



THE SOUL OF CHILE
Raúl Cardinal Silva Henríquez

and

THE IMPERATIVE OF SOLIDARITY
Monsignor Cristián Precht Banados

Working Paper #70 – May 1986

The content of this Kellogg Working Paper is not typical. Rather than presenting a piece of research or scholarship, this document offers public addresses by two leaders of the Catholic Church in Chile. **Raúl Cardinal Silva** is archbishop emeritus of the Archdiocese of Santiago, having served in that office both during and after the last democratically elected government in Chile. **Monsignor Cristián Precht** is currently vicar of the Archdiocese of Santiago, having served previously as head of the Vicariate for Solidarity, the human rights arm of the Archdiocese.

These addresses were delivered in March, 1986 at St. George's College in Santiago, Chile. They were offered as part of a seminar on the Bases of Democracy for invited Chilean university student leaders, co-sponsored by the Kellogg Institute, CIEPLAN and St. George's College. The addresses have been translated by Timothy Scully, C.S.C., of the Political Science Department of the University of California at Berkeley and are also available in Spanish from CIEPLAN in Santiago.



The Soul of Chile

I have been asked to participate in this seminar organized by CIEPLAN to speak about the "Soul of Chile." That is, a Pastor has been asked to sketch that which in his judgement constitutes the essence of the Chilean nation--that which characterizes Chile as a nation. It is evident that there are many elements which could be included as relevant. Leaving much aside, I have wanted to retrieve in my reflections values which, in my judgement, constitute the richest treasure of our nationality.

This work does not represent a pastoral letter of a bishop to his congregation, nor does it represent a breaking of silence to enter fully into the nation's hazardous political and social struggle.

Here, I aspire to something far more modest. I offer the personal reflections of an emeritus Archbishop of Santiago about themes which are well known and which were frequently treated when he was the pastor responsible for the Diocese.

The Church and la Patria: two magnificent entities, two souls which can subsist and yield fruit only in the measure that they are faithful, each one to her tradition.

The Church, founded upon the Word, the Pain, and the Spirit of Christ, knows that She can teach nothing but that which Christ entrusted to Her; nor can She give life, except by embracing His Cross; nor can She govern, except by serving as He served. Her expertise is humanity, and She always lives immersed in Her times, always

renewed and young, precisely because She never ceases to look back at Her origins to re-encounter, in Her originating event, the perennial foundations of Her faith, the motives of Her hope, and the reasons for Her love.

La Patria also constantly looks back at her historic journey through her founding documents. No Patria--Chile least of all--is born out of a void or by accident. La Patria is constituted at a given moment in time in which a group of persons physically inhabit a specific territory, recognize as their own a common patrimony of blood and culture, and enter into a communion of works and destiny. La Patria is not given birth through a geographic accident or an act of war. No, la Patria is formally and decisively constituted by a profoundly human communion, based upon values which insist that selfishness be put aside, values which deserve lives of sacrifice; based upon a solidarity of one mission and destiny which involve all and distinguish them from all other peoples on Earth. The territory only represents the physical space of this communion in the spirit, and military feats only a sometimes necessary means for preserving this patrimony of blood and culture.

Thus, a Patria cannot set out indifferent to the path it chooses. La Patria is not invented but rather rediscovered and revitalized, always faithful to her original patrimony. When a Nation which is Patria searches for a path outside of her tradition, her apostasy leads her inexorably towards anarchy and dissolution. La Patria is neither invented nor transplanted, because she is fundamentally soul, collective soul, soul of the people, consensus and communion of

spirits which cannot be violated or twisted, nor created by the will of the few.

From this flows, with imperative clarity, our most urgent task: rediscover the consensus; more than this, consolidate the communion in those spiritual values which created la Patria at her inception. History shows--and will continue to show--that only in faithfulness does hope abound.

Peoples who become estranged from their tradition and allow thoughtless imitation, willful violence, unpardonable negligence or apathy to captivate their soul, lose, in addition to their spiritual features, their moral consistency and, ultimately, their ideological, economic and political independence.

Chile has her soul. Natural disasters, potent foreign ambitions, external wars and long nights of internal dissension, even hatreds, poverty, and suffering--the worst suffering of all--from not loving brother or sister, have not been able to snatch the soul of Chile. And at this hour our hope is again stirred. Chile wants to continue to be Chile. Chile longs to begin again, to be as she once was, and be so always, to be at the head of the Reign of great values; small and perhaps limited in her economic potential, great and overflowing in her wealth of the spirit. A formidable impetus of rediscovery and reconciliation surges forth and seeks to attract us; a reencounter with our original self, a reconciliation with our work and destiny, and with all those who walk along with us in spirit and blood. This imperative affirmation of our own identity will only be found in faithfulness to our tradition.

