

Freethinker

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A HORRIFYING HEAVEN

ONCE again I have found myself in accord with a Roman Catholic. This time it was Father Basil Wrighton, acting chairman of Ark, the Roman Catholic Animal Welfare Organisation, when he said, "I cannot understand how the bishop could have said this".

The bishop was Bishop Cashman of Arundel and Brighton, and in an interview with the *Catholic Herald* he said "I'm mad about it. I've got a blood-lust in my veins. Pheasant, partridge, rabbits and pigeon are my level. The fun is in the shot and in the excitement. I don't know anything on earth that gives me personally more excitement than waiting for a bird to come over my gun. *Its the nearest thing to heaven in human terms that I know*".



should be struggling to create a popular image, to upset the apple-cart in this barbaric fashion. Further, the bishop's smug assertion that he was not in the least disturbed by the possible reaction of "those people who worry about shooting birds and the rest of it" must surely be insufferable to those who look to such men as their guides. Surely this man, who presumably regards himself as enlightened, should take informed criticism seriously. That anyone could consider confessing their sins to someone such as this pinpoints the fact that the Catholic Church is based solely upon a faith perpetuated by fear.

Brigid Brophy, the distinguished novelist and leading member of the NSS, gave the *FREETHINKER* the following comment on this remarkable affair:

Freethinkers, who are no respecters of sporting parsons, won't be surprised. But perhaps the news that a bishop considers shooting birds the nearest thing to heaven he knows will shock some loose-thinkers out of their sentimental conviction that there must be some personal sanctity about those who elect to devote their lives to the basically bloodthirsty Christian myth.

From the point of view of the pheasant or rabbit concerned, it is no worse to be shot by a bishop than by anyone else. The true scandal is that ANYONE should shoot animals for fun—or for food, which means for the fun of eating them. Hundreds of healthy vegetarians daily demonstrate that humans don't need meat. Game shooting and the meat industry are just expensive ways of indulging human (including clerical) blood-lust. Snobbery, habit, press-button religion (if Rome hasn't issued a ruling on the subject, don't bother to think about it) conspire to make a smoke screen which prevents most people from ever bringing their morality to bear on the matter.

As soon as people do, we will begin a non-violent revolt against the unthinking violence we produce on animals.

NO RETURN

THE long-term implications of the Czech situation are slowly becoming apparent. Of greatest importance to Free-thinkers indeed probably to the world as a whole is the intellectual vacuum, which has been created in Prague.

An article, written by an anonymous Czech writer and published in the Paris newspaper *Le Monde* last week, points out that an 'intellectual haemorrhage' has already taken place in Prague. Although no arrests have been made among the intellectuals a psychological operation has been launched against them. False rumours about mass arrests

That Father Wrighton should disagree with these sentiments, indeed that such an organisation as Ark should exist is surprising, in view of the traditional Catholic doctrine that animals have no rights. However, Cardinal Heenan is Ark's president so Father Wrighton's view must be a valid one. I share his failure to understand how Cashman could have said this, not because I am surprised that a Roman Catholic bishop should engage in this sort of activity (it is to be expected in spite of their concern for the human sperm), but because one would not expect a bishop in the twentieth century, when the Catholic Church

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Freethinker

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Editor: David Reynolds

and even rumours of warnings to intellectuals by the political leaders have been circulated. This, combined with the seeming loss of all prospects for the future and the presence of several hundred thousand Soviet soldiers and fifteen hundred police has caused what is best described by the consul in one of the countries to which the refugees are fleeing: "In my whole career I have never seen so many men with famous names as in the past three days".

A wave of anti-Semitic feeling displayed in the Soviet press and in the undisguised persecution of the Jewish member of the Czech Praesidium, Dr Frantisek Kriegel, when the Praesidium went to Moscow (Kriegel only escaped arrest because his comrades refused to leave without him) has increased the panic.

Perhaps the most forbidding aspect of this helpless situation is that it is not only the older generation, who are fleeing. The younger generation, the students, who contributed so much both to the short-lived Czechoslovakia before August 21 and to the effective passive resistance after that sad day, are now leaving in droves because they see no hope of regaining their freedom. There are now about two thousand Czech students in Britain alone. Thousands more are scattered throughout Europe.

The article in *Le Monde* points out that this will cause an intellectual desert in Czechoslovakia for many years to come—a desert similar to that caused by the Battle of The White Mountain in 1620, after which Comenius and many of those early Humanists who had taken part in the Reformation were forced to flee the country in the face of the avenging Catholic armies. The unknown author in *Le Monde* appeals for help to establish a guarantee which will permit the intellectuals to return. There may be little we can do, but there is an extremely valid reason why we should do what we can. It is not just a question of putting the blood back into Czechoslovakia for its own sake but a question of rejuvenating a country which by the very nature of its history is in a position to conduct the experiment the world so badly needs—the experiment which may bring capitalism and soviet communism closer—the experiment which if it works might eventually lead us out of the stifling fumes of the cold war.

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.

