

**The Humanist World Weekly**Registered at the  
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FOUNDED 1881 by G. W. FOOTE

Friday,  
June 28, 1968**FREE (RELIGIOUS) COLOUR TV**

**FREE** colour TV will be available to families moving into a new housing estate either at Maidstone in Kent, or at Basingstoke or Andover in Hampshire. The only programmes they will be enabled to watch are closed-circuit religious services.

This is part of a crusade planned and initiated by Lord (J. Arthur) Rank—well-known for his promotion of the British film industry—to bring Christianity into the homes; a £50,000 "drawing-room revolution" in Christianity. Lord Rank, a 79-year-old Methodist millionaire, believes it better to spend money on a dynamic new TV approach to religion than to build a new church. "A church on a new housing estate of 5,000 to 6,000 people would cost about £90,000 and will attract an average congregation of 28 people. But with a few hundred TV sets we could have a congregation of thousands. Just think about that".

Lord Rank claims there will be no religious barriers in the TV services, and hopes that Anglicans, Methodists and Roman Catholics will join together in their homes.

To stimulate interest, and avoid boredom, Lord Rank plans to engage top-of-the-bill speakers and Churchmen with "an exciting and interesting approach to religion".

"People seem to fear being labelled as church-goers and that is what keeps them away from Sunday Services. *But the Church is dumb. TV is undoubtedly the greatest means of communication ever known. The Church hasn't exploited it and that's stupid.*"

He went on: "In a few years this closed circuit could be nation-wide. What a fantastic congregation we would have then".

Many will no doubt feel the scheme hare-brained and naive, but Lord Rank proved himself a man of vision and insight when he undertook to make something of the British film industry, and it may be thought that at 79 years of age his imagination and acumen is no less keen than it was 30 years ago. If a nation-wide closed-circuit system becomes established entirely in the hands of Christians whose sole inten-

tion is to spread and strengthen Christianity, then humanists and secularists may well have cause to worry.

The humanist movement couldn't hope to set up a similar system on its present slender resources; though finances may not be our greatest drawback. The churches' enormous financial resources in themselves are insufficient to make Christianity (etc.) the vital force it could (unfortunately) become; it may be saved from extinction—it may gain huge advances—because a few imaginative men like Lord Rank are willing to cut across tradition and adjust procedures to current circumstances despite the risks involved, and the radical changes deemed necessary. *It is this same attitude which is so desperately needed in the humanist movement*

So far as a closed-circuit TV network is concerned, perhaps our only hope would be in a combined effort involving most of the various radical, political, educational and ideological organisations pooling a degree of their resources and sharing broadcasting time.

\* \* \*

**NEW 95 THESES**

THE Reverend J. J. Thompson (a regular contributor to the **FREETHINKER**, and now one of the new 'secular churchmen') has posted his own 95 Theses upon the chapel door of his Philosophian Church. Upon which, in full clerical garb, he took his place in the pulpit, delivered a sermon, and invited vocal contributions from the congregation.

Mr Thompson has obviously worked hard on his 'Theses' and given them considerable thought. Because they present what may be confused with a humanist view, dealing with many issues upon which freethinkers have much to say, the **FREETHINKER** is to

publish them in their entirety beginning this week. Comment from correspondents will be welcome.

Part of the new Theses, and fundamental to the Philosophian Church, is a system of ethics variously described as Securitanism, Anthropism and Permanism; these are postulated to be without the defects common to other ethical systems, and Mr Thompson writes (Thesis 22) "This is the only ethical principle that has been found capable of a purely *a priori* proof, that overcomes the objection of David Hume that a prescriptive proposition is logically impossible of deduction from factual premises. Since its first announcement, no one has yet been able to refute this principle or to find a flaw in it". In Thesis 24, Mr Thompson has written "The Social-Survival principle of ethics justifies a basic formulation or law, as fundamental to all social science as Newton's laws are to mechanics or Faraday's laws to electrolysis, which may be simply stated thus: all moral behaviour is directed towards survival of the agent's society".

Following the sermon, when the congregation were invited to contribute rather in the manner of Quakers at a Friends Meeting, your Editor, one of the congregation, took the opportunity to rise and suggest that the Theses, and the ethical system embraced, attempts to establish an Absolute; that Permanism retains the defect common to previous systems in that it fails to give a sound and incapable basis—overcoming the 'naturalistic fallacy' objections, and the transition from 'is' to 'ought'; that, in the final analysis, Permanism needed voluntary agreement that the continuance and betterment of society was a 'good' before it had effect; that, therefore, it too was subjective and that 'good', once again, only reflected personal approval. The service was then ended.

The Theses make many points of interest to our readers each of whom will be enabled to make his own assessment of them as they appear in the **FREETHINKER**.



# FREETHINKER

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

National Secular Society. Details of membership and inquiries regarding bequests and secular funeral services may be obtained from the General Secretary, 103 Borough High Street, London, SE1. Telephone 01-407 2717. Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the NSS.

