

International

Bonhoeffer Society

# NEWSLETTER

*English Language Section*

John D. Godsey, editor  
James Patrick Kelley, managing editor

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## SCHEDULE OF BONHOEFFER SOCIETY EVENTS AT ANAHEIM

Our convention schedule has been communicated to Geff Kelly by Heidi Hogarth, the Annual Meeting Manager from Scholars Press. Jane Pejsa's talk, "Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Prussian Ruth," is scheduled from 6:15 to 7:15 in Conference Room 1 on Saturday evening, November 18. Our session featuring papers by David Hopper and Charles Marsh, Jr., with respondents Dan Hardy and Paul Matheny, Wayne Floyd and Wayne Wachsmuth, is slated for Sunday afternoon from 1:00 until 3:30. Our business meeting will take place on Monday from 11:30 until 1:00. Locations of the latter two events will be announced in the AAR/SBL Annual Meeting Program.

Because the AAR Program Committee could not find any space for Al Staggs's inspiring one man-one act characterization of "Dietrich Bonhoeffer," Al has agreed to postpone his presentation until the AAR Annual Meeting in New Orleans in 1990.

The Bonhoeffer Society's celebration of Eberhard Bethge's 80th birthday (born 8/28/09) will occur on Sunday evening with a happy hour to begin at 5:30 and dinner at 6:30. The place will be announced later. Participants must register with Geff Kelly as soon as possible. It will be a joy to have Eberhard and Renate with us in Anaheim, and don't be surprised if the celebration includes a "roast" as well!

## VISITING BONHOEFFER SCHOLARS

1. Dr. Wolfgang Huber, Professor of Systematic Theology and Social Ethics at the University of Heidelberg, is spending the fall semester 1989 at Emory University as Visiting Lilly Scholar in Theology and Fellow in Law and Religion. Dr. Huber has published extensively on Bonhoeffer and is a co-editor of the DB Werke. (This notice came from Professor Romney M. Moseley, who moved this summer from Emory in Atlanta to Trinity College in Toronto.)
2. Dr. John de Gruchy, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Cape Town, is spending this semester as a Visiting Professor at Union Theological Seminary and Scholar-in-Residence at Broadway Presbyterian Church, New York City.
3. Professor Hans Dirk van Hoogstraten of the University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands, is a resident scholar from September to December at the University of Chicago's Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion. Having served as chairperson of the Dutch Bonhoeffer Society and the 1988 International Bonhoeffer Conference in Amsterdam, he is well qualified and available to provide stimulating discussions of a variety of topics on university and seminary campuses. He can be contacted directly at The Divinity School of the University of Chicago (tel. 312-702-8226) or through Robin Lovin (312-702-8248) or Burton Nelson (312-583-2700).

Esteemed Colleagues:

In a letter which is of necessity brief, I would like to communicate three things to you, namely: (1) the address of the new base of operations for the general secretariat, (2) the present condition of our 1988 Conference Book, and (3) the prospect for our 6th International Conference in the year 1992.

(1) WE ARE MOVING! Beginning Friday, September 1, you can reach us at the following address:

Internationale Bonhoeffer-Gesellschaft  
Allgemeines Sekretariat  
Heinrichstrasse 13  
D - 3250 Hameln an der Weser / BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND  
Tel. no. ((49)) (0) 5151 27211  
Bank acct.: Deutsche Bank, Hameln Branch, acct. no.  
(trans.: 254 700 73) 0702290

Beginning on 1 September 1989, I will be serving as an exchange pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover, Synod of Calenberg-Hoya, District of Hameln-Pymont, with place of service in the Abbey Church Congregation of St. Boniface in Hameln. This service is for a period of 3 to 5 years under the terms of pastoral exchange between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the German National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation. I hope that the coming stay in the Federal Republic will serve well to promote our common work in the Bonhoeffer Society, and I look forward to the opportunity for further and sustained contact with the European sections of our community of scholarship.