ALMOST CHEEK

THIS week English and Welsh bishops of the Roman Catholic Church are meeting under the chairmanship of Cardinal Heenan. The Laity Commission, which was set up by the hierarchy to advise bishops on matters affecting laymen has set before the conference a letter, which poses a number of questions about the Pope's encyclical. At the time of writing only a draft of this letter has been published in *The Times*.

The draft is full of apologies and its content choked by long-winded euphemisms. In fact, its general tone reminds one of a schoolboy who is about to be thrashed, but is doing his utmost without being cheeky to convince 'sir' that he has done nothing wrong. Aside from this humility and circumlocution the draft raises a number of points, which FREETHINKERS would no doubt like to see answered.

In the preamble they raise the most far-reaching question, that of the Papal authority, "It is evident from the wide public discussion that has taken place that the document itself and the circumstances surrounding its preparation and promulgation are raising fundamental questions about the exercise of teaching authority in the church".

They go on to ask thirteen questions, which are highly pertinent and one would imagine very difficult for the bishops to answer. The first raises the question of the Papal Study commission's findings which were said in the encyclical to have "departed from the moral teaching". The laymen ask whether there was ever really an open question on the issue and can the findings of the commission not be published so that the Pope's reasons for rejecting them can be appreciated.

Question two reads: "With human beings, as opposed to animals, the conjugal act only rarely results in conception. In our experience the desire to conceive rarely plays an important part in the act. How, then, can the conjugal act be said to have as its primary object the generation of life?" In this vein a large part of the 'reasoning' in the encyclical is demolished. A later question raises the important matter of collegiality. It points out that in the addendum to *Lumen Gentium* it is stated that the Pope can decide whether to act personally or collegially. "Vatican II insisted upon collegiality." This is the "first major issue since Vatican II and collegiality has not been called on. They ask why not and express the fear that collegiality will soon become a doctrine of little significance.

Thus we have leading Catholic laymen questioning the whole encyclical and the Papal authority itself. It seems that reason is slowly emerging above the quagmire of faith.

A CENTENARY MEETING IN NORTHAMPTON

IN November 1868 Charles Bradlaugh first contested a parliamentary seat at Northampton. He was eventually elected in 1880, but then had six years struggle before, as an outspoken atheist, he was allowed to take his seat. This struggle by a local MP and his constituents against the mighty national parliamentary machine is a part of British constitutional history. Once in the House Bradlaugh became the most celebrated and highly revered back-bencher of his day and was promised Government office in the next Gladstone administration before his premature death in 1891.

In and out of parliament he was a dynamic force, con-

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THE NEW THEOLOGIAN

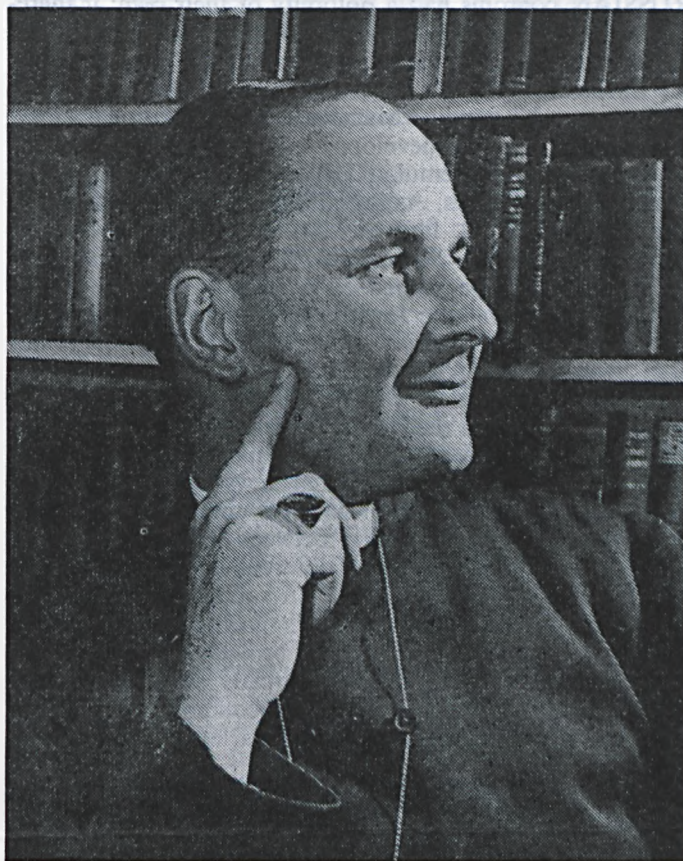
IAIN SAUNDERS

THE most striking aspect of the *New Theologian*¹ is the author's ability to remember detail. Unfortunately, in a brief survey of such a wide field this ability becomes more of a drawback, since it tends to obscure the many ideas and criticisms put forward. It is not really of much concern whether Williams, a Cambridge radical, smokes Player's Gold Leaf Virginia or Van Buren drinks Rhingold beer. The *New Theologian* is also a very personal book that describes the author's own involvement with the subject almost chronologically—an involvement that was stimulated by the Bishop of Woolwich's *Honest to God*, first published in 1963. This encouraged him to make further investigation amongst other leading thinkers including Bultmann, Tillich and Bonhoeffer and he was fortunate enough to be able to meet many of them on a personal basis. The value of the work lies in the brief insights that Ved Mehta managed to obtain and it is clearly in an attempt to avoid making the reports too subjective that the irrelevant detail has been inserted. Any interview though, is highly coloured by the personalities involved and it is probable that little more distortion would have been introduced by a more coherent ordering of subjects and a more selective choice of facts. Its great merit is that it is easy to read and avoids becoming embedded in heavy theological controversies while it does convey an interesting and attractive impression of the atmosphere surrounding these men. This makes it a useful, if slightly irritating, introduction that itself provokes thought and investigation.

