

The Freethinker

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN once remarked that if a dog bit a man it would not be news, but if the man was to bite the dog that indeed would be news — the genuine article! This sapient comment occurred to me the other day when I read in an Irish Newspaper that even Judas Iscariot, the traitor who delivered up "Our Lord" to the Jewish priests might not be damned after all. Indeed, the clerical author of the article in question was of the opinion that, despite the unparalleled enormity of his crime, Judas Iscariot may "after all be still in purgatory and not in Hell". Return-tickets, it will be appreciated can be taken for purgatory (unlike hell, which is strictly a one way traffic); Judas may eventually come out and the priest (who must surely be a bit of a Rationalist at heart) announced that he himself was praying, at mass, for Judas' eventual liberation from the pains of purgatory. There is, it would appear, hope for us all: even for Judas Iscariot!

Judas is Re-educated

"Here's News", as any more popular newspaper would phrase it. Judas Iscariot, the Gospel financier and prototype of Shylock, who betrayed Jesus Christ for thirty pieces of silver. For hitherto it has always been orthodox theological doctrine that Judas Iscariot was not only the greatest of all recorded criminals, but was the one person in human history who was certainly damned. For whilst the Christian Church has always been chary about making definite pronouncements on the *post-mortem* damnation of even the greatest of sinners (a Catholic I used to know asked his priest whether Ernest Renan was in hell, and the reply was that he was so in all probability but "only God knew") no such cautious inhibition has ever been manifested in the case of Judas. His was the one unpardonable crime; probably — or so learned exegetes have surmised — that mysterious "sin against the Holy Ghost", which no less a person than "Our Lord" himself pronounced to be beyond any conceivable forgiveness either in this world or the next.

Hence, acting it would appear unanimously, theologians have agreed that Judas Iscariot is the one human being of whom it may be stated safely and certainly that he is eternally resident in hell. Nowadays, however, "winds of change", blowing so vigorously on earth — and already observable at the Vatican Council — are blowing even in hell — no doubt, a welcome change of temperature for the inmates! That is, if there really are any inmates left in the abode of eternal torment. For if, after all, Judas is not really bad enough for hell who really is? Are the Devil and his Angels permanently unemployed? Surely what we witnessing is nothing less than a theological revolution! Re-education is being substituted for punitive damnation!

The Strange Case of Judas Iscariot

This matter under discussion is not one only of great interest but of extreme complexity, for it embraces some knotty points in both the celestial sciences of theology and astronomy. To commence with the latter, where pre-

cisely, is hell located; and why precisely does it still remain obstinately concealed, from our telescopes, even the all-pervasive radio telescope at Jodrell Bank? For let us be clear upon this abstruse question; the Catholic Church in its infallible wisdom, has definitely determined that hell—and for that matter purgatory—are not states of mind or terrifying allegories (as some misguided heretics have not scrupled to affirm) but actual places. And the fires which everlastingly burn within them are not figurative, but real material fires, which those imprisoned within can feel with their sensitive organs. This must obviously be so since—as the eminent Jesuit Denis Petau once aptly com-

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

Hope for Judas Iscariot?

By F. A. RIDLEY

mented — "it would be as impossible to torment an immaterial spirit with physical fire as it would be, say, to paint a smell" (*verb sap*).

This being indubitably so, and hell being a place consisting of material fire, it must surely have length, breadth and height, like any other material body. For it is to the point here, to note that the Catholic Church has officially condemned the Berkeleyan doctrine of the non-existence of matter (it had to, if only to safeguard the dogma of Transubstantiation!) To what part of the visible universe then, must we turn our telescopes in order to observe hell and purgatory? One could plausibly conjecture that due to the intensity of their eternal fires, they ought surely to be bright objects clearly visible a long way off.

But this astronomic problem of Judas's celestial (or subterranean) whereabouts is vastly less complicated than is the theological problem. Only consider the precise and inexplicable crime of Judas which has caused most theologians to deny even the hypothetical possibility of his salvation. He betrayed the second person of the most Holy and undivided Trinity who had descended upon earth for the sole purpose of achieving our salvation by his own death on the Cross. So far, so good. But where does Judas enter the celestial drama of divine sacrifice and of human salvation? Surely he was a necessary and inevitable part of it: no betrayal, no trial; no crucifixion; no crucifixion, no salvation!

Assuming (as in all reverence, we surely must assume) that the death of Christ was planned by his heavenly Father from all eternity, must not Judas's betrayal have been an original and indispensable part of the divine plan? And if so, ought not Judas to be canonised (as, say, St. Judas of our Redemption) for playing his part so well in the predestined plan of our salvation? Briefly, why damn Judas at all? For, had he not betrayed "Our Lord" none of us could or would have been saved from the dire consequences of original sin. Surely, Judas ought to be regarded as a benefactor? Clearly the theological problems involved are complex: the most famous traitor in recorded history is assuredly shrouded in mystery on every side.

Let Judas Out!

However, we must all be thankful for the amount of light, small as it is at present, that the Irish cleric has been able to throw upon the present whereabouts of Judas.

