

The Freethinker

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THE announcement that Pope Paul VI is to visit India for the Eucharistic Congress in Bombay, represents—along with this same Pope's recent visit to Palestine and with the Vatican Council itself—a step towards the attainment of the new look, the Catholic Church's 20th-century image, the outcome of the policy inaugurated by the late Pope John XXIII.

It has always been a recognised tradition that the official papal designation assumed by each new pope, indicated the nature of the policy which it was his intention to pursue during his tenure of the Papacy. Thus, for example, when Pius XII assumed the same name as his predecessor, Achille Ratti, it indicated that he intended to continue the ultra-reactionary policy in both church and state. Paul contrarily, is pre-eminently distinguished as the name of the apostle to the Gentiles, of the outstanding missionary of the early Christian Church, whose cosmopolitan peregrinations around the Levant traditionally laid the foundations of the Christian Church. As one of the present pope's supporters remarked upon his assumption of the name, it signified an entire programme in itself.

The Prisoner of the Vatican

The above prediction would appear to have hit the mark, for Pope Paul broke with the papal tradition of recent times by his trip last year to the Holy Land and will do so even more decisively by his forthcoming trip to India, which has only the most tenuous connection with Christianity nowadays, and is an officially secular state where, in the words of the well-known Protestant hymn, "The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone". For since 1870, when the Italian army occupied and summarily ended the temporal power of the Papacy, the predecessors of Paul had obstinately shut themselves up in the Vatican and intransigently continued to describe themselves as prisoners of the Vatican. Previously the popes had often been quite mobile and had even once moved their headquarters from Rome to Avignon during a particularly unsettled era in the 14th century. Indeed had the then anti-clerical Communist Party managed to seize power in Italy after the last war, as it looked like doing in 1945, tentative plans were suggested for transporting the Vatican bodily to some other Catholic metropolis. Dublin, Madrid and Buenos Aires were all mentioned at the time as possible modern "Avignons". However, matters did not turn out that way and the Vatican remained in Rome.

Pope Paul and World Politics

It has often been noted by percipient critics that, despite its alleged Apostolic foundation, the Papacy is at bottom much more a political than a religious institution; that in reality its authentic prototypes were the Roman Caesars rather than the Jewish apostles—say Augustus Caesar rather than St. Peter. This political character, it may be relevant to add, was never more evident than at this present time. For it is obvious that ex-papal Secretary

of State Montini, has retained his interest in world politics now that divine providence has elevated him to the more exalted status of Pope Paul. The Pope does not travel at random or for purely health reasons. Last year he journeyed to Jerusalem and the holy places with the scarcely concealed objective of furthering the grandiose papal strategy of Christian reunion bequeathed by his far-sighted predecessor, Pope John. His journey east was primarily one, not of spiritual devotion but of ecclesiastical policy, in particular connection with the present Vatican overtures to the Orthodox Churches of the East. But today, unless we are much mistaken, the Vatican is about to embark upon a still more ambitious

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

Pope Paul Raises the Colour Bar

By F. A. RIDLEY

plan and one this time concerned directly with secular politics. For just as the original Paul, the apostle (in whom both some religious and rationalist scholars of note have seen the *real* founder of the Church of Rome rather than the shadowy Peter) was traditionally contemporary with a new phase in current political evolution—the foundation of the Roman world empire of the Caesars—so Pope Paul is contemporary with a new phase in modern world politics, the end of the European imperialism that has dominated the world since the 16th century, and the emergence of the coloured races of Asia and Africa as increasingly important factors in world affairs. It is, I submit, for power that Pope Paul has planned his Indian visit.

African Saints and Asiatic Cardinals

The fact is that ever since 1881 when Pope Leo XIII created the first American cardinal (Archbishop MacCabe of New York) the Vatican has been increasingly looking beyond its traditional confines in Europe. Nor, particularly in recent years, has it limited itself to the white races. Since the end of the First World War we have seen cardinals—and therefore qualified electors to the Papacy and possible popes themselves—of Indian, Chinese, Japanese and most recently Negro origin. And the celestial hierarchy has kept in step with the terrestrial one, colour being no bar to canonisation. Only a few weeks ago, Pope Paul himself transformed nineteen Africans martyrs into duly canonised saints of the Church. It is no accident that this present century of coloured saints also happens to be one which has witnessed the transformation of the political, economic and cultural status of the coloured races from helots of European imperialism into sovereign and independent states. For has not the Papacy always obeyed the divine injunction that bids us combine "the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness if the dove"?

The Papacy and the Coloured Races

It is not then an accident that Pope Paul should be going to India in 1964 when the sub-continent has become the world's largest democracy; or for that matter that the then Pope did not go in, say, 1864 when India represented a political nonentity subject to the then British Raj. For it is only in this century that the coloured races have

"arrived" on the world-scene. Now the Vatican is obviously determined to woo them; after all, they have votes at the United Nations! So we have Asiatic cardinals, African saints and papal tourists to Bombay! Will the next step be a non-European pope? At least the first step has been taken; the road to the Vatican is now open to all races.* Pope Paul has abolished the colour bar to the Papacy.

* There has of course, never been an official bar on the elevation of a non-European pope. During the dark ages there were a few Syrian popes and the famous (or infamous) Borgias seem to have had Moorish and even perhaps, Negro blood in their veins. But the Vatican is acutely sensitive to world events and it appears to be by no means certain that the successors of Peter (a non-Aryan) will always be drawn exclusively from the white races.

