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Industrial Sunday in Calcutta

[We print here the order of Service held in St Paul's Cathedral, Calcutta, on Industrial Sunday, 5th November 1972. The Service, entitled 'MEN: MONEY: MATERIALS—A SERVICE OF REFLECTION', was arranged by Canon S. K. Biswas, and was attended by representatives of management, workers, trades unions, commercial associations and the diplomatic corps.]

A MOMENT OF REFLECTION

Kalhil Gibran wrote:

You work that you may keep pace with the earth and the soul of the earth.

For to be idle is to become a stranger to the seasons and to step out of life's processions that marches on in majesty and proud submission towards the infinite.

Always you have been told that work is a curse and labour a misfortune.

But I say unto you when you work you fulfil a part of earth's furthest dream, assigned to you when that dream was born. And in keeping yourself with labour, you are in truth loving life. And to love life with labour is to be intimate with life's inmost secret.

I say unto you:

All work is empty save when there is love.

And when you work with love, you bind yourself to yourself and to one another and to God.

Tagore wrote:

Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found? Our master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation; he is bound with us all for ever.

Jesus said:

The hour has come that neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. The hour is coming and now is when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth—for that is what the Father wants.

And a word that suggest a time when religious places shall fall and man shall find life and worship are one.

PART ONE: AFFIRMATION

Hymn

God of concrete, God of steel,
God of piston and of wheel,
God of pylon, God of steam,
God of girder and of beam,
God of atom, God of mine,
all the world of power is Thine.

Lord of cable, Lord of rail,
Lord of highway and of mail,
Lord of rocket, Lord of flight,
Lord of roaring satellite,
Lord of lightning's flashing line,
all the world of speed is Thine.

God of Turk, God of Greek,
God of every tongue men speak,
God of Arab, God of Jew,
God of every racial hue,
God of Congo, Palestine,

God of Congo, Palestine, all the world of man is Thine.

Lord of science, Lord of art,
Lord of map and graph and chart
Lord of physics, and research,
Lord of Bible, Lord of Church,
Lord of sequence and design,
all the world of truth is Thine.

God whose glory fills the earth, gave the universe its birth, Charges men to recreate love of Him we celebrate, Claims mankind by grace divine, all the world of life is Thine.

V.* I remember Jesus said: The hour has come that neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. The hour is coming and now is when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth—for that is what the Father wants.

All standing:

- L. Why have you assembled?
- C. We are friends of Jesus who lived on earth almost two thousand years ago.

He did not come to be served but to serve. We have assembled to be served by Him through His Word, His community and His new life.

L=Leader.

C=Congregation.

V=Voice.

[•] The following symbols are used throughout:

- L. Why have you come here?
- C. Today we worship together—people of different churches or of different faiths or of little faith. We come to bring to God ourselves and our work. We come in order to recognise each other as fellow men and women; to greet each other with the old words: 'Peace be with you'.
- L. And peace be with you as well.
- C. We know that peace is an option God opens to man. We would accept it gratefully on behalf of the world God loves. We represent the others: the doubters and the atheists. We represent those who mourn and those who have been silenced. We bring with us obedience to God and rejection of God, we bring wishful-thinking and self-excuse, we bring tears and swearwords, the hypocrisy and the cruelty of all the world. We bring these not as something foreign to us but as parts of ourselves which need to be redeemed and healed. We come as men who are like all others.
- L. If we are like all men, why should we come together?
- C. Not because we are better or different, but because a Word comes to our hearing and draws us.
- V. The right time has come and the Kingdom of God is near. Turn and believe the Good News.
- L. Do you believe?
- C. We do not know. We are held by this man Jesus, whose freedom and concern for others we recognise as ultimate. We are held by his refusal to give answers and yet also by his discernment. We are baffled by his lowliness and his authority. But whether this is belief we do not know. And whether this can have much to do with our life in an industrial society we do not know. The majority of our generation are turning away from faith.
- L. Will you also turn away?
- C. To whom should we turn? The words he speaks hide the mystery at the centre of life. We shall stay and work out the strength and the weakness of our faith.