For, whilst according to the majority of experts on the lower regions of eschatology, there is not actually a vast amount of difference between the temperatures of hell and purgatory, there is this certainly important distinction: one can get out of purgatory — in fact, one generally does, in God's good time! But "one stays put" in hell for all eternity. Accordingly if — as our Irish cleric suggests — Judas is at present in purgatory, and not (as hitherto supposed) in hell, he can get out; and our Irish

contemporary expresses a cautious hope that this will eventually happen. I hope so too! In fact, I feel convinced that I express the unanimous opinion of all readers of this journal in hoping that by the end of this current year of grace 1964, Judas Iscariot will be finally released from purgatory. Elementary justice demands it! Two thousand years confinement in a temperature somewhere around boiling point is a sufficiently stiff sentence, even for the unique crime of betraying the Son of God.

Professor Flew on The Objectivity of Ethics

ON WEDNESDAY, September 18th, 1963, Professor Antony Flew spoke to the Melbourne Rationalist Society on "How Far Can a Secular Ethic be Objective?" The Chairman, W. Glanville Cook, introduced Professor Flew and his subject matter by quoting a recent dictum of Lord Denning, the judge appointed by the Macmillan government in England to investigate the Profumo affair. Lord Denning had laid down, "Without religion there can be no morality, and without morality there can be no law." This of course was to deny flatly the possibility of a purely secular ethic — a bold assertion on the part of an authority charged to investigate the morality and legality of actions of persons in high places whose dubious proceedings had to be reconciled with their "sound" religious training.

Professor Flew quoted Bertrand Russell as noting that when he published ethical judgments on political questions he was apt to be told that he had no right to do so, because he did not believe in the objectivity of ethical standards. Russell's reply was: Well, I am not satisfied of the perfection of my own ethical judgments, but still less am I impressed by those of others.

Could we get beyond that position, in the effort to find moral standards which would be incumbent on everyone, whether the person making the moral judgment, or persons considering the judgment?

The lecturer said that David Hume, "the first great humanistic philosopher," had developed in the eighteenth century the first — the first in modern times — "world" ethical outlook which was secular through and through. Hume had written, in 1740, a letter, while his *Treatise of Human Nature* was in preparation, which put the proposition that vice and virtue, like the perception of sounds, or of colours, or of heat and cold, were not qualities of objects, but were perceptions in the mind. To pronounce some action or opinion to be "vicious" meant simply that the person pronouncing judgment felt that blame ought to be attributed in respect of it. So morality, Hume posited, was a matter of sentiments, a function of human desires and revulsions.

In every traditional system of morality he had met with, Professor Flew said, the author posited a god. Instead of stating a position in terms of fact — "It is," or "it is not" to be so — the approach was that "it ought," or "it ought not" to be so. Only in the last two or three decades had it become recognised that this difference was of the greatest importance — observation of the gulf between describing and prescribing, between the disinterested spectator and the active participant taking it upon himself (or as from God) to make decisions of a moral character.

With this powerful logical instrument provided two centuries ago by Hume, modern ethical philosophers have seen that morality cannot be logically founded on religion. The supposed wishes of a deity cannot be a ground; these are only statements of non-moral facts (supposing

the "wishes" to be facts). Indeed, it is obviously impossible to do what Lord Denning, as quoted by Mr. Cook, says must be the case, i.e., to derive law from morality, morality being derivative only from religion.

Are things good because God says so? Or does God say so because they are good? If the former, then ethics or morality is degraded into a worship of power. If the latter, then God is not needed for the fashioning of an ethic; human beings can work this out themselves, on grounds of duty, mutual obligation or the like.

The problem, then, is how to provide a positive account of what is being said when someone pronounces a moral judgment.

Kant, the second great philosopher of the eighteenth century Enlightenment, took us further with his concept of an imperative: we *have* to do what has the cogency of universality, if there is to be an acceptable moral order. Hume's "pleasing sense of approbation," on the part of the spectator of what he feels to be a morally or ethically right action, will not do as a standard. For, after all, the ideal impartial spectator does not exist; this spectator might just as well be God.

Another Human concept — that morality is not so much an object of the *understanding*, as a matter of *feeling* — has been taken up in our time by such philosophers as Ayer. In his book, *Language, Truth and Logic*, Ayer pushes this further. He suggests that moral statements are not *descriptions*, but *ejaculations* — verbal expressions of feeling such as "Hurrah!" (for a "right" action) or "Boo!" (for a "wrong" one).

Well, how do we get away past the diversity of feelings on morality; arrive at some solid values?

Ayer's new book helps. *Freedom and Reason* puts to us that there are three important truths about morals. The first is that moral judgments are a prescriptive not descriptive kind of statement. The second is that it is possible to have prescriptive judgments as premises from which rational conclusions can be reached. The third is Kant's insight that moral judgments are distinguished from other forms of prescriptive judgments in that they can be universalised. This principle alone makes argument possible about matters of fact and matters of morality.

For the penalty of saying something is that you can't consistently say something else which is different. You can have a concept of "democracy," and then distinguish between your notion of "true democracy," which is (say) parliamentary democracy, and an Eastern self-styled democracy, which is merely "people's democracy." But there is not much in this form of judgment other than words. Your "Hurrah for True Democracy!"; your "Boo for People's Democracy!" don't amount to an argument. You are not agreeing or disagreeing with a judgment, but simply ejaculating.

