CHARITY: BIBLICAL AND POLITICAL

Many sincere persons now advance the argument that Jesus Christ Himself endorsed the principle of using the force of democratic government to "take from those who have, and to give to those who have not." They claim that the Bible fully supports the concept that aid to the unfortunate -- charity -- is a proper function of government. Since, in addition to religion, this concept concerns both economics and political science, it falls within the scope of the Foundation's field of research. Russell J. Clinchy, pastor of the First Church of Christ (Congregational) in Hartford, Connecticut, was asked to study the various issues involved in this question. Here is his report. Editor's Note, February, 1951.

1. Give author Russell J. Clinchy's definition of charity. Why is charity a purely personal matter? Why is it important for us to keep the personal nature of charity in mind? See page 159.

2. How does he differentiate between biblical charity and political charity? See pages 159-160. See the same pages for his explanation of how and why "the spirit of charity was debased to 'public welfare.' "

3. What is the teaching of the Judeo-Christian religion concerning personal responsibility? See page 160.

4. Give the author's description of "the drama with which the Bible opens." See pages 160-161.

5. Read the parable of the talents in The Gospel according to St. Matthew: Chapter 25, verses 14 to 30, and explain how in this parable Jesus teaches "the sense of personal responsibility." See page 161.

6. The Good Samaritan "personally and voluntarily accepted a responsibility for the man who was in need." Explain and illustrate this statement giving particular attention to the underscored words. See pages 161-162.

7. A good brief description of political charity is given on page 162 where Dr. Clinchy relates what Christ probably did not say to the Good Samaritan.

8. Show how political charity employs compulsion and is, therefore, not charity at all. See page 162.

9. What evidence does the author give in support of his belief that if Jesus