(2) We can all be glad that our Amsterdam Conference Book shall appear in a short time. That is the word from Mr. William B. Eerdmans, who received the galley proofs from Kok Publishers in Kampen just yesterday. According to Mr. Eerdmans, the collaborative publication of the Conference Book can now be carried out with all speed, since the final edition of the work now requires only the correction of a few typographical errors. Kok and Eerdmans have as yet no definite deadline in mind, but we have good reason to hope for publication during 1989.

(3) Just today I received an important communication from Professor Dr. Josef Smolík, who reports that there will unfortunately be no possibility at all in the summer of 1992 to accommodate our approximately 120 conference participants in Prague (because of the Comenius Tercentenary, the general assembly of the Christian Peace Conference, etc.). The Czechoslovak Ecumenical Council does remain open, however, to the possibility of holding an interim Bonhoeffer Conference in 1991, perhaps in Slovakia (in remembrance of DB's visit to Ciernohorské Kúpele). We would all look forward to such an opportunity for cooperation and the substantial participation of the colleagues in the East.

The question of a venue for the Sixth International Bonhoeffer Conference, then, has suddenly found a clear answer. Since Prague is no longer to be considered in this connection, our thoughts and plans must now turn in earnest in the direction of New York and Union Theological Seminary.

A meeting was held on May 16th at Union Theological Seminary in New York to consider the two important questions of conference theme and conference site. As a result, the UTS administration is holding either the first or the second week of August 1992 open for the six-day conference. Suggestions for the theme would be welcomed.

Guy Chr. Carter

## N.E.H. GRANT AWARDED FOR BONHOEFFER TRANSLATION PROJECT

The National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded a two-year grant to begin work on an English translation of the critical edition of the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke. The sixteen volume edition, now being published in Germany, will be translated into English under the direction of a committee of the International Bonhoeffer Society - English Language Section. Volumes in the set will include a new translation of Bonhoeffer's texts, notes prepared by the German editors, and additional editorial material of special interest to English-language readers.

The first phase of the project includes an editorial and planning conference for the work as a whole, and translation of four representative volumes from the German edition. Each volume will have a translator and an English-language editor. The four volumes in the first phase will be Sanctorum Communio (editor, Clifford Green; translator, Nancy Lukens); Act and Being (editor, Wayne Floyd, Jr., translator, Martin Rumscheidt); Life Together/Psalms (editor, Geoffrey Kelly; translators, Daniel Bloesch and James Burtness); and a volume of previously untranslated Bonhoeffer works, titled Jugend und Studium in the German edition. (Jugend und Studium will be edited in the English edition by Guy C. Carter).

Project Director for the N.E.H. Grant is Robin W. Lovin, Associate Professor of Ethics at the University of Chicago Divinity School. Mark Brocker, a Ph.D. candidate in theology and ethics, serves as research assistant to the project. Michael Lukens, Professor of Religion at St. Norbert College is administrative secretary to the International Bonhoeffer Society - English Language Section Translation Committee.

North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago will host the first editorial conference in late September, 1988. Translations of the first four volumes should be completed within three years, and the Project hopes to continue translation of the remaining twelve volumes at a rate of about two a year.

National Endowment for the Humanities support, which provides funding for conferences, travel, computer software, support staff, and honoraria for the editors and translators, includes a grant of \$63,144 and \$25,000 in matching funds. Raising the final \$25,000 becomes an important challenge to the Society during the next two years. Members who know of potential funding sources are encouraged to contact Prof. Robin W. Lovin, University of Chicago Divinity School, 1025 E. 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637. Individual contributions (tax-deductible) may be made payable to the International Bonhoeffer Society - English Language Section, or to the University of Chicago, and designated for the Bonhoeffer Works Translation Project.

## SUSAN KELLY FUND

Expenses for Geffrey and Joan Kelly continue to run high for the medical treatment of their daughter Susan. It has been four years now that she and they have been battling the effects of her brain tumor. Members of the Bonhoeffer Society in both the U.S. and West Germany have been generous in their gifts. More help is urgently needed. Checks can be made out to the "Good Samaritan Fund" and sent to:

Rev. Charles Sensel  
First United Methodist Church  
1023 N. 6th Street  
Chillicothe, IL 61523

Charles will channel the gifts, which are tax deductible, to the Kellys.

