

# motive

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# motive

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# THE VETERAN



He would come late at night, break into dreams,  
As though forgetting time he might forget  
His pain. He'd shuffle in, sit down, and place  
His withered arm upon the awkward chair.  
Then (while I rearranged the midnight room),  
Blinking his eyes against the sudden lamp,  
He'd growl his hate of man. "Damn the lot,"  
He'd say. "No one cares. People forget. . . ."  
And he'd recite his anger, year by year,  
Cursing the world and all us lucky ones  
Who yet were young and whole and proud.

But after a drink or two, he'd start to cry  
A tearless, choked, imprisoned way. Then  
I'd say, "It's late. Spend the night, John.  
I'll spread a cot." And trembling, he would strip  
His shirt and pants away, showing the wound  
That hate had twisted into shame.

Later,  
In dark I'd lie, drifting back to sleep,  
Until, after the length it takes to pray—  
Just in case—I'd turn and say, "Goodnight,  
John. You sleep good." And he'd reply,  
"You, too," speaking as soft as someone  
Filled with love might speak, or someone who'd  
Forgotten why he came or who he was.

—WINSTON WEATHERS

PAINTING: SPERAKIS





R. O. HODGELL



I have read with interest the two articles on the Vietnamese war in the October issue. They have much to say that is worthwhile and even contain some minor classics. Particularly the article by Oglesby has moments of real depth, especially when he is trying to explain the parallels and non-parallels between Asia and Europe; furthermore, his outline of the radicalization of revolution (p. 22) is a real gem of comprehension and explanation.

There are, however, other problems which I would like to discuss. I can understand the *cri du coeur* of Terrill: he feels abandoned by those who he thought were his brothers. We can sympathize, for the abandonment is real. But Terrill has found a way out of his dilemma: he has discovered new brothers and in the process has swallowed their "truths" uncritically. Let us look at just one paragraph. He says that "the Vietnamese are still fighting for their national independence." But which Vietnamese or how many of them view the war in these simplistic terms? He says that "they (still indeterminately) threaten nobody" and propose no "invasion of the U.S." But this is a strangely limited criterion of action, particularly when the thrust of his article is an appeal to the

international solidarity of like-minded groups (hence, also states and nations). He says that the independence of any country is not negotiable, which is either inaccurate or untrue depending on how one wants to define terms. For the independence of many countries, from the United States of America to the Democratic Peoples Republic of Algeria, in fact, resulted from negotiations, after one side's will had been broken in war. Finally he says that the U.S. has no "right to use its occupation in Viet Nam as a basis" for negotiations, leading one to wonder where Terrill has gotten the right to define others' rights (unless it be from Bertrand Russell) and what relevance this judgment has for negotiations that could end the war. One commiserates with Terrill on the emotional level, at the same time feeling that much of the basis for this disenchantment is his loss of touch with political reality.

Surely the same thing cannot be said about Oglesby. If I concentrate on a few points where I think the article is weak, this does not mean that I reject out of hand the main thesis of the article.

Oglesby points out four difficulties from which our "sur-realistic Asian politics suffers." In the first place he questions the reality of balance of power as a basis for our Asian policies. Unfortunately his history, his understanding and his imagery all are weak. The balance of power represents a dynamic equilibrium, as Oglesby recognizes in the beginning of one paragraph, although he shifts his similes and at the end of the paragraph tells us: A dynamic equilibrium is not static, a static one is unrealistic, and he wants to criticize a static one. On the level of concepts, the balance of power system is a mobile system of multi-state power relationships whereby any state is prevented from achieving hegemony. It is not designed to prevent war, it is designed to preserve the independence of the major members. In this, historically, it has been relatively successful, and we are clearly following the lessons of history in trying to apply it to the Asian area. It is true under a balance of power system, smaller states may suffer as states, but it is safe to say that no one as yet discovered an alternative *workable* system. However, if we are concerned in our humanitarian interest with weaker states rather than simply smaller states, the fact that China is now recognized as a major actor and element in the balance of power in Asia, is a clear exception to Oglesby's point. It shows that new states can enter the balance of power system; worse yet for the moralist, it shows that they do aspire either to enter the balance of power system or to achieve a hegemony themselves, but not to set up a utopian world order as an alternative. History shows us that the new revolutionary states merely aspire to replace the old one, to the discomfiture of their idealistic supporters on the morrow.

Oglesby's second objection to our Asian policies says in essence that containment is an invention of hindsight, not foresight. Again his history is wrong and it is a shame that his analysis is not matched by an equal depth in research. The idea that containment will lead to internal changes in Russia, and hence to the development of a regime that can peacefully co-exist, stems clearly from the early "Mr. X" article, and the loosening of NATO ties has been as much a result of this effect as a result of the successful policy of building up Western European economics. Certainly, accommodation, the logical complement of containment, has been interrupted by the Vietnamese war and this is legitimate cause for regret. But it is not very hopeful to swing the pendulum of interpretation all the way over to the other side, and say because we are now making mistakes in Viet Nam we have always made mistakes everywhere else.

The pendulum keeps on swinging on the third point and we find that Oglesby has more on his side than disinterested analyses. He has a doctrinaire axe to grind. It's obvious that the U.S. wants more than just peace and that we want a certain kind of peace. But it is hard to think that it is not evident to someone as discerning as Oglesby that this kind of peace is one that can be summarized as "peace with justice," and that it is attached to the enhancement of freedom and the finding of the better way of life for peoples in many parts of the world, including the U.S. itself. Foreign policy



involves in making choices among conflicting options on the basis of a hierarchy of values, including peace, interest and justice; it is not a narrow crusade for justice. (I am sure that Oglesby would be among the first to decline many of the options open to Western policy under the name of crusade.) To say then that this kind of peace is a peace for American businessmen is to haul a devil theory out of the trash heap where it belongs, and is doubly ludicrous in regard to Viet Nam where, of all ironies, if there are any business interests to be defended they are French. I guess to some people that would indicate that the international business community is even more powerful than the political views and interests of the strongest nations of the world. But you have to have a pretty twisted eyeball to see anything through that kind of microscope!

This brings us to a broader problem in the nature of the current discussion on Viet Nam. I would call it the dilemma of realism and urgency. The dilemma is simply that those who have a sense of urgency about the dangerous situation into which the United States is sinking in Southeast Asia have no sense of realism as to what to do about it, and those who make realistic suggestions have no sense of urgency. Terrill is a painfully good example of the first point and Oglesby somewhat so as well. Oglesby's first suggestion is that we should simply get out of Viet Nam, which is in the strict sense of the term easier said than done. Another point is that we should promise never to intervene in a revolutionary struggle. But such a promise helps not at all in defining in what is a real revolutionary struggle, and in fact is the kind of hand-tying gift to false revolutionaries and ideological imperialists that the communist countries have wanted to get out of us for quite some time. It is just as stupid to say that "communism equals natural revolution and is good" as it is to say "communism equals Russian and Chinese imperialism and is all bad," or to say, "(what shall we call it?) non-communism equals businessmen and is bad."