The typical 'New Theologian' comes across as a mildly eccentric academic living a rather spartan existence but still finding time to appreciate the simple things in life. The typical doctrines that emerge are very much more difficult and dangerous to classify. However, two of the more fundamental thoughts are the identification of God with love and the rejection of the Bible as a necessarily true document. The former leads on to the controversial and radical suggestion of religionless Christianity while the latter illustrates the scant attention paid to the dogmatism and rigmarole that is such an integral part of the Church. Cynically this movement could be viewed as an attempt to make God impervious from attack by isolating him from all verifiable associations. More sympathetically interpreted it appears as an attempt to regain the original conception and purpose of Christ's life, which has become entirely obscured by centuries of distorted teaching. His life was one of love and concern for the happiness of his fellowmen

and many of his miracles were directly related to this theme. The water into wine and the feeding of the five thousand can scarcely be seen as much else. Thus, an unselfish person is more the goal of the 'New Theologian', than is a regular churchgoer—a reversal of normal priorities. He wants people to go to church because they are joyful and not because they are terrified of what will happen if they do not go. In this light such radical statements as God is depth and the appreciation of Mozart holy become more comprehensible and many of the paradoxes and incongruities involved in ownership disappear. This also implies that eventually religion, as a belief in the supernatural, will become superfluous. Certainly it will in its present form.

These attempts to update Christianity will be rejected by many as merely the flogging of a dead horse but this is to underestimate the part played by religion and Christianity



Dr John Robinson, The Bishop of Woolwich.

both in the past and in the lives of some in the present. Religion has generally represented much of what was unknown and mysterious. So, as man's knowledge has increased the influence of religion has decreased. To bury it completely now would put a very great strain on our present knowledge and state of awareness. Karl Popper has seen the progress of civilisation as being a movement towards self-responsibility and this is essentially what the new theology is about. In his thesis 'Man and Society' the ideal state is one where everyone is fully conscious. He sets this against the state of tribalism where natural and human laws are unconditionally accepted as one and the same, and where religion represents both and thus effectively exerts a dictatorial force. This was necessary at that time given the low level of awareness that existed. Now the role of religion as a controller has gone but it is a very presumptuous step to assume that its role as a guide has also disappeared. For a Christian, Christianity has many advantages in that it provides a driving force, it is easy to understand and it does contain its own justification. So, if it were possible to allow Christianity to develop on the lines suggested by the new theologians, religion would fall away of its own accord without creating the void that results from a direct rejection. One can appreciate the Pope's fear that we are beginning to have more control over our own environment than we have maturity to use that control. But, prevention by dictate is one of the easiest ways to encourage people to do something and the Pope's energy would have been far more usefully expended in increasing our understanding of the use of the pill.

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THE SOVIET UNION AND THE JEWS

OTTO WOLFGANG

RUSSIAN pogroms had a notoreity of their own; it therefore was a great step forward when the Russian Social democrats, and later the Bolsheviks, tried to stamp out the antisemitic vestiges in the population. When in 1913 Stalin wrote his study "Marxism and the National Question" he had not yet developed to the last stage in which he earnestly tried to emulate Hitler in everything, up to the Concentration Camps. As an Ukrainian, Stalin's successor, Krushchev, did not find any faults with the revival of anti-semitism in the Soviet Union. Since Stalin's study—which still must be valued as a serious analysis of the National Question—the Jewish question has been clouded by the refusal to consider the Jews as a religious rather than an ethnic group although it must be clear to everyone that a Jemenite and a British Jew have nothing else in common apart from their religious tradition.

Contending the attitude of the Austrian Social Democrats of his day, Stalin stated that Jews have no common language nor territory; and what "community of fate" and national cohesion could exist between Jews who inhabit different territories and speak different languages?

Denying the existence of human races, modern science in fact merely accepts peoples as groupings speaking a specific language and having been brought up in a certain cultural climate. In 1913 Stalin already said Jews speak the language of the rest of a specific economic and political entity and grow up in the same cultural atmosphere as the non-Jews, which

"cannot but leave a definite impress on their national character; if there is anything common to them left, it is their religion, their common origin and certain relics of national character. All this is beyond question. But how can it be seriously maintained that petrified religious rites and fading psychological traits affect the 'fate' of these Jews more powerfully than the living social, economic and cultural environment that surrounds them? And it is only on this assumption that it is generally possible to speak of the Jews as a single nation!"

(p. 10 of the translation, Lawrence & Wishart.)