Humanist Letter Network (International) and Humanist Postal Book Service (secondhand books bought and sold). For information or catalogue send 6d stamp to Kit Mouat, Mercers, Cuckfield, Sussex.

### OUTDOOR

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

Manchester Branch NSS, Platt Fields, Sunday afternoon, 3 p.m.: Car Park, Victoria Street, Sunday evenings, 8 p.m.

Merseyside Branch NSS (Pierhead)—Meetings: Wednesdays, 1 p.m.: Sundays, 3 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

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

### INDOOR

Humanist Housing Association, Blackham House, 35 Worples Road, Wimbledon, SW19 (near Wimbledon Station), Sunday, July 7, 3 p.m.—5.30 p.m.: Garden Party.

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1, Sunday, June 30, 11 a.m.: Dr JOHN LEWIS, "Naturalism".

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

## CHAPMAN COHEN CENTENARY EVENING

J. G. CARTWRIGHT      WILLIAM GRIFFITHS  
PETER COTES          DAVID TRIBE  
Mrs. E. VENTON (Chair)

and the recorded voice of      CHAPMAN COHEN

Refreshments — Everyone welcome

CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, LONDON, WC1  
SATURDAY, JUNE 29th, 7 p.m.

## MEMORANDUM ON THE ADOPTION LAW

Submitted by the British Humanist Association

THE BHA would bring to the attention of the Department the following three points:

1. The right of the mother to consent to the adoption of her child subject to a condition that specifies the religious persuasion in which the infant is to be brought up seems to us unreasonable on the following grounds:
  - (i) It is inconsistent with Part II, Section 13 (i) of the Children Act, 1958, which states that the effect of an adoption order is to extinguish all rights, duties, obligations, and liabilities of the mother and vest them in the adopter;
  - (ii) This sole exception is in favour of indoctrination of the child, which is a dubious practice at best and has less excuse if it is delegated;
  - (iii) The welfare of the child, including its moral welfare, is taken into account if a high standard of case-work is insisted on;
  - (iv) Adoptions are thwarted when the number of babies with a particular religious label does not match the number of would-be adopters of that denomination.

We therefore ask for consideration of the removal of this conditional consent.

2. Adoption agencies are restricted to local authorities and adoption societies registered by local authorities. We think there is an advantage in making the local authority primarily and financially responsible, so that voluntary adoption societies would be employed by them where necessary.
3. There is evidence that children suffer because there is liable to be confusion or conflict in the practices and procedures involved in dealing with rights and claims under different Acts affecting children.

We ask the Department to make the welfare of the child paramount and to try to establish uniformity of practice and procedure to serve this purpose.

## TELEGRAPH PUBLICITY

IN responding to a Press Release issued by the National Secular Society, the *Daily Telegraph* (June 5) afforded some helpful publicity to the campaign against compulsory religious instruction in State schools. An article, written "By Our Churches Correspondent", headed "STOP RELIGIOUS SEGREGATION, SAYS SOCIETY", makes mention of three points which the NSS were happy to see appear.

"There should be no segregation of children by religion in schools, said a statement yesterday by the National Secular Society. It claims that "denominational schools" which indoctrinate children with religion are wrong.

"In response to questions from the Church of England Commission on Religious Education, the Society says that the most important contribution a school can make to moral education is through the example of teachers.

"In the secondary school there should be free discussion on moral questions with plenty of practical help for charities and old people. The society wants religions of all kinds and not only Christianity taught in British schools."

### "WORLD WILL END"

#### Billy Graham's prediction

BILLY GRAHAM, the evangelist, predicted the end of the world in a sermon at San Antonio, declaring: "Everybody knows it. Everybody feels it; it's in the air".

Graham said that 26 civilisations have risen and fallen in history. "There's no reason to believe ours will last forever. This world as we know it will come to an end".

Report in the "Daily Telegraph" (June 18).



## SLAVERY

**Statement by the Anti-Slavery Society, a non-governmental organisation in category B consultative status.**

THE Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 22 and 23 of Council resolution 288 B (X)

Communication dated, May 20, 1968: Received May 22, 1968.

This year has been called the International Year for Human Rights. Large numbers of people throughout the world have been encouraged by the United Nations to think about human rights—other people's as well as their own. Non-governmental organisations in consultative status have been specifically requested to help in this educational work. The present world-wide wave of student protest is one symptom of the growing disillusionment of thinking people who are becoming more conscious of the extent of social and economic injustice and are beginning to understand the nature of its causes. Their demand for reform is beginning to command respect. Many honestly want to fulfil their obligations to the under-privileged. The Anti-Slavery Society would be failing in its duty if it were not to report to the Council [Council on Non-Governmental Organisations; 44th Session] the reaction of public opinion within the Society's own limited field. Here is that reaction:

Twenty years ago the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted and proclaimed. Article 4 of that Declaration reads: "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude. Slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms". What have the United Nations done to fulfil that promise? They have passed resolutions in the General Assembly, in the Economic and Social Council and in the Commission on Human Rights condemning slavery and calling upon all Member States which have not yet done so to ratify the Supplementary Convention. This was first done in the General Assembly as long ago as 1962. There are still fifty Member States which have not yet ratified. Yet this compares favourably with other conventions, and slavery is officially condemned and forbidden by the Government of every Member State.