At this point we cannot avoid the question: What does this tradition consist of? What are the values which constitute our Patria from the beginning, the body and soul of our great national communion?

Here the experts have the floor. It is they who must penetrate, with careful love, beyond the exterior apparel of the dates, battles, and legal documents, to those constants of the spirit which characterize our being and development as a nation: to rediscover the collective soul which brings us together as a people and grants us the right to be.

But the Pastor also has something to say about this; because in every historical process a divine plan progressively unfolds and is revealed. The Risen Christ, the same yesterday, today, and always, is present in every step of our history, in every trait of our soul. To read our history with eyes of faith is to enter into a vital prayer, where we contemplate the face and know the will of the Lord of History.

From this perspective--the only one which we claim as our own --and supported in the more certain testimony of those experts, we wish to propose some of the traits which--it seems to us--give form in a decisive way to our spiritual physiognomy, revealing, through it, God's design for us.

The first and most evident is the primacy of liberty above all forms of oppression.

There is something in our soul, something in our collective unconscious, which presses us to reject, as alien to the social body, all that requires subjugating the person or the nation to forces foreign

to them. Let us express it positively: an essential component of the soul of Chile, an appreciation and a habit of individual and national freedom, as the supreme good--superior to life itself.

This is not the time nor the place for proving in detail a thesis such as this, so charged with meaning and responsibilities. Let us content ourselves with reaffirming our most basic roots in the Spanish tradition. We are children of a mother whose millenarian pride was to nurture, in every creature, a soul of regal stature, an inviolable sovereignty. As a community, each Spanish city or region guarded its rights with intransigence from every threat of despotism or vassalage. Frequent was the sacrifice of life for liberty, preferring death rather than to bow before the oppressor.

And this Spanish pride, perhaps an unconscious expression of a soul which had been created by God and paid for with the blood of His Son, met in Chile another rebellion, as stubborn and obstinate as its own, which obliged it to continue a bloody struggle for three centuries and, in the end, to sing its admiration and respect for so worthy an adversary. And, in the inevitable collision of both rebellions something marvelous occurred: the stronger of the two sought to preserve the rights of the other who, finally, had been conquered.

The Spanish conqueror was never able, nor did he try, to silence the cry of a conscience which, in the din of battle, prompted him to see, in the fierce and half-savage indian, a sovereign and inviolable human soul like his own which fought, as he himself, for his Patria and his freedom. And steeped in the respect for the regal dignity of man, whatever his cultural or religious condition, a legal statute was

elaborated which, despite inevitable transgressions, always denounced as abuses and sought to preserve the natives of this land from every wicked and degrading slavery. This is because he who authentically loves freedom does not tolerate his own being built on the subjection of others.

Thus the soul of Chile began to gain form. The epic of the American emancipation and the first defenses of national sovereignty against imperialist pretensions definitively strengthened her in this characteristic that would become a dominant and distinctive trait in her spiritual countenance. In Chile there is no place or interest for any historic project, for any social model which might mean squandering personal or national liberty. The social body would be incapable of assimilating it, as alien to its essence.

By this assertion we do not want to lull ourselves into what could be a legitimate pride, but rather we wish to reawaken a serious responsibility: that all Chileans must be educated and educated in freedom. Training for the free exercise of each one's gifts--to think, to discern, to judge and act, to participate in the elaboration and the execution of social decisions--is the primordial task of all Chileans.

Ultimately, all legal rules and institutional structures, all economic and social policies, and any educational system must tend to ensure, for every Chilean, the exercise of his freedom and a respect for his own person as an inviolable being. Any other purpose--for example, instrumentalization of social institutions to put them at the exclusive service of the few--is condemned from the start to failure as

alien and hostile to the national soul. A people cannot apostatize its soul without suffering the loss.

This same lesson which our history teaches us introduces what seems to be the second definitive trait of our spiritual being. Similar to the first, yet it provides a needed complement. We believe we define it well as the primacy of legality above all forms of anarchy and arbitrariness.

The impulse to freedom is not the exclusive patrimony of Chile, nor of the Latin American community. Many are the peoples, on this and other continents, who rose up at the cry of "liberty", to cast off the yokes, real or imaginary, which bound them.

But the liberating dynamic was not always directed into the same channels. It was not infrequent, for example, and perhaps it was more the rule than the exception, that the spirit of emancipation was tainted by fratricidal hatred leading to outbreaks of bloody revenge. Nor was it uncommon for a change in the system to be such more in name than in fact, exchanging monarchic absolutisms for despotic caudillismos, with nothing but the uncontrollable lust for power to guide them. It would be Simon Bolivar himself who would confess, in 1830, with a tone of discouraged sincerity, "I blush saying it: independence is the only good we have achieved, at the expense of all the others".