John Maclean: Revolutionary Rationalist

By P. KEARNEY

FORTY ONE YEARS AGO—in November 1923—the Scottish Labour movement lost one of its beloved sons. He was John Maclean, the Glasgow schoolteacher whose rational thinking led him along the path of revolution and what to some would seem to be personal disaster.

Maclean was a bitter enemy both of church and state. While still a student at Glasgow University he realised that education was important for the workers if they were to bring about the revolutionary changes needed in society. Early in the present century he joined the Social Democratic Federation. His subsequent political development caused him to join other political organisations, but always the auspices under which he spoke were, to him, less important than the general development of the Labour movement. In this respect Maclean was no sectarian.

He was soon in trouble with the authorities, especially in the early part of the First World War. And he was transferred from one Glasgow school to another until 1915 when he was dismissed, never again to teach. But he taught in the wider school of society. He held classes attended by thousands of workers in Glasgow and Clyde-side. And he fought. He fought against a system that, in the words of a one-time ally, George Lansbury, caused little children to waste away and perish.

John Maclean was a thorn in the flesh of the judicial authorities who arraigned him several times and on three occasions sent him to prison for long sentences. There is not the space to deal with those trials. Suffice it to say that he suffered in His Majesty's prisons and claimed that the authorities tried to poison him. Certainly he refused to eat prison food, living instead on that which was brought to him by members of the broad Labour movement.

Out on bail in 1915, he and others led the Clydeside rent strike, in that historical struggle in which workers downed tools to stop factors from evicting tenants who could not afford increased rents for the hovels in which they lived.

When his trial came round workers carried Maclean on their shoulders to the court; inside the atmosphere was electric. It was around this time that Parliament rushed through legislation that resulted in the Rent Restriction Act, confirming Maclean's thesis that if the workers fight together governments can be forced to recognise their needs. He was fined—for the only time. Thereafter he was given prison sentences for his activities.

There came a period in his life when his wife and two children had to live apart from him. But whatever the circumstances Maclean always found time to correspond

with his wife and frequently inquired after the children's health and education. In his most famous trial, in 1918, Maclean faced his accusers squarely. He used the court in Edinburgh as a platform to state the view of a rationalist who was in revolt against a system which condemned masses to poverty in peace-time and death in wars in which only the interests of the ruling classes were served.

Not every socialist agreed with Maclean during his short but turbulent life. He annoyed, for instance, those who tried to serve two masters—the Labour movement and the Catholic Church. And he died at the age of 44. As Lansbury (later to become a Cabinet Minister) put it, Maclean's wrath took one form, whereas wrath of other men equally true and brave took other forms. "Yet all of us can respect the honesty, courage and sincerity with which he pursued his way through life," Lansbury added. "When we spoke in his home of morals and religion he treated me with a genial tolerance because for him there was but one expression of true worth: the economic emancipation of the workers. And he played a great part in building up the movement. The Scottish Labour College [now the NCLC] owes its existence to his untiring efforts on its behalf. John Maclean had a very rough side to his tongue, yet he was a gentle living soul. I know nothing and care nothing as to what he believed about a future life: it is of little account what men say they believe, it is what they do that matters. It is up to us to be true to our ideals as he was to his." These words are worth recalling by members of the Labour movement today.

Religion in Primary Schools

"THE religious education of primary children is a difficult job," said *Primary Education* (30/10/64) and it is not surprising that many teachers "feel dubious about carrying it out." The Institute of Christian Education feels that any teacher who doubts his capacity to do the job should opt out. Yet if one teacher opts out another has to do a double share, and any widespread withdrawal from RE by primary teachers "must lead to the appointment of specialist teachers of the subject". "We try to avoid specialist teaching in primary schools", *Primary Education* continued. "What is taught by the class teacher is part of everyday life. What is taught by the specialist—who is a visitor to the class—tends to be something separate." Whether religion is best taught as part of everyday life or as something separate is, the paper said, a subject for debate. But, it insisted, "morality must be taught, and taught as a part of everyday life." The Institute's evidence to the Plowden Committee stressed that morality exists and can be taught through religion or apart from it. "And since," said the evidence, "in the present day religion is accepted as being within the sphere of private judgment, whereas morality is still accepted as a general concern of society, it would be most unfortunate if the two were so identified that morality, too, was left within the private sphere." *Primary Education* agreed: while stressing the right of teachers to opt out of RE, it reminded them that they cannot "opt out of the duty to teach the conventional morality of our society."

Is it not obvious, though, that there is only one satisfactory solution to the problem: taking religion right out of the schools?

WITHOUT COMMENT

"I am sure that our nuclear weapons will be used with wisdom"—Bishop Philip Hannan, auxiliary Bishop of Washington, DC, speaking at the Vatican Council.

