

C. The Church Participation in the Societal Order

1. Some Background thoughts and ideas:

a. The major questions:

- how does the church govern its own?
- how much does it belong to the societal pattern?
- how strong is its will for change and growth?
- how does it react to alternatives?
- can it accept a margin of error, in itself and society?
- does its role vary based on a population minority/
majority posture?
- how has it fared in the wielding of temporal power?

b. Particular areas of concern in historical perspective:

- (1) Education
- (2) Care of the Needy: hospitals, homes, orphanages, etc.
- (3) Public morality

2. The American Churches and Education (public) (private)

a. The historical pattern:

Following the collapse of the western Roman empire the educational work in the west fell almost totally on the church. There was nothing such as the idea of modern public education but most cathedrals maintained schools in which ecclesiastical subjects were first and various "secular" topics were also given. Availability of this sort of education was meagre and probably the level of learning was low. Monastic societies continued to maintain libraries and some learning could be obtained there but it was available only to the committed persons of the order. This situation was generally true until the time of Charlemagne. With this king came the popularity of the "court schools", very limited in whom could attend, but effective in work. Charlemagne allowed the Saxon cleric, Alcuin, to stylize his school and here developed, I think, the concept of the "seven liberal arts" and the "quadrivium" and the "trivium". There was no great wave of public education but rulers soon became proud of their national institutions and the vast majority of teachers were clerics.

With the coming of scholasticism there was a generally enriched ideal of education and some of the monastic orders began maintaining schools for people outside the order. Universities grew out of the renaissance spirit and the desire of the kings to have something other than armies for personal pleasure.