Nonetheless, fifteen years before, his vision cast toward the extreme of the continent, illumined by an intuition which could be said to have been prophetic, Bolivar's words were "if any republic lasts for a long time in Latin America, I am inclined to think it will be Chile.

Never has the spirit of liberty been extinguished in that country; the vices of Europe and Asia will arrive late or not at all to corrupt the customs of that far off part of the universe. Her territory is limited; she will always be outside the infectious contact with the rest of humanity; she will not change her laws, practices or uses; she will preserve uniformity in political and religious opinions; in a word, Chile can be free".

And during the same years in which, while America was torn apart and exhausted, Bolivar gave up command, in Chile, a new conception of the state began to take form based upon impersonal authority and objective rights, which would safe guard individual and social liberties, inscribing them in a strict juridical order.

This conception--which would later be called Portaliana--does not take form out of the void. It is rooted deeply in the fertile terrain of mother Spain and ancient Rome, the latter, with its cult of law as ensuring liberty; the former, with its image of authority as God's representative, servant and guarantor of the unity of the people.

Portales it was who translated this concept effectively into a style and tradition of government; yet it lived in the soul of the people, and it was this consensus which made it possible. Chile did not want to be, nor could she be an inarticulate, invertebrate body. Even her name, Chile (marrow), seemed to call out for cohesion, consistency, substance, order... And so it was that this society was formed, with sacrifices which at times were heroic, hunger for liberty, yes, but awareness that such liberty is only possible with order, with a common recognition of objective norms which are sacred because they

guarantee freedom. This freedom depends upon respect for authority which imposes itself, not on the basis of coercion, but by radiating its interior nobility and by rendering outstanding witness to civic altruism. Manuel Montt would express this in its classic form: "The rule of freedom and order in government. Not liberty without order, nor order without liberty, rather the right harmony of these two saving principles of the Republic".

Thus, Chile only came to know the excesses of anarchy by exception and transitorily. The national temperament, a stranger to extremes, moderate, realistic, could not and will not adopt modes of behavior based upon arbitrary arrogance or caprice, or upon personal ambition. Our soul is nourished from a tradition in which the government defines itself as servant, never master; limited by the bounds of the law, under which government itself is the first to be subjected, and confronted by the judgement of the people which demands respect and a hearing, and reserves the permanent right to judge the moral quality of the administration.

It is an ethic of government, a philosophy of power as service, which challenged the theoretical and practical conceptions operative then in most of the civilized world. It is this conception which permitted a still-adolescent nation to win quickly an advanced place in the political and juridical maturity of the continent and overseas, laying the bases of a social peace which would last for more than half a century.

Over the course of time the guiding principle will play different rhythms. At times the primacy of order will be emphasized to temper

a poorly understood liberty. Other times, freedom will rule the day to make more flexible a rule of law which has become too rigid.

Emphasizing, never excluding: order to defend freedom; freedom to humanize order: both in complete and indissoluble harmony, under the command of an authority which places itself at the service and under the judgement of its people, of its collective will to be.

Again, this is not a privilege to be proud of, but rather an inheritance to reconquer, a responsibility to assume.

All Chileans should educate themselves and be educated to respect Rights. Rights are the link between liberty and order. Only law can regulate, among ourselves, the exercise of our basic liberties; only objective norms, valid always and for everyone, can sanction and protect elemental rights, of thought and opinion, of personal freedom, of work and subsistence, of education and culture, of association and participation. We should educate ourselves to respect powers and instances wherein rights are created, are interpreted and applied, and the persons who incarnate them. But, above all, we have to educate ourselves to respect the people for whom, and by whom, the law exists. More and more, to approach the heart of the people, to feel its pulse, and to hear its voice, and to satisfy its legitimate claims for justice, and guarantee its access to goods which God made for all, and take seriously its greatness as a community of free men, called to participate responsibly in the decisions which make up its economic, professional and social world. The Portalian conception of government is unthinkable without an authority which, more than just its witness of personal detachment,

remains permanently in contact with its people who moderate in it, with their good sense and refined instinct of what is good, prudent and possible, the passions and tensions inseparably attached to the exercise of power.

A corollary of this respect for the law is the possibility of dissent, an aspect of Chilean social life which makes its history unique. The excesses of intolerance and sectarian fanaticism constitute, among ourselves, an exception and a blemish which, apart from making us more humble, should prod us to safeguard with more zeal the gift which is threatened. Persecution and political vengeance are alien elements in our national soul.

If we are asked for the deepest reasons for this and other traits of our national soul, the response can be found in what seems to be the third integrating principle of our collective being: the primacy of faith over all forms of idolatry.