In July 1966 the Social Committee of this Council debated for ten days the report of the Special Rapporteur on Slavery, called for by this Council in 1963. The Council had requested him to suggest measures to end slavery. His principal and very strong recommendation was that a small, permanent advisory committee of experts on slavery should be appointed to have certain responsibilities for slavery and for nothing else. A very strong case for this measure was stated by the Special Rapporteur and elaborated by the distinguished delegation of Pakistan. No attempt was made to answer that case, yet no action was taken except to refer the report to the Commission on Human Rights, which in turn referred it to the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The Sub-Commission's resolution substantially approves the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur and today—five years later—the position is essentially the same as it was in 1963. Why is it—one may ask—that, in spite of the Special Rapporteur's call for a committee of experts on slavery, no delegate of any Member State has yet been willing to sponsor any resolution on slavery calling for machinery to be set up to implement the Supplementary Convention?

Perhaps the explanation is in the reply which was given

to the representative of the Anti-Slavery Society by one distinguished delegate in the Commission on Human Rights when asked to co-sponsor a resolution, this time an even milder one which did not even call for a Committee of Experts. He said, and these were his words, "I will not waste your time by reading your draft resolution. We have no slavery in my country, but we have neighbours who do have it and we have no intention of embarrassing them".

The Anti-Slavery Society, which has been trying to deal with this problem since 1823, would like to see a more dispassionate approach to it. If Governments are sincere in their declared wish to see slavery abolished—and unquestionably the majority are sincere—why is it that, while conventions on refugees and on narcotics have machinery to implement them, no such machinery has yet been acceptable to this Council to deal with slavery—not even in a purely advisory capacity?

Like the problems, for example, of refugees and of narcotics (only perhaps, more so) slavery is a complex problem. Its nature, its causes and remedies, vary from country to country. Some of the causes of slavery are in many cases beyond the control of the Government concerned, the remedies dependent on international co-operation. Those causes are the ones which create poverty, which create the conditions in which slavery can flourish. Among them are over-population and a failure on the part of the rich nations to agree to pay fair prices for the raw materials exported by the developing ones, and the persuasion of Governments having no apparent enemies to spend vast sums on armaments when large numbers of their people live in slavery because there is said to be no alternative until the average daily diet of slave and master alike can be improved.

All these contributory causes of the survival of slavery are matters for expert study and for international action. Of course they are being studied already, but *not* as causes of slavery.

There is another aspect of the problem to which the Anti-Slavery Society must draw attention. During the past year the Governments of two Member States have announced inquiries into slavery. In both cases government employees were involved directly or indirectly, and slavery was reported to have continued over long periods: six years in one case, twenty in the other. In one of the cases 150 Government inquiries had been held into allegations of slavery and similar practices over a period of twenty years, yet not one person had been punished. Does this not constitute justification for the existence of an impartial, disinterested international body having responsibility for investigating reports of slavery?

Four years ago, the Anti-Slavery Society submitted a report to the United Nations giving details of one incident in the country to which reference has just been made. The Government of that country replied, in good faith, that its officers had found nothing to substantiate the report. The Anti-Slavery Society admires the generous candour with which that Government has now published what its inquiry revealed. Nevertheless this terrible record provides the clearest possible proof that, given the opportunity and temptation, greed and fear are always liable to produce such results. The history of slavery is full of examples, of

(Continued on page 208)



## 95 THESES FOR A SECOND REFORMATION OF THE CHURCH

I PROPOSE to defend the following 95 THESES for a new Reformation of the Church.

I invite the clergy and laity of the world searchingly to consider these 95 Theses and the proposed institution of a New Reformation of the Church based on these Theses.

JAMES JEREMY THOMPSON.

### Part 1: The Church Today

1. The Church, however unscientific or superstitious it may be accused of being, has been through the ages and can continue to be a force for good. The Church upholds morality, inspires ideals, unites a people in common feeling, comforts the afflicted, helps the needy, befriends the lonely, heartens the despondent, consoles the sorrowful. No social agency is available to replace it. Yet the Church has not advanced along with the advance of science and technology, and it is now failing in its moral responsibility to the modern world.

2. The chief function of the Church is not to provide spiritual experience, but rather to uphold a morality, above and beyond the law of the land, which is essential to the survival of society. It corrects the deficiencies of law, viz. morality enacted by the State is minimal, imposing the essential, while that advocated by the Church should be maximal, aspiring to the sublime; law of the State tends to be negative, and prohibits, while the counsel of the Church is positive and exhorts; law can enact only what is enforceable with sanctions, while the Church can exert personal influence; the law of the State can be unjust, while the Church can supply reason and principle above law, to form the basis for law and to justify it.