Another problem is the question of commitment, to the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia. Somehow the liberals who want us to defend certain values do not include commitments among them. What about some of the larger countries in Asia, such as Japan and Australia and India, whose evolution seems to have been strengthened by our own support in Southeast Asia and throughout the entire area. How about Venezuela and Chile? Are these bad regimes because they are only evolutionary instead of revolutionary? Are we going to side with rebel movements simply because they are violent and use the "proper" slogans?

On the other hand we have an article such as Arthur Schlesinger's in a recent issue of the *New York Times Magazine*, which contains some very useful, realistic and helpful suggestions for de-escalating the Vietnamese war. But there the sense of urgency is absent and one has the feeling of participating in an intellectual debate whose results are graded or applauded rather than acted on. The fault is not Mr. Schlesinger's; the fault is in the nature of the debate, both on the part of the debater and just as much on the part of the present government.

What can be done in Viet Nam? How can the pressure for alternatives be made to be felt? These are real questions to which answers must be found. Oglesby's article, far more than Terrill's, takes up part way along the road to an answer. We still have a long way to go.

I. WILLIAM ZARTMAN  
 professor of government  
 new york university

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I am glad to find out that someone knows what the U.S.A. should do in Viet Nam. I wish they would (or could) tell me the solution. I, personally, feel that Johnson is right in sending troops over there and in escalating the war in an effort to win. However, I would like to know why all news reports give nearly the exact number of Viet Cong killed but vaguely refer to U.S. casualties as "light." Could it be that LBJ doesn't

trust us? I feel that if we Americans aren't willing to pay the price, then let us get out; but how will Johnson know if we are willing as long as we don't know what the price is?

In response to Ross Terrill's article ("An Open Letter to American Liberals," Oct. '66), I agree that the National Liberation Front would like the U.S. to withdraw our troops so they could run South Viet Nam. However, the recent elections indicate to me that 85% of the South Vietnamese want the U.S. to keep the NFL from taking over. Either the situation has drastically changed since September 1965 (as indicated by U.S. propaganda) or Terrill talked to the wrong "well informed people."

Whether or not our aggression in Viet Nam has tarnished the U.S. reputation would depend on one's point of view. No doubt North Viet Nam doesn't appreciate our troops.

American fathers take a rather dim view of soldiers toying with their daughters, also. I understand that commanding officers don't appreciate brawls with the natives. And what about these vicious rumors of churches and schools built by off-duty soldiers for the people of Viet Nam?

Terrill seems to base his story on the assumption that the NLF represents the majority of the people and the U.S. are aggressors trying to impose their will on the Vietnamese. I wish he would tell me how the elections fit into his scheme of things. I understand that the candidates in the recent elections were screened to keep out the communist sympathizers. Why then did 85% of the people vote. Were they exercising their Ky-given privilege to prove that they were ready to pick their own leaders in hopes that in the next election we might permit a couple of communist sympathizers to run?

I am glad that *Motive* published Ross Terrill's article. It caused me to think, inspect my beliefs and firm up my opinions. Maybe I'm misinformed, but I still favor escalation of the war in North Viet Nam.

JACK W. GRIFFITH  
 arlington state college

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After reading Father Robert Hovda's review of William DuBay's *The Human Church* (Oct. '66), I was convinced that we had read two different books under the same title. Later I realized that we had read the same book with different backgrounds and interests. This book excited me as have few books on the Church; I have been able to use its insights in a number of research papers, sermons, and other public presentations.

Father Hovda criticizes the book on four counts. His first criticism is that "the 'human' that emerges from these pages is a thin man indeed—a man devoid of humor and of art, without delicacy or social grace . . ." and with a blunt intelligence. Granted that Father DuBay does not develop all these human virtues, but his task is not to present a comprehensive anthropology; it is rather to argue that the Church should but does not function to affirm these and other parts of the whole man. The man that Hovda describes to contrast to DuBay's "thin man," even with his delicacy and social grace, seems to be the "thin man." These are certainly not the characteristics that the New Testament indicates for the authentic Christian. In speaking of man, DuBay's emphasis is squarely upon the task of Christians to "bear witness to God's love for man by means of their own practical love for man." (p. 46) DuBay lauds the man who is willing to die so that others may have life, regardless of his delicacy or social grace.

As to the second point, Hovda argues that "appraisal involves consideration and respect." If this is a valid criterion of evaluation, which I question, DuBay seems to both consider and respect the Catholic Church; he did commit his life to this institution when he became a priest. The book is dedicated to Pope John XXIII. In his "select booklist" the author refers to a large number of Catholic writers. The context and self-understanding from which DuBay speaks are obvious throughout the book.

Hovda's third point is that DuBay is apparently not aware of the importance of "influence as 'remote' as liturgy and theology." Is this the same book I read, where the author de-



votes the longest of his eight chapters—over one-fifth of the book—to worship? If theology is understood to be the study of the expression of religious faith in the clearest and most coherent language available, as the professors in my seminary insist, then DuBay's entire book is theology.

Father Hovda's final point was the most irritating, exposing his real motivation in this review. He acknowledges that DuBay does in fact make some sound points, but he asserts that "he manages to do so in a voice so harsh and strident that it discourages agreement." Since when does the truth of a statement depend on the tone of voice with which it is uttered? Yes, such voices have been heard before—Amos, Moses, Christ, Luther, Calvin, etc.

The time has come, once again, for harsh and strident voices, lest the Church fade away into history books. Hovda can talk all he wants of man's humor and art, his delicacy and social grace, his sophisticated and discriminating intelligence; he can praise, laud, and respect, all in a quiet, soothing voice. But as for me, speaking from the context of a community which is seeking to understand what it means to be responsibly human in a dehumanizing world into which Divinity entered, lived, died, arose, and was responded to, I prefer to echo the mandate, sometimes in a harsh and strident voice, "I say to you, rise, take up your bed and go home." (Luke 5:24)

W. SHEPHERD BLISS III  
drew theological school

Yesterday I was pleased to receive copies of *motive* with my poem, "Resume: for Charles Gounod" (Nov. '66, p. 42). I was *not* pleased, however, to discover I had lost a name in the process of publication—not the way it was intimated on page 59, anyway. The manuscript sent may have had only my last name on it, but the cover letter (and the return address, and the return envelope) all had my full name. Some half-hearted amanuensis must have decided to enroll me with other mononymic writers: Saki is the only one who comes to mind.

But I can assure you, I not only have a first name; I like it. And I usually use it. Just as you are probably happier as *motive* magazine than as "magazine," I am happier (in print, at least) as Robert L. Girouard than as plain, old Girouard. *De gustibus . . .*

In the meantime, I was most pleased with the magazine for its tasteful layout, its interesting articles, and its authoritative voice. A fine issue, and one of which I was proud to be a part.