From the beginning, the soul of Chile has been nourished by the nutrient of faith. Not just any faith, but specifically the biblical faith which forms the great Judeo-Christian tradition. That faith has, as its primordial role, the vocation to denounce the deceit of all idols.

Many are the idols some have attempted to impose on us in the course of our history. Even the first settlers were tempted by the allure of gold, power, and glory without measure--idols who exact a stiff sacrifice in terms of human lives. But faith did not succumb to this temptation. While in other parts of the world, natives were considered beings without souls and degraded to the level of useful commercial objects, among ourselves the faith projected its

transforming light, viewing the indigenous, whatever their training or docility during the conquest, in their reality as children of God, gifted with a transcendent origin and destiny, redeemed by the blood of Christ, called to the dignity of a life of grace and to the mystery of communion with God and their brothers and sisters, the white Europeans. Our precursors lived in a cultural and ethical space in which wealth, prestige, and lordship could not be bought at the price of subjugating a human being. Those who did so, or attempted to do so, felt the entire juridical weight of the Spanish crown and the theological wisdom of the Latinamerican priesthood fall upon them. Delinquents before the King, sinners before God: this is how those were considered who, denying their faith, put their faith in idols and dreamt of building their greatness on the destruction of their brothers and sisters. Many times it was their own consciences, trained in the eternal principles of the dignity of man as creatures of God, which tortured them and destroyed their ambitions for greatness, forcing them to make restitution, during life or in death, of all that was unjustly snatched from the indigenous populations in the wars of conquest.

This was the Christian faith which left its mark on the epic of the colonization, tempering its economic, political, or strategic objectives with the missionary spirit of the Gospel and the rescue, for God, of the indigenous soul.

In this, and in the following period, the Church concentrated its vigilance and its love on defending the weakest. It accompanied the conquerors, aiding them in their legitimate aspirations and offering help to educate and civilize; but its chief interest was the vanquished.

Faith was offered to one and another to snatch them away from their idols.

Those idols would continue to weave their way through the march of our history, always with the pretense of the Absolute. At times they took the form of political ideologies; other times, of economic systems or new moral codes. And there stood faith to tell us that only one is Absolute: God, and humankind as child of God.

Thus it was that, fifteen years ago, in the name of that same faith we pledged to keep, we bishops of Chile had to warn in the face of the possibility that an actively atheistic socialism would be set up in Chile, that "each time humankind has attempted to build paradise on earth, forgetting God or disfiguring His real image, it has ended fatally by becoming the slave of some new and false gods, such as technology, the economy or the State". And we asserted that "socialism of marxist inspiration has, until now, led to replacing God with the divinized State, an omnipotent state which recognizes no other moral law but that of political expedience, and whose despotic power has stepped on and bloodied the history of many peoples, violating the fundamental rights of the person, society, and the churches" ("Evangelio, Política, y Socialismos", No. 36).

In the name of that faith, whose trust has been confided to us, we cried out with urgency and anguish so that neither that nor any other ideology become an idol before which all had to be sacrificed, including the soul of the people. For this reason, with the same urgency and anguish with which we condemned marxist socialism, holding fast to the unchanging doctrine of the Roman Pontiffs, we have

also maintained that the ideology of liberalism without limits is incompatible with the Christian faith, a liberalism which considers profit as the essential engine of economic progress, competition as the supreme law of the economy, private ownership of the means of production as an absolute right, without corresponding limits or social obligations. This ideology, as Paul VI stated, also leads to dictatorship and creates--in the word of Pius XI--the international imperialism of money. The Christian faith urges us to condemn it, and calls solemnly to mind once again that the economy exists for the service of humanity ("Populorum Progressio", No. 20; "Octogesima Adveniens" numero 26).

Yes, there is only one Absolute, God, and humankind as children of God. The biblical faith has crossed the path of our entire history, to impede that which holds us back in a degrading worship of gods which are not God. Power, efficacy, consumption, wealth, and even economic development itself are not values worthy of humankind when those values require human sacrifice. And the great task of the Church, her mission par excellence, is to claim sovereignty for God and the inviolability of humankind as children of God, as the only Absolute of history.

This mission frequently places the Church in a certain tension in regard to those who hold power. This is not opposition, but rather a critical independence which permits the Church, exercising its role as conscience, to proclaim the degree of respect for the dignity of persons and the rights which follow from it. As a result of this focus, while Mother of all, the Church has and should have a positive

predisposition for those who, by force of circumstance, appear as the poorest and most vulnerable. Thus, she proves not only her faithfulness to Christ, but also lends the government her most loyal and unique contribution. So understood, faith becomes through hope the motor of history. And history only becomes immobile because people abandon their faith, and with it, the source of hope.