## DEATH OF ALLEN HACKETT (1905-1989)

Another of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's friends from his 1930-31 year at Union Theological Seminary has died. Allen Hackett, a member of the IBS, passed away in Concord, New Hampshire, on July 25th, and memorial services were conducted at the South Congregational Church (UCC) on August 4th. Burton Nelson, Vice-President of the English Language Section of the IBS, was present to offer condolences to Mrs. Dorothy Hackett and other members of the family.

Allen, a minister of the United Church of Christ, had during his recent retirement years been working on a translation of Jean Lasserre's book, Christians and Violence. He had already completed his translation of Lasserre's Can We Believe in Military National Defense? and had planned to prepare a Lasserre Reader, in collaboration with Burton Nelson. His descriptive account of his relationship to both Lasserre and Bonhoeffer appeared in an IBS Newsletter three years ago.

## REMAINDERING OF BOOK BY KELLY

Geffrey Kelly's Liberating Faith: Bonhoeffer's Message for Today is now in process of being remaindered by Augsburg-Fortress Press. Those who would like to order copies in the future should do so by sending in their order to Geffrey B. Kelly, La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA 19141. The price is \$10.50 per book. This is a discounted price that includes postage and handling. There are 300 copies of the book left. Those who use the book regularly for courses on Bonhoeffer should note that copies will no longer be available from Augsburg-Fortress after this semester, even though they are retaining the copyright to the book.

## GERMAN BOOKS OF NOTE

1. The German Section of the IBS sponsors a series of books on Bonhoeffer which are published by the Chr. Kaiser Verlag under the rubric "Internationales Bonhoeffer Forum" (IBF). The eighth volume (IBF 8), which appeared in 1988, is entitled Dietrich Bonhoeffers Hegel-Seminar 1933. It contains the notes taken by Ferenc Lehel as a student in Bonhoeffer's Hegel Seminar, worked over and edited by Ilse Tödt. A jewel!

2. A volume just published by Chr. Kaiser Verlag is a new book by Eberhard Bethge: In Zitz gab es keine Juden: Erinnerungen aus meinen ersten vierzig Jahren. Let's hope for an early English translation!

## PAPERS AND EVENTS OF NOTE

1. Dr. Paul H. Ballard of the University of Wales College of Cardiff, who during the mid-seventies published several excellent essays on Bonhoeffer (see the Bonhoeffer Bibliography), has recently written two new essays which he hopes to have published in the USA in the near future: "Bonhoeffer's Christian Anthropology" and "Bonhoeffer as Pastoral Theologian."
2. Sad news has come from Dr. Ilse Tödt that Jörg Rades died last April of lymphoma at age 30. Jörg was a participant at the 1988 Amsterdam Conference and was in the process of preparing his PhD dissertation on Bonhoeffer's intellectual background under the direction of Professor George Hall at St. Andrews University, Scotland. One paper, written in the hospital while awaiting a bone marrow transplant, is in hand: "Bonhoeffer and Hegel: From Sanctorum Communio to the Hegel Seminar with Some Perspectives for the Later Works." Dr. Tödt is trying to determine from Professor Hall whether other preparatory papers might have been written.
3. Under Professor Ján Ligus, Lilly Fellow from the Comenius Faculty in Prague at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Mark K. Nation, a former student of John Yoder, has written an outstanding paper on "'Pacifist and Enemy of the State': Bonhoeffer's 'Straight and Unbroken Course' from Costly Discipleship to Conspiracy."
4. In a Bonhoeffer seminar conducted last spring by Professor Josiah Young, III, of Wesley Theological Seminary, Afro-American student Cheryl B. Anderson wrote an insightful paper on "Bonhoeffer and His Tegel Theology: Opening the Door to Liberation Theology."
5. Emmanuel Steinberg reports that a "one-man show" about Bonhoeffer was put on by D. Paul Thomas at the Spring Concert Series at Lee Chapel Theater in Pasadena, California, April 13-15. Mr. Thomas' soliloquy, he says, "was done with great professionalism and brought out the most salient points of Bonhoeffer's character and death, namely his piety and his wit." Mr. Steinberg also reported that the play was well received by the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles.
6. On April 12 an impressive Chapel Service, featuring "Bonhoeffer Testimonies," was led by Professors Glenn Stassen and Paul Simons at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.
7. Reverend Hugh Searle, editor of the Newsletter of the British Section, reports that in early June he enjoyed a memorable week at the Kirchentag in Berlin, during which he heard the world premiere performance of a BONHOEFFER REQUIEM by Walter Hollenweger, Professor of Mission at Birmingham University. It carried the dedication "to the dead of all nations" and was a presentation in song, music, dance, and narration of Bonhoeffer's life, imprisonment, and death.