ROBERT L. GIROUARD  
dept. of english  
brown university

*We could probably please some of our habitual critics by claiming that we found a one-named writer natural because we are so deeply steeped in such mononymic scribblers as Matthew, Mark, Luke, etc. Actually, it's just that we receive an incredible number of manuscripts from such people—most of whom are as half-hearted about their poems as they are about their names—and so just aren't surprised by anything. We didn't even think to ask Prof. Girouard if he really meant to use a decapitated nom de vers. We're sorry—but then, not everybody can be a half-hearted amanuensis!—EDS.*

As a new subscriber, I have been reading my first copy. As a commoner, allow me to say that your religious publication is interesting, not too pertinent, and woefully lacking.

Noting that millions of my fellow countrymen shiver terribly in the thinness of their beliefs; many of whom look upon New Testament Christianity "with all the aplomb of a jackass contemplating the Iliad," I am tempted to fall back on Ruskin for a fitting comment. He said, "The greatest thing a human

Soul ever does in this world is to see something, and tell what it saw in a plain way."

Brethren, in a world system where we are locked in almost hopeless warfare with the demonic Chinese communistic monster, I wonder if Christ's message to a stricken world needs Intellectualizing.

*motive* is a very "hep" publication, but in an hour when masses of average American residents are beginning to go along with the new dictum that "God is not dead; He just doesn't want to get involved," it would seem the duty of religious journalism to seek to "get man lost, and then get him saved." The force and scope of the ancient question: "What must I do to be saved?" is just as great as it was in the days of Whitefield, Spurgeon, Wesley and Moody.

Gentlemen, the people that I work with, live with, and read about daily, need desperately more light on "the simplicity which is in Christ."

JACOB McNABB  
garden grove, cal.

My praise to Duane Mehl on his October article, *Sex in the Future*. In it were pointed out many truths about some sexual attitudes currently existing in our society. He made clear some important points without resorting to the usual "sugarcoating" that is so often the case when dealing with the subject of sex. Obviously keeping in mind the difficulty of writing on a subject that is both delicate and complex, Mr. Mehl never lets his topic escape his control.

More profound, perhaps, than we realize is his point that we do not know how to handle the abundance of knowledge we have about sex. Of course progress has been so rapid in our era that this may be said about many things, but until we have caught up with the things we profess to know, I doubt that the necessary adjustment will ever be made—unless it's an adjustment to the fact that we will never adjust.

Finally and above all else in Mr. Mehl's article, was the refreshing way in which he showed enough sophistication so as not to pretend to have the solution to a problem which, as yet, has no solution.

LARRY W. McHOLLAND  
university of arizona

Please convey my gratitude to Mary McDermott Shideler for "grabbing a hold" of the imaginative intellectual and shaking him "to awares." Her article, "Inklings of Another World" (Oct. '66) is an exciting and astute picture of many a pseudo-intellectual, crippled by a diffident imagination.

I must go now and read Tolkein and Morgan and Williams (and William B. Yeats!); but, I am really eager because Shideler has "raised the curtain" for my imagination and my greatest problem, I am sure, is her caution concerning discipline.

This kind of writing, this kind of message, is, indeed, a tribute to *motive*.

JESS MAGHAN  
lees-mcrae college

Humor and pathos are often closely related. The October issue suggested both.

As to humor: consider this. In the article by Mary Shideler appeared these words: "Either God is dead or man has become incapable of knowing or believing in him, and Harvey Cox in *The Secular City* authoritatively (ha!) has assured us that 'it will do no good to cling to our religious and metaphysical versions of Christianity in the hope that one day religion or metaphysics will once again be back. They are disappearing forever. . .'"

The voice of authority has spoken, but listen as Mrs. Shideler goes on: "But a new element is entering our careful calcula-



tions, and is threatening to change them. Into this highly secular, scientific and rational world have come the Nine Walkers, who constitute the Fellowship of the Ring: Frodo the hobbit, carrying the great ring of Sauron, and his companions: an elf, a dwarf, a wizard, two men, and three other hobbits (or halflings as they are sometimes called)."

Isn't it hilarious to have a church paper casually dismissing Christianity, and then seriously considering "hobbits," "elves" and "wizards" as keys to truth?

Now the pathos. You probably won't consider it, but it is sad that a paper supported by the church and published for young people of the church should have so little to say that would help to strengthen the faith of those who desperately need to keep some basis of relationship with the historical Church.

G. ERNEST THOMAS  
first methodist church  
birmingham, michigan



It appears that William Hamilton viewed Bergman's trilogy through a dark glass (Nov., '66). Those few points with which I agree are innocuous—banal, as he would have it; and it would be in no way ameliorative for me to recognize them. I find it difficult to believe that Mr. Hamilton perceived little symbolism—which in film, after all, is simply visual metaphor—in the three works. When one *has* discovered Bergman's symbolism, he will be prepared to write more than a cavalier theological exegesis of the films. To ignore their symbolism—especially that of *Through a Glass Darkly* and *The Silence*—is to admit of critical incompetence. Such symbols as the circle in *The Silence* are as sublime as Bach counterpoint. The films do merit theological interpretation, but Hamilton's incoherent, parochial overview can only divert your readers to more acute sources.

ROBERT FINTON  
columbus, ohio



I was especially interested in your November issue and the article by Clifford Edwards concerning the movie "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

How refreshing to read that there are some Christians who are still able to face reality. It would seem that too many so-called Christians today cling to the pious aspect of religion and forget such things as love's "ability to exist in what might seem the most impossible circumstances," stated by Edwards as one theme of Albee's story. One often forgets that without hate there could be no love, without war, there could be no peace, nor would there be reason for it.

My experience in seeing "Virginia Woolf" (who, by the way, refers to columnist Virginia Woolf—she is noted for cutting remarks) was a great one because never before have some of these concepts been viewed openly before. We all know that hate, vileness, filth in language and sex exist—so why hide them behind "censorship"? One must admire Albee, Nichols and Msgr. Little for accomplishing what others of us fear to accomplish—facing reality.

Thank you again, Mr. Edwards and *motive*, for one of the most truthful and revealing witnesses I've read.

JUDY TATE  
minneapolis, minn.



Even though I have not yet seen *motive* this year, I am certain that most of your readers view the situation in Viet Nam with concern. I would be tempted to offer some "opinions from the scene," but I am hardly an area expert at this point. Besides which, ample portions of opinion are served up daily across the U.S., at reasonable prices.

What I would like to do is share part of the experience which has been mine during the three months I have been in the country, training and working as an English teacher in a Vietnamese high school.

—While a group of us were in Dalat studying Vietnamese language, one of the people we met was a Vietnamese government social service worker, the only one at the hospital there which is about a six hundred-bed facility. Her many projects include securing and distributing magazines to the patients, arranging weekly movies for them, having clothes made for the new babies who otherwise would have none, helping families who accompany patients to the hospital, and finding plane fare for wounded soldiers at some distance from their homes. Few other hospitals in the country have even one such worker. She studied at the school of social service in Saigon. The others in her graduating class now work for such private organizations as CARE and Asia Foundation—where salaries are higher.