But a people such as Chile, nourished by its faith in the Gospel, has not been stopped nor can it ever be stopped. Nothing can interrupt its march, its ascending path. Nothing: not even the pain, the unspeakable suffering of division of a deeply wounded body politic. On the contrary: this same pain is purifying its soul and clarifying its path. When Pedro de Valdivia camped by the stony and open river bed of the Mapocho, he heard for the first time the name which described the rocky hill resting beside the waters of the river: HUELEN. Huelen, which means, "pain".

And Jaime Eyzaguirre, student and lover unlike any other of the history and soul of our Chile, from whom we take this quote, discovers for us a mysterious trait of our being: Chile grows better in the midst of pain. Struggle and heartbreak have become inseparable companions of our race. It is the Cross, the mark of people who have a history and are capable of living it. For this reason, Chile, victor in all its wars, remembers little its great victories, but rather lingers over its epics of pain: Concepción and Iquique--where life was surrendered, where holocaust prevailed, and the spirit, deprived of worldly success, becomes noble and pure in the crucible of suffering.

Our generation also has experienced pain. Chileans of this decade, of this generation, have had the privilege of suffering, of crying the bitter tears and drinking from the cup of misunderstanding and hatred. We have experienced pain. For too long we have seen our security and our pride demolished, cracking the foundations of everything which made us great, strong, respectable; we have feared that Chile will cease to be Chile, that we will become so twisted as to no longer recognize ourselves, that la Patria will lose her face and soul.

We have known pain. Only God knows how much, with how much bitterness, each of us suffered. But we also, and above all here, summon our faith, a faith in Christ, dead but resurrected, which speaks to us from the Gospel: "Do not be afraid: I have conquered the world... your pain is giving birth: soon happiness will rush in, a happiness no one can take away."

Yes, it is like giving birth. Perhaps it is necessary, at least something wholesome, to learn through suffering, what la Patria is worth—to reevaluate the worth, at the cost of personal pain, of the inheritance which others conquered with their blood. It is necessary, wholesome, and perhaps even just to suffer thus. But it is like the pain of birth. Now we can say that Chile is our Mother, but also our Daughter. We have created her, we have become her creators, through our pain.

For this, our love for Chile is redoubled, it becomes tender, vehement, passionate, demanding. We love Chile today as a mother is loved and as a daughter is loved. Now we understand, now that we

have valued what it means to have, what it is to be Patria, we feel that there is no work more beautiful than to recreate her, no mission more noble than to reconstruct her, no fate sweeter than to die for her.

And now is when we need, more than ever, the treasure of our faith. Our faith in Christ, dead but resurrected, who repeats: "Take heart! Do not be afraid. I have conquered the world!" Yes: the world, all that which is evil in humankind, the seeds of deceit, of division, of hatred which have been vanquished by Christ. And we can, and we must conquer it with Him. At times, it might be that its effects are undiminished, in agonizing spasms, and it returns to do us harm. But at its root, the power of evil is vanquished: the victory is ours. Lies and hatred, sin and death do not have the last word. Rather, in the end, all hatred will pass, death itself will be conquered, and only la Patria will remain--the family of persons who lived, struggled, believed and hoped together, the family who renounced hatred because they had very little time to love one another.

La Patria transformed, purified of all that which overshadows it, the heavenly Patria, prepared and pretasted on earth--Chile, of yesterday, of today, blessed land of our children, good land of all; Chile, our great love, our great task, our great gift, that Chile of which Valdivia wrote: "This land is such that there exists none better in all the world in which to live and pass on life."

My dear friends: concluding my remarks, I wish to express my deepest longing which is really a prayer. To Christ Jesus, to the God of our Parents and our Patria. To Our Lord, we bring, as a sacred offering, this land of Chile, with its people, without distinctions or

exceptions; with the vocation of all to be free; the right of all to feel themselves children, and the duty of all to be parents of a new Chile. A Chile which continues to be, until Christ comes again, the fairest land in all the world!

Raúl Cardinal Silva Henríquez

THE IMPERATIVE OF SOLIDARITY

My dear friends,

I stand at this podium with deep respect and love.

Yesterday in this room we heard Raúl Cardinal Silva Henriquez, a providential man who is Father and Teacher of la Patria and the Church. I was impressed by his teaching, filled with the purest evangelical wisdom. And I was also struck by the eloquent silence with which his words were received. I bless the Lord for this aged man who keeps on dialoguing with the young soul of our people and making this dialogue fruitful with the testimony of his own life. To him, therefore, my deepest respect and love.

I experience a similar feeling upon entering this house. Respect and love greet other teachers who, almost forty years ago, began to give form to my life with the salt and leaven of the Gospel. To the Holy Cross Fathers, the teachers and staff of St. George's College, I am forever grateful; and to them my prayers of blessing on this the fiftieth anniversary of St. George's.