(*The Guardian*, 11/11/64)

It's the Mass that Matters

By GILLIAN HAWTIN

WHEN the mass left England, the faith left England. It was no accident that the main fury of the reformers vented itself against this. It was not only, or even at all, because their version of the eucharist became the Lord's Supper, a memorial and no longer a sacrifice. They knew, being so much closer to it than we are, the part the mass plays in Catholic devotion and worship; that the doctrine of the all-saving and perfect atoning of the Sacrifice of Holy Mass is central to Catholic theology, belief, and practice. It was not just a personal idiosyncrasy on the part of Oliver Cromwell that he showed what even to us seems bigoted hate against the "abominable superstition of the mass" and the priests who offered it. In the 16th century they had not lost sight of its meaning. It is no accident that Catholic priests have risked death to say mass—in the catacombs of Rome, in the remote hills and bogs of Ireland in penal days, behind the Iron Curtain today—with the minimum of materials, and the bare words of consecration. It is no accident that the laity hid priests in holes in isolated country houses during recusant days in this country, to hear mass, to receive God into their souls in the eucharist. Enter a Catholic church; the warm and welcoming glow of the sanctuary lamp guides the widow, the child, rich, poor, old, young, to That which is the building's *raison d'être*. There He is, there is Jesus, our Saviour, our Friend, our Lord, our Judge, our Redeemer; within the Tabernacle. It is a full and perfect Sacrifice, it "makes up" what is wanting to our own efforts for our sins; it is the enactment of Calvary; it is the Incarnation—God made man again for us, on the altar. As the sun rises, twenty-four hours around the globe, somewhere mass is being offered as a continuous service and exercise of intercession between fallen man, and God the Father, God the Trinity. It is no accident that Elizabeth forced the people of this country (for many of them were attached to the old faith at heart for a generation or more) to forsake the mass and attend the Protestant church under pain of what was, then, the very heavy fine of one shilling. It is no accident that those who could produce this fine at all, crippled themselves to abstain from attending the state church. It is no accident that hocus-pocus (derived from the words of consecration in the mass—"Hoc est enim corpus meum"—"For this is My Body") which today has a derisory meaning, was a thing to bring terror to the heart of a 16th-century Protestant. In mission stations today, there are neophytes and Catholic natives of Uganda and Kenya, who walk miles to hear mass. I have heard of Catholics, a generation ago, in the remoter parts of Wales and Ireland (there are more mass centres today) walking 20-30 miles to fulfil this obligation. It is no accident that the Church makes Sunday mass obligatory. Do not judge what place it holds in the heart of a Roman doctrine by the attitude of the man who, after a Saturday night hop and a hangover, goes to quarter-to-one mass. Judge it rather, not only by its martyrs, but by what the ordinary laity believes of it. When the bells ring, God Himself is there. "When two or three are gathered together, there shall I be in the midst of you". Midway between the martyrs and the careless, there are very many thousands of people in this country—housewives, teachers, accountants, doctors, bankclerks, who go to mass not only on Sunday, but on weekdays, perhaps four or five days, and any weekday, not only when there

is a family calamity, or special joy or sorrow. In a large family, at least one or two of the children will be sent, on a rota to make sure the family is always represented and praying for family needs and for the sins of the world. Thus it is an intimate part of the devotional life of the ordinary laity. The reason why, in a Catholic country, one sees people crossing themselves as they pass a church in a bus, or slipping in and out of a church with their brief case or shopping basket, is because the Blessed Sacrament Who is God Himself is there.

If I have spent what a Freethinker considers too considerable a space on this, it is because it is essential to convey some idea of how the mass, and other devotions connected with it—Benediction, Quarante Ore, Exposition, Corpus Christi processions—are an integral part of the Catholicism of the ordinary man. The theology of the mass is extensive; it stands at the centre of the love and hate which the Catholic religion attracts. Yet there is hardly a protestant or agnostic Englishman who has any understanding of this at all. Therefore it is hardly surprising that when the Vestments measure came up in Parliament first before the Lords on July 13th 1964, and finally before the Commons on July 30th—pushed in at the very end of the session of a tired and dying Parliament which, as we know now, was to be rejected by the country—this measure excited very little comment. Families were more concerned with a trip to the Costa Brava, or a bucket and spade at the seaside. Yet what happened in Parliament in those days, as with so many happenings seen only in retrospect to be highly important for the destinies of our land, may be more significant for their children, and children's children, than many of the events which made the headlines.

The Henrician revolution, and the Elizabethan settlement—i.e. the Reformation as it is better known—was, in this country, hardly a popular movement at all; even, as witness the Pilgrimage of Grace, unpopular. Henry, we know, was "almost irritably Catholic" (Belloc). Certainly, there were ardent Lutherans, but in England the Reformation was a coup d'état; it was imposed from above.

I am going to make the startling suggestion that there are very many disturbing signs in England today—for those who have eyes to see—that something like the reverse is currently being put into operation! The Vestures of Ministers measure has far more importance than we realise, not because it matters to us as Freethinkers what trumpery finery a popish priest decks himself in as such; not because, as for evangelical Protestants, it offends them as "unscriptural", but precisely because these clothes are very highly significant to tens of thousands of Roman Catholic Englishmen as indissolubly associated with the Holy of Holies, the *Mysterium Donum Dei*, the most holy rite of their religion.