Put it that this is just a game of cross-purposes. Person

(Continued on page 203)

The Thomas Paine Memorial Statue

By CHRISTOPHER BRUNEL

SIXTY years ago a man in Thetford started campaigning for a statue to the town's greatest son, Thomas Paine, to be erected there. The man was G. R. Blaydon, former Town Clerk and Mayor of Thetford, and this month he saw his ambition achieved. Seeing the happiness on Mr. Blaydon's face, immediately after the unveiling on Sunday, 7th June, was for me one of the many pleasures of an important and memorable day.

The fact that Mr. Blaydon had to wait sixty years shows — once again — how successful the conspiracy of silence about Paine had been. Now, the positive indications of the ending of this conspiracy are seen with greater and greater frequency. Joseph Lewis, Secretary of the American Thomas Paine Foundation, in his dedication address at the unveiling ceremony, said "I come to praise Paine, not to bury him!" And, truly, Paine is beginning to emerge from the shrouds that church and reactionary politicians have wrapped around him. Even in the Labour movement he has been played down.

Paine and his works have always been propagated by freethinkers — on the surface this is paradoxical, as Paine believed in God! But his attack on organised religion in *The Age of Reason*, was and is, not only a masterpiece of reasoning, but something that we freethinkers can still find valuable in exposing the frauds of religion. It was, therefore, so much in the great tradition of the freethought movement that the National Secular Society should join with the newly-formed Thomas Paine Society in organising coaches to Thetford to celebrate Thomas Paine, as it were, coming home to Thetford just one day short of 155 years after his death in New York.

The statue has been donated by the American Thomas Paine Foundation, thanks to the perseverance of its secretary, Joseph Lewis, who has already had statues of Paine put up in Paris and Morristown in New Jersey, U.S.A. Sir Charles Wheeler, the President of the Royal Academy, has done the sculpture, and in a short speech, after the unveiling, he told how reproductions of Romney's portrait of Paine and engravings had enabled him to get the physical characteristics of the man, but at the same time he had to express his spirit as a man who was restless in advocating the rights of man. This Sir Charles has certainly succeeded in doing, as his statue has a great mobility; the fact that this mobility is largely seen in a physical manner is perfectly correct historically, as Paine was an active man, especially as he had to ride a horse during his early days as an Exciseman.

Napoleon once said to Paine, trying to flatter him, "A statue of gold should be erected to you in every capital of the world", and so, appropriately, Thetford's statue is gilded, and how fine this looks against a magnificent dark copper beech, which is behind it, in the forecourt of the Municipal Offices in King Street.

The ceremony did not go smoothly. The Mayor of Thetford, Councillor Richard P. F. Easten, introduced Joseph Lewis, who began telling of Paine's birth in Thetford in January 1737, and how "his whole life was devoted to justice and humanity;" Mr. Lewis gave as his opinion that the American Declaration of Independence was originally written by Paine. "The World", said Mr. Lewis, "is acquainted with an edited and abridged version", and he went on to explain that thirty per cent had been eliminated from this original draft by Thomas Jefferson, to whom history gave the credit for the Declaration. But,

as in the Old Testament, it seems that God was not pleased with Mr. Lewis's praises for Paine, for he sent down lightning and torrential showers on the great gathering. Actually, God was badly off cue, coming in several minutes before Mr. Lewis started talking about *The Age of Reason*.

But Joseph Lewis, a man nearing his seventy-fifth birthday, was not ruffled by the rain and having to run for shelter, as at a cricket match; he took it in good humour — and the listening crowds took their example from him, and stayed to the end.

To wind up the ceremony the Deputy Mayor of Thetford, Councillor The Lord Fisher, D.S.C., B.A., thanked Joseph Lewis and Sir Charles Wheeler for their speeches, and briefly added that in his opinion Thomas Paine had helped to form democratic government in this country.

There is much more I would like to say — which space does not allow. However, I end on a personal note. It was wonderful to see so many old stalwarts of freethought, coming to honour Paine — something that they have been doing in different ways for so many years longer than I. Like them, my father campaigned to restore Paine to his proper position in history. Yet he died over six years ago, but not before kindling in me a great and lasting interest in Paine. In the same way, I am sure that the younger generations of freethinkers will continue the campaign, adapting it to modern circumstances, and taking into account the considerable victories already won. Yes, and enjoying those victories.

PROFESSOR FLEW ON THE OBJECTIVITY OF ETHICS

(Continued from page 202)

A says, "I went to the footy," and person B says indignantly, "I didn't!" They are talking about different things. In a sense of argument, neither has said anything — and where nothing by way of judgment is said, there are no premises, no reasoning, no conclusions to be drawn.

Perhaps the key to a rational or objective ethic lies in the fundamental basis that what is moral has a universal and a prescriptive character; we strive to find a general rule, as to what shall be right for everyone in the same circumstances. Physical science looks for universal descriptive laws, and moral philosophy looks for universal prescriptive laws. It is absurd for the moralist to say, "Just *this* is the right course," regardless of what may happen as a result of taking this course. By analogy, that is as absurd as for the scientist to assert, "*This* is the law of Nature, and be damned to what happens in any experiment to test it!"