—Here in the Delta it is still easily possible to go all day, or even several days, without seeing another American. In Phu Vinh, capital of Vinh Binh province (where I teach English at the province's public high school), there's not even a dance hall or "American bar." This doesn't mean that the American presence is not felt. The "OK!" (meaning "gimme") and the only slightly less frequent "OK, sah-lehm!" (referring to a well-known brand of American cigarettes) spout forth from children even in small hamlets, and quickly dispell such illusion.

—As much as an American is first identified according to nationality and only later according to job, there is still a possibility of relating almost normally to some people. A ten-year-old next door neighbor provides one example. Every time I leave the house or return she asks me where I'm off to or where I've been. And if I have time we talk awhile through fence—in spite of my all too frequent "Khong hieu" (I don't understand). Nor does Mr. American have to be Santa Claus. A good bit of exchanging of goodies does go on, but it was at her initiation, and I am almost always the one showered with abundance, of a sort which defies material poverty. Here, and now, at least, such is possible.

—A well-educated Vietnamese friend in Dalat commented to me that if ten years ago the U.S. had spent in Viet Nam on constructive action ten percent of the amount so far expended on the war effort, there would likely be no war here today. But the real danger for the future, he said, is that when the war is over the Vietnamese and Americans alike will want to go home and rest, thinking that because the pressure is off the job is over.

I think these experiences speak well for themselves. So I will let them do so, hoping that *motive* readers will not think them a random selection.

JOHN SPRAGENS, JR.  
advisory team 57  
apo san francisco

*Mr. Spragens, a frequent contributor to motive in past years, is working in Viet Nam through International Voluntary Services—a private program which works in much the same way as the Peace Corps. In Viet Nam it is now sponsoring projects in agriculture, community development, and education. For information on this program, write: I.V.S., Inc., 1555 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.—EDS.*



A little refutation of Royal G. Thern's advancements in "The Picket Line" (Oct. '66). I think I'd rather read *motive* than "watch it." A subscription to *motive* might do son Michael a little good. That goes for Gertrude Bishop of Detroit, too. If a magazine that contains well written, illuminating articles and good poetry is "insidious and subversive," then perhaps Royal G. Thern would do better with a periodical that enlightened him less and bored him more.

STEWART WHISENANT  
wilmington, del.



# THE ASSASSINATION, THE WARREN REPORT, AND THE PUBLIC TRUST

One woe is past; and behold,  
there come two woes more  
hereafter.

REVELATION 9:12 (KJV)

Perhaps the epitome of will operating in panic—like a case from a text book in abnormal psychology—has been the government's handling of the assassination of John Kennedy. The Warren Commission attempted to "close" the case, to make it not exist in the public mind. Thus it hastily drew firm conclusions about dubious evidence, disregarded counter-evidence, defied physical probabilities, and perhaps accepted manufactured evidence. For a temporary lull it has run the risk of a total collapse of public trust. —Paul Goodman, "The Psychology of Being Powerless," THE NEW YORK REVIEW, Nov. 3, 1966.

By ANTHONY TOWNE

I approached the Kennedy assassination literature with the intent of reviewing one or two of the current books. But I abandoned the idea long before I had finished reading all the books listed. In part, because there are already available many significant and adequate reviews of each of the titles. But the primary reason is that I am now convinced that the issues raised by all of the books pose to our nation some basic questions which completely overshadow any discussion of the merit or absence of merit of any single title or author in the list.

Suffice the literary report to read simply that the books vary greatly in quality. Perhaps the least commendable among them is the Warren Report itself. The efforts of Manchester and Epstein are enormously important. Mr. Lane has made a curious contribution: a book as biased as the Warren Report but documented far more convincingly. Penn Jones, Jr., has introduced some

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*Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy.* Washington, D.C. (1964).

Edward Jay Epstein, *Inquest: The Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth.* The Viking Press (1966), 224 pp., \$5.00.

Penn Jones, Jr., *Forgive My Grief. The Midlothian Mirror.* Midlothian, Texas (1966), 188 pp., \$2.95.

Mark Lane, *Rush to Judgment.* Holt, Rinehart and Winston (1966), 478 pp., \$5.95.

*Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy.* Washington, D.C. (1964), XXVI volumes.

Leo Sauvage, *The Oswald Affair: An Examination of the Contradictions and Omissions of the Warren Report.* World Publishing Company (1966), 418 pp., \$6.95.

Harold Weisberg, *Whitewash.* Harold Weisberg (1966), Hyattstown, Maryland, 208 pp., \$4.95.

William Manchester, *The Death of a President.* Harper & Row (1967), \$10.00. Maps.

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testimony of radical interest; his concerns bear watching. Despite its literary flaws, I hope the Chief Justice especially will find the time to read Jones' *Forgive My Grief*.

What I now propose to say is based upon having read all of the books listed, with the exception that I have certainly not read all volumes of the *Hearings* which are supposed to support the Warren Report. (I have, however, examined many of them in the pursuit of particular issues.) Additionally,

I have read (and am indebted to) numerous articles contending with the assassination. No event in American history has evoked so much response, excepting the assassination of President Lincoln. Within a few years, the literature of the Kennedy assassination is likely to exceed that of the Lincoln assassination.

Relying heavily upon the books listed—especially The Warren Report itself (which is its own worst enemy)—I offer seven conclusions which seem to me

inescapable. Those who differ with my impressions are invited to undergo a reading of all the literature before dismissing my points.

I submit the following conclusions:

1. The Warren Commission was derelict in conducting its investigation of the circumstances of the assassination, and it was negligent in its interpretation of the evidence that came before it.
2. Evidence and testimony, some of it crucial to the inquiry,



was not considered by the Warren Commission, and that evidence, along with much other evidence, has been suppressed—some of it for the next 75 years or longer.

3. It has not been established beyond reasonable doubt that Lee Harvey Oswald participated in the assassination nor has it been established beyond reasonable doubt that he did not.

4. It has been established beyond reasonable doubt that at least one—and in the event that Oswald did not participate, at least two and very likely a third—other individual did participate in the assassination. Such a conclusion clearly requires a conspiracy.

5. The circumstances surrounding the subsidiary murders of Officer Tippit and Oswald himself remain clouded in doubts and strange confusions, and in neither case may we conclude that we know with reasonable certainty what actually happened, or why.

6. A number (at least twelve) of witnesses or participants in the events of the assassination have since died mysteriously or have otherwise suffered unusual violence. These incidents have not been investigated (so far as the public knows) in relation to the assassination.

7. There exists in this country and elsewhere profound disquiet and uncertainty about the assassination, the related murders, the Warren Commission Report and the astonishing literature that it has spawned. This apprehension seems to be accelerating.