I come before you with these feelings in response to a kind invitation from CIEPLAN, to share a part of what I have learned in these years of intense ministry in the heart of the Church of Santiago. And since everything must have a name, even my experience, the organizers have decided to call this talk "The Imperative of Solidarity."

1. Between Sorrow and Hope

Following what Cardinal Silva said yesterday, I would suggest that solidarity is situated precisely between sorrow and hope.

I did not know that "Huelen" means "sorrow". Yesterday, I was moved on learning it. But I did know--and it never ceases to amaze me--that the mystery of sorrow is inextricably intertwined with the mystery of life. And the way in which we confront the human dilemma holds the key to understanding the most important chapters of the individual and collective lives of both individuals and peoples.

No one knows birth without pain, and no death is exempt from heartbreak. All life and all death is played out between sorrow and hope. And in the center of the mystery lies solidarity which does not deny sorrow: it takes it up with the hands of a potter, to encourage and recreate life from its deepest and most beautiful sources.

Solidarity is not optional. It is not, in its essence, a personal option meant only for those who choose it. It is both a condition and a way of life. It is the most natural attitude for all of us who were created to love, and find the meaning of life by filling with love all of our existence. For this reason, solidarity has concrete expressions and feels a bit uncomfortable, even among the pages of a dictionary.

Solidarity is the name of that great woman who, with her fragile figure, walks through the streets of Calcutta to give aid to the dying among her people. She is a living image of thankfulness, a committed love without visible return towards those who are forgotten by society on their way between life and death.

Solidarity is the name of a strong man who, in the shipyards of Gdansk, gathers the union, congregates his people, and raises his voice on behalf of justice and right.

Solidarity is the name of the countless women of this land who love and suffer, and never give up, in spite of persistent unemployment and powerlessness. They are the stay of their homes and the cornerstone upon which are built the neighborhood soupkitchens.

Solidarity is the name of the students who give part of their vacations to sew and build for, serve, and accompany the less favored brothers and sisters of the slums and countryside. And it is particularly fitting to recall in this place that, more than twenty years ago, this solidarity had its own beginnings in the person of Claudio Orrego, an alumnus of this school. He was an open Christian, a warm, restless apostle of service to the Patria and exponent of active nonviolence.

Solidarity is the name of the priest who searched for homeless children under the bridges of the river Mapocho, who sheltered the forsaken aged, who preached social justice and seized the initiative of Christian action and reflection. We hope to venerate Father Alberto Hurtado on our altars as a saint of our land, friend of God and of the poor.

Solidarity is the name of that familiar house which stands at the heart of the Church of Santiago. More than a house, it is a place of shelter and hope, protector of life, defender of law, visible sign of the love of the Church for the many marginalized of her land and her

history. This dear Vicariate, placed at the center of Santiago, will forever be remembered in the grateful heart of our people.

So it is with solidarity: concrete, diverse, varied; gracious and committed, prophetic and charismatic, warm and stimulating. It is never exhausted in its many expressions, and it is newly incarnated in every time and place, in hundreds and thousands of anonymous heroes who, day by day, write the most important pages of our history.

In the midst of this symphony of solidarity shines the most beautiful Countenance ever seen on the earth. The Man entered history from its underside to show the vulnerable love of God for humanity. He who made the poor lovable, and who gathered us together to build a Kingdom of peace, justice, and truth. All these forms of solidarity are a reflection of the love of this Jesus who takes upon himself the passion of humankind and thrusts into his own shoulders the open wound of his people, this man who stood forth to proclaim the beatitudes of a life free from hatred and domination.

2. Between Exclusion and Solidarity

The images we have just evoked might lead us to think that solidarity is merely an individual way of life. It is not. It is true that solidarity finds its basis and foundations in the human person, but it is also true that solidarity transcends human reality. From the Lord and from the Kingdom which He announced, we have received the imperative of solidarity to set it up as the basis of a new society.

2.1. A Society with No One Excluded

With Jesus and His Gospel we dream and struggle for a broad and open world, with no limits or barriers, founded on love and justice, on the respect of life and law. A world with a place for everybody, and never satisfied with the invidious solidarities of race or color, of language or class, of union or party, of East or West, of male or female chauvinisms. A world in which rationality, consensus and pluralism defeat all forms of domination. That is, a world based on a logic of solidarity, and not on a logic of exclusion. A great Pentecost of all humanity!

This new society is an impossibility if we do not believe in solidarity. It is necessary to know and believe that we are bound to the same fate, for we all have the same roots. To know and believe that strength is found in the experience of unity in diversity. That is the reason why we have been created as man and woman who become one body precisely because they do not forfeit their diversity.