The undeniable truth is that Freethinkers, as witnessed by their silence and impassiveness, just have not realised what is going on at all! We may disagree with the Evangelicals in ninety-nine things out of a hundred. This does not mean to say they have not got their finger very much on the pulse in the hundredth thing. On Thursday, October 15th, the Protestant Alliance Annual Rally was held at Caxton Hall. The Rev. Robert Hood, MA, of Ipswich, addressed it on "The drift to Rome; shall it
(Concluded on page 372)

This Believing World

A flaring headline in "The Observer" on November 1st must have caused many a good Catholic to shudder. It was, "What's Wrong With Our Church?", and the accompanying article pointed out plenty. The once infallible Church, founded by God himself—that is, Jesus—on an infallible rock called Peter, seems in a pretty sorry state these days. The book dealing with the alleged wrongs is entitled, *Objections to Roman Catholicism*, edited by Michael de la Bedoyere who, when editor of the *Catholic Herald* once crossed swords with H. G. Wells—or rather tried to, and got a thorough defeat for his pains.

★

Some of the articles in the book are written by converts and deal with such subjects as freedom and education, superstition and credulity, and so on. It is difficult to believe that no Roman Catholic before this book found out that "superstition and credulity" could ever be applied to Roman Catholicism! In any case, the disputes which are at the moment rocking the Vatican Council must be proving once for all the utter fallibility of the Church if nothing else. Its "divine" mission is as mythical as its so-called origin.

★

The Bishop of Southwark who is most anxious to unite Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Free Churchmen into one happy family should begin with trying to unite Baptists with Baptists in Wales. According to the *Sunday Express* (October 11th) the Baptists of Ystalyfer, 150 of them, march to chapel and then divide, one lot entering by the main door, the other lot going in through the vestry. One of these, a retired schoolmaster charges the others with rowdy behaviour at divine service, and rival ministers want to use the pulpit at the same time. Altogether, we get a pretty picture of Christian unity and Christian behaviour, much as it has always been in the Church's history for centuries.

★

In Houston, Texas, some weeks ago, a large group of parents asked the education authorities to withdraw from the schools all books dealing with evolution, on the grounds that the theory was diametrically opposed to Christianity, that it contradicted the Bible as well as scientific facts, and therefore should never be taught to children. On November 9th, the Texas State Board of Education voted 14-6 to approve the use of the books. But were the parents not right? The Bible *has* no use for evolution.

★

"Humanism is just an escape route for those who find theology too frightening", wrote a Malcolm F. Smith in a letter to the *Birmingham Post* (November 11th). An obviously fervent Roman Catholic, Mr. Smith was incensed at some articles on abortion by Wendy Cooper that had received the commendation of the Birmingham branch of the National Council of Women. How could Miss Cooper write over 900 words without once mentioning God? How could she suggest that "the moral law is something as variable as fashions, gimmicks and politics and no absolute quality"? The whole business was "vile". So Mr. Smith ended his diatribe with an attack on humanists who, "Far from being advanced... are three-quarters of the way back to the apes." We make two comments. First, we confess that theology can be frightening—when it deals with hell or original sin, for instance. Second, we are glad at least to note that Mr. Smith has advanced far enough to accept some sort of evolutionary theory once anathema to the theologians.

IT'S THE MASS THAT MATTERS

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continue?" He made some cogent points, with most of which, Freethinkers, after very little investigation, would surely agree. He reminded us that when Luther was told the Roman Catholic and other Churches, were holding conferences, he said "let them go on"; they would come to naught, agreement and reunion with Rome being always submission to Rome.

Mr. Hood knew the Roman Catholic leaders were "kind, polite, and smiled on TV, and none can fail to see how it is all written up in the press—the Church hoary with age, beneficent, and the only one with the answers to all the problems of the 20th century"! He reminded us that Dr. Ramsey had said he could foresee the time when England might accept the Papacy! He reminded us that the Reformation in Europe did *not* happen on a misunderstanding. He reminded us that if we had our larders full and our pockets full, we also had full prisons and juvenile courts. What, however, was his explanation of all these matters, and what was his remedy? His "explanation" was that England had deserted the open Bible, that the seeds of unbelief had been sown in Protestantism by Modernism. What was his remedy? It was prayer; it was their "divine mandate" to preach the gospel "which is the dynamite of God"; it was to trust in the Lord, and stand firm with Joshua, while what was foretold in the last days should come to pass. I could not help feeling that Dr. Heenan was not going to be worried much by all this.

When *The Churchman's Magazine* and *Wickliffe Preacher's Messenger* (Editor A. L. Kensit) remarked this October, that during the debates in Parliament "members of all parties showed themselves pitifully unaware of the issues at stake," we can agree, especially as the Established Church's episcopacy, to a man—as is clearly observable in Hansard—seems intent on rushing into the arms of Rome! What is the game? Are the two rival firms so weak they must do business? Are the Anglicans, still smarting under Rome's condemnation of their orders, and hoping, even at this date, for a re-assessment in their favour, willing to sell their country back into the bondage of Rome in order that they should be "real" priests? Goodness knows, one cannot accuse Catholics in this country of being secretive about their aims. Leave alone the evidence in practically every Catholic publication one picks up; consider these two clerical utterances. In 1957, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Clifton said "Our aim is the conversion of every single man, woman and child in Britain." In 1961, Archbishop Heenan, then in Liverpool, said "... for us, Britain is a missionary territory. ... We are here to win as many converts as we can."