3. The Church's influence in the modern world should increase rather than diminish. It is regrettable that people are turning away from the Church, that fewer students aspire to the ministry, that many people are forsaking moral principle except hedonistic pursuit of self-interest, that many are turning to promiscuity, drug-addiction, aimlessness, recklessness, delinquency and crime, that so many men throughout the world hate and fight men of other races, nationalities, and beliefs, and that they are securing with advancing scientific knowledge ever more violent and deadly devices with which to destroy and kill. Today's people require a Church that meets their needs—that gives them principles to live by in a world in which they can enjoy the benefits of scientific advance without destroying themselves. The Church is an instrument of vast potential: it can bring a philosophy of social morality into the personal lives of individuals and a reasoned system of values into the actions of groups and nations.

### Part 2: Intellectual Freedom

4. The First Reformation argued the question of indulgences; the Second argues for intellectual freedom. To be fully effective the Church should reach all people, not only followers of specific creeds. When the Church rejects or excludes unbelievers, it thereby rejects many of the very people whom it most ought to attract. The Church must no longer demand faith as a condition of membership, nor should its service require manifestation of faith. The Church must permit intellectual liberty.

5. Freedom to think independently and to form con-

clusions as evidence persuades is an inviolable right of rational human beings. The Church may not rightly impose a belief or set of beliefs to be accepted on assurance unsupported by direct evidence, nor make any such belief a requirement for membership. The Church must welcome all regardless of belief; for beliefs are always sincerely held and it is a contradiction that one can believe what he thinks untrue.

6. The whole past history of the world shows that human progress has been made where there has existed a right to think, and that where thought has been controlled or suppressed, there has been little progress. Those parts of the world where beliefs have been enforced by unyielding taboos have preserved from generation to generation the same customs and traditions almost without change from prehistory. The "Golden Age" of Greece which gave the world a sudden flood of new ideas occurred when there prevailed intellectual liberty. The fundamental difference between the modern scientific method of thought that has been so prolific in new knowledge and the unscientific stagnation of the Middle Ages lies not so much in curiosity or diligence or other personal characteristic which the true man of science is portrayed as having as in the freedom to think which is accorded him. The moral progress of humanity depends similarly on intellectual liberty.

7. These THESES, and all of the Church's preachments, are to be offered not as doctrines for unquestioning acceptance, but as THESES for scrutiny and debate. All who join in the New Reformation must enjoy the intellectual freedom which befits rational beings.

8. Freedom to think should extend not only to the laity but also to the clergy. Every minister must be free to preach what he believes is true regardless of orthodox teaching. There should result no exact uniformity of belief, but one may expect to find a core of common agreement. It is foolish for the world's many religions and sects to differ in details of doctrine while requiring uniformity within themselves: it is more reasonable to find the common core of agreement and beyond this to permit individual variation of belief. There should be no statutory qualification for the ministry.

### Part 3: Religion

9. Whether the universe has had a cause, whether such cause was a specific being, whether an intelligent being, whether a volitional one, whether it still exists or has quite expended its causative force or energy, whether such cause is identical with the universe, what else might possibly account for the origin of matter, are questions to which nobody today knows the answers. One may or may not believe in the existence of God, with equal reason and justification.

10. Whether life, of any sort, of an individual can continue, in any manner, after the death of his physical body, is also unknown. Nor is there evidence for Karma-transmigration, or reincarnation, nor is there clear, definable difference between a material and a "spiritual" being. One may or may not believe in a soul.

11. The world's many religions and sects contradict one another; hence their teachings are not all true. The concept of religion must be enlarged to include not only recognition



of one of the various gods of the world's many religions but also all beliefs and practices, however divergent, however arguable, natural as well as supernatural, that are directed to the moral uplift or perfection of humanity.

#### Part 4: Sacred Writings

12. If there is or has been some specific being that caused the universe, it can no longer be held that this being was the tribal god of the Hebrews, YHWH of the Old Testament, nor the central character in any other of the so-called sacred writings of the world, nor any of the personifications of a supreme being in literature, legend or art which have been created by men in various times and places.

13. The Bible is the commendable literature of a primitive people just emerged from barbarism at the dawn of history and settling in a pastoral life united into a cohesive society by a religious folklore and tradition. As such, it is a valuable source of archaeological knowledge of the ways and beliefs of a people in days long past. The assertion that the Bible was written, inspired or guided by the supposed cause of the universe cannot be substantiated. The early religion of the Hebrews was barbarous, involving even human sacrifice.

14. Modern science suggests that the earth and its life did not originate in the manner related in the Bible, that the first of the human species were not the persons there depicted, and consequently that there was no "fall of man" for the disobedience of eating a forbidden fruit. The early events of humanity related in Genesis and the story of the Exodus may be regarded as fables. The Old Testament books of Kings and Chronicles may have a basis in historic fact.

15. The historical record indicates that Jesus may have been an earnest social reformer worthy of great honour. There is no proof that he was born of a virgin or sired by a Holy Ghost, or that any such being exists as a Holy Ghost, or that the cause of the universe is a trinity. That he rose out of his grave or ascended away from the earth cannot be proved.

