

'Maybe it would be better all round if the Archdiocese went bankrupt.'

PAY AS YOU PRAY?

This year the Catholics of Liverpool Archdiocese have been assaulted by a money-raising scheme going by the name of the "Christian Responsibility Campaign". Many of them may have wondered why it has a title like that — and for most the answer will surely be painfully obvious.

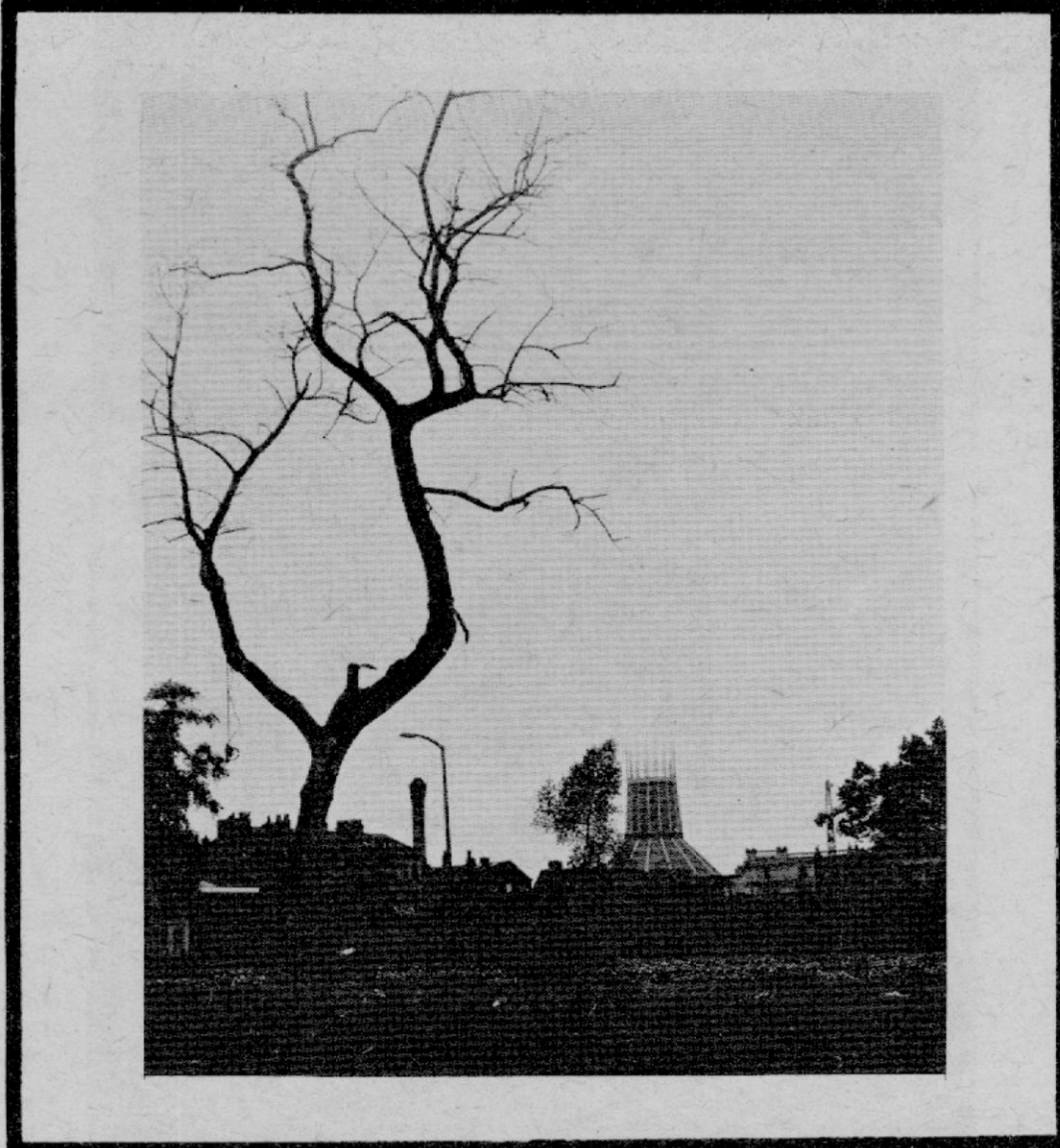
It is that the authorities quite simply want to disguise the true motive of the campaign and make it sound more respectable.