The basis of a solidary society rests in the originating experience of being bound to a common destiny. Therefore, whenever anyone is excluded from the human community, our own humanity is deeply torn. That is the tragedy of Cain, who was the first to exclude. He believed he was killing Abel, and did not realize that, in fact, he was killing himself... The blood flowing from Abel's side was the blood of Cain, his brother. He had killed his own kin! That is the tragedy of the open wound of our country, a wound that will not heal until the last drop ceases to flow from our own brothers and sisters.

Excluding ideologies, as in the logic of war, imply that the future of a people is built upon imposition or domination. And on the basis of this tired aberration, they search out proselytes of sectarianism. Isn't the history of war sufficient? Hasn't enough blood been shed? Don't we hear the cries of the just Abel who calls out from the countless graves of the victims of violence?

With good reason Cardinal Fresno cautioned us in his last message: "Without reconciliation and peace, every day the road Chile must travel becomes more dangerous. And it will be violence, not rationality, that will rule the day. In this way, as human rights are violated, we will break with the solidarity so characteristic of the Chilean people." (Mensaje de Cuaresma, 1986).

2.2. A Solidary Society

The construction of a solidary society rests on certain ethical and Christian principles which I will only name. These principles were proclaimed by the Church in Medellín and Puebla, and restated most recently in the Pastoral Orientations of the Bishops of Chile (cf. "Una Iglesia Servidora de la Vida", 1986).

A Solidary Society is built upon an absolute respect for human rights:

These rights are intrinsically mutually interdependent. That is to say, the violation of only one of these rights weakens them all. In

consequence, the Latin American Church seeks the promotion and complete respect of civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural ones. The Church does not favor some rights over others. We can signal the qualitative importance of the right to life, or the just cause of the poor, but never at the cost of other inherent rights, nor apart from human rights.

Today, we simply assume that the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in the agreements which followed it, ought to serve as the starting point for any political project. They are the basic requirement of any society. If we wish to build upon rock, as the Gospel demands, these postulates serve as the essential foundation. Without them, no society can pretend to be just. And to this end, the Church offers her vigilance.

She reminds us without tiring that, when human rights are concerned, the problem is not one of quantity. We are not only interested in there being less torture, we ask that there be no torture. We are not impressed by diminished disappearances, we want this shameful practice to cease. We are not swayed by a decrease in the unemployment rates. Rather, we demand that every woman and man attain to life's fullness. For us, these problems are not merely statistics. They are real human situations with a name and a face, a neighborhood and a city. These persons are, in fact, named Jesus. And, after His death on the Cross, we refuse to allow a single crucifixion on this earth.

A Solidary Society is built upon the Preferential Option for the Poor:

Our Christian interpretation of life leads us to discover that God has always preferred the weak to the strong. He prefers David to Goliath. And throughout history He takes on the defense of the poor, in whom His image and likeness is especially apparent.

The Church has insisted that this option is not merely sociological. It is theological. It is true that, first, She opts for the immense impoverished majority, who lack basic material well being and the possibilities of full social and economic development. But She also understands all who suffer any form of poverty, regardless of the personal or moral state in which they are found. It is, therefore, not an exclusive option. As the very name indicates, She only wishes, following His design, to give preeminence to those to whom God prefers, to announce from the weakness of the poor the Reign of God to all creation.

The preferential option for the poor leads us to solidarity with the cause of the poor and to looking at history and our own lives from the perspective of the poorest. In a world where the rich, the scientists, and the technicians are alone given the opportunity to speak with authority, and where the poor and the marginalized are ignored, an attitude of solidarity is all the more urgent. As if they were not capable of expressing their sufferings or sharing their dreams!

The Church adopts the perspective of the poor because it is the most universal one. This is what they continually teach us by their way

of living. The solidarity of the poor far surpasses the solidarity of the rest of society towards them. In a word, in their way of living and sharing, they bring about in practice a solidary society, not an excluding one.

A Solidary Society is built upon active non-violence, or upon the strength of justice accompanied by truth:

"Violence, in its different forms, challenges the deepest reaches of our Christian faith. Jesus walks before us, and He commanded us to set aside all violence and all ambitions of power.

"The Gospel message is contained in the Beatitudes. They trace, with grace and beauty, the traits of a Christian: a person who is stripped of himself, non-violent, pure of heart, a lover of justice, a promoter of peace, vulnerable to suffering, capable of mercy. In these features our fidelity to Jesus is judged, which is the best we can give our Patria, so wounded by violence" (QQ. PP. No. 55).

Such an attitude demands that we deepen our ethics of means, and not only ends. Violent means can only breed more violence. Just and true means, in contrast, can reestablish law and justice, overcome the zero-sum dynamics of winners and losers, and give an appropriate place to minorities so they can exercise their rights in equality with the majorities.