## NEW VOLUMES OF THE DB-WERKE PUBLISHED

Two new volumes of the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke have just been published in Germany by Christian Kaiser Verlag. Nachfolge was edited by Martin Kuske (DDR) and Ilse Tödt (Federal Republic), and Schöpfung und Fall was edited by Martin Rueter and Ilse Tödt. Previously published volumes are: Sanctorum Communio, Akt und Sein, Gemeinsames Leben/Gebetbuch der Bibel, and Jugend und Studium 1918-1927.

"One Reality": Revelation and the Secular in the Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer is the title J. Patrick Kelley intends to give his forthcoming contribution to the series sponsored by the Bonhoeffer Society. To be published by the University Press of America later this year, the book will be a reworking and abbreviation of Kelley's 1980 Yale University doctoral dissertation. The author will update the history of Bonhoeffer interpretation, concentrating upon a clear statement of the case for a perduring theological system from summer, 1925, to the prison texts, admitting that clarifications and specifications of both its Christology and, especially, what is required in theological ethics were continuously incorporated into the system. The general content of Kelley's dissertation can be discerned from the following reprint from Dissertation Abstracts International, 41/5/1980:

Bonhoeffer has been sufficiently quoted to make clear the fact that he combined a view that all theology presupposes and depends upon God's self-revelation, on the one hand, with an understanding of the Christian's life of faith as "holy worldliness", on the other. Just how he made such interests, which some others regard as opposed, compatible in his theology has not been so clear.

This study outlines a consistent conceptual pattern, running through the whole Bonhoeffer *corpus*, which requires his combination of such views. It includes: (1) a review of Bonhoeffer publications, (2) a crucial biographical clarification based on Bonhoeffer's unpublished first student paper in systematic theology written in 1925, and (3) an outline of his broad conceptual dialectic and a brief survey of his writings to confirm that it is a programmatic assumption through all periods of his theological development.

The review discloses a growing consensus among Bonhoeffer studies, particularly those which have made full use of Bethge's biographical studies to place Bonhoeffer's admitted theological development in relation to: his early, university-based career, the concentrated ministry of his middle years in the German Church Struggle, or his later involvement in the Resistance Movement. Two issues, however, remain controversial: (a) whether or not his theology presupposes a consistent "ontology," and (b) whether or not and where any sharper breaks in his admitted theological development may have occurred.

By reference to Bonhoeffer's 1925 student paper his own statement (in a letter of April 22, 1944) that he had experienced only one drastic change or break, when he turned "*vom Phraseologischen zum Wirklichen*", is placed in the Summer of 1924, as his own contextual remarks also make clear, while he was first traveling abroad. This break, therefore, occurred before the beginning of his theological *corpus* and is not to be identified with any of the later, lesser shifts in his vocabulary or dominant occupation.

For this reason, a consistent, if broad, conceptual dialectic, presupposing encounter with the reality of God's self-revelation in history and juxtaposing, while mutually reinterpreting and relating, different sorts of thinking about the two sides of his revelational reality, can be traced through all Bonhoeffer's theological writing from start to finish. On its one side, his theology obviously has to use the special language of conscious faith, which discerns the divine presence within historical events. On its other side, however, theology must speak concretely about the reality of these events in ways which are more ordinary, even "secular", in the sense that they do not require any special experience of faith or use of its special vocabulary. For this side of his theological dialectic Bonhoeffer regularly presses three broad sorts of "non-religious" discourse into service: (1) simple references to or descriptions of sensory conditions, (2) broad declarations of historical or social circumstances, and (3) moral declarations and exhortations.