I believe that any reasonable person who has read the Warren Report itself and the books here under discussion would come to very similar conclusions. There is, of course, the possibility that within the information lodged in the suppressed evidence and testimony there may well be details that would enhance our comprehension, but it is implausible to suppose that any information exists which could overturn these conclusions. If any such information does exist, it is

difficult to imagine why it has not long since been made part of the public record.

From the foregoing conclusions, certain questions seem ineluctably to pose themselves. The time has past, I think, for dwelling upon the conclusions, and we must now consider the questions which these conclusions compel us to ask. Yet one hesitates. Even the most vociferous critics of the Warren Commission have hesitated to raise the obvious questions. Why? Is it not because we harbor some awful suspicion that the issue of searching inquiry can only be the disclosure of a shameful ugliness that will sear and damage us all?

For myself, I conclude that if the wholeness and the health of the nation cannot be repaired without that searing and damage, then so be it. Something is indeed rotten in the state of this nation and it finds a focus now in the dire events that took place in Dallas.

It has been suggested that the distortions in the Warren Report were dictated by a desire on the part of the Commission to spare the nation just such a trauma as I—or the facts—now invoke upon it. One fervently hopes that the accusation is not a fact. If it is, then the members of the Commission share an awesome guilt for they have, in seeking to spare the nation a trauma, succeeded only in aggravating enormously the agony the nation cannot much longer escape. That agony may well prove to be more traumatic than was the assassination itself.

Let us now ask the compelling questions.

### **1. What was the nature of the conspiracy that accomplished the assassination of President Kennedy?**

We have now come, as they say in the civil rights movement, to the "nitty-gritty" of the matter. The questions tumble out like vermin from a dragon's belly. Did Lee Harvey Oswald, a malcontent outcast, himself shoot at the President? One suspects that

he did, but there is no proof that he did. Who else shot at the President? One or more other malcontent outcasts? This is conceivable. Certainly, however, any others cannot be supposed to have done so coincidentally. The odds against that are staggering. But, conceivably, there could have been a conspiracy of malcontent outcasts. One doubts it though, primarily because malcontents typically act alone for the very good reason that their discontent stems from the fact they are, or they fancy themselves to be, alone. More likely, surely, the conspiracy used Oswald as an instrument of its own and other ends. What could those ends have been, and who might those other conspirators have been? One considers the extremists of the right and of the left. Oswald was of the left, and so the left is indicated; but the prevalent madness in Dallas is of the right, and so the right cannot be excluded. There simply is not on the record enough information to enable us to answer this necessary question. There is on the record an abundance of information pointing in several directions inconclusively. What the information buried in the suppressed evidence and testimony might contribute we are not permitted to know. Why are we not permitted to know?

Here questions most painful and querulous force themselves into utterance. If I am the voice that utters them I merely rehearse a murmuring chorus of horror that rumbles in the land. Frightful rumors bubble at the bottom of cocktail parties across this country like festering olives in dead martinis. Was the government itself somehow involved in the murder of John Kennedy? *There*: the unspeakable has been spoken. More unspeakably, it just is not possible to render the desirable resounding: *No!* On the contrary, it is practically impossible not to speculate that in some dark fashion the President was done away with by a conspiracy in which agencies and/or personages of the government





itself did in fact participate. I persevere. Were elements of the Dallas police force involved? Were elements of the FBI involved? Were elements of the political authorities in Dallas and/or Texas involved? Was the Vice-President, and now President, Lyndon Baines Johnson, involved in any way? I hasten to say I cannot believe this last unspeakable murmur. The very thought fails to survive an incredulity I had thought to be exhausted. *It could not be. It must not be. It is not.* Incredulity prevails. Nonetheless, incredulity cannot push out of my mind the thought that while Lyndon Johnson *could not have been involved he might be capable of having been involved.* I detect that I am not alone in that ghastly reservation. That is why the horrid murmur continues at all. Had the circumstances been opposite—Johnson as the President mur-

dered, Kennedy as the Vice-President succeeding—would such suspicions have arisen about John Kennedy? I think not. There are differences of men. I ask myself: having said these unsayable things, will I, as others have, mysteriously die? Imagine that a citizen should entertain such a notion! It is a scandal in itself.

Let us then exclude from our minds (as firmly as we can) any involvement of Lyndon Johnson or his immediate associates in the murder of his predecessor. We are left anyhow with possibilities of plots that are in themselves terrifying, and not the least of the terror is the prospect of repetition. Those who perpetrated the conspiracy, or some of them, so far as we can know, are still at large in the land. It may be that the plot was a mere plot of malcontents, not unlike that which *seems* to have accomplished the murder of

Lincoln. If that is so let us know it, small comfort though it would be. If the plot has darker meanings let us know that, unbearable though that might be. There was a conspiracy, and it is imperative that we know the nature of it. Let us no longer be told what common sense forbids us to believe: that Oswald did it alone. That simply is not true. Let us be told every bit, however sordid, of the truth that is known. Let us face the awful truth about ourselves, about our nation. The public, after all, while often foolish, are not fools.

**2. Who killed Officer Tippit and why? Why did Jack Ruby kill Oswald and how was he able to do it? What is the meaning, if any, of the many deaths and violences that have afflicted witnesses, reporters and others involved in the circumstances of the assassination?**



These are lesser questions only in degree. Only one of us is President and so confronts the menace of assassination; any one of the rest of us might find himself caught up somehow in the random violence that can follow upon so heinous an event. Prodigious are the little evils that attend a monstrous crime. It would serve no purpose here to catalogue all of the little evils that attended the murder of John Kennedy. Many of them are buried in the mammoth miscellany of the Warren Commission *Hearings*. Other foul deeds are documented in the literature that has followed upon the Warren Report. *Ramparts* magazine (November 1966) affords a feast of the bizarre grotesqueries stemming from the assassination. Included in the *Ramparts* account are major excerpts from Penn Jones' *Forgive My Grief*.

Nobody knows (or at least is telling) who killed Officer Tippit. Oswald may have done it; Oswald may not have done it. Everybody knows—indeed multitudes saw—that Jack Ruby shot Oswald to death. Who knows why, despite an inconclusive, challenged trial? And who can say to this day how he was able to do it before the entire nation and before the eyes of a host of Dallas' finest? Nor do these few puzzling questions exhaust the wormcan of mysteries that are our gruesome legacy from the assassination. What of the two reporters who went to the Ruby-Senator apartment just after the murder of Oswald, both of them since dead by violence—one in a California police station, allegedly by accident? What of the many other witnesses and associates of witnesses who have since suffered strange death or violence, intimidations and inexplicable misfortunes? One's tolerance for the odd and the coincidental is strained to a breaking point by events that would alarm, even had they no relation to the assassination. The events are on the public record. A comprehensive investigation of the events is not

on the public record. What is the FBI for?