However, it is not the first time Soviet rulers pervert Marxist principles in pursuance of power politics. They view Jews as both different from other 'ethnic' groups in the USSR: entirely urbanised, not identifiable with a specific territory, with a tribal rather than an ecumenical religion and emotional ties with relations outside the SU, particularly in USA and Israel. Jews therefore are from the start suspect of being potentially loyal. They are not allowed to assimilate, since with a Russified name and without the stigma "Jew" it would become difficult to watch them by purely administrative measures. In their passports (which every Soviet citizen has to produce on many occasions), Jews are registered as belonging to the fictitious Jewish nationality, which enables petty officials to discriminate against them in the admission to public jobs or high-schools.

There is not a single Yiddish school anywhere in the USSR for 2½ million Jews, although there are schools in their native tongues for ethnic splinter groups forming only an infinitesimal percentage of the population (e.g. the 0.005 per cent Koriaks). Because Jews have always been over-represented in the Soviet universities, in the arts and sciences, a quota system (*Numerus Clausus*) is now being applied; there have even been reports that prize-winning Jewish graduates of Secondary schools were denied admission to a university.

Experiences during the Second World War and the trauma of continued discrimination has tended to increase

among Soviet Jews a feeling of belonging to a 'community of destiny' with no outlet into real integration. After the revolution the decline in religious belief was greatest amongst Soviet Jewry, a process which since the revival of anti-semitism has gone into reverse. Together with their coevals, Soviet Jews experience a revival of a wave of fervour and many, without any previous background of religious upbringing or indoctrination, now crowd the few open synagogues on holidays; others wear the Star of David, learn Hebrew in secret or listen to the Israeli radio. The majority of them would probably reject an opportunity to emigrate, but like the Negro youths in the USA they react against discrimination.

The Zionist Bogy

The reaction of the Soviet—and lately the Polish—authorities is to equate all Jews with Zionism and to raise unashamedly the Nazi bogy of "All-Juda". In 1947 the Soviets voted for the partition of Palestine and immediately recognised the state of Israel in order to dislodge the British from the Middle East. Two decades later, the Soviets armed Egypt—whose leader they elevated to a "Hero of the Soviet Union"—against Israel in order to dislodge America. In a leader, *Ramparts* wrote at the time of the six-day war:

"Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States has clean hands. Russia's gift of massive armament to the Arab states are clearly motivated more by designs on the oil and waterways of the Mid-east than by any sympathy with Arab nationalism . . ."

In order to reach this goal, no slander is dirty and mean enough. *Komsomolskaya Znamya* of Kiev, wrote: "Many ties link the Zionists with the most reactionary forces of the world, including the West German neo-Nazis". In tarnishing the memory of the millions of Jewish Nazi victims *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, the paper of the Party Youth, went even further: —

"Hitler's fascists and the leaders of Zionism found a common language and co-operated with each other. The 'Kastner Case' is a clear example of this. During the Second World War, Kastner . . . organised a 'Committee to save Hungarian Jews'. He arranged with Hitler's Gestapo and the SS to let 1,000 of the richest . . . Jews emigrate. While fascism was at its height, the Zionists co-operated actively with Nazi chiefs, and in a number of instances, acted as their direct accomplices."

When the Israel General Rabin received an honorary degree, Kozantchuk in *Pravda Vostoka*, Tashkent, sneered. The man had never attended any university only an English Military College for a year, but this, "at the Israeli standard of learning", was sufficient to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. However, he added, his whole philosophy ought to be defined as "banditry". (All quotations from Soviet papers are taken from the January 1968 issue of *Atlas*, Marion/Ohio.)

That in this atmosphere of incitement Soviet Jewry had to let it go that they too sided with the Arabs against Israel, is understandable.

It is the height of hypocrisy if the Soviets clamour that Israel must restitute to the Arabs all occupied territories.

"In October 1939 Soviet Russia presented Finland with demands aiming at the establishment of Russian naval bases on Finnish islands in the Gulf of Finland and on the Finnish mainland of Hango, the cessation of the Arctic port of Petsamo and other frontier adjustments. . . . When Finland refused part of the demands, Soviet Russia invaded her on November 30th, 1939."

(An ABC of International Affairs—*The Penguin Political Dictionary*.)

Was this not aggression—and unprovoked at that? The world is still waiting for the restitution of these conquered territories.

WHY SUPPORT 'BIAFRA'?

AN INDIAN RATIONALIST

THE terrible suffering of civilians, particularly children, caught up in the civil war in Nigeria has naturally aroused deep sympathy for the victims. Along with this has gone political sympathy for the Ibo secessionists, who have attempted to set up a sovereign state of Biafra in Eastern Nigeria. Opponents of American policy in Vietnam are being mobilised to attack British Government policy towards Biafra. These radical, liberal, protesting elements in British socio-political life, would be considered natural allies by most Humanists. One would be very reluctant to criticise them openly for fear of strengthening reactionaries. However, partisanship for 'Biafra' and therefore against Nigeria has gone to such extreme and illogical lengths, that the strange attitudes and actions of the 'Biafran' leadership are going uncriticised, let alone opposed, by the radical left.