It can hardly be any accident that these moves on the part of England's Church are made just as Rome has returned to the vernacular in England. This is certainly *not* because the practising Roman Catholic laity do not understand the Latin. Apart from the facts that the basic part of the mass, or "Ordinary" never changes, and missals are bilingual, one can hardly go to mass (usually low mass, mass which is said not sung) fifty-two Sundays a year, plus holy days of obligation, without becoming familiar with its few thousand words in whatever language. Obviously the hierarchy's aim is to make Catholicism less alien to possible converts.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

Quatercentenary of the birth of Christopher Marlowe

LECTURE AND READING by Richards Clements, David Tribe, Paul Hansard in the Conway Hall Humanist Centre, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1., on Friday, December 4th, 8 p.m.

THE FREETHINKER

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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 J. W. BARKER, L. EBURY, J. A. MILLAR and C. E. WOOD.
 (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

Leicester Secular Society (Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate), Sunday, November 22nd, 6.30 p.m.: B. B. PINDER "Holidays Abroad".
 Marble Arch Branch NSS (Carpenter's Arms, Seymour Place, London, W.1.), Sunday, November 22nd, 7.30 p.m.: National Secular Society, Secular Education Month, November, 1964. Details of Public Meetings on "Religion in the School" on page 376.
 Poplar (Bromley Public Hall, Bow Road, E.3), Friday, November 20th, 8 p.m.: DAVID TRIBE, F. H. AMPHLETT MICKLEWRIGHT
 SIMON ELLIS, Mrs. E. VENTON, "Religion in the School".
 South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall Humanist Centre, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1), Sunday, November 22nd, 11 a.m.: REGINALD SORENSEN, M.P. "The Humanist Challenge and Dilemma". Tuesday, November 24th, 7.30 p.m.: D. J. GIBSON, "What is Freethought?"
 Sutton Humanist Group (Red Cross House, 11 Park Hill, Carshalton Beeches), Saturday, November 21st, 7.30 p.m.: KEN TAYLOR "Man's Predicament".

Notes and News

Maria da Piedade Gomes dos Santos, the brave woman who was kept as a hostage for her husband by the Portuguese PIDE, was released from prison on September 18th at the end of the term of her "security measure." The *Portuguese and Colonial Bulletin* (October-November) justifiably attributes her release to the pressure of world public opinion roused by papers like itself and bodies like the British Committee for Portuguese Amnesty, which published the pamphlet *Portugal: Women in Prison*—a campaign in which we are proud to have played a small part. The *Bulletin*, giving the names of other prisoners who have been released after intensive efforts by British and international organisations, argues that "more and more Portuguese political prisoners can be released" and that "a true Amnesty can be obtained for them." The *Bulletin* is obtainable from K. Shingler, 10 Fentiman Road, London, S.W.8., annual subscription 15s.

"THERE is nothing personal in the papal parliamentary defeat," said the *Guardian's* Rome correspondent George Armstrong (10/11/64), but he emphasised again that the bishops "really believe all they have been saying about their collegiality." They had rejected a scheme on missionaries by a vote of 1,601 to 311, and it will now have to be rewritten to satisfy them. Cardinal Alfrink of Utrecht had again stolen the headlines, however, with the admirable suggestion that the Council should go further than Pope John's encyclical *Pacem in Terris* and condemn "clean" as well as "dirty" bombs. Two French bishops had supported the cardinal but no American had raised his voice. "It is now known", Mr. Armstrong reported, "that a group of American nuclear experts, all Roman Catholics, has sent a confidential petition to their hierarchy asking that the council should not commit the folly of condemning the 'clean' tactical bombs."

One American bishop, TV-personality Fulton J. Sheen, had however "descended" from his Hotel Hilton suite to speak on missions. On this, his first appearance before the Council, Bishop Sheen said that "there are 200 million poor in the world who would gladly take the vow of poverty if they could eat, dress and have a home like myself and many of those who profess the vow of poverty." Presumably the speaker then returned to the Hilton.

THE FRENCH CATHOLIC union, the Confédération Francaise des Travailleurs Chrétiens, has voted by 14,000 to 6,000 at an extraordinary congress to change its name to the Confédération Francaise et Democratique du Travail. This means an official severing of the union's "already loose links" with the Church, and is regarded by the *Guardian's* Paris correspondent (9/11/64) as opening the way for an "eventual tie-up" with the Socialist union, Force Ouvrière, and making it easier for them to work together with the Communist-dominated Confédération Générale du Travail. Opposition to the change of name came mainly from the strongly Catholic miners of Alsace-Lorraine, but although they immediately walked out of the meeting in silence, they decided not to secede.

ITALIAN ROMAN CATHOLIC bishops have—in what a BUP report in the *Yorkshire Post* (9/11/64), described as the strongest statement since the reign of Pius XII—warned voters that Communism is "a grave danger for life and for religious and civil liberties." The statement was issued by the Italian Episcopal Conference in time for the Italian elections for municipal and regional officials on November 22nd, but is regarded, more importantly, as bringing to an end a struggle within the Italian hierarchy on "whether a 'soft' or 'hard' line—as represented by the late Pope John and by Paul respectively—was the best method to deal with the ever-growing power of Communism in Italy." The present pope has made it clear that he will follow a "hard" line towards the large Italian Communist Party, despite its late leader's agreement with Pope John's policy of "understanding" and "dialogue."