16. The miracles attributed to Jesus are unlikely, and prove nothing with regard to any theological or moral doctrine.

17. There is no "prophecy" in the Bible which is fulfilled in Jesus, or in any other way, nor did Jesus utter any valid prophecy.

18. Without a "fall of man" there was no "redemption from the curse". The idea of a human sacrifice, as the execution of Jesus for sedition is asserted to be, in order to propitiate an offended father God for favour or personal advantage, as to requalify for admission to a lost paradise, is an abhorrent one; it is a relic of human sacrifice of early religions in which parents killed and burned their children as gifts to appease their angry God, to pay for selfish gain.

#### Part 5: Moral Philosophy

19. Human acts are affected by a quality called morality and so must be guided by a principle that distinguishes right from wrong. In all times and places there has been almost universal agreement that right and wrong exist and also about which acts are right or wrong. This agreement argues that there does exist binding ethical principle, if it can but be located and stated, that morality is more than custom, that it is not purely a matter of subjective opinion or emotion.

20. Such ethical or moral principle requires certain qualities. It should be a single principle, universal in its

application to all human acts and all human agents, constant for all times and places, absolute rather than relative, objective rather than subjective, both prescriptive and descriptive, necessary, ultimate, naturalistic, obligating, enforceable, discoverable and provable.

21. Through all the history of philosophy there has never existed until recently any theory of the nature of morality which has met these requirements. Twenty-four centuries of ethical thought have failed to produce agreement on the difference between right and wrong. The ethical writings of Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Augustine, Aquinas, Grotius, Hobbes, Spinoza, Hume, Locke, Rousseau, Bentham, Mill, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, have all failed to provide the answer. The world's past ethical philosophies—Cyrenaicism, Cynicism, Hedonism, Epicureanism, Stoicism, Supernaturalism, Intuitionism, Mysticism, Pragmatism, Relativism, Subjectivism, Emotivism, Existentialism, have all been deficient. The contributions of Wittgenstein, Dewey, Kierkegaard, Sartre, Moore, Russell, Ayer and other modern philosophers are all disputable. The Emotivism and Subjectivism that modern Sophists are adopting are philosophically unsound.

22. The recent ethical theory known as Permanism or Anthropism or Securitanism, which identifies the generalisable element in all right conduct as the tendency to preserve society, provides the only moral principle yet known which fulfills the requirements for validity. This is the only ethical principle that has been found capable of purely *a priori* proof, that overcomes the objection of David Hume that a prescriptive proposition is logically impossible of deduction from factual premises. Since its first announcement, no one has yet been able to refute this principle or to find a flaw in it, although this hypothesis can be regarded only as an approximation to truth as close as is possible with present knowledge, and it can open a way to further thought and research in the development of ethical theory.

23. From the standpoint of scientific method, that hypothesis is most acceptable which most simply explains all the relevant known facts. The Perman principle is the only one that explains all the facts of morality as it is now or has ever been practiced anywhere, by any people. It explains human social and moral behaviours of the most diverse sorts which other ethical theories fail to explain: these include not only traditional moral precepts, but also prejudice, intolerance, censorship, indoctrination, war, crime, punishment, government, law, sexual standards, education, social welfare, tribalisms and customs of all sorts. It is universal in application to all social behaviour; this universal applicability to all conduct qualifies it to supply moral principle for a New Reformation of the Church.

24. The Social-Survival principle of ethics justifies a basic formulation or law, as fundamental to all social science as Newton's laws are to Mechanics or Faraday's laws to electrolysis, which may be simply stated thus: all moral behaviour is directed towards survival of the agent's society. This law draws its substance not only from philosophy and psychology but also from human palaeontology, archaeology and history, and offers a basic postulate not only for ethics but also for sociology, jurisprudence, economics and international relations and it clarifies historic and current affairs.

(To be continued)



## OBSCENITY AND THE ARTS

Jean Straker

SOMEWHAT to the 'left' of the key speakers on the platform Arnold Abraham Goodman (Baron Goodman of the City of Westminster, a Life Peer) lawyer and chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain sat in an uneasy New Establishment seat alert and sensitive to a rising tide of intellectual anger which threatens to sweep away our shaky and strangely inherited obscenity laws.

The conference had been arranged for the afternoon of June 6th to investigate the working of the Obscene Publications Acts, 1959 and 1964. It brought together almost 100 people from most fields of contemporary art, creative, reproductive and distributive. It was the brain-child of a number of organisations.

In the event it revealed and noted symptoms of concern, frustration and anxiety and promised that a working party would examine the nature of the malaise and refer back to the Council. My own feeling is that changes everywhere are taking place so rapidly that the working party will be overtaken by events—the flood of libertarian publications is making a breakthrough similar to that which unstamped newspapers made in the mid-nineteenth century—that its diagnosis may be redundant. The meeting nonetheless was historically important for it gave us the opportunity to feed our discontent into the 'system'.