In its programmatic application of this broad "Christological dialectic" Bonhoeffer's theology is here presented as both more consistent and more conventional than many studies have admitted. No more specific or rigorously "ontological" consistency appears to underlie this broader correlation of revelation and the secular in his outlook. The special force of his theology is attributed to the degree to which he kept the concrete, descriptive meaning of his understanding of revelation always in view through the application of his broad correlation of the language of faith and other ways of speaking about everyday realities.

## EBERHARD BETHGE'S 80th BIRTHDAY - James Patrick Kelley

From August 27 to September 2 a "Bethge Olympiade" was held, commemorating Eberhard Bethge's eightieth birthday. Many members of the extended family gathered for a special celebration at the Bethge home in Villiprott on August 27, a day before the actual birthday. At the same time, the yearly conference of the West German Section of the International Bonhoeffer Society assembled in Rengsdorf, in the Westerwald, where the Bethges had lived before retirement.

Winfried Maechler from West Berlin was the preacher at a special service of thanksgiving in the Rengsdorf church on the day itself. Bonhoeffer Society members (with guests from East Germany, Italy, Holland, and even the Managing Editor from the U.S.), family, and members of the Church of the Rhineland all gathered for a wonderful celebration and buffet, hosted by Präses Peter Beier and Oberkirchenrat Hans-Ulrich Stephan. Many greetings, including words from Professor Gaetano Latmiral from Italy, imprisoned with Bonhoeffer in Tegel, and other gifts were given. Renate, Dietrich, and Sara Bethge played Couperin and Bartók. Pastor Hans-Joachim Barkenings spoke on "The Claim that Missed Us -- Eberhard Bethge as Teacher of the Rhenish Church." A warm time was shared on a cold, rainy day by about 400 persons.

Later the same day a four-day conference on "The Illegals in the Confessing Church" began at the Haus Hermann Wied, the continuing education center of the Rhineland Church in Rengsdorf, of which Eberhard was Rektor when he retired. About 45 persons, more than twenty of the surviving "illegals" themselves, educated in institutions such as Bonhoffer's Finkenwalde seminary and ordained by the Confessing Church, attended. Historical papers on the Dahlem Synod, and on the "illegals" in Berlin-Brandenburg and in the Rhineland, were presented by Professor Günter van Norden (Wuppertal), Pastor W. Scheffig, and Professor Horst Ludwig (Humboldt University, Berlin). The Bethges were lively participants. Eberhard even sang some Lieder on the last evening, with Renate as accompanist!

The final stage was a special tribute to Eberhard's contributions to theology, church history, and Jewish-Christian relations, hosted by the Seminar for the Study of Systematic Theology at Ruprecht-Karls-University in Heidelberg. Dr. Ernst Scharffenorth was the host for a crowded agenda of greeting and tributes. Professor Heinz-Eduard Todt gave an extended summary of Bethge's own rich theological legacy. Others spoke on the special influence he has exerted upon the policy on Jewish-Christian relations of the Church of the Rhineland. The managing editor briefly noted the connection between Bethge's experiences in the United States at the Scholars' Conferences on the Holocaust and the German Church Struggle here and his special passion and clarity in later framing and adopting this policy in his home church.

Those who are interested in a belated continuation of the "Bethge Olympiade" are invited to share in our Section's celebration at our meeting in Anaheim in November, which Eberhard and Renate will attend.

### DEDICATION OF VIDEOTAPE ARCHIVES

Pat Kelley reports that the Bethges will be in the U.S. for the dedication of what he calls the "Videotape Archives of Interviews with Early Christian Resisters to the Hitler Regime," which is scheduled for Richmond and Lynchburg, October 29-31. Eberhard will also speak on November 1 and perhaps also November 2. After some special lectures at William Jewell College, the Bethges will visit with Sabine and her family in Connecticut and then attend the Anaheim meetings.