None of this is pretty, and no one ought to want to dredge it up for the sake of sensation or scandal. It is an insupportable offense that all this sordid flotsam should attach itself to the memory of a man who was the very epitome of decency and grace and elegance. It can be detached now from that gentle memory only by a ruthless scrutiny of every last ghastly detail. Let the squeamish repair to that umbrage where sleeping dogs lie and dirty linen has its privacy. For the rest of us, and not least for the memory of John Kennedy, the nausea, will not pass until the sickness is expunged. We need not pretend even to approach his decency and grace and elegance to insist that the memory of it be freed from the corruptions which assault it. Many demons have gathered in the wake of that dread murder, and the nation shall know of no peace until all of them have been exorcised.

### **3. What were the reasons for the derelictions, the negligences and the distortions to which the Warren Commission subjected itself?**

The astonishing ineptitudes and defections from judgment on the part of the Warren Commission are amply and plainly exposed by Epstein in *Inquest*. His disclosures are confirmed by a thoughtful reading of the Warren Report itself. What has not been disclosed is how it could have permitted such a travesty on the processes of inquiry. The manifest reluctance of the members of the Commission to comment publicly on this question forces us to speculate as responsibly and fairly as we can.

It is evident from the record that, with the partial exception of the Chief Justice, the members of the Commission found it difficult to take time from other and onerous duties in order to give the investigation and the preparation of the Report the attention it required. We may, then, as it were in the defense of

the members, plead the pressure of other business. This is some explanation but certainly no excuse. Nor will it adequately account for a gross miscarriage of responsibility. Even an inattentive Commission ought to have been perplexed by the preposterous exercises undertaken in its name.

It is also evident from the record that the Commission suffered from that illusion endemic to Washington: the sacrosanctity of the FBI. The fact is that the Commission did not seriously attempt to undertake an independent investigation. It relied heavily, and largely uncritically, upon the investigations of the Dallas police authorities, and especially the FBI. Given the incongruities and blatant contradictions with which those investigations are littered, the Commission would have had to be enchanted not to have recoiled in bewilderment, but recoil it never did. It consumed with a ravenous appetite the most indigestible concoctions of fact and arrant fancy.

Having said all of this by way of explanation and defense of the Commission for its failures, dissatisfaction drives us into more recondite speculations. Could it be that the Commission somehow was aware of its derelictions, that it perhaps even deliberately entered into them? This seems to be a necessary conclusion. The Chief Justice is curiously on record as having professed that the public might not ever know the whole truth about the assassination. What did he mean by that? He could have meant that the whole truth was unattainable, but he made the statement early in the investigation and so could not have known how much truth was, in fact, attainable. He could also have meant that some portion of the truth ought not to be known by the public and therefore would not be. It seems likely that that is precisely what he did mean.

What could that truth be which the Chief Justice might conclude the public should not





endure? It would have to be horrendous, more horrendous even than the assassination itself. It would have to be the specter of a conspiracy. And, I think, that conspiracy would have to be more than a mere conspiracy of malcontents: it would have to be a more monstrous conspiracy to have robbed the Chief Justice of his better judgment. May it not also be that the Chief Justice himself could not endure the truth from which he felt disposed to spare the public? Mr. Warren is assuredly a man of consummate decency; all the members of the Commission are at the least men of common decency. It is a characteristic of

decency that it finds incredible, on occasion, the depravities to which human nature can lend itself. I am persuaded that the Warren Commission found the truth it saw—or, at any rate, suspected—simply unbelievable. They were incredulous, and their incredulity led them into lengths of absurdity otherwise inexplicable. This is, I submit, if so, entirely to their collective credit. If the price we must pay for decency is occasional stupefaction in the face of rampant wickedness, then we had better be prepared to pay it. Innocence is, after all, redemptive.

It is in such a context that I am able to grapple with various

suggestions that the Commission was guided in its vagarious procedure by resort to what it called the *national security*. (That phrase was invoked by the Chief Justice himself; others have been content to invoke a lesser cant—the *national interest*.) If men of decency could not endure the truth it is imaginable that they would conclude that the rest of us would be torn and rent and destroyed by it. That is an arguable proposition to which I have no fixed rejoinder. I venture only to suggest that perhaps, precisely because we are less than decent, the mass of us, the public, might accommodate unpalatable truth more readily than



our betters. That, it seems to me, is, in fact, the substantial affirmation upon which democracy necessarily is dependent. Our own ordinary and banal wickednesses might just prove, in their innumerability and endlessness, the sole effective antidote to the obscenities of the assassination.

**4. By whom and why has so much evidence, some of it crucial, been withheld and/or suppressed from the public notice?**

This is a question with which it would be impudent to trifle. Evidence of enormous importance—especially evidence associated with examinations of the dying or dead President—was never considered by the Commission, and reposes to this day in privileged obscurity. (The Chief Justice alone did review some of this evidence—not all of it—but his response to it is not a matter of public record.) Other evidence, variously estimated at from 30% to over 50% of the total evidence, whether or not pertinent, never has been made public. The national interest and/or security have been proclaimed as reason for this withholding and/or suppression. *What interest? What security?* These are neither impudent nor trifling questions, and they have never been answered, perhaps because they have never been directly asked. How possibly could the national interest or even security be endangered by a full disclosure of truth about the assassination?

I find it particularly distressing that the Chief Justice has submitted himself to such a proposition. Is it not specifically his high function to preside, as best he can, over the establishment of truth in the nation? It is a function he has otherwise fulfilled, in my opinion, with a vigor and a thoroughness that are an everlasting monument of integrity. To be sure, it does not appear that he has himself withheld or suppressed any evidence, save by not mentioning it. But he has provided the prestige of his office as a shield behind which those

who do withhold and suppress may comfortably repose.

Who has withheld or suppressed evidence related to the assassination? Clearly, the responsibility rests primarily with various agencies of the government: the Department of Justice, notably the FBI; the CIA; the Secret Service; law-enforcement agencies in the State of Texas and in the City of Dallas. Why? We do not know because we are not told. We are once again driven to the speculations reason insists upon. They are not difficult to discern. Were any or all of those agencies in any way involved in the assassination conspiracy? One doubts it, excepting only some wonderment about the Dallas police department. But one does not know. The police mentality, as has been often noted, resembles in many ways the criminal mentality. Did any or all of those agencies suppress evidence to protect themselves against criticism for errors and failures of which they were guilty in connection with their investigations and other actions after the assassination? That there were errors and failures we know from what is already public knowledge. How many other errors and failures were there that are so far buried in undisclosed information? Could it be, for example, that Mr. J. Edgar Hoover has confused, not for the first time, the *national* interest with the interest of the *FBI*? It would not take much, I suspect, to persuade Mr. Hoover that a fundamental lapse of public trust in the FBI would automatically usher in a total collapse of the Republic.

