. Forty minutes had to be found because it can be multiplied many times over in orbits. Well, this religious fellow also remembered somewhere in the Bible it said the sun went *backwards*. The space men told him he was out of his mind. But they got out the Book, and read these words in 2 Kings 20, 'Hezekiah, on his death-bed, was visited by the prophet Isaiah, who told him that he was not going to die. Hezekiah did not believe him and asked for a sign as proof. Isaiah said, 'Do you want the sun to go ahead ten degrees?' Hezekiah said, 'It is nothing for the sun to go ahead ten degrees, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.' Isaiah spoke to the Lord and the Lord brought the shadow ten degrees backwards! Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes!

Twenty-three hours and 20 minutes in Joshua, plus 40 minutes in 2 Kings make the missing 24 hours the space travelers had to log in the logbook as being the missing day in the universe! Isn't that amazing? Our God is rubbing their noses in His Truth. That's right!"

Yes Lord, I believe, help thou my belief.

Thank you for inviting me to be with you and share some of my thoughts about the "Space Age Work of the Church".