The Archdiocese of Liverpool is in debt: multi-million pound debt to the tune of £8m. What is the debt for? Well, the main thing is Catholic schools which have already been built or which are going up.

Then there are new churches and presbyteries in new housing areas. And of course there's the Cathedral (the one we have to spare). When you read the small print in the many handouts produced for the campaign you will see that it is to pay off this huge debt that the campaign is being run.

But the propaganda for the campaign, including a Pastoral Letter and sermons from the archbishop himself, tries to suggest that the money is wanted to secure the future, and that the real purpose is to develop a sense of responsibility for the church among lay people.

"Christian Responsibility" would make a bit more sense in



these terms: money is needed, and if it's the future we're bothered about, it could be intended that those who give the money should have some say in how it is to be spent.

But, with a debt of £8m and a situation in which even the interest on loans is not being met at present, who can believe anything else than that the money is really wanted simply to pay the debt resulting from expenditures already made?

To be fair to the archbishop, I hear that he wanted to come straight — it was his advisors and the professionals running the campaign that the appeal should be disguised.

The emphasis on lay responsibility is made the more tragically laughable when we look at the causes of the debt. The policy of the English bishops to provide independent Catholic schools for all Catholic children has aroused strong and informed opposition from clergy and lay people for many years.

The arguments have been various, only one of them being the expense of the policy which threatens to bankrupt the English

A LIVERPOOL PRIEST SPEAKS OUT

church if it is persisted in. Yet the church authorities still go on with it, regardless of criticism.

Similarly the Cathedral has been from first to last a monument sponsored by successive Archbishops. Archbishop Heenan simply decided to scrap the old plan and get something cheaper built to have the problem out of the way.

His clerical advisers meekly said 'yes' — and the laity were turned to for money:

In other words, this 'Christian Responsibility' campaign is really a money-raising scheme to pay off debts for which no lay people and precious few clergy have ever had the remotest responsibility.

In one of the handouts (a letter from the Archbishop) there is a paragraph which to a casual glance might suggest some recognition of the errors of the past,

'For too long the clergy have made policy, and the laity have footed the bill.'

and an intention to involve the laity in the councils of the archdiocese as responsible contributors to policy. I quote it in full.

"At present I am considering a number of proposals of special interest to the laity. These include: diocesan collections, which I hope to cut down in number if not abolish altogether when we reach our target; greater lay involvement in administrative matters; the publication of more financial information at both diocesan and parish levels; consultation with the laity in matters of expenditure and ensuring that the revenue is adequate; and a system for identifying and welcoming parish newcomers, which would help to cut leakage and also maintain the level of offertories."

How cynical! The real and incredibly thinly-disguised purpose of parish visiting is to ensure financial stability. In the context 'lay involvement in administrative matters' seems to refer to helping to raise money. The nearest these suggestions get to offering lay participation in policy making is also in financial terms ('in matters of expenditure'), and suggests only consultation (which can of course be ignored if the result of the consultation is unwelcome to the authorities).

But anyway there has been this sort of talk before. When the archdiocesan pastoral council was started in 1968 there was a great deal of talk about how this was to bring the laity into consultations about policy.

But, out of sixty members of the council, thirty are priests or religious. The remaining thirty are lay, but as they represent the laity of the entire archdiocese, they tend to be professional men and women, and are certainly not representative.

Just after the crisis about the Pope's encyclical on birth control (*Humanae Vitae*) this pastoral council discussed a possible statement about the encyclical. This

(continued on facing page)



One in four

One house in four in Britain is uninhabitable on grounds of condition or amenity, according to Prof Colin Buchanan, the planning expert.

"To put the point briefly, these inequalities are firmly related to the pervasive levels of class in our society," he adds.

P.S.

The August issue of the Free Press could contain a letters column — if we get any letters. It's up to you. What do you think of the information carried in the present issue? What else should we report? Letters and comments should be sent to Liverpool Free Press, 107 Brookdale Road, Liverpool 15.