One could not feel that the members of the late 20th century meritocracy who sat on the platform—Dennis Lloyd (Baron Lloyd of Hampstead), Quain Professor of Jurisprudence in the University of London, Cecil Rolph Hewitt (C. H. Rolph of the *New Statesman*), a former City of London policeman and editor of the Penguin transcript *The Trial of Lady Chatterley*, Peter Lloyd, a young Conservative who read history at Cambridge and recently wrote the Bow Group's booklet *Not for Publication*, Peter du Sautoy, classics scholar from Wadham and President of the Publishers Association, Frank Kermode, Professor of English at the University of London and vice-Chairman of the Arts Panel of the Arts Council—would have anything personally to lose by an abolition of the obscenity laws; yet most were of the opinion that this could not be done or that it was not desirable that such freedom should be given. The ghosts of old Authority were holding very fragile barricades as onslaught after onslaught came from the new fighters for freedom of expression. These were among new voices that loaded the batteries of dissent: Cosmo, the Defence of Literature and the Arts Society, the English Stage Society, Freedom of Vision, and the National Council for Civil Liberties.

The trouble, Dennis Lloyd, told us could be traced from an introduction of an Obscenity Bill into the House of Lords in 1857 by John Campbell Campbell, a Baron son of a Scottish clergyman, who was later to become Lord Chancellor of England. It was he who had previously raised, as Attorney General, a personal definition of blasphemous libel, used against Henry Netherington, that

"the vast bulk of the populace believes that morality depends on Revelation—and if a doubt could be raised among them that the ten commandments were given by God from Mount Sinai, men would think that they were at liberty to steal and women would consider themselves absolved from the restraints of chastity".

The link was significant and apt, for Hetherington had been a member of the original newspaper stamp abolition committee of the Peoples Charter Union. Then, as now, publishers exposed themselves to prosecution and incurred fines in order to bring tyrannical law into disrepute; now as then publishers (John Calder and I, both present) were taking the same risks, feeling the same penalties, fighting the same battles against an Authority that still held a suspicious dread of repealing any restriction on the liberty of the subject.

It was Cecil Rolph who gave the modern form to that suspicion. Those who opposed censorship, he said were in a minority; a referendum of the whole population would support the strongest censorship. Thus was an illogical statistical assumption used to support the benevolent paternalism of the policeman and the moralist; it was echoed by Peter Lloyd, who felt there ought to be a law, that one had to experiment carefully in seeking for more freedom of expression. Peter du Sautoy broadly supported existing legislation but would join with others in an examination of the law. Frank Kermode concluded that we were divided, and that it would be appropriate to conduct an examination into the affect of abolishing the present laws.

When it came to the appointment of members for a working party it seemed that the voices of discontent were unwanted, and Tony Smythe, John Calder and I protested. Lord Goodman told us that the Committee would have power to co-opt.

There was a feeling among some of us that the working party might wish to constitute itself into a kind of advisory panel for the Director of Public Prosecutions to consult: that the fees now earned by lawyers for giving uncertain advice could be better earned in future by giving more certain advice, that there was a belief held by some that there were some things that everybody agreed should not be published.

When in 1947 Waldorf Astor (of Cliveden), the 2nd Viscount, who had bought the house in 1912, sold it to the the Arts Council on condition that its main rooms should be restored and used as its headquarters, the recently enacted Royal Charter of Incorporation charged it to develop

"a greater knowledge, understanding and practice of the fine arts, and in particular to increase the accessibility of the fine arts to the public".

Not exactly a strong mandate for the maintenance of censorship on the arts!

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Members only  
Admission by current (1968)  
membership card

CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, LONDON, WC1  
SUNDAY, JUNE 30th, 10 a.m.



## A NEW BREED OF THEOLOGIAN

August Fry

[August Fry was born at Chicago in 1930, took his B.D. at the University of Chicago in 1955, was ordained by what is now called The Church of Christ in America in 1956, took his Ph.D.(Oxon) in 1956 and is now a member of the staff of the English Faculty of the University of Amsterdam, and a student pastor for a sister church in the Netherlands for the students at Delft.]

EVEN the outsider can see that the churches are in a turmoil today. Outstanding Roman Catholics deny the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, Anglican bishops plead for theological integrity in terms of slang expressions and a pop singer slips a bit of a love song into a Gospel hymn. And behind it all the institutional church waits quietly for it all to blow over, knowing quite well that it has sufficient momentum to ride out the storm.

Until very recently the theologian has been content to remain within the institution in the relative security of academic life, and he has accepted, though often with no little hesitancy, the role of apologist for that institution. During the last few years, however, there has been a growing alienation between the theologian and the Church as institution. Even within the guarded walls of the university it has become obvious that it is one thing to help maintain the social structure of the Church within the forms of Western society and another to serve the God whom he was called to serve. The theologian now recalls the silence of so many continental churches during the 1930s, the role of American Catholicism in the Vietnam war and the endless suppression and injustice in the name of decency and righteousness of which the church are guilty. Theologians have become extremely critical, they have decided that in many cases it is no longer morally responsible for them to remain within the Church and to try to reform it from within, they are breaking out of the old forms in search of new ones.

Although it would be extremely premature for me to predict what those new forms will be, some of the characteristics of this new breed of theologian do spring to the eye. There is, first of all, the willingness to subject every aspect of ecclesiastical organisation to profound critical analysis and to reject any part of it which is not acceptable to the enlightened conscience of our time. The use of the Church as a means for influencing political as well as judicial decisions is also rejected, just as the use of ecclesiastical pressure to limit the exercise of human freedom in any one of its many areas of expression.

But most important of all is the new theologian's attitude toward truth, which he no longer dramatizes with a capital 'T'. He has ceased to think that he possesses it or that he is called upon by his profession to apologise for it. He feels, rather, that he is searching for it with every talent he has and that the community in this world to which he owes his first allegiance is that of those who are similarly engaged. In a word he is one with all seeking believers.

This attitude, however, has consequences, and these consequences are more important than the particular content of his 'faith' at any given moment. He must stand open and unprejudiced before everything and everyone and be ready to test every experience according to his own best lights. He must be as quick to judge the new as the old, the latest fad as quickly as the oldest commonplace; and he must be ready to adopt a cause if he thinks it is right, even if it does not have the approval of the New Left.

Finally, he is the enemy of orthodoxy in whatever form he finds it, in the churches or outside them, for he approaches life with an attitude and not a content. The orthodox Freethinker will find him as uncongenial as the orthodox Christian, and both will think him a very dangerous man to have around.

## IN THE NEWS AGAIN — Madalyn (E. Murray) O'Hair

MADALYN MURRAY, as she was then known, will be remembered by regular FREETHINKER readers for her tremendous campaign to remove compulsory worship and Bible readings from publicly owned schools throughout the USA; a campaign which she had to take to the US Supreme Court before gaining a decision in her favour.

Madalyn O'Hair, as she is now known, is once again in the news through sponsoring and directing an atheist radio programme which gives "the atheist point of view" each week from a radio station in Austin, Texas; a station owned, incidentally, by President Johnson's "family business interests".

Few women have campaigned with such perseverance and vigour, against such tremendous opposition, with so little support, nor have suffered such abuse, injury and harassment and hurt to themselves, their family and their property as this valiant atheist.

A short extract from a letter we published (April 26, 1963) is typical:

"When we came home from the Supreme Court, after three days in DC [District of Columbia], our windows were broken again. All the ground wires into our house had been yanked out. Bill's aerial was this time broken beyond repair. When Garth and

Bill [her two sons] returned to school they both had trouble. This is the first time that Garth has been pushed around at school by other 8 and 9 year olds! Bill had a hard time. It culminated with a dozen fellow students ganging up on him, but four boys out of his radio club at school came to his rescue. A real fray ensued. Then Bill and Garth got trapped in the drug store and had to have the police rescue them. Out of this we got one name, and went to have a warrant sworn out. Again the police magistrate refused to have the warrant issued, and we had to bring in our attorney to get even a 'show case' summons."

Shortly after, Mrs. Murray filed a "Tax the Churches" suit which brought even more trouble upon herself and her family. Some extracts from her letter which we published July 24, 1964, could only fully express a little of what she suffered:

"If you have been reading the newspapers or listening to radio or television, you know that we have been driven out of Baltimore, Maryland, by brute force.

"As you know, our 'Tax the Churches' suit was set for June 2, and the powerful forces of the Church had to stop us in some way. And so, on June 1, Bill and I were dragged into a Criminal Court in Baltimore to face charges that we had forced a young Jewish girl to abandon her Jewish faith and turn to atheism.

(Continued overleaf)



The girl's family asked for Bill and me to be sent to jail for two years.

"Our 'Tax the Churches' suit was then postponed—by a request from the Catholic Church which the State of Maryland granted—to June 22, which would give the State time to put Bill and me in jail on the above ridiculous charges. But, let us get this clear: if they had not tried to frame us on this charge, it would have been some other charge equally ludicrous. We asked for a jury trial—knowing full well that in Maryland every single person is required to swear that he believes in God before he or she can sit on the jury. Meantime the judge . . . ordered that Bill could not see the girl any more at all. This was too difficult for Bill or the girl, and they eloped to Hagerstown, Maryland, where they were married on June 16.

"Meanwhile the State of Maryland, hoping to pursue this matter further, postponed the 'Tax the Churches' suit again to July 1, hoping to have us in jail for certain by then.

"And then Bill brought his bride home. Within minutes the house was surrounded with police cars. The police had no warrants, no court orders, nothing, and when we confronted them they said so into a tape recorder which we carried. And then, they flew into us. Calling in reinforcements, they broke into our house, dragged me into the streets and beat the living hell out of me. Bill was unmercifully beaten. A crowd gathered—over 250 people—and they screamed and howled to the police, 'Kick them again', 'Hit him again' and 'Kill her, kill the bitch'. The police enthusiastically responded to the point that Bill and I were both hospitalized. Mother (aged 73) came out of the house and begged them to stop, only to be felled with one blow from a night-stick. She also was taken to the hospital.

"When we were beaten insensible, we were taken to prison, then to the hospital, and then back to prison where we were held incommunicado for the day. Our lawyer found out where we were only on a radio news broadcast. On a Sunday we were hauled into court, and before the day was over our bonds were increased, Bill was again beaten in his jail cell . . . and we were released. Returning home we had two nights of dread as the police attempted break-ins again since they knew we had the tape recordings of the fracas in our home. After two sleepless nights, we fled to Hawaii, but still Maryland is trying to extradite us and take us back."

These are only short extracts from a long and savage saga which readers may care to examine in full by reference to earlier FREETHINKERS (1963: March 15, April 26, June 28, July 5, August 16; 1964: July 10, August 7).

Mrs O'Hair seems a determined fighter and there is little doubt she secured her recent radio programme only after severe difficulties; nor is there any reason to assume that her difficulties are now over.

## SLAVERY

(Continued from page 203)

which these two are only the latest to be publicised. Twice only in the history of the world has there been internationally constituted machinery to implement international treaties on slavery. These were the International Slavery Bureau from 1890 to 1914 and the League of Nations Standing Advisory Committee of Experts on Slavery from 1933 to 1939. Wars destroyed these bodies. The Anti-Slavery Society, with its pitifully small resources and its proud record, picked up the bits afterwards and provided the continuity and inspiration which brought new treaties into being. For twenty years from 1946 this Society deliberately refused to publicise slavery in the hope of securing governmental and international co-operation to end slavery. In doing so it had to sacrifice its public support. The Society has been bitterly disappointed and has no option now but to publicise those reports of slavery which it is convinced are true and where more should be done to end it. The Society would still much prefer to work in discreet silence, in friendly co-operation with Governments, as indeed it is able to do with some. Governments faced with

this problem could do much more if machinery existed at the United Nations to facilitate their co-operation.

The Anti-Slavery Society deeply regrets that International Human Rights Year is to be allowed to pass—twelve years after the adoption of the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery—without the voice of a single Member State being lifted to demand the immediate establishment of machinery, comparable to that which implements the Conventions on Refugees and on Narcotic Drugs, to make the Supplementary Convention on Slavery effective.

The Anti-Slavery Society appeals to the Council to recommend the establishment of such machinery at the first opportunity.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### The Making of Assassins

I SEE the USA government are going to conduct an investigation into the factors which give rise to men becoming assassins of important public figures.

The first thing that can be made clear is that it is not merely the civic right to hold weapons which is responsible. A resolute man will always be able to get hold of a gun if he makes up his mind to use it.

The real clue is to consider how the 'mind is made up'!

As I see it, the USA government and possibly the USA press are largely responsible for the frustrations which give rise to the adoption of desperate means by deep-thinking individuals. I believe that if real liberty of opinions are allowed by Government and press—and of course this applies to Communist opinions as well as to others—there will be less excuse for frustration leading to murderous attempts. But real freedom is the basis for outright condemnation by all democrats.

E. G. MACFARLANE,

Convener, The World National Party.

### Shades of Foote and Cohen!!!

YOU are one of the best editors the FREETHINKER has had, and the one most capable of improving its image.

I base this statement not on supposition but on factual evidence in past issues, using Professor Christopher Rick's system of "verbal analysis", which won for him world-wide acclaim after his erudite analysis of Miltonian critics in his book *Milton's Grand Style*.

I am only sorry that I can't send you one of my "Gold stars" which I was allowed to award to deserving people on two occasions by the editor of *The Willesden Chronicle* and, on another, by the editor of *The Hampstead and Highgate Express*. But truth to tell, I possess no real stars.

Miss MURIEL FANCETT.

[Thank you kindly; I promise not to let it go to my head. In turn, I should like to award you a prize for the most reasonable, learned, accurate and moderate letter of the year.—Ed.]

### Model answers

AS one of Jean Straker's models my answer to D. M. Chapman's question (June 14) is that I neither shave armpit hair nor pubic hair. I feel that my body is not complete without such hair. It seems to me that when hair is removed the body has a clinical appearance. This is not to say that anyone else has to agree with me. It is up to each individual to make their own decision. But, surely what is interesting is why D. M. Chapman wants to know. Perhaps he will tell us.

GLORIA RODWELL.

I AM one of Jean Straker's models. I use cream to remove armpit hair in summer but not in winter. I don't remove my pubic hair because, through wearing very short miniskirts, this area is kept well ventilated.

ANNA MACDONALD.

[Jean Straker has written, in defence of photographs being permitted to show pubic hair, that "I take the attitude that it is wrong to falsify pictures of the body, that it is wrong for a photographer to issue visual statements which are fraudulent", and Mr Chapman obviously feels there is an inconsistency here if Mr Straker is willing that photographs of his models should show shaven armpits (to which we may add shaven legs and plucked eyebrows). Surely the argument should be that it is wrong that legislation is such that a photographer can be punished for photographically illustrating the body as it is.—Ed.]