Another point of interest presents itself. What of the role of the Kennedy family in all this mess? It arises here because it is known that certain evidence has been withheld at the request of the family. It is also a fact that Robert Kennedy was the Attorney General and exercised responsibility for the FBI at the time of the assassination and for some time thereafter. Readers of William Manchester's *The Death of*

a *President*—the “official” Kennedy family report on the assassination—will find many illuminations about these questions but they will not find any answers. (Manchester, however, has written the best book so far to appear on the death of the President.) What the family has done is perfectly understandable. It has found certain evidence to be offensive and in bad taste, to use euphemisms. No one in his right mind wants to see photographs, for example, of Kennedy mutilated and ruined. Certainly his widow and family ought not to be forced to see them. They should never be published in *Look* but if they were to become a matter of fully public record that is exactly where they would appear, of course. One gathers that Robert Kennedy exercised his authority as Attorney General and made off with evidence that fell into such a category. He has lately restored some of that evidence to the National Archives under the most severe restrictions. Bully for him, say I. But the fact remains that *that* evidence together with other evidence remains virtually suppressed. It does not appear in the Warren Report—some of it was not even considered by the Commission—and the truth therefore remains obscured. Every shred of evidence concerning all the circumstances of the assassination must be made fully available to every responsible person who desires or has a valid reason to examine it. Nothing less than this can satisfy the nation's need to know the whole truth.

Let us not, however, require any further suffering from the late President's family. Their silence, most especially the silence of Robert Kennedy, is commendable. Our silence, however, would be despicable.

**5. What did the assassination of President Kennedy (and the circumstances surrounding it) really mean to the rest of us, and why do we even now, more than three years later, feel such anxiety**





### and apprehension about it?

Any assassination of the leader of a nation is, of course, an assault upon the body politic of that nation, and when the nation is a major power in the world the impact is magnified, and when the leader is a charismatic figure the rending astonishment can be massive. One cannot measure the relative greatness of Abraham Lincoln and John Kennedy because

greatness of that order is immeasurable, but both Presidents were, manifestly, charismatic personalities who caught up the imagination of the nation and the world. If the enormity of the Kennedy assassination looms larger than that of Lincoln it is not only because it is nearer to us in time but also because in that interval of time this nation has been thrust into preeminence

among nations that it did not enjoy (or suffer?) a century ago. No one event focussed upon one man has affected the history of our times more than the murder of President Kennedy.

What has happened to us since the assassination in our clumsy efforts to accommodate the anguish of that atrocity? I submit that the nation was thrown into a state of shock from which it has



not yet recovered. We were rendered numb and foolish, and incredulity overwhelmed us all, so that we have refused to accept more than we cannot deny—the event itself—and we have allowed ourselves to be convinced that the circumstances could not have been even more hideous than they may have seemed at first and superficial glance to have been. No question of blame need be raised, but the health of the nation requires that we shake off our shock and confront the whole terrible truth about the assassination.

Shock most profoundly affects those nearest to the trauma that induced it. In this case, excepting the family itself, those nearest the event were the high officials of government who had shared responsibility with the dead President. To some of them fell the burden, reluctantly assumed, to investigate and report upon what had taken place. It is neither surprising nor culpable that in their shock they functioned less well than they might otherwise have been expected to do. Nor need we wonder or blame ourselves that we were content, in our shock, to join—even eagerly—in the faulty conclusions to which they came. Nonetheless, a state of shock is more dangerous even in a nation than in a person. Who can say to what extent the shock we have been in has malaffected the conduct of our own domestic affairs and our participation in the affairs of the world? We would, I think, have to be out of the shock to come to any sound judgment about our behavior while we have been in it. We are not out of that shock yet, though there are signs we have begun to stir in it. We can proceed to rid ourselves of the shock we are in by facing up to and embracing the circumstances however painful, that plunged us into it.

We have become a great nation because we have remarkably well confronted the adversities that have come our way with gallant toughness and we shall

remain a great nation only when we confront this latest calamitous adversity with whatever toughness may be necessary.

Let us have a thorough reinvestigation of the assassination.

The answers to all these (and other) questions are not going to fall out of trees or creep unsolicited out of files in the National Archives and elsewhere. To learn the truth we are going to have to search it out. That will be no easy or casual task. The official organs of investigation are closed and secretive. It is possible that for one reason or another they view with some alarm the prospect of a fresh evaluation of the assassination and its prodigious aftermath. How is the nation to address itself now to a full and thorough and tenacious reexamination of every aspect and circumstances bearing in any way upon the assassination? Many individuals have worked tirelessly and usefully to provoke such a reexamination, and some of them have managed to turn up hitherto undisclosed information. But, it seems to me, the contributions of evangelical private investigators have been pretty much exhausted. The job is far too big for one man or several men laboring alone and unassisted. What is now required is an understanding not less vast than that set three years ago for the Warren Commission itself. Indeed, the task before us dwarfs in scope and urgency any effort that has yet been made.

I endorse the initiative of Bishop James Pike and others that there be formed a National Committee to demand of the President that he cause to be made public all of the evidence and testimony relating to the assassination. I would, however, urge that such a Committee formulate a more comprehensive program:

1. That the President be importuned to direct that all evidence and all records bearing upon the assassination be made available to the Committee and other responsible investigators;

2. That the Chief Justice be invited to respond in any way he finds appropriate to the criticisms that have been made of the Warren Report;

3. That the Congress authorize a Joint Committee to investigate independently and with staff of its own selection the assassination, the subsidiary events, the conduct of the Warren Commission, the relevant activities of any and all public or private agencies and/or individuals, and any other matters appropriate, and that the Joint Committee make a public report withholding nothing whatever;

4. That the National Committee itself receive and review all of the resultant information and, upon due reflection, render a full and definitive judgment and opinion.

I propose, in other words, that all three branches of the Federal government be solicited to a total reinvestigation of the assassination and all other relevant matters, and that the results of that inquiry together with all extant evidence and all pertinent records be evaluated by the National Committee, representing the public. That Committee should publish its conclusions together with all relevant evidence and information that now exists or may be gathered in the future. I cannot conceive that any effort short of this could dispel the doubts that linger nor restore the health that has lapsed in the nation.

What is involved is the public trust. The public trust implies that the public has trust in its government. That trust is presently seriously impaired. It is impaired because the government has not had trust in the public. It has not trusted the public with the truth. When the truth is entrusted to the public, the public will entrust itself to its government and the public trust will once again be intact.

We may have much to endure, but when we have endured it, all of us will breathe easier, and John Kennedy will rest in that peace to which we all aspire.





PHOTOGRAPH: KEZYS

# RAVINE

I cannot tell now if I dream  
all this, or if, when this was done,  
I was not sleeping nor alone,  
because, before, I did not know  
the waterfall, and how the roots  
of moss grow into it like blood.

Long after, I can feel my blood  
reeling and swing me in a dream  
of weaving through the earth in roots  
of trees as I have never done  
since then, and since I do not know  
the way I would go down alone.