True enough the massacre of Ibos in Northern towns in 1966 was a despicable affair, but it was the action of uncontrollable mobs and was condemned by the Federal leaders. It must also be recognised that the killing of the highest Federal leadership in the Ibo-biassed coup of January '66, followed by the imposition of a unitary Government by Ironsi, the Ibo military head of Government in May '66, contributed to the Hausa Moslem outbreak. Having decided to secede in the name of the oppressed Ibo, the Ibo leaders proceeded to suppress the non-Ibo minorities in Eastern Nigeria in order to mortgage oil under non-Ibo land to French interests so as to buy arms from Portugal and Spain. They also proceeded to add territory outside 'Biafra' and occupied the mid-West state and its capital Benin at the beginning of the conflict. These facts should have led the left to desist from extending political support to 'Biafra'.

Let us consider some salient points on the question of carrying food and medicine to the starving. The Federal Government 'had offered to allow supplies to go by road across the battle lines at any point of Biafra's choosing' (*Guardian* editorial of 21.6.68). (This would have been supplemented by air, if loading of planes at Fernando Po was inspected by Nigerian consuls.) The land corridor was rejected by 'Biafran' leaders for months! A non-partisan attitude would have been 'let us drive Red Cross lorries loaded with food towards the "Biafran" lines and let the Ibo leaders order their soldiers to open fire on them!' But the humanitarian clamour was for challenging the sovereign Federal Government by arranging uncleared or even clandestine flights!

What has blinded the humanitarians, radicals, etc.? The rest of Nigeria—i.e., the Federalists—are a united front of Christians, Moslems and Pagans. 'Biafra' is nearly entirely Christian and about 85 per cent Roman Catholic. Hence the deep Catholic interest. The protestants could not lag behind in expressing enthusiasm for the 'Biafran' cause. To the anti-Government radicals this was a 'natural' issue to join in. In the dust and the din raised by all these, issues have been clouded and the thoroughly unrealistic Ibo leadership has been strengthened in its obduracy. The fact that the Federal Leader Gowon, his chief negotiator Anthony Enaharo and his best military commander Benjamin Adekunle are all Christians is nothing. Enthusiasm for Christian 'Biafra' is everything! Being neither Christian nor Moslem (either by birth or conviction!) and

being neither European nor African, I can watch from the side-lines, and I can see vast masses of Europeans being led to support disruption on the basis of the Christian religion, where there could be unity on the basis of co-existence of all beliefs or better still, on the basis of secularism.

RANDOM NOTES

"COMET"

AS reported in last week's FREETHINKER, the revolt against the Papal Encyclical has taken a significantly new turn. A "Freedom of Conscience Appeal Fund" has been set up to help clergymen who have had to resign or who have been suspended. A national register of those who could offer temporary shelter to such priests is being prepared. For many years, Rationalists have rightly complained that the indoctrination of the Roman Catholic through segregated education and through the church has been so severe that appeals to their reason have been usually fruitless. Faith overcame reason and individual conscience was subordinated to obedience to the Institution. Now at last, many consciences have been stirred to question and revolt—so manifestly unreasonable and unjust has been the Pope's statement. The appeal therefore is very aptly named and it is significant that the lay opposition have invited Lady Asquith, a Protestant, to be one of the four Trustees of the Fund. Humanists should not expect Margaret Knight to be invited but we ought to declare our clear sympathy with the movement and some contributions from us however small (or large!) would be most appropriate. This struggle belongs to and affects all human beings.

Many priests, theologians and psychologists in America are in similar revolt, but Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle, it is reported, gave an ultimatum till 14th September to 52 priests in the Washington area to end their "attack on authority". The maintenance of its authority is more important to the Roman Church, it appears, than human happiness. The minority of the Papal Commission who recommended the continuation of the old line to the Pope, argued that if the Roman Church now changed its view, it would mean that God revealed His will to the Anglican Lambeth Conference some ten years before He did it to the Roman Church and that would never do! I am sure as intelligent men they realised that this would also mean that God revealed His will to Atheists many many years before he did it even to the Lambeth Conference! But naturally, they could not mention this in a report to the Pope!

Belgian Bishops in the meanwhile have taken a bolder stand than their British and American brothers. They said that Roman Catholics had the right to follow their own convictions about birth control if the decision had been taken in a serious and responsible manner. They have been helped in this stand by the fact that the Pope had not exercised his Infallibility in issuing the Encyclical. This extra-ordinary and indeed strange power accrued to the Papacy, or came to a head or was revealed, only in 1870. It is just as well for the rest of the world that the Pope did not put the stamp of infallibility on his Encyclical. Maybe, in another ten years, people will say, it is just as well for his own sake that the Pope did not do so!

CZECHS AND COUNTERCHECKS

G. L. SIMONS

I HAVE just about struggled out from under the biggest heap of Western propaganda and self-righteousness that I can remember. Whatever else the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia has achieved it has given the capitalist press, the establishment BBC, the British House of Commons, and Richard Nixon a field day. Do not misunderstand me. The Warsaw Pact countries may deserve our considered condemnation. But what I do maintain is that this condemnation will not be rational if it is based solely on the lurid fulminations of Grimond, Heath, Wilson, and the comfortable commentators and pocket-philosophers of our so-objective news media.