"NOT far from where a man touts FREETHINKERS on the street", we read in the *Guardian* (9/11/64), the Diocesan Church Bookshop, Manchester, approaches its one hundred and fiftieth anniversary. We can appreciate the reporter's juxtaposition, but why "touts" and not "sells"? Would he refer to a newsvendor touting the *Guardian* or even its sister paper the *Manchester Evening News*? We think not. True, George Woodcock, the veteran FREETHINKER salesman in Manchester carries a poster advertising his wares, but so does the newsvendor.

Humanism Adrift

By F. H. AMPHLETT MICKLEWRIGHT

It is probably true to say that the freethinking movement of this country has always tended to sectionalise, and that different groupings have represented differing interests. The Deists were mainly Tories and there was a social distinction between them and the type of upper middle classes which provided the radical dissenters or the disciples of Bentham. Again, this group was sharply distinct from the far more radical group which in politics or in religion was typified by Thomas Paine. A democratic, proletarian radical freethought of varying texture might be traced through such names as Cobbett or Watson, Hetherington or Southwell. There was a distinction socially between the working-class supporters of Holyoake or Bradlaugh and the somewhat unorganised middle class religious liberality which evolved into the agnosticism of Huxley, Morley, Leslie Stephen or Matthew Arnold. In short, speaking historically, the freethought movement has always been a movement rather than a party, has had its politico-social distinctions and its right or left wings in religious discussion. Its common purpose has been associated with the disintegration of orthodox forms of religion and with an anti-ecclesiastical approach to social problems such as education, censorship or the definitions of social morality.

Some such sketch of a century and a half would presumably be readily agreed as the background of the present time when the freethought movement embraces a right wing of humanism and a left wing of secularism. Indeed, the organisational issues are all the more important today. A wide and somewhat amorphous humanism may be traced in much popular thinking. It comes to the fore at times in the columns of the *Guardian* or the *Observer*. The organisations which provide humanist propaganda are the spearheads of this wider movement. They are well known to the churches. Both the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church have not only disowned humanism but they have published booklets and pamphlets attacking it. It is essential that any organised expression of the humanist case should be presented in a clear-headed and apt manner, that it should be heard widely, and that it should in fact express humanism. If this is not done, the whole movement is betrayed.

For some years now, the present writer has felt that this is merely not being done. After some years of ecclesiastical and semi-ecclesiastical drifting, attempting to find a foothold ideologically which did not give way under him, his views gradually clarified and he sought to join the humanistic rationalist movement. In fact, he did so join and became linked with several humanistic groups. He is bound to confess that his experiences were not too encouraging. It must be admitted at once that both the Rationalist Press Association and the Ethical Union were undergoing periods of reconstruction although both were issuing valuable statements still from a rationalistic angle. A third organisation astounded him. It had a long history of freethinking and plain speech. Some of its Victorian forebears were among the advanced radicals of their day. But a stage had been reached when it was courting active opposition from within to write anything anti-clerical or criticise conventional sexual morality in its magazine. Was the group dominated by the mere stupidity of a handful, was it unwittingly harming the humanist cause by not realising the moribund situation which must arise out of

its existing viewpoint, or was there even an active fifth column at work seeking to shatter any signs of new life and activity which might spring up?

It was clear that a small minority wanted humanism as a religion and a few even wanted some form of ceremonial or symbol, a cultus formation. This was a fair enough position even though far removed from the rationalism to which the writer had come. But this is a very removed position from one which sets out to demand that Humanists should not speak in any way derogatory of Christianity or that their propaganda should not include anything which might alienate Christian sympathy and the possibility of co-operation. If the latter policy were carried out, it would mean that the humanist teeth had been drawn and that the traditional anti-clerical and freethinking attitude would have come to an end. Indeed, some of the propaganda would seem to bear all the marks of this.

It is the constant expression of this propaganda, side by side with the demand that the old battle-cries should be hushed and that humanism should be merely something living in a peaceful co-existence with Christians which leads the present writer to assert that, somewhere within the picture, a fifth column is at work. After all, it would not be the first time that organised Christian forces have used the method of underground agency or have made contact with persons who have not the least idea that they are so being used. In one grouping known to the writer, it would be laughable to say that most of the people in key positions would have the abilities necessary to act as a fifth column. On the other hand, it is just such people who could be used to carry out the functionings of internal disruption without their having the least idea that their prejudices and lack of insight were being turned to this end.

It might well be asked why the present writer has chosen just this moment to seek the widest publicity in the freethought movement to air his suspicions. He was prompted to do so by an important article in the *Humanist* for November, 1964, by Dr. Victor Purcell. The author is a most distinguished historian who has held offices of high administrative importance in the Far East. He is now holding an academic post of importance in the University of Cambridge. Dr. Purcell dismisses the merely religious humanist as a curiosity of the movement. But he points out that positive harm is done to the whole movement by the "Don't be beastly to the Christians" group. Inactivity and the smothering of any rationalistic progress are the natural sequels where they have gained any sort of hearing. Finally, he categorically claims that a fifth column is at work, bent upon the destruction of humanistic and freethought endeavour. As Dr. Purcell points out, his own thorough training in counter-espionage enables him to spot enemy-inspired activity when he sees it.