A Solidary Society is built upon the full political and social participation of people and organizations:

In accord with the Social Doctrine of the Church, we believe that the conflict in which the country is embroiled originates in, and is sharpened by, the lack of political and social participation of all its inhabitants. And citing the Bishops of Chile: "As long as there are no open channels of political participation, there will be less chance of a peaceful settlement of the crisis that affects the country" (OO. PP. No. 43).

This situation deeply wounds both individuals as well as the national community. Among the people there exists discontent, because the rights which belong to them are denied. Political and social leaders act with a great handicap because political parties are not legally recognized. The youth feel robbed of possibilities to fulfill themselves and are easily captured by violent agitators. Our common life is wounded, divided, atomized. And, what is worse, fear and distrust have increased, making more difficult a reconciliation" (OO. PP. No. 45).

Finally, and again citing the Bishops, "the Church believes in, and aspires to, democracy. It is this system which best promotes and protects human rights and citizenship. Nevertheless, the Church does not make democracy an idol, she is conscious of its limitations. But there exists no reason, either from past or present, to distrust the capacity of our people to make decisions which affect them and to become protagonists of their own history.

"Totalitarian ideologies of different types tend to replace the choice of the people with the choice of governmental elites, thus violating this notion of democracy. The Church correctly rejects these closed systems of thought that do not serve persons and that, in the political struggle, end by depriving the people of their freedom" (OO, PP, No. 47).

The exercise of human rights is closely linked to the practice of democracy. The Church does not ignore this fact. History has proven that elemental rights of the human person are frequently neglected in authoritarian regimes, unlike that which occurs in democratic ones. Thus, this essential democratic right, consisting of the sovereign right to choose governing authorities, is not merely a formal right, it is a fundamental principle which makes the development of other rights possible. Without recognizing this popular sovereignty, all other rights are meaningless.

For this reason, the Latin American Church in general, and the Chilean Church in particular, have appealed not only to Law, but also to democracy, as a system which makes possible the progress of human rights.

A Solidary Society is built upon a universal sharing of goods:

Consequently, consistent with the preferential option for the poor and the full exercise of human rights, a solidary society is built on the principle of a universal sharing of goods. Goods are created by God and given to humankind as simple administrators to multiply and

develop them, a charge for which they are responsible to God and all human persons. And, as John Paul II has taught, all goods are subject to a "social obligation" which tempers the right of property with the ethical requirements of the common good.

These days this principle has been captured with particular salience by Cardinal Fresno in his Lenten Message: "The daily conduct of each must be guided toward sharing gifts and talents, especially with those who most need them. We should share them with generosity (cf. Tob. 4:7). We should give example of austere lives; of a style of life consistent with the reality of the majority of the Chilean family. While there is so much pain to sooth, it is indispensable to give witness which imparts hope, in place of offending or irritating with our indifference, with our waste and frivolity" (Mensaje de Cuaresma, 1986).

3. Between Indifference and Responsibility

We have arrived at the end of this long exposition. And it is possible that we are troubled by more than one question. It is also possible that, overcome by the size of the task which awaits us, we think we are speaking of impossible dreams or unrealistic demands. It is also possible that, accustomed as we are to turning our attention toward parties or unions, or even toward the Church itself, we might come to conclude that the task of articulating the concrete demands of a solidary society is left to others. For this reason, I would like to recall that the foundations of the society we wish to construct rest on a

deep and personal conversion in solidarity. This is the irreplaceable contribution of the live witnesses of solidarity whose example we highlighted at the outset of this talk. And there is no better way to seal these words than to remember the fable of the Crippled Fox.

"Once upon a time, a man walking in the woods came upon a fox which had lost its legs. The man wondered how it was possible for the fox to survive? Then he saw a tiger arrive with game in its mouth. The tiger had eaten its fill and left the rest of the meat for the fox.

"The following day, God returned to feed the fox through the same tiger. The man began to ponder the immense love of God and he told himself: 'I will also lie down, trusting completely in the Lord, and all I need will be provided.'

"So he did for many days, but nothing happened. Close to death, the poor man heard a Voice saying: 'Hey, you, who live in error, open your eyes to the Truth! Follow the example of the tiger, and stop imitating the crippled fox'."

I did not understand the meaning of the parable of the Crippled Fox until one day I found in the street a little girl who was shivering with cold and whose face revealed the hunger of many days. Outraged, I turned to God to ask: "Why do you allow such things? Why do you do nothing to change this?"

For a moment, God was silent. But that night, suddenly, God answered, "Do you believe I have done nothing? Certainly I have done something. I made you."