The little-read schoolbook



The Little Red Schoolbook has been little read. Police raided the publishers not long after the book appeared and seized all the copies they could find, on the grounds of obscenity.

After a short trial, the publisher was found guilty and fined £50.

As a result, booksellers have been afraid to handle it. But is the book really obscene? To help Free Press readers make up their minds we are publishing extracts from it. This month's is on schools. Later extracts will be from the sections on sex and drugs.

Some copies of the schoolbook escaped seizure and are obtainable from the Liverpool Free Press, 107 Brookdale Road, Liverpool 15. Price 30p. No charge for postage.

Everybody wants to find out about things. Education should teach you how to find out about the things you need to know and give you the opportunity of developing your own particular talents and interests to the full.

Many teachers think that they themselves should decide what you should know. They think it's a waste of time to let pupils try things out for themselves and let them discuss things.

To learn anything demands an effort from you — and some encouragement to make the

effort. School should give each individual pupil as many opportunities of learning as possible.

If you're bored, you learn only how to be bored. Whether the timetable says maths, geography, or whatever.

If you're not given any responsibility or allowed to choose or decide anything for yourself, you learn to be irresponsible and to depend on others, even if your work gets 10 out of 10.

To learn anything useful it's important that you should want to; that you find the subject interesting; that you understand why you have to learn it; that you get a chance to say something yourself;

that you are allowed to work on the subject in your own way; that you are allowed to cooperate with your friends.

To make sure you learn enough of each subject, the school draws up a timetable. This is usually decided only by the headmaster, not by the teachers and certainly not by the pupils.

You yourself know best when you are bored. Or when you feel you're never allowed to say anything. Tell the teacher. He wants you to learn. Most teachers also want you to enjoy lessons. Because then they enjoy them more too. Talk to your teacher and see if you can't persuade him to make his teaching more interesting.

Schools have to be organised. Lesson times, breaks, meals, courses, etc. all have to be fixed. If these things weren't organised, nobody would be able to get anything done at school.

Some teachers believe that individual teaching means simply listening to pupils one at a time. But if the whole class has to listen too, then it's still class teaching. Perhaps they hand out a book towards the end of the lesson from which you read a short passage and then talk about it. Perhaps they divide up the lesson so that you read, write and talk in the same lesson. Or else they simply check your homework and set the next lot.

This is all class teaching. It's the teacher who decides what is to be done in the lesson. If your teacher always uses this method, he's wrong. There are many other methods and he should use them.

A good teacher may sometimes let you decide yourselves whether you want to work alone, in twos or in groups. Perhaps he also lets you decide what you want to work on within the subject you're doing. He may give you a project and a few suggestions on how to tackle it — and then leave the rest to you. He may send you off somewhere to collect information. He may just throw you into the middle of a subject and let you experiment for yourselves. This can be very difficult, but you really learn something from it.

If you're lucky enough to have a teacher like this, it's a good idea to think of the difficulties he has and give him your support. In return you'll enjoy working with him. He'll almost always be easy to talk to and will give you good ideas and advice and help you with practical and personal things.

Mucking about is another form of escape. You muck about when you're bored. Mucking about is escaping from a teacher who isn't so strict that he frightens you. You

often muck about if you've had a lousy time in the previous lesson, or because there are too many stupid school rules, or just because you want to let off steam. This is a natural reaction.

Some teachers would like to make their teaching interesting but simply don't get a chance because of all the noise you make. Never muck about unless you're absolutely certain that the teacher is an incurable bore and you've tried every way of persuading him to change.

But remember — even if a teacher is a bore, mucking about won't actually solve the problem. You'll have to take more positive action.

Homework shouldn't be just a routine duty, set because it says so in the timetable. It should give you a chance to work on things on your own and develop the ideas discussed in class. It's important for you to learn to think things out for yourself and to express them clearly.

If you find it difficult to work at home, tell your teacher about it. Get together with some friends who have the same problem and ask the school to let you stay there a bit longer each day to do your homework.

Cheating means just copying the answers from someone else or from the back of the book. Cooperating means working together with other people so that you understand things better. But some teachers call this cheating. Ask these teachers to tell you how you can cooperate without cheating.