The moral, like the physical, scientist must test his rules and precepts, and here lies the hope for an integrated ideal of rationality for both physical and moral science.

AN ANALYSIS OF CHRISTIAN ORIGINS

By GEORGES ORY

(President of the Cercle Ernest Renan, Paris)

Translated by C. Bradlaugh Bonner

Price 2s. 6d., plus postage 4d

This Believing World

It was interesting to compare two reports of the unveiling of the statue of Paine at Thetford — in the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Express*. The *Daily Telegraph* devoted half a column to the historic event, and thus gave it very fair prominence in its columns. The names of Sir Charles Wheeler, who sculpted the statue, and Joseph Lewis, (extracts from his splendid speech were quoted) were given. As to the *Daily Express*, it compressed everything into eleven lines, missed out all names except that of Paine, and informed its readers that Paine was "a philosopher and rebel", and wrote the *Rights of Man* as well as campaigning against Britain in the American War of Independence. Needless to add it did *not* mention the *Age of Reason*.

★
Incidentally — just for the record — to a request that Mr. Lewis and Sir Charles Wheeler should be interviewed in "In Town Today", the BBC replied that to the suggestion "in connection with the statue of Thomas Paine", they are always glad "to have ideas for our programme", but they could only include a small number of people. Alas, neither Mr. Lewis nor Sir Charles were allowed to appear amid the usual list of bores who achieved "fame" with pop records, or with the young convent-bred actresses, or the schoolgirls who have written world-shattering novels about sex at 16; but we hope that the "a" in "a statue of Thomas Paine" will be noted. Probably, neither the Director of the programme, nor his erudite secretary has ever heard of Thomas Paine.

★
Slowly but surely, many — or even the lot — of the wondrous "teachings" of Jesus are being questioned these days and, as a result, discarded. The lucky husband or wife whose partner is declared irrevocably mental and confined for life in an asylum could never, under our Christian laws, re-marry. "These marriages can end, says Judge" is a heading in the *Daily Mail* (June 13th). The judge is Mr. Justice Cairns, and he must be congratulated on his decision, due in no small measure to the Mental Health Act of 1959. In time nearly everything that "our Lord" (a complete celibate himself) said about marriage will similarly be discarded, and a saner outlook ensured than the nonsense that prevailed in the Orient nearly 1900 years ago and is still accepted in the West by Christians.

★
That our insufferable Sunday laws should continue, was the decision of Mr. C. Woodhouse, the Home Office Under-Secretary, who in Parliament refused to allow anything to be altered in the 300-year-old law against playing games on the Lord's Day. It appears that the Act was now being "reviewed" and "the Government thought it best to await its results". — As if in the meantime anybody now playing "games" on Sunday would make the wrath of the Lord rise in such anger that He might even destroy the participants.

★
But why, in God's name, shouldn't people be allowed to spend their rest-day as they like? What is there to be afraid about? Even the sponsor for the abolition of the idiotic 300-year-old act appeared to be afraid of something for he very apologetically said, "he did not wish to encourage large scale organised Sunday sport". Is not "the Lord's Day" anything but an intolerant Christian imposition? If not, what is it?

★
The people who insist on the Lord's Day being "holy" all the time are in general the people who believe the Genesis story of Adam, Eve, and the Apple as being Gospel truth, guaranteed by God Almighty. We are pleased

to tell them that this is much disputed even by Christians, and can even cause a theological argument. For example, the filming of the complete Bible is being held up because there is a dispute about the Apple (*Daily Telegraph*, June 8th, 1964). Christopher Fry the script writer, claims that it wasn't an Apple — or even a fig, or a pomegranate. There is nothing about an Apple in Holy Writ. So the filming of the Bible has ceased for the time being — and in this year of 1964 too. Shades of Thomas Paine.

Points from New Books

A GOOD many scenes in Waguih Ghali's novel, *Beer in the Snooker Club* (Andre Deutsch, 18s.), are set in modern Egypt. For instance Ram opens his eyes in the morning to the call of the faithful. He thinks how much better it would be if the voice from the minaret cried, "No God but a God"; and better still, "No God, No God", still in the same beautiful voice.

Although penniless under the new regime, Ram still mixes with a smart set, accepting hospitality and patronage. He doesn't feel in sympathy with a taxi driver who murmurs, "Of course one takes what God gives". Ram tells the man he is no better than a Roman Catholic. The taxi driver retorts, "Me? Ha, ha, I am named Mohammed after the Prophet". "That's what I mean", Ram replies. "A good Moslem Roman Catholic".

Religion in modern Egypt, one gathers, is a pretty poor joke. Another Cairo citizen says, "My mother is at home. She was constipated for a long time until we built her a little mosque in our flat — she was so used to using them for such matters in Turkey".

There's some considerable depreciation in the religion-is-sacred attitude in young England, too, judging by David Benedictus's much discussed novel, *You're A Big Boy Now* (Anthony Blond, 18s.). Bernard, the young man in the sharply told tale listens to a morning uplift programme on the wireless with "a story, a hymn and a prayer". The story is about a Welshman who got his legs cut off by a passing steam train when only a boy, "yet still managed to umpire the local football team for nigh on forty years, indeed to goodness". And then comes the hymn, *Onward Christian soldiers marching as to war With the cross of Jesus going on before*: and Bernard can't help thinking it's pretty bad strategy "especially if the element of surprise is what you're after".