The seriousness of this charge cannot be overstated. A leading scholar who has had the requisite administrative and specific training, is willing to make a categorical charge of this kind. Dr. Purcell does not give his evidence, although he says that only a threat of proceedings for libel prevents him from mentioning names. So far as the present writer be concerned, his own personal experiences go very far towards reinforcing the general statements made by Dr. Purcell. In short, humanism is

not cutting the ice that it should. There are grounds for thinking that basically this is due to enemy-inspired activity which has gained not a little unwitting collaboration. It should be recalled that there are people who turn up in humanist groupings because they like to hold office, and no other organisation would be willing to give them an opening, the type of people who hang on to petty offices of registration and the like when they are long past any serious activity or who would be Tory local councillors if they had the ability to pass a selection committee. These people are excellent ground for the activity of the fifth columnist. Without knowing what they are doing, they act as his natural obstructionists in committee and elsewhere. The vital question is what is to be done.

In the first place, the British Humanist Association should declare itself specifically anti-Christian and anti-ecclesiastical. This would help to bring matters to a head and make clear the proposition that "he that is not with us is against us". Demand should be made that these groups should embark upon public activities along these lines. Claims to be humanist should be proved by validly humanist and anti-religious activity. After all, these steps are merely to do in reverse what the Christians have already done with their anti-humanist propaganda. Following from this, it should be made clear that there is no place whatever in the movement for the "Don't be beastly to the Christians" school. Some such stringent activity should eliminate the fifth columnists and their hangers-on. The whole matter should be ventilated on every possible occasion, by resolution at every annual meeting and the like. One of two things must happen. The anti-rationalistic people will withdraw. Where they go to is of little concern to the Humanists proper, save that some may suddenly find alignments not far from Church House or Westminster Cathedral! If the reverse takes place and the rationalistic elements are defeated, they should at once withdraw from every group, society or institution which sides with reaction and a pro-Christian inactivity. They will not be homeless for the National Secular Society provides a natural home and their work can be rebuilt therein. It would then be interesting to watch the folding-up of the groups which had been left. In either case, there must be a temporary weakening, but it will be at the cost of roots purified and the opportunity of rebuilding a proper freethinking and rationalistic movement, one of the crying immediate needs of this country both in the anti-theological and the moral spheres. To attempt to gloss over the present critical situation as Dr. Purcell has outlined it is sheer madness. It can only mean that the whole movement suffers from pernicious anaemia and that finally there will be a great sell-out to the Black International of the churches. Let all Humanists and Rationalists wake up before it is too late!

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Who Was Peter?

By H. CUTNER

IF Peter had done all the things which the New Testament writers credit him with, how is it that *nowhere* in secular history is he named? How is it that the Jews, in writing their own history, never mention him as having preached at any synagogue? Josephus mentions neither Peter nor Paul, and the only reason given for this by Christians is that Josephus deliberately suppressed their great success in converting Jews to Christianity. But why should Josephus suppress anything? He was and still is heartily disliked by the Jews as a renegade. But what would we know of Jewish history without him? The truth must be faced that there was no Peter—or Paul—to write about. Both were invented long after Josephus.

What every reader should remember is that Christian chronology is as mythical as its heroes. Whatever the dates given in books on the New Testament the fact remains that no one knows when the Gospels were originally written, where, in what language, or who were their authors; and they were not mentioned by name before about 180 AD. As for the Acts of the Apostles—a work of fiction if ever there was one—I have never been able to find anything positive about its origin, not even of when it was first mentioned. It certainly tells us a lot about Peter and Paul, but on what authority? Christians readily answer that question—on the authority of Almighty God, who inspired every word. How else could the writer (Luke?) have been able to get all the speeches of Paul and Peter down so literally in Greek considering that both of them spoke in Aramaic?

Then there is the difficulty of Peter's names. Was he called Simon or Cephas (or Kephass), a "stone", or what? How is it that in the Epistles of Paul, Peter is only referred to in Galatians? Think of it—Peter shares with Paul the honour of being a hero in Acts, and Paul refers to him only in Galatians!

Even Luke refers but once to Peter by that name in his Gospel, though twice by the name of Simon Peter. And no doubt there was some special reason for calling Peter, Simon, just as there must be one for suddenly suppressing the name of Saul in Acts, and substituting Paul. No reason is given for this change. But as Robert Taylor pointed out—perhaps the first to do so—we are suddenly introduced to Peter in Matthew 8, 14, as if we all knew him already—"as if the writer of this Gospel had taken it for granted that everybody must know who Peter was"—though he appears as Simon earlier. In his *Devil's Pulpit*, Taylor makes a great deal of play with the names of Peter though much more is made by the American writer, W. H. Burr, in his *Revelations of Antichrist*.

In Acts 10, 5, Peter (or Simon Peter) lodged with another Simon—Simon a Tanner—in Jappa. Why Jappa, a town in the Levant on the Mediterranean coast? The clue is in Matthew 16, 17 where Peter is called by Jesus, Simon Bar-jona (incidentally, Peter is also called Satan by Jesus, in Matthew 16, 23, and was told "Thou art an offence unto me").

Robert Taylor is convinced that Peter is a literary personification of the Zodiac Sign of Aquarius, hence Peter is a "fisher" of men. But note also the reference to Joppa (where the prophet Jonah fled) linking Peter up as the "son" of Jonah. These links with the Old Testament are a feature of the New.