In this article I would like to stress aspects of the affair that are deeply relevant, but which have not been adequately considered—and will not be—in the British press, radio and television.

There can be no doubt that the Soviet Union sees the maintenance of communist buffer states as essential to her own security. She remembers with bitterness the outrages committed on her soil by repeated Western invasions. In the First World War much of the worst fighting took place on Russian territory. In 1920, under the instigation of Winston Churchill, the young Soviet State was invaded by a dozen capitalist countries with the express intent of reinstating feudal Tsarism: at one time the Bolsheviks controlled only 15 per cent of Soviet territory. Few British people are aware of the details of this War of Intervention. Similarly, not many people realise the suffering and devastation caused by the Nazi invasion in the Second World War. The following is taken from an Official statement of the Extraordinary State Committee of the USSR, and the information is used in the published works of Fleming, Horowitz and others:

"... between 15 and 20 million Soviet citizens had been killed; the Germans had destroyed completely or partially 15 large cities, 1,710 towns and 70,000 villages; they burned or demolished 6 million buildings and deprived 25 million people of shelter; they demolished 31,850 industrial enterprises, 65,000 kilometres of railway track, 4,100 railway stations, 36,000 postal, telegraph and telephone offices, 56,000 miles of main highway, 90,000 bridges and 10,000 power stations; they ruined 1,135 coal mines and 3,000 oil wells, carried off to Germany 14,000 steam boilers, 1,400 turbines and 11,300 electric generators; they sacked 98,000 collective farms and 2,890 machine and tractor stations and slaughtered or carried off 7 million horses, 17 million cattle, 20 million hogs, 27 million sheep and goats, 110 million poultry; they looted and destroyed 40,000 hospital and medical centres, 84,000 schools and colleges and 43,000 public libraries with 110 million volumes; they destroyed 44,000 theatres, 427 museums and 2,800 churches."

The second point concerns the status of national sovereignty in the present world. It is clear that both the United States and the Soviet Union regard the preservation of the *status quo* as of more importance than considerations of local democracy. In Guatemala, the democratically elected Arbenz was defeated by an America sponsored invasion from Honduras (1954); in Guyana (formerly British Guiana) the democratically elected Dr Jagan was defeated (1953 and 1963) by British troops and American money; in Vietnam the overwhelmingly popular Ho Chi Minh is prevented by American troops from taking his rightful place as leader of a united Vietnam. Similarly, Russian tanks will ensure if they can the political conformity of the East European satellites.

Thus the balance of power is sacrosanct, and many Americans are on record as stressing how essential it is to world peace that the balance be preserved. And yet whenever the Soviet Union strives to maintain it, all pious Western writers and politicians are outraged! But for the West to take steps to preserve it—as in the examples quoted above, or in Dominica, Venezuela, Bolivia, etc.—is a supreme moral duty! This is only one feature of the dual morality that bedevils the Cold War. Western hypocrisy is further underlined by the response to the invasion of Czechoslovakia. The West has always maintained since 1948 that Czechoslovakia is a Russian satellite, with no independence and completely subject to Russian whim. And yet when Russia proves the truth of their assertion they are horrified and amazed!

The final point relates to the suffering that the invasion has caused. No doubt the Czech pride has been hurt, but to compare the Russian invasion with the Hitler invasion is absurd. At the time of writing (28/8/68) the fatalities in Czechoslovakia are less than 100—bad enough, but scarcely worse than an American race riot, and somewhat less significant than the 4,700 Vietnamese reported killed in the last eight days alone—why does this not excite our newsmen. Senator Eugene McCarthy, whom the Czechs would certainly have preferred to Humphrey as Democratic nominee, observed that the calling of the Security Council was out of proportion to the gravity of the affair. This is one of the few sensible comments that the West has generated in recent weeks.

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BOOK REVIEWS

DAVID TRIBE

PETER LEECH

WHATEVER views are taken of the Trades Union Congress full marks must go to its publications department for *The History of the TUC 1868-1968* (TUC-Hamlyn, 12s 6d). Lavishly illustrated and cogently written, this handsome volume is indeed 'a pictorial survey of a social revolution' worthy of a centenary.

The struggles and sacrifices, hopes and dreams of three generations of working men and women flow over the pages in a pageant we do well to recall. Odger, Tillett, Mann, Burns, Turner, Citrine, Bevin, Cousins . . . there is a living tradition. Though the book is mainly concerned with active trade union officers there are interesting vignettes of personalities from other spheres: the Rev. Thomas Hughes, Cardinal Manning, William Morris, and notable politicians. Many unionists gained their public speaking, political agitation and adult education experience at meetings and clubs organised by the National Secular Society. This isn't referred to; but Annie Besant, 'Fabian and freethinker', is there with her famous matchgirls' strike of 1888 which ushered in female participation and the New Unionism. I was sorry at the absence of Charles Bradlaugh. Apart from his general social reforms, he was notable for his work in the drafting of union constitutions, extension of employers' liability, abolition of 'truck' (payment in kind, with attendant abuses) and of market rights and tolls. But Bradlaugh, as atheist and individualist, had many enemies in the Christian (Howell) and 'red revolution' (Burns, an NSS speaker in his youth) wings of the movement, however much he was loved by the unions he helped directly: miners, agricultural labourers, sailors and firemen, postal telegraph clerks.

Bradlaugh has of course become notorious in trade union history for his opposition to the legislated 8 hours' day. He believed matters of this sort were for negotiation between adult workers and employers. Though this is still quoted against him as an example of his Victorian Liberal blindness, it is a little ironic to see this issue in perspective today. The book makes something of a feature of a watchcase of the 1860s, though not of the first International which issued it, and its quotation: "We require 8 hours for work, 8 hours for our own instruction and 8 hours for repose". How instructive are the telly, bingo and the betting shop? As for Government intervention, the Centenary Congress has just met under the shadow of a punitive Prices and Incomes policy, virtually rendering void the 1906 Trade Disputes Act, imposed by a Labour Government!

When we put this book aside and pass from its rose glow into the peasoup reality of today, we then see what a public relations exercise in fact it is. Though the old spirit is still alive, though the movement does not lack its men of dedication and enlightenment, though (like another much-maligned organisation, the United Nations) a great body of unsung work is constantly done, the reformist image and the earthly substance are growing steadily further apart. In 1889 some railway porters at Northampton came up to Bradlaugh and asked "Can nothing be done to prevent this disgrace to Leicester?", where some Irish Home Rule supporters had been arrested. Today they are rather too busy watching out for the passengers with the lightest bags and heaviest purses. What has happened to all the social and educational issues that used to come up at Congresses? The one picture in the book of a Government Training Centre is carefully chosen to show a West Indian receiving instruction. There isn't a word about racial intolerance in the unions—and I don't mean the more florid examples of the dockers and bummarces in support of Enoch.

A century ago—prematurely, as it turned out—John Stuart Mill was warning that unionists would prosper only at the expense of non-unionists. Now, with qualifications, we can see what he meant. Clearly the landed gentry and the tycoons with expense accounts and expensive accountants haven't suffered. But what about life's far from negligible casualties in the flood of inflation—the chronically ill, old, alcoholic, injured, addicted? What about those it is hard to organise—roadsweepers, artists, writers, composer, sandwichmen? What about brother unionists in jobs of low social esteem and corresponding income? In America we see what will come increasingly here with automation: Big Unionism, with certain favoured men negotiating big productivity deals the consequences of which is a great and growing pool of permanently unemployed. Not men cheerfully paid not to work, trained in leisure, given self-respect, but good old-fashioned listless spectres at streets corners on a subsistence dole. What about it, George, if you're not too busy looking for a title or the chair of a nationalised industry?

ACTION by Sir Malcolm Knox; George Allen & Unwin (The Muirhead Library of Philosophy), 45s.

Action by Sir Malcolm Knox is about forty years adrift of current moral and philosophical speculation. This of itself is no serious indictment, but the obvious hostility of the author to linguistic philosophy, his explicit religious belief and his continual appeals to Hegel leave the reader wondering just what he hopes to achieve.

Ostensibly, *Action* is a 'study of moral experience' based originally on Sir Malcolm Knox's Gifford Lectures. (Gifford Lectures, it should be explained, are a worthy institution founded by Lord Gifford which are intended to deal with 'Natural Theology in its widest sense and including, in particular, the study of ethics'. They are, further, to be 'popular' and 'without reliance on revelation'.)

Knox's thesis is that moral problems arise when human action is elevated from the instinctual level to action through choice—not a particularly exciting observation. Action becomes chosen action for Knox when the self-conscious element is introduced (his example is of the child who displays bad-tempered behaviour, of which he may be conscious, but unless it is the consciousness of 'I am bad-tempered' then the possibility of choosing to be bad-tempered or not is precluded).

A task which the author sets himself is to trace development from the instinctual level of action to action through choice. His extraordinary conclusion, which seems so obviously manipulated to fit his thesis, is that mind is no more than 'body becoming conscious of itself'. But then: how would this theory accommodate such basic mental concepts as emotions, knowledge, reasoning and mental events not issuing in behaviour?

If anything in *Action* was interesting to the humanist/secularist then one might expect it to be the chapter on choice, freedom and determinism. But the arguments offered against determinism are so flimsy they strain one's respect. Determinism commands a powerful phalanx of arguments, however much emotion rejects it. For example, Professor A. J. Ayer's formulation of a determinist position is quite simply this: 'of course I can do what I want, therefore I am free, but what I want is determined by my character, and therefore I am determined'. But all Knox offers against this is the eccentric query, 'what evidence is there for an underlying character, there all the time?' Is there a psychologist in the house?

Perhaps it is a mistake to offer comments on *Action* as a work of philosophy. It does contain a chapter churning out the old 'morality depends on religion' idea. Knox in fact considers the humanist ethicist's position (as manifested in Richard Robinson's *An Atheist's Values*), but I don't think I need do more than quote Knox here:

'Mr Robinson's attack on religion is violent, but instead of offering a reply I am tempted to wonder why he has not considered the extent to which religion has alleviated misery.'

Lord Gifford may be surprised to learn that one of his lecturers saw 'popular' as comprising watered down philosophy which convinces no one, irrational attacks on respectable philosophical theories, and no argument at all against the humanist view.

THE NEW THEOLOGIAN

(Continued from page 299)

The essence of these movements is consciousness and love, and perhaps the greatest achievement is that the New Theologian seems to care little whether one attains this as a Christian or not. The New Theology contains truths and more relevance than at first appears and although Ved Mehta's *New Theologian* is rather unorthodox in its approach it brings this over well.

LETTERS

In Defence of Hume

WILL you allow me to defend my favourite philosopher, Hume, against Professor Lazerowitz, as quoted in your review of *Philosophy and Illusion* (September 7). Hume's position is that we can be certain only of our sensations: we do not know what causes sensations, or what lies behind them. Nowhere in the *Enquiry* does Hume assert that "X is not really Y; it only appears to be". He says that we assume causation between X and Y only because in our experience, X is always followed by Y—a very different statement. His *Enquiry concerning human understanding* is brief, lucid, and written in admirable English. HENRY MEULEN.

Sexual Morality

IN reply to Connaire Kensit and Ruth Buchanan's letter (FREETHINKER, September 7):

The writers' efforts to quote precisely are not very helpful. Their conclusions are no more valid as a result and the implication that without chapter and verse any argument is pointless is positively obstructive. In fact by picking on the word "purpose" in their quote they have missed one writer's point. Extensive quoting is prohibitively lengthy, so is omitted in extensive comment.

They also continue to bury their heads in the sand over jealousy. Of course it is an unfortunate emotion often with damaging consequences. But it cannot be eradicated just by thinking it should be. Other things being equal, the more a social system provokes jealousy the less I prefer it.

My care to admit subjectivity when appropriate (inevitable in such discussions) has been incorrectly taken to indicate my "personal problem". M. J. O'CARROLL.

I AM sorry that Kensit and Buchanan (September 7) seem to write me off as a traditional emotional attitude, when I am in agreement with so much of their original article (August 9).

I am also sorry that the space-saving word "promiscuity" is dismissed as a "handy smear", when I merely asked for support for their conclusions, pointing out the obvious objections. I sympathise with their motives, though I feel that what they advocate could well encourage too-early marriage, with the usual results in human unhappiness.

Regarding "purpose of sex"—I made this criticism because it can harm one's case to overstate it. The original statement is akin to saying "God made hens to lay eggs for us to eat"! Such statements tend to prejudice people against good sense under the same heading.

But the main weak link in the article is concerning sexual jealousy. According to current psychology, repression is only storing future trouble, and aggressive impulses are better to be regulated and/or diverted into harmless or useful outlets. Perhaps "construct marriage contracts to suit themselves" is intended to cover this. If so, fair enough.

However, marital fidelity nips the trouble in the bud, by preventing grounds for jealousy. It is also suggested by "sexual responsibility to the partner". If infidelity (not a smear!) is advocated, this discriminates against the female, who is of the more monogamous sex, by temperament (how many polyandrous societies are known compared with polygynous societies?). A strong factor in the female sex drive is the desire for a home and family. Despite the point that "marriage" is an economic arrangement only, infidelity by the man still represents a threat to the wife's security, emotionally, if not rationally.

GEORGE D. RODGER.

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ART

KIERAN DALY

WOODSTOCK GALLERY, 16 Woodstock Street, London, W1.

An extremely vivid exhibition of paintings by Geoffrey Hammond, 3rd to 21st September.

HAMMOND has executed an enlightening series of paintings titled "Seated Figures". These express a serious concern for the reality of solitude—something which one cannot envisage when considering our densely populated environment.

He seemingly, stumbled upon a vision of senile people, seated in chairs helplessly awaiting their final hour of relief. Upon rearranging his almost visual inspiration together with personal conceptions of the same element, he painted this impressive example of isolation, loneliness and ultimate resignation.

The exhibition comprises thirty-one paintings and of course these all tend to centre around 'natural phenomena'—the landscapes of beach scenes, estuaries and rock forms rather reflect the atmosphere of a Turner and softly relate a tale of rhythm and vibrant harmony.

A completely vital show of tranquil personal understanding.

A CENTENARY MEETING IN NORTHAMPTON

(Continued from page 298)

tributing to the advance of secular-humanist ideals. He was particularly instrumental in improving social conditions and did much to further free speech and publication, family planning, colonial freedom, the avoidance of unjust wars, secular and moral education and the social use of science.

To commemorate the centenary of his first election contest, the National Secular Society, in conjunction with the civic authorities and local organisations in Northampton is holding an exhibition of documents, caskets and other items connected with Bradlaugh, in the Central Library. This will run from November 9 to Sunday November 17. On November 17 there will also be a large rally at the Guildhall at 3 p.m. The speakers will include Michael Foot MP, Reginald Paget MP and the Rev. Lloyd Jenkins. In addition a short selection of Bradlaugh's speeches will be delivered, and his campaign song will also be featured.

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