LETTER FROM CLIFF GREEN TO EBERHARD BETHGE DATED 26 AUGUST 1989

Dear Eberhard:

Twenty years ago at this time I was just finishing my summer of research at Rengsdorf. That was the time Kaltenborn discovered a previously unknown copy of Sanctorum Communio at Humboldt University, when we were trying to find a manuscript of Akt und Sein. It was also the time the Johnsons visited, and their young boys had a feast in the cherry trees! It was also the time of your sixtieth birthday. As that age comes in sight for me, I now realize how young you were then! But now you are twenty years older, so I send warmest greetings on your eightieth birthday, both from Audley and myself, and also from all your friends in the English Language Section of the Bonhoeffer Society.

If Freud was right that the two main ingredients of life are love and work, then you have lived well. On the work front, look what you have accomplished. Not only did you manage all that editing and lecturing in the early years after the war, working largely alone. That was in addition to your normal duties at the Pastoral-kolleg. And on top of that came the marvelous biography. If you were yourself a veritable one-man factory, that has now grown into a whole Bonhoeffer industry!

Of course, the great effort of the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke is a tribute to your success. I know that sometimes you have had mixed feelings about others going back over your work and redoing it. But not only does that lead to new research, new discoveries and new editions. In itself it testifies to your contribution. For there would not be such an enormous amount of commitment and energy being devoted to this work by others except for the foundation that you laid single-handedly.

What all this means is something you have heard many times before: without Eberhard Bethge there would be no Dietrich Bonhoeffer. This is not to overlook your own distinctive contributions, especially in Jewish-Christian relations. But it is to say that the very special friendship that you both enjoyed has found its fruition in the work born of your loyalty and perseverance.

And that leads to the second point of Freud's formula, which is actually the first point. What a network of friendship and affection you have woven around the world! To a large degree that is a reflection of your own warm and generous humanity. I have often remarked, when people have asked me about the Bonhoeffer Society, that it combines in a remarkable way the qualities of scholarship and friendship rarely found in academic societies -- which all too often resemble a pool of barracudas! And that is largely due to the human qualities you embody, attract and encourage in others.

I say this on behalf of all our members. And I also say it personally on my own behalf. It is a wonderful thing to be able to look back on twenty years of friendship. I remember the many occasions of hospitality you and Renate have offered over the years at Rengsdorf and Villiprott. Sitting in your back garden with the de Gruchys in 1984 on a sunny afternoon eating one of Renate's marvelous Black Forest cakes is one memory. Or sitting in your study late at night, enjoying a cigar and relaxed conversation after the pressure of the day's work is over is another. But even more than such occasions is the memory of your consistent generosity and helpfulness in project after project over the years.

Now we look forward to some more good years! Audley, Roger Johnson, and all the members of the English Language Section join in sending our congratulations and warmest good wishes! Dominus vobiscum!

Clifford Green



"THE NOVEMBER 9, 1938 POGROM AND DIETRICH BONHOEFFER"  
Eberhard Bethge, Neuwied Marktkirche, 6 November 1988  
IBK Rundbrief 29 (April, 1989), pp. 1-7

Summary and Excerpts by Nancy Lukens

## I.

This service commemorates the 50th anniversary of the "burning of the sacred places of the God of the Torah, also our God; the public desecration of the Torah, also containing our Ten Commandments; the beginning of the physical destruction of the Jewish people in the name of wild, hybrid ideas about the liberation of the world by the Aryan race, which instead led to enslavement under the false gods of the Germans."

(Text: Psalm 74:8, chosen by ecumenical planning group for November 8 commemoration: "They said to themselves, 'We will utterly subdue them'; they burned all the meeting places of God in the land.")

"Bonhoeffer called this psalm to our attention 50 years ago, these verses of despairing pogrom victims 2½ millenia ago when the Babylonians laid waste to Jerusalem and the temple. Bonhoeffer felt this text described the abandonment experience of the Jews of 1938 with shattering precision. And this voice crying out, alone before God, obviously sounded weightier and more lasting than the radio broadcasts and news headlines that bombarded us daily." Bethge noted years later that DB had made a small, but clear pencil mark in the margin of his Luther Bible beside Ps. 74,8: "9.11.38!", adding another exclamation mark beside the words, "There is no longer any prophet, and there is none among us who knows how long. How long, O God, is the foe to scoff?" This is the only known case where DB made specific reference to a current event in a margin note in his Bible.