The Terms of Employment

V. (Words from the story of creation in the Bible, the first chapter of Genesis.)

Acceptance with Joy (All stand)

L. Let us be thankful for the facts. The industrial age is intricately knit: drawing on skill, spreading it, taking in money, making it; punctuating rural seasons with weekly wage; filling shop-shelves and shoppers' pockets; uncovering new strengths in man; demanding new understanding of relationship; changing

the life of nations; an elemental revolution far beyond the business man's opinion and the miner's sweat.

- C. How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all, The earth is full of your riches.
- L. In the Bankura District of West Bengal the last fifteen years have seen mud roads change to tarmac; riverbeds and gullies have been bridged and forded; numerous buses ply now and people fill them, busy between towns and villages on roads that used to be lonely; High Schools now stand where primary schools hardly existed; health centres increase; the Kangsabati dam spreads its waters through canals, and water, hybrid seed and fertilizer now bring harvest to old bad lands; and Durgapur stands to the north, key to much of this, its wages radiating out, its demands stimulating markets in a hundred towns and villages—the hot steel symbol of a new era, a new age of that dominion offered man by God, there in the depths of creation. Here in Calcutta the streets and the life of the slums are slowly but surely being transformed.
- C. How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all, The earth is full of your riches.
- L. Out of the crucible of man's mind come the formulae of space; the magnitude of stars becomes the needed elbow room of Adam.
- C. When I see the heaven, the work of your hands, the moon and the stars which you have arranged, What is man that you should keep him in mind? Mortal man that you should care for him?
- L. Yet you have made him less than a god;
 With glory and honour you crowned him
 Gave him power over the works of your hand,
 put all things under his feet.
- C. How great is your name, O Lord our God, through all the earth.

With Acceptance

L. Freedom: The industrial age is secular: the universe is no longer under obligation to the idol in the field or on the pedestal— I am free to use and explore my environment. In society also I am free from the straightjacket of the divine superiority of ruler or caste—no man should be my master but by consent—not even a Manager, not even a Union official not even a priest; and, I hear a voice saying—not even a husband! And morally also, nothing is taboo.

I require the reason for a 'do' or a 'don't'.

I am free to walk in the Way wherein I should walk—whatever that is.

And Responsibility

L. Yes; we can do anything, that is our freedom. But we have to decide what we will do. Industrial man has come of age, DECISION is a new dimension. There are plenty of critical decisions to be made in today's world. Must industrial man be threatened by nuclear explosion, or the failure of an industry, or a million Oxfam babies before he makes those decisions?

Hymn: Hymn for the Space Age

- God made man to be the master,
 Of his earth and all it holds
 Knowledge, Science, ever vaster,
 Human stature now unfolds;
 His the power, his the glory,
 His the kingship in our day
 God has given man the sway.
- In the depth of steamy jungles,
 on the sun-scorched desert sand,
 On the crisp hard polar ice-packs,
 Man as master now may stand;
 His the earth and all its glories,
 But today our hearts leap high—
 On the Moon his footprints lie!
- 3. Yes, today with eyes of wonder,
 See man reach towards the stars,
 From a world still torn asunder,
 Marred by bitter human scars;
 His the power, His the knowledge,
 He can do whate'er he will
 Why this cry of anguish still?
- 4. In Calcutta's mud-splashed bustees, Midst the rubble of Vietnam, In our hurt, divided cities, Hunger, fear and war's alarm: Men are dying, men are crying, Men are fighting for a place While their fellows conquer space.

6. Now we see the choice of ages,

Trusted to our hands today;

Take our solemn thanks, O Father,

Grant us grace and strength we pray:

That we choose not desolation,

Mocked by satellites above:

May we choose a word of love.

(Written on the day 3 men returned safely to earth after having completed the first landing on the Moon, July 1969)

PART TWO: TENSION

THE AFFIRMATION BECOMES DEMANDING A MANAGER REFLECTS ON THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD TODAY

Amidst all the complexity of modern industrial life which we see reflected in the city around us we are sometimes inclined to forget the underlying simplicity of all industrial effort. Why do we work?—in order to be able to sustain life—at its simplest level—we hunt to eat—we plant to eat—or—we do a job of work to produce something to exchange for something to eat that someone else has hunted or grown—all industry to a greater or lesser extent is directly or indirectly based on the need to obtain the necessities to sustain life. What then goes wrong?—basically it is greed.