"And if you're going to have, suppose, a double flanking attack, which side gets the cross of Jesus? — because there probably aren't enough Jews in the company to make up one flank all by themselves. And could you trust a whole battalion of Jews not to give the game away by singing and dancing one of those schmaltzy things Harry Belafonte keeps on discovering?"

The prayer is all about Overcoming Your Disabilities. Bernard wonders "if there'll be long queues of the legless all day outside the Welsh labour exchanges wanting to sign on as football referees".

It's funny to think that not so long ago a moral story, a hymn and a prayer would inevitably have been treated very seriously by any novelist who was given the privilege of print, isn't it?

OSWELL BLAKESTON.

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Lecture Notices, Etc.

OUTDOOR

Edinburgh Branch NSS (The Mound).—Sunday afternoon and evening: MESSRS. CRONAN, McRAE and MURRAY.

London Branches—Kingston, Marble Arch, North London: (Marble Arch), Sundays, from 4 p.m.: MESSRS. L. EBURY and J. A. MILLAR.

(Tower Hill). Every Thursday, 12—2 p.m.: L. EBURY.

Manchester Branch NSS (Car Park, Victoria Street,) Sunday Evenings

Merseyside Branch NSS (Pierhead).—Meetings: Wednesdays, 1 p.m.: Sundays, 7.30 p.m.

North London Branch NSS (White Stone Pond, Hampstead).—Every Sunday, noon: L. EBURY.

Nottingham Branch NSS (Old Market Square), every Friday, 1 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY.

INDOOR

Birmingham Branch NSS, (Birmingham and Midland Institute, Paradise Street), Sunday, June 28th, 6.45 p.m.: Professor P. SARGENT FLORENCE, "Rational Social Policy".

North Staffordshire Humanist Group, (Guildhall, Newcastle under Lyme), Friday, June 26th, 7.15 p.m.: A Meeting.

South Place Ethical Society, (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1), Sunday, June 28th, 11 a.m.: H. J. BLACKHAM, "Contemporary Theology".

Notes and News

"BRITAIN is fast becoming a Humanist nation", ran the main headline in the *Church Times* (5/6/64), in reporting an address by the Bishop of Leicester, the Right Rev. R. R. Williams, to his Diocesan Conference. "There is no denying that the Church faces a much more militant challenge from humanist and secularist sources than most of us have known in our lifetime". Dr. Williams said, citing articles in the responsible Sunday press and *The Listener* which "set out plainly the desire of many to turn our country into a humanist, secularist country" in which Christianity would survive as "the private fad of the few". Movements were "afoot" to abolish religious instruction in schools, universities were "under heavy pressure to abdicate altogether from any control or influence over the sexual behaviour of their students" and the proportion of illegitimate births to live births had been steadily increasing. On top of this there were teenage riots. Clearly the situation is serious — from Dr. Williams's standpoint, at any rate. What, then, did he propose to do about it? "The most we can do", he said, "is to dedicate ourselves to God and to his purpose for all men, that we may be used by him to do those particular things which he has sent us into the world to do".

AN Essex clergyman, the Rev. R. D. Black of Witham, is also worried. Most Church of England members don't care about the church, he said, "so long as it is open for a baptism or a funeral or a wedding with bells" (*The Essex Chronicle*, 22/5/64). This may be neither a new nor a profound observation, but it is assuredly a true one. Unless something is done to rouse the parishioners, said the Vicar, the Church will die. We're afraid it's too late for resuscitation, Mr. Black.

★

A FRIEND of ours — we are informed by letter from the Christian Nationalist Crusade of Los Angeles — has paid for a subscription to *The Cross and the Flag*, the official organ of the Crusade. We have not yet seen the first copy, but the preliminary literature gives us a good idea of what to expect. The publisher, Gerald L. K. Smith, has, we are told, been "the persecuted victim of a gang of international character assassins", the same "gang" that effected the dismissal of the late General MacArthur, the "crucifixion" of the late Senator McCarthy, and is now engaged in a campaign to smear and destroy the Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities". The first principle of Christian Nationalism is to "Preserve America as a Christian Nation being conscious of the fact that there is a highly organised campaign to substitute Jewish tradition for Christian tradition". And among the specially-advertised books is *The Jews and Their Lies* by Luther, described as a "super-sensational treatise" which "diagnoses the enemies of Jesus Christ and calls on Christians to make no compromise in their faith".

★

CHRISTIAN Nationalism, needless to say, is pledged to "expose, fight and outlaw" Communism. It also aims to "safeguard American liberty against the menace of bureaucratic Fascism" — the objective indicating that "Fascism" is here used in a rather special sense. How special may be seen from the description: "a cross between Kremlin Communism, English-German Socialism and Italian Fascism". No mention you will note, of Nazism. Fascism, as Mr. Smith and his Christian Nationalists see it, is "confiscating independent wealth by way of the income tax and destroying the liberty of the States by way of the Supreme Court". Joseph Smith, editor of the formerly freethinking *Truth Seeker* and Gerald L. K. Smith, editor of *The Cross and the Flag*, may not be physically related but they are mentally akin in their pathological anti-Semitism.

★

SOME Catholic laymen, said *Time* (15/5/64) deplore the fact that Cardinal Spellman's voice, "loud and clear in condemning *The Deputy*, dirty movies and the Communist threat, is rarely heard on such social issues as segregation and political corruption". Interesting, and heartening, was item number five in the same issue of *Time* — none other than *The Deputy* (or, in England, *The Representative*) by Rolf Hochhuth, in spite of the Cardinal's (and the Pope's) condemnation. But — as a friend of ours remarked — should the book be classed as fiction?

★

THE September-October 1963 issue of the Australian *Rationalist* contained reprints of FREETHINKER articles by Margaret McIlroy ("A Catholic Doctor on Birth Control") and D. H. Tribe ("The *Honest to God* Debate"). Last month's *American Rationalist* reprinted "*Playboy* and the Catholics" by Colin McCall. This week, we return the Australian paper's compliment by printing its report of Professor Antony Flew's lecture on "How Far Can a Secular Ethic be Objective?" held in the Honorary Justices' Rooms in Melbourne, following a dinner of the Melbourne Rationalist Society.

What Price Freedom?

By DAVID TRIBE

AT A TIME when there is much talk of the need for ombudsmen we may be grateful that there exists an organisation which, while lacking official status (and official restraints), is perennial watchdog of the nation's liberties. Publicity for the work of the National Council for Civil Liberties has deservedly expanded fast of recent years. Though national press coverage for the 1964 Annual General Meeting was unspectacular, both the size and enthusiasm of attendance were gratifying. From 17 national and 7 district organisations, 7 Co-ops, 15 Labour parties, 18 trades councils and sundry branches came 159 delegates. With them were almost 100 individual members and observers.

The most newsworthy and probably the most important of the council's concerns remains the relations between police and public. Included are such matters as police procedures, wrongful arrest and prosecution, political demonstrations and leafleting, and special branch and 'security' investigations.

Notoriously outstanding in this field during the past year were the Sheffield police violence revelations, incidents arising from the July 1963 Queen Frederika visit, and the unsatisfactory report on the inquiry into the death of Hal Woolf while in custody. After promising freedom of demonstration, the Government invoked the Metropolitan Police Act of 1869 to protect Her Hellenic Majesty's sensitive eyes and ears, and then set about prosecuting Moule, Chandler, Clark and Adler for "incitement" or "conspiracy". A fetid backwash of this bureaucratic splash dredged up the "half-brick" cases. Starting with the demand by a Civil Liberties lawyer for an analysis of pocket dust on one of the defendants, the quest for justice has led to the Old Bailey, where Det.-Sgt. Challenor, the officer responsible for the framing, has been found a paranoid schizophrenic unfit to plead, and to insistence that other controversial convictions associated with him be quashed. It seems certain that if there had been the independent system of tribunals wanted by the Council, this dangerous psychotic, entrusted with special training, would have been removed sooner.

In the booklet *Civil Liberty* 1964, (NCCL, 4 Camden High Street, London, N.W.1., 1/6 plus postage) is an anonymous article "False Arrest" by a woman picked up apparently because two detectives resented the sight of a white woman and a coloured man in the streets of Paddington. Life's arbitrary injustices can overtake anyone. An increasing number of people in the public service find themselves especially vulnerable because of the expansive interpretation of the word "security" as a curb on their lives and opinions. Yet if the activities of some police officers can be oppressive, potentially more dangerous are the many "security" services whose uniformed and armed employees seem to live beyond the law in their patrols and investigations.

These and many other matters engage the attention of the council and were the subject of many AGM resolutions and debates. Yet NCCL work of recent years has been marked by recognition that prevention is better than cure, that enlightened education and legislation are the real guarantee of civil liberty. So that in his foreword to the current booklet the Chairman, Mr. Malcolm Purdie, takes penal reform as his special subject. Without essaying a reconstruction of the present system of probation and detention, a modest National Secular Society resolution made a few proposals to lessen the brutalising and increase

the reformative aspects of imprisonment along lines already advocated in theory by the Home Office but lacking in practice. Among these was paid employment as occupational therapy and means of providing compensation to victims. Like many others in the field of radical reform this resolution was carried unanimously.

A comprehensive resolution on procedural law reform from the Progressive League; jury reform; rights of women; rights of youth; freedom of and from the press; extradition and political asylum; the advancement of High Commission Territories; broadcasting rights of minorities; religious and political discrimination in Northern Ireland; the puritan revival against "obscenity"; the rights of "illegitimate" children the fostering of good race relations and equality before the law; and ombudsmen were subjects of resolutions passed, many unanimously.

Of special interest this year to the many trade union delegates present was the debate on the House of Lords judgment in the *Rookes v. Barnard* case. This appears to nullify the legal protection it had hitherto been assumed trade union negotiators enjoyed under the 1906 Trades Disputes Act against suits for torts possibly involved in strike threats. Secularists and Humanists will be pleased not only at the proposals for radical law reforms passed at the AGM, but also at a National Secular Society resolution on "Religion and the Law" protesting at the civil disabilities suffered by all under the Sunday Observance Acts and likely to be suffered by declared unbelievers in many professional appointments, schools, the Royal Navy, adoption and affirmation in law courts, not to mention the increasingly nebulous threat from the Blasphemy Acts. This resolution was opposed by a mere 6 votes, with 6 abstentions.

Many millions are spent every year on insurance and assurance, simply to safeguard the individual against the chance attack of adversity. Not only is the National Council for Civil Liberties an excellent insurance against arbitrary governments or bureaucracy, it is also an important vehicle of education of public opinion. All who have a vision of a new society and determination to fight for it should support the council by voluntary work, individual membership, or persuading organisations to affiliate. At present a mountain of activities is supported by a shoe-string.

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The Value of the Religious Experience in Pentecostalism

By DEREK STUBBS

(Continued from page 199)

ABOUT 25 per cent of the Pentecostals believe in the theory: "Britain is the lost ten tribes of Israel — and therefore the chosen race." Apart from the implications of Hitler's *Herrenfolk* programme, British-Israelism (BI) also teaches unquestioning obedience to monarchy and the state. It is also a cesspool of the right-wing mentality (reaction, racialism, nationalism, etc.). BI is inter-denominational and Pentecostals believe in it independently from their sect's authority. There is no "party line" for or against. Of the BIs, most accept the validity of the document, *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, a cunning anti-semitic document (by a paranoid-schizophrenic), even used as "proof" by Hitler. Although, to be fair, racialism and nationalism are these days attributable to large groups in society, especially the working classes, and it would be wrong to say that Pentecostals alone are guilty.

The fact that "Britain fulfils the marks of Israel" is to them a proof of Bible prophecy and therefore of God. The Pentecostalist is gullible for such theories as "The Great Pyramid — proof of God" and "Flying saucers — vehicles of Satan." He believes in the dogmas of adventism, resurrectionism, eschatologism, the doctrine of original sin, etc., etc. The Pentecostalist of course has the "we-are-right-everybody-else-is-wrong" attitude. This is part of his prejudicial nature, and the movement sells prejudice outlets for ten-a-penny.

The Pentecostalist's way of thinking is mystical (as opposed to mechanistic or functionalistic methods of reasoning). If he cannot find a reason for a fact he falls back on the old answer, "It is the work of God/the Devil." If he can drain any mystical value from a ceremony or a doctrine, the Pentecostalist will. (Little has been said of the mysticism of Nazism and Fascism, although it has been noted in Communism, and was obvious in Spanish Inquisitionism.)

The way the Pentecostalist dwells on the concept of "freedom," implies some neurotic transfixion. He genuinely desires some form of freedom and his attitude is — like that of so many tin-pot Hitlers — "Oh, I could make everything right if I had the chance." However, he discourages the formation of a self-responsible character-structure, and he contracts out of any attempts at genuine social progress.

History has shown us time and time again, what happens when the nasty little pedlar of freedom sells his wares, like so many packets of shoe-laces, in the market place of humanity; the people are sold a worse task-master than before.

Pentecostal ceremonies fall into two groups: (a) The "worship," communion or prayer meeting, and (b) the revival, gospel, campaign or convention meeting.

When a believer is first "filled with the spirit" it is known as the "baptism in the Holy Spirit." The main period for this to happen is from puberty to the late twenties. It is usually (and should be according to scriptures) preceded by conversion and "baptism in water." Any outbreaks of "tongues" or prophesying is not treated seriously or worthy of "interpretation" but just as general "praise." *The experience at "baptism" is stronger than*

any following "experience." The believer must "want" to be filled before it can happen. After his "baptism" the Pentecostalist usually undergoes a character change. It can best be described as maturation: the shy become outspoken, they develop a greater, and more concrete, sense of purpose, a greater sense of belonging.

"Unbaptised" believers may be "baptised in the Spirit" at "Tarrying for the Spirit" meetings, or "Revival Campaigns," where the leaders will provoke ecstasy by repetitive singing and hand clapping and continuous evocations and encouragements to likely looking members of the meeting. Otherwise, their "baptism" will be in private, at home. It may be induced by extreme mental tensions (which themselves can be induced), or a physically repressed and (therefore) depressed organism.

One woman of sixty, an ex-missionary, described her "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" to me. At the time she was thirty, though a Christian all her life, she had shortly before been "reconverted" at an Elim revival campaign. Unfortunately she was slightly deformed; to this day she is unmarried; and I strongly suspect she has been celibate all her life. However the "experience" she recounts is vaguely familiar to me: "I was laying in bed one night. I had been seeking the experience given to the Apostles, and promised to all Christians. I opened my mind to the idea of 'the love of God,' and it filled me. The 'love of God' filled me." I asked her to be more explicit, and she continued: "An 'electric power' overtook my body. Waves of this power melted through my body for several hours. I was lifted up [she means she felt ecstatic]. I had no need to eat for a week after."

A man of fifty-five, who had been converted as a teenager, and had been strongly associated with the Pentecostals, gave me his account of his "baptism": "One day I had a terrible cold so I decided to go to bed. Suddenly, during prayer [Pentecostals are prone to praying at any time at all, sometimes for no particular reason] I started shaking and sweating, and then the 'power' overtook me. I started crying and laughing and speaking in tongues. I was in my bedroom, in this state, for twenty-four hours." Immediately after this, he went down with pneumonia for three weeks, but his "experience" kept him cheerful throughout his illness.

The "worship" or "communion" service will take place on Sunday mornings or a midweek evening prayer meeting (minus communion). Non-believers are not encouraged or invited.

After an opening hymn and a Bible reading, the pastor, or a senior member of the church hierarchy, at the direction of the pastor, will "lead" the congregation in a prayer of praise. The congregation will then "settle down."

The congregation (mainly the female members) will, preceded by inhalant gasps, repeat such words and phrases as, "Jesus," "Mighty Lord," "Wonderful Jesus," "Precious blood," "Precious blood of the Lamb." Wilson noted that some believers will just repeat the word "blood."

The pastor may suggest a chorus to be sung softly, or any member of the congregation will begin to sing it and

the piano and most of the rest of the congregation will join in. The attitude is one of reverence. There will be no singing loudly or hand clapping.

(To be Concluded)

CORRESPONDENCE

CHARLIE PEACE

F. H. Amphlett Micklewright in his article "Charlie Peace" would have us believe that Peace's bad character, burglary and murder were due to religion. Surely he is letting his 'Free-thinking' run wild here, or else he thinks that some readers of THE FREETHINKER may be ignorant enough to believe him.

As an anti-religious man myself, I fail to see what the Christian religion has to do with Charlie Peace's burglary and murder, no more than I can see what Seneca's teaching had to do with Nero's character and conduct.—Nero was Seneca's pupil.

An educated religious man on reading Mr. Micklewright's article would only smile at the writers' deductions. Does he think that Charlie Peace would have been any better if he had accepted the religion of Humanism?

G. MCKENZIE.

"CATCH-22"

I've just been into the Bristol Central Library and asked about *Catch-22*. The lady in charge said she knew about the *Guardian* letter and that "it just was not true, the book had never been on the open shelves".

She produced a copy even without my asking for it. It has been out once a month through this year. I had better see how I react to it before asking what is their basis for restricting it.

JIM LITTLE.

PORTUGUESE PRISONERS

The most desperate appeals for protests and help we have ever received have just come from families of prisoners in Peniche Fortress, and have also arrived from prisoners themselves who have said "we will fight to the last!"

These men are seriously ill, but are denied medical treatment; visits from families have been stopped, so has correspondence. 200 relatives recently demonstrated outside the prison in protest.

The lives of these and other prisoners are in danger. They are sick, they are subjected to constant provocation, punishment and gun-point threats. Your action can help to save them.

Joaquim Pires Jorge serving 10-year sentence plus Security Measures. Suffering from repeated intestinal haemorrhages.

Carlos Costa, serving a 10-year sentence plus Security Measures, suffering for a considerable time from an intestinal disease. Has sures. Suffering from repeated intestinal haemorrhages.

Antonio Dias Lourenco, arrested August 1962, not brought to trial, held incommunicado 7 months, tortured. Now suffering from pulmonary disease.

Fernando Blanqui Teixeira, arrested 6 May 1963, tortured with deprivation of sleep for 13 days and nights, now suffering serious nervous disorder as a result.

Manuel Guedes, sentenced to 4 years plus Security Measures, in prison still, after 12 years. Serious physical and nervous deterioration.

Alfonso Gregorio, serving 9½ year sentence plus Security Measures, verging on insanity.

Please protest immediately to: The Portuguese Ambassador, 11, Belgrave Square, London. S.W.1. The Minister of the Interior, Lisbon, Portugal. The Director, Forte de Peniche, Peniche, Portugal.

H. WARD, Secretary.

British Commission for Portuguese Amnesty,
30 Benson Road, London. S.E.23

ANARCHISM AND LOGIC

I was interested to observe your anonymous columnist (Notes and News, 29/5/64) commenting on C. H. Rolph's remark on the "enviable logic" of the anarchist position, hinting that anarchists are not logical in "everything else".

I should be interested to know on what grounds your columnist makes this assertion.

Not that it can or will be denied that a logical position is difficult to maintain in this land of Church and State. Do free-thinkers give up because their children get school religious education; because they pay taxes which help religious institutions, rates which subsidise churches, radio licenses which broadcast religion *ad nauseum*; they sponsor libraries which issue religious books, stand up (albeit reluctantly) for the national anthem?

All these compromises are inevitable and we all strive in our ways to minimise them. If these situations did not exist we should be living in a rational society and there would be no need to

persist in our agitations. It is the impossibility of being rational and logical in present-day society which makes it necessary to remake the society in which we live. It is the anarchist preference for a form of society in which all are free to co-operate which makes us join the freethinkers on many causes.

But we feel that an emphasis on freedom, the thing that marks out anarchists from freethinkers, is a necessary prerequisite for the displacement of gods may lead to a deification of the State as happened in many countries, particularly in Eastern Europe.

JACK ROBINSON.

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