## II.

On November 9, 1938, Bonhoeffer made the usual Wednesday trip from Köslin 60 km. eastward to the village of Gross-Schlönwitz, where Bethge was in charge of the second Confessing Church pastoral training program. In this remote area, news of the pogrom did not trickle through until Thursday; Bonhoeffer learned the essential details in the usual veiled-language phone conversation to his family in Berlin. This remote position was in fact typical; none of the illegal Confessing Church seminarians had a public position from which to speak out against a pogrom. The burden of "Dabeistehen," standing helplessly by, was surely reinforced by the fact that DB had just weeks before helped his twin sister Sabine and her Jewish husband Gerhard Leibholz, the Göttingen law professor, to emigrate to England in the face of the September legislation against "non-Aryans." When DB returned to Köslin to teach on November 14, he saw the newly arrived seminarians' confusion about how to interpret the burning of the local synagogue.

To be sure, the Confessing Church at this time still embraced the prevailing theology of Jewish guilt; in fact, the centuries-long tradition of a theology that lays a curse on the Jews for their nonbelief in Christ has still not been eradicated. "It is hard to imagine today how matter-of-factly we thought in terms of divine judgment of the Jews." One Köslin student later recorded DB's adamant rejection of the synagogue-burning as a fulfillment of the curse on the Jews and his remark, "If the synagogues burn today, tomorrow it will be the churches" (G. Maltusch in W. D. Zimmermann, ed., Begegnungen mit DB, p. 133f.) "We had no idea then that Martin Luther in his time had suggested something similar to a burning of a synagogue; it was none other than Julius Streicher, the Nuremberg Gauleiter, who had to teach

us this lesson. The Chr. Kaiser Verlag had just come out with a new volume of Luther including his antisemitic writings, which were not contained in the 4-volume study edition we had used. Of course we did nothing against the Jews. But what were we to think of the order to scourge the Jews? That thousands were now instruments of Hitler's and even perhaps God's rage?"

One of DB's newsletters to former Finkenwalde students illustrates how Bible references were used in those days to communicate content one could not entrust to censored correspondence. In a letter of November 20, 1938, in that newsletter, he added three lines that were loaded with a theology of Israel unheard of in his time: "In the last few days I have given a lot of thought to Psalm 74, Zechariah 2:12, Romans 9:3f. and 11:11-15. This leads one very much to prayer" (GS II, 544). DB wants to communicate through these verses how he is dealing with the November 9 events: first by praying Psalm 74 with the Jews, then by contradicting any theology of Jewish guilt, not to mention its execution by the Aryans, with Zechariah 2:12: "Whoever strikes you strikes the apple of His eye" (sic - not Zech. 2:12 in RSV or KJ). Then Romans 9:3f., against any rejection of Israel in church tradition: "For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen by race. They are the Israelites, and to them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship and the promises...." And beyond the theological argument, the personal involvement: "This leads one very much to prayer."

### III.

DB's prayerful meditation centered on two themes: First, the role of the ordained and tenured proclaimer of salvation, of churches and Christians existing remote from the persecuted Jews. Is it not now impossible to continue unchanged in this position? Then, the "How long?" of the Psalm: When will the escalation of the pogroms end? What role will I, DB, play in ending them? What will be the cost of Christians' having let it come this far? Today we know that DB payed with his life with his personal step into active conspiracy. By November 9, 1938, he already knew of overthrow plans through his brother-in-law Hans von Dohnanyi. In fact, at times his family put too much faith in a putsch putting an end to the desperate question, "How long?"