The temptation of the employer to give as little as possible to gain as much as possible—the temptation of the employed to get as much as possible for doing as little as possible—all imbalance and injustice throughout the world is a direct or indirect result of such greed.

It is impossible to restore the balance or to correct injustice without sacrifice since otherwise even increased overall production tends to be shared on the basis of existing imbalance. At the international level this is what UNCTAD (the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) and their slogan—'trade not aid'—is all about. There is need for the developed nations to relax their hold on secondary manufacture and concentrate on the more sophisticated technical and scientific developments, permitting the developing nations to add more value to their primary products.

At our level there is need for wage-earners to be prepared to make some sacrifice, in the form for example of a voluntary wage freeze, to assist in providing for the unemployed—preferably by financing new employment, but at worst by providing unemployment benefit. The tendency of existing wage-earners to demand an ever higher share of the national product helps only to maintain existing disparities and to frustrate employment expansion. Employers are frequently to blame and are even more frequently blamed, but employees and their organised representatives are not blameless—to take an example recently referred to by the Union Labour Minister and subsequently expanded upon by the Prime Minister—general introduction wherever practicable of seven day working could boost production and provide fresh

employment at no, or next to no, capital cost; and yet the Trades Unions are foremost in opposing this measure wherever sought to be introduced. Why? Because it could involve loss of overtime earnings for existing workers.

Nor is Government without its share of blame. What employer struggling against rising costs in order to remain in viable economic existence and yet forced statutorily to pay a so called 'profit' bonus, even when operating at a loss, can hope to think of fresh invest-

ment or expansion of employment opportunities?

At Government, corporate and individual level we too often think of our responsibility for others only in terms of acts of charity. There is too little feeling of shared responsibility for the existence of conditions in which such charity is needed and therefore too little feeling of shared responsibility for doing something radical to change those circumstances—to eliminate, at least for potential wage earners, the need for giving as charity that which should be there by right by

way of food, shelter, clothing, education and work for all.

We are conditioned by our background to give of our surplus not of our substance. Industry and trades unions share an equal responsibility and are often equally lacking in accepting the need for voluntary sacrifice, not only as a duty to others but, at its lowest, as a means of self-preservation. We live in an age of glorious revealed knowledge in the shape of technological, scientific and every other kind of human advancement; but we also live in an atmosphere of cynical lip-service to our shared responsibility for creating conditions in which the God-given means of sustaining God-given life can be available for all.

Where is the lead to come from? From the United Nations? UNCTAD has tried and so far failed to overcome the suspicions and intrigues of political power-seeking. From national Governments? Where is the political leader with the courage to sacrifice votes? From industry or from labour? Both are too preoccupied with the problems of their own existence to heed those of the third still so politely knocking at the door. From the Church? There is too little evidence of the Church's own response in terms of its own income and property. From God? It is already there if we are not afraid to follow it. These then are the questions I would leave with us all tonight. There are no individual answers, but let us hope that our collective conscience will be awakened to effective action instead of words, before that door from the third world comes crashing down in our midst.

MR DAVID MILNER

Silence

A WORKER'S EXPECTATIONS

A couple of months ago, I was asked to present a paper on the Post-election attitudes and expectations of Workers in West Bengal, in one of the meetings of the Cathedral Management Group. In order to know at first hand what were really the expectations of the workers—expectations about their future, expectations about their

Management, about their Trade Unions and about National Development—we interviewed a fair number of them as a random sample in the vast Industrial Complex of Durgapur. We interviewed them at tea-shops and market places; within factories and outside factories; and what turned out in this paper I here share with you.

- 1. Most of them hope for a bright future but expect to struggle hard to achieve it.
- 2. Most of them expect in terms of what they can get out of the changed conditions. To put it in their own words 'It does not really matter whether it is Rama or Ravana, Tom or Dick, who is at the top. What really matters is whether he can give us a little more than what we have now.'
- 3. Most of them expect their Trade Unions to wangle more and more benefits for them, whatever the brand of the Unions.
- 4. They expect management to move with the changed spirit of the times but are rather doubtful that management would change. They expect all standards that are demanded of the Labour to be demanded of the management also.
- 5. They have expectations of being treated on an equal basis and not as mere roll-numbers in the factory.
- 6. Some of them felt that workers' expectations belie their hopes, for, in their opinion, what is being done now at present is something like being busy arranging and decorating the chairs on the deck while the ship is slowly sinking. They expect that for justice and fairplay to prevail, the whole system ought to be changed with a corresponding change in values.

Reflecting on these, we questioned ourselves:

1. Are the workers, in their struggle to get more and more, which of course are symptoms of a greater need, forgetting their responsibility to those brethren who have not even got that much of rights and privileges as they have? Do they forget that they too have a responsibility to the community at large? In their zeal for their own cause, do they in fact increase the alienation which is already a malady in the industry? Does this inward directed interest prevent them from really growing up into maturity and as a result work merely for money like hirelings instead of like heirs? Does not the poor show in performance by Public Sector Industries show this?

What then can be done? Whatever it is, let it not be arranging the chairs on the deck while the ship is sinking. I would like to end this with a question addressed to us all. We, who follow the faith of one who did not believe in any assumptions of divisions among mankind—Jew or Gentile, Roman or Greek, worker or manager—we who believe in the God whom prophets like Jeremiah, Micah and Hosea repeatedly proclaimed as the God of the powerless, the poor and the hungry—what side are we on? As Christians, are we perpetuating these assumptions of divisions and yet trying our best to think that we are on the side of Christ?

ACT OF CONFESSION (All kneel)

L. Let us pray.

Let us recall, not our busyness, not the heaviness of our responsibility, not our most enlightened acts, but the sickness of industrial life.

Where our struggle for justice has been weakened by the prejudice of class, caste or opinion:

Where we have given up trying to view the whole and turned to the easier claim of our own 'necessities':

Where we have been more concerned with who is right rather than with what is right:

Where we have not been sensitive to the needs of others:

Let us say together:

C. O Lord, Spirit of Justice,

O Lord, Spirit of Love,

We acknowledge before you that we are not in true awe of you and we do not love you above all else.

We do not delight in prayer: we run away from your word.

We find little joy in your service.

We do not share in what should be the freedom of your children. We are impressed by our responsibilities but we do not break through our hostilities.

We are not free from obsession with money.

We do not really love our neighbour.

Our hearts are divided with doubt and guilty fears.

We lay our brokenness brefore you, O Lord.

Silence

The Hymn

Judge eternal, throned in splendour Lord of Lords and King of Kings; With your living fire of Judgment Purge this state of bitter things; Unify our hurt divisions With the healing of your wings.

Still the tired folk are pining For the hour that brings release; And the city's crowded clangour Cries aloud for sin to cease; And the factories and the rice fields Plead in silence for their peace.

Crown, O God, your own creation Cleave our darkness with your sword; Help in all our hard decisions With the purpose of your word; Touch the body of society With the future of the Lord.

PART THREE: MEETING POINT

(A story told by Jesus is read which tells of the generosity of God in his dealings with mankind and, perhaps, points to a new relationship between men: Matt. 20:1-16)

A DESCRIPTION OF AN EXPERIMENT IN SHARING

'It is just too bad' says the manager, 'that there are so many unemployed young men in this city, the State and the country. consider myself to be a reasonably good Manager, I try to run my concern as best as I can—in spite of so many problems and difficulties. My Firm employs so many people, and we do look after them. I and my Firm pay our taxes—exorbitant though they are. Beyond that I just cannot be bothered. I cannot overnight increase the employment potential of my Firm. In any case, with all the heavy taxes they are collecting from us, it is for the Government to sort out the unemployment problem. Please do not bother me'. 'But', says the unemployed young man, 'am I not a vital part of society? Is the future of the country not linked with me and my generation? Does society not owe this much to me, that I should at least have the opportunity to be gainfully occupied? I am not asking for charity. It is my birthright to earn my daily bread. I have a University degree. I have for the last three years walked from office to office, from Employment Exchange to Employment Exchange looking for a job, but no one has bothered about me. It is not my fault that society has failed to create sufficient avenues of employment. It is not my fault that the educational system you adults have created and fostered, does not make me very good employment material. I cannot wait for ever for things to improve. It is for you to do something for me-not only for my sake, but for your own. It is in your enlightened self-interest to do this'.

You have heard the Manager—who is not too unreasonable in what he says. You have heard the young man—his impassioned plea for fair-play, as well as his veiled threat that he will not take it lying down for ever. Where do the two meet? No doubt, the Manager and his friends have no legal obligations towards the unemployed young man and his friends. No doubt, legally and constitutionally it is for the Government to make the economic freedom, guaranteed under the constitution, a reality. But can the Managers—the leaders of Commerce and Industry afford to leave it at that? In creating a new society, new values, new human relationships, can the Managers afford to sit on the fence, to keep their noses clean?

Thank God, there is a growing awareness among a section of the leaders of Commerce and Industry and Banking that one has to forget about purely legal obligations, and to go several steps beyond these in accepting one's moral responsibility towards society, and the future generation. 'CYSEC'—the Calcutta Youth Self-Employment Centre is an experiment in this direction—in bringing those whom God has blessed with much, and the struggling unemployed youth, closer, in

an effort to evolve a new pattern. It is not an act of charity from one individual to another, from one group to another. It is a purely voluntary act of faith, a testimony of united action of sharing of time, talent and experience, a lighting of a candle in a dark room, by the helper and helped together. 'CYSEC' was born at the end of 1970, out of the realisation that new job opportunities are not, and will not in the foreseeable future, be growing fast enough to keep pace with the fast increasing number of job seekers, and one of the solutions is to sell the idea of self-employment to young men, and actively to help them to become self-employed small entrepreneurs. With this objective in view, a partnership was formed, purely on a voluntary basis, of some leaders of Commerce and Industry and Nationalised Banking, the Church, certain Social Service Organisations and the Ministry of Education, Government of India. The modus operandi that was decided upon included popularising the idea of self-employment among the younger generation, creating a place for self-employment training in educational institutions, arranging for practical training to equip young men for self-employed careers, constantly screening and interviewing young men with a view to fit them into the right selfemployed careers, helping such young men to prepare their project and viability reports, and to do their market survey, and other formalities, with a view to setting up their small self-employed units, helping them to secure Bank finance for their projects, as well as the necessary initial orders from industries.

The practical project training centre at Behala was formally opened in February, 1971 by the Governor of West Bengal, and the training of the first batch of young men was recently completed. Out of this first batch, as well as certain other young men who had been trained elsewhere, already a number of self-employed units have been set up in different parts of Calcutta, and more are in the process of being set up. The target is to have at least twenty-five such groups operating by the end of the current year. In the meanwhile, the second batch of trainees at the training centre at Behala have already been admitted, and more are in the process of being admitted.

The process is a continuing one, and is expected to be a model which other organisations will copy and repeat. It is realised that, by itself, 'CYSEC' cannot make any significant impact, but as a working model it is expected to do so. 'CYSEC' is one institution that has grown up with the full awareness that it will never succeed unless it is operated as a close partnership between leaders of Commerce, Industry, Banking, Social Service Organisations and so on, and the young men who are going to be the beneficiaries of this experiment. The idea which 'CYSEC' represents is slowly permeating into the educational system, and with the help of 'CYSEC', one of the leading educational institutions in the city is already working on the blue print for introducing a self-employment orientated stream, over and above the usual humanities and science streams.

The money that the nationalised Banks are, and will be, investing in the young men, for their self-employed units, without insisting on the usual guarantees and securities, represents an act of faith of society, and an investment in the future generation. It is appropriate and significant that 'CYSEC' has been included this year in this Industrial Sunday Service, and I would close with an appeal in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who did not consider it beneath his dignity to wield the working tools of a Carpenter, to leaders of commerce, industry, banking, education, government and the church, to come forward and associate themselves even more closely with this novel venture, for the need is indeed very great.

MR K. K. DUTT

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Glory to you, God, I believe that you are Holy and One and Just. I believe that you are the Creator of all things and that you have given man to have dominion over your created world.

I believe in sharing with man in need the reward of labour. I affirm that each man is my brother and that together as a family we must nourish each other; my strength for others' weakness and others' strengths for my failings. I believe in my duty to support those in the human family who suffer from the ravages of selfish man. I believe that your grace and justice are essential to feed the spirit of man.

I believe that every man must be free to grow, free to be concerned. I realise that to be truly free I must commit myself to the protection of my brother's human rights and his dignity; I believe in the independence and interdependence of man living within the human family.

I believe that before I am prepared to dominate I must seek to build a society where every man has equal opportunity to live and love to your glory. I believe in social and economic freedom; that I must shake off the shackles of slavery and injustice, greed, self-interest, apathy and pride, and work for the building up of our nation.

Because I believe in this I commit myself to it.

MEN, MONEY, MATERIALS AND THE CROSS OF JESUS CHRIST

All Standing

- V. YOUR PRIME SIN IS NOT PRIDE OR SELFISHNESS BUT SLOTH
- L. To be slothful is to refuse to be fully man, to refuse to care for and love our fellow, to refuse to share with him dominion and control of our world.

Jesus Christ is not slothful.

- C. True, he knew the necessity of food and shelter.
- L. He knew the pull of family.
- C. He knew the hurt of enemies.

- L. He knew the unending facts of poverty and disease.
- C. He knew the demands of work and politics.
- L. And he held all these together without fail.
- C. In him our nature found its balance.
- L. There was no difference in him between the good of one and the good of all.
- C. Self-interest for him took the same identity as love for the world.
- L. And he said:
- V. The kingdom is at hand; you are and live towards this. You must believe what is happening here.
- L. There is no soft comfort here: yet let us take comfort in the fact that the sweat and blood of true justice are more to be found in the struggling of industry than in any cloistered world.
- C. In the Cross: in the conflict of power; in the bewilderment; in the agony; in the impossible but so human situation, Good News is headlined.
- L. When Christ seemed most committed to failure we hear loudest the only promise of ultimate worth: God is love. In that word all order and justice are summed up; all interests find their unity.
- C. But these are words. Where are tomorrow's decisions? And where is tomorrow's freedom?
- L. Industrial man is faced with decisions as never before; here is the full human responsibility to be exercised; here freedom is most at stake.

When we assemble as the Church we cannot tell the world (which is also ourselves in part) what to do. But there is a fact that we are to take hold of: there is a crux to every decision. In the 'world' we describe it is in terms of commercial risk, or of whatever group interest is most to hand. In the language of God there is only one interest and in it all share; and the crux of every decision is a cross.

Hymn

Lord, look upon our working days. Busied in factory, office, store; May wordless work thy name adore, The common round spell out thy praise!

Bent to the lot our crafts assign, Swayed by deep tides of need and fear, In loyalties torn, the truth unclear, How may we build to thy design? Thou art the workman, Lord, not we; All worlds were made at thy command. Christ, their sustainer, bared his hand, Rescued them from futility.

Our part to do what he'll commit, Who strides the world, and calls men all Partners in pain and carnival, To grasp the hope he won for it.

Cover our faults with pardon full, Shield those who suffer when we shirk: Take what is worthy in our work, Give it its portion in thy rule.

All kneel for PRAYERS and THE BLESSING

RECESSIONAL: A HYMN OF PRAISE FOR INDUSTRY

God is working in our day, Hallelujah. We can see his mighty deeds, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

Glory be to thee O God, Hallelujah. Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

God is present in industry, Hallelujah. Calling men to live as men, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

God is present where men work, Hallelujah. At the loom and the machine, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

God is present where men meet, Hallelujah. At the club and the canteen, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

God is present where men fight, Hallelujah. For the justice of their rights, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

God is present where men plan, Hallelujah. In production and research, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

God is present in man's despair, Hallelujah. And he suffers with the poor, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

God is where men organise, Hallelujah. In the union and the board, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

God's where men negotiate, Hallelujah. Calling them to choose the right, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

God is working in our day, Hallelujah.

Loving, judging, setting free, Hallelujah. (Chorus)

Where we see our God at work, Hallelujah. There shall we, his people be, Hallelujah. (Chorus)