But (says Taylor), Jonah (or Peter if you like) is the Roman deity Janus, on the site of whose temple is built St. Peter's Church in Rome. Like Janus, Peter is depicted

with a staff in one hand, and a key in the other, and Janus was called "Father", that is, "Pater" Janus. The name Peter is really an Egyptian word and is found in "Jupiter". In any case, it must not be forgotten that the *Encyclopedia Biblica*, in its article on Names, admits that nearly all the names in the Bible are "made up", that is, they are fictional names.

It would take too long for me to go into the questions of Cephas and whether Cephas is Peter, or meant to be Peter, or is someone else. But readers interested in phallic connections in the New Testament should explain the words "Peter and Paul" for themselves. Peter was the "rock", the "Rock that begat thee", or "Thou art Peter [the rock] and upon this rock I will build my church". The *literal* meaning of much of this and many other parts of the New Testament was intended only for those who did not understand—the common or ignorant people. It was the "inner" meaning, the "spiritual" meaning, which contained the message of Jesus—but only for those who understood.

We are told that Peter was "executed" in Rome in Nero's reign, but there is not a line in Roman history about him. Nor of Paul for that matter. And even more curious is the fact that Justin Martyr, writing about 150 AD says in his Dialogue with Trypho that "Christ changed the name of one of the Apostles to Peter", and says nothing else about them. In fact, he only mentions one of the other apostles by name—"a certain man whose name was John". But quite a number of the Apostolic Fathers never mentioned Peter, and it is up to Christians to tell us why, if he lived and was the character depicted in the New Testament. Where is Peter, as the first pope, mentioned by a contemporary writer? Curious also that the only mention of Paul by Peter is in his second Epistle, where he is called "our beloved brother Paul". But an interesting fact about the two Epistles of Peter is that they are never referred to by the Apostolic Fathers, which is more than remarkable if Peter was the first pope. Of course, both epistles are forgeries, and Peter, quite unknown outside the New Testament, never existed.

OBITUARY

We regret to announce the death after a long illness of Edwin Gay. He was aged 52.

Mr. Gay was a journalist by profession and enjoyed a wide range of hobbies including cycling, and swimming. He was a member of the National Secular Society. The general secretary conducted the funeral ceremony at Beckenham Crematorium on November 7th.

Our deep sympathy is extended to Mr. Gay's wife and daughter.

SECULAR EDUCATION MONTH, NOVEMBER 1964

"Religion in the School"

Public Meetings organised by the National Secular Society

Birmingham (Digbeth Civic Institute, Digbeth) Saturday, November 14th, 3 p.m. Speakers: Richard Clements, David Tribe, Professor P. Sargant Florence.

Leicester (Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate) Sunday, November 15th, 6.30 p.m. Speaker: David Tribe.

Manchester (Register Office Hall, 64 Lower Ormond Street, All Saints) Sunday, November 15th, 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Margaret McLroy.

Reading (Rainbow Hall, Cheapside) Tuesday, November 17th, 8 p.m. Speakers: Margaret McLroy, James Johnson, Dr. Ronald Goldman, Bob Crew. Chair: David Collis.

Richmond (Parkshot Rooms, Parkshot) Tuesday, November 17th, 8 p.m. Speakers: F. H. Amphlett Micklewright, Hilda Flint, G. N. Dev. Chair: Nigel Sinnott.

Poplar (Bromley Public Hall, Bow Road, E.3) Friday, November 20th, 8 p.m. Speakers: David Tribe, F. H. Amphlett Micklewright, Simon Ellis. Chair: Mrs. E. Venton.

Westminster (Alliance Hall, 12 Caxton Street, S.W.1.) Monday, November 30th, 7.45 p.m. Speakers: Harold Pinter, Margaret Knight, David Collis. Chair: David Tribe.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE ONE BOOK

Mr. Arthur E. Carpenter will be delighted to hear that the selection of F. A. Hornibrook's *Culture of the Abdomen* by John Pertwee for *Desert Island* companionship was not Mr. Hornibrook's "advent 'on the air'".

It was at least a Second Coming, for Lord Boothby had earlier made a like choice.

DAVID TRIBE

PROPHECY

Whenever a prophecy appears to be fulfilled we hear all about it. For instance if there's a prophecy that if the Fairy Flag in Dunvegan Castle in Skye is waved on a not sufficiently serious occasion certain disasters will follow, and this happens, a lot of fuss is made. But it's different when it's the other way about.

According to the Ministry of Works guidebook of Stirling Castle, there was an ancient prophecy that a queen would be burnt in that building. When Mary Queen of Scots slept there (as she did in so many places!) a candle set fire to the curtains of her bed. She was however rescued. But there isn't half the noise made as would have been the case had she been burnt to death and the "prophecy" proved right.

I. S. LOW

CONFINED PRIESTS

On October 29th in the *Sun*, Dr. Biezanek described how she as a doctor, knew of a Roman Catholic priest who was placed by his Church in a mental hospital for shock treatment because he had deviated from Church dogma. One wonders to what extent Rome maintains in Britain today a penal system of her own. Dr. Biezanek also mentioned high-walled seminaries for the confining of recalcitrant clergy. I would suggest that it might be useful, to all who value liberty, to know to what extent Roman Catholic-dominated mental institutions and seminaries are being used as prisons.

JAMES H. MCMAHON

TEN NON-COMMANDMENTS. By Ronald Fletcher.

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