What could one count on? His church? Individual efforts? Not on a Confessing Church Synod acting on this outrage. Church officials had been required to take an oath of allegiance to Hitler in gratitude for the Austrian Anschluss. Churches had distanced themselves from the Confessing Church leaders who had designed a liturgy of prayer to avert war, which had brought them charges of treason.. Karl Barth had written to Hromadka in Prague that Hitler should be resisted in the name of the Christian Church, and the Confessing Church had ceremoniously distanced itself from Barth. -- No, those weeks did not suggest one could rely on the institution and authority of a Confessing Synod or lay responsibility on others' shoulders for pogrom matters. The issue was more and more one of taking up one's own position, leaving all security behind.

This journey began with reflection and ended in action and death. Two years after the November pogrom DB formulates a confession: "The Church confesses to having seen the arbitrary use of brutal force, the physical and emotional suffering of countless innocent people, oppression, hate, and murder without having raised her voice for them, without finding ways to hasten to their help. The Church has failed the weakest and most defenseless of the brethren of Jesus Christ" (Ethics, 121f., written in the Fall of 1940, before Auschwitz was in operation, but after Hitler's victories in France).

#### IV.

Only in retrospect can we see the connection between the November 1938 meditation on Psalm 74 in Gross-Schlönwitz, Outer Pomerania, the return in 1939 from the USA to his country beset by downfall, the confession of church guilt after the fall of France, the simultaneous personal involvement in political conspiracy, and the poem "Stations on the Way to Freedom," written July 21, 1944, in Tegel Prison.

#### DE GRUCHY EDITS NEW SERIES ON 19th & 20th CENTURY THEOLOGIANS

Six volumes of a series entitled "The Making of Modern Theology: 19th & 20th Century Theological Texts" have now been published by Collins/Harper & Row. Dr. John de Gruchy, General Editor, has stated the general purpose of the series thusly: "This series of theological texts is designed to introduce a new generation of readers - theological students, students of religion, ordained ministers and the interested general reader - to the writings of some of those Christian who, since the beginning of the 19th century, have had a formative influence on the development of Christian theology." Each volume has three sections: an Introduction with biographical sketch and overview of his/her theology, Selected Texts (the bulk of the volume), and a Select Bibliography.

Lest the fact be missed, most of the editors of the individual volumes are prominent members of the Bonhoeffer Society:

1. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (ed., John de Gruchy)
2. F. Schleiermacher (ed., Keith W. Clements)
3. Rudolf Bultmann (ed., Roger Johnson)
4. Paul Tillich (ed., Mark Kline Taylor)
5. A. von Harnack (ed., Martin Rumscheidt)
6. Karl Barth (ed., Clifford Green)

A seventh volume, Reinhold Niebuhr (ed., Larry Rasmussen), should appear soon.

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#### IBS MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

\_\_\_ I am submitting my 1989 dues (\$20) herewith.

\_\_\_ I would also like to pay dues for 1983-1984 (\$30) to receive copies of the newsletters for those years and a copy of Tom Day, Dietrich Bonhoeffer on Christian Community and Common Sense postpaid.

\_\_\_ I would also like to pay dues for 1985-1986 (\$30) to receive copies of the newsletters for those years and a copy of William Peck, ed., New Studies in Bonhoeffer's Ethics postpaid.

Correct errors, if necessary, in address label on next page. Make checks payable to "International Bonhoeffer Society -- English Language Section," and mail this form (or a Xerox copy of it) with your payment to: J. Patrick Kelley, Treasurer, c/o Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, VA 24501-3199.

INTERNATIONAL BONHOEFFER SOCIETY

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SECTION

1990 Board of Directors Ballot - Vote for Four

\_\_\_\_\_ Geoffrey Kelly

\_\_\_\_\_ Michael Lukens

\_\_\_\_\_ Burton Nelson

\_\_\_\_\_ William Peck

Members whose dues are paid are requested to complete the ballot above and return it to the Society's secretary, Professor Geoffrey B. Kelly, La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA 19141.

Note: Those members who would like to serve on the Board of Directors are urged to send their names and a short résumé to Geff Kelly at the above address. They will be included in subsequent ballots.

International Bonhoeffer Society  
English Language Section  
c/o James Patrick Kelley, managing editor  
Lynchburg College  
Lynchburg, VA 24501  
U.S.A.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED