Newbigin Speaks Of Unity, Communism In Southern India

By RICHARD BEST

Rice students were given a chance Monday to hear the Rt. Rev. Lesslie Newbigin, Bishop of the Church of South India and General Secretary of the International Missionary Society.

Bishop Newbigin briefly cited the rationale behind the ecumenical movement and recalled the history of the South India body in which Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists committed themselves to unity.

THE SCOTTISH cleric reviewed the reaction of the non-western world to Christianity—the "fantastic gallery of caricatures" of the Church which Christ willed.

The Hindu finds it difficult to see the Lord of Creation in the

sects so absorbed in the pride and aggressiveness of the white races. Christians, says the Hindu, are not content with the name of Jesus; they must add other labels.

This inherent contradiction led to union in South India in 1947, although twenty-seven years of negotiations were necessary for the three strands of Christian tradition, episcopal, connciliar, and congregational to be fused into one body. The union was not a compromise, but rather "a common movement of penitence" to ascertain the true meaning of the Gospel.

A QUESTION from the floor raised the problem of Christians in the Indian state of Korela, the only place in the world where the Communists win in free elections.

The Bishop replied that Korela had the largest percentage of Christians in India and that Christianity creates the desire for a new order.

The Church, he added, must show the way toward justice or naturally men will turn to Marxism, which he asserted was merely a secularization of Christianity. Newbigin scored the idea that the Christian’s ultimate allegiance is to the Western political and social system rather than to Christ.