But then I did not go alone:  
I have the taste of other blood  
than mine in me, as if I know  
the hand that helps me in this dream,  
or waking if these things were done,  
is not my own; or as the roots

in the waterfall are my roots  
that hold me. Though I go alone,  
my dive to the water is done  
now in my son's and sister's blood;  
and when that cry opens my dream  
at the edge of the cliff, I know

it is my brother's voice. I know  
too, the living touch of these roots  
in my hand still is not a dream.  
For when I thought I stood alone  
there, you coiled them close to my blood,  
and then I saw that you had done

the thing that I could not have done  
for you for all desire, I know:  
flashed like the salmon up my blood  
that watched you spring from rocks and roots,  
and as the bear that goes alone  
and singing in my viking dream

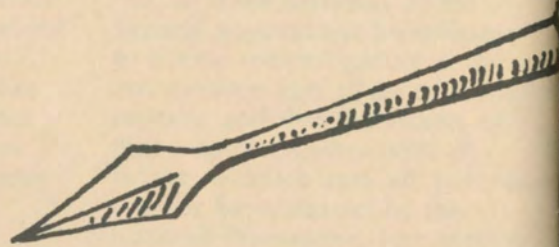
has always done, dared the waterfall for roots  
to let me hold. I would know by this alone  
my brother and blood, awake or in a dream.

—SUZANNE GROSS



BARBARA GARSON'S

MAK



DRAWING: LISA LYONS (FROM THE PLAY)





## REVOLT, REVOLUTION, AND RESPONSIBILITY

By KENNETH ATCHITY

Early in November, when I asked Barbara Garson how she thought the public would react to seeing *MacBird* on the stage, she replied that she hoped the scene of Kennedy's assassination would cause "a hollow feeling of some real loss," but that, for the play as a whole, "I hope they laugh a lot," she said; "I think it's a very funny play." I was as puzzled by her answer as I am by her play.

When I first read *MacBird* in the *Grassy Knoll* edition in September,<sup>1</sup> I was impressed with an aura of power and a danger that seemed to hang about the play; and although I could not define my emotions precisely, they were certainly and significantly, I thought, without laughter. I found humor in the play, of course, but it was overshadowed by a remorseless spirit of total

cynicism. As I turned the play over in my mind I became in turn angry, puzzled, appreciative, elated, and even somewhat terrified of the forces it might possibly unleash. It seemed to be a play of mixed traditions and cross-purposes, and I felt as confused as Macbeth in my conclusion that so foul and fair a play I have not seen.

I could not laugh at *MacBird*, though there were temptations, because I could not forget the audience and the effects the play might have on it, and the despair the play might offer it. To me *MacBird* is a stillborn monster, an attempt at creation which aborted not through any fault of the midwife, but through a fault of nature; it is a perversion artistically, socially, and politically because it is irresponsible. Because it is revolt without revolution.



It is true that *MacBird* was written from a sense of responsibility, a sense whose integrity I do not question. It was meant to awaken Americans to the evils in our social and political system, and, coupled with an organization of activists which offered an alternative to these evils, *MacBird* was part of a true revolution. Removed from the organizational context, however, *MacBird* becomes irresponsible.

As a member of the Independent Socialist Club, Mrs. Garson wrote the earliest draft of the play for entertainment at a Berkeley demonstration. The purpose of the demonstration, in general political terms, was incentive and organization, a wholesome purpose in itself. I am sure that *MacBird* was funny to its Berkeley audience, if only because they had a counterplan to offer, a program of activity to supplement the grim picture presented in the play. They could laugh at horrors because they saw a light. As revolutionists they implied construction as well as destruction, the latter being only the natural precursor of the former.

Transported from the particular audience whose political sincerity gave a salutary context to the play to a general audience whose general political innocence and lack of preparation may regard it as a completed picture of American life, *MacBird* is no longer part of a revolution, but becomes a mere revolt, with all the pettiness that term implies. For revolt is irresponsible, implying as it does a disregard for the general welfare of society, because it offers no alternative to the decadence of which it seeks to convict society.

*MacBird* is by no means devoid of significance and true merit, as my fear of its consequences may have implied. Considered from a more detached point of view, it is a brave attempt to produce a genre of writing almost unknown in this country—a combination of parody, burlesque, lampoon, and polemic that might be called invective satire. As such, it is part of a tradition that goes back to the first democracy, in which Aristophanes severely castigated whomever he pleased, whether it was a political, social, military or artistic authority which suffered from his caustic wit. It is necessary, therefore, to confront this play in terms of its literary traditions; for not to do so would be offering evidence that our society is as *MacBird* paints it—totally without courage of self-analysis.

To begin with, *MacBird* is first and foremost a play, a denizen of the theatre. Robert Brustein, Dean of the Yale School of Drama, in a recent article discussed *MacBird* in terms of what he calls America's "third theatre."<sup>2</sup> In our country—

where comedy has degenerated into commodity and tragedy has been totally sublimated into the grim and the serious—it is this third theatre which returns to the drama all the "superb, gay and wild" qualities associated with its greatest and most human moments. The third theatre traces its origins, according to Mr. Brustein, to off-Broadway and the Living Theatre, and "has now reached full velocity in reaction to the intolerable Viet Nam war." Megan Terry's *Viet Rock*, recently produced at Yale, is another example of the third theatre of which *MacBird* is the most outspoken representative to date. Mr. Brustein observes that the playwrights of the third theatre seek "relief from political impotence in untrammelled free expression." I am sure their plays serve to purge the authors' feelings of the "ineffectualness" of things; my concern here is with the audience.

Mr. Brustein also observes that *MacBird* is a parody, and this introduces the first literary tradition I wish to discuss; perhaps it is the easiest of all to discuss, because *MacBird* is most literarily effective as a parody. As such it is brilliant. The melody of the verse would do credit to Shakespeare himself. Plot parallels are taken advantage of quite boldly. *Macbeth* is not the author's only source; she couldn't resist the temptation to borrow freely from *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II* and *Richard III*. And I am glad that she did; poetic license is a hallmark of artistic consciousness, and the variety added by these gleanings adds certainty to the merit of the parody. *Hamlet* was chosen for the portrayal of the Egg of Head (Adlai Stevenson) as the overly sensitive politician, who can't make up his mind. *Julius Caesar* offered a wealth of material for the portraits of *MacBird* and Robert. The startling plot parallels between *Macbeth* and the political events of the last six years contribute the element of inevitability to the parody, as when the witch predicts, "MacBird shall be the mightiest of all,/But Ken O'Dunc alone shall leave an heir." Robert Kennedy, of course, is McDuff. As a parodist, furthermore, the author is at her best in her feeling for speech patterns adapted to Shakespearean verse. The echo is unmistakable when *MacBird* tells Ken O'Dunc:

I wonder if you know just what this means  
To me, a boy who nearly dropped from school?  
Vice-president of these United States!  
Why, it's an inspiration to all boys  
Who daily toil, and sometimes feel despair  
To know that in the White House—or quite near—  
There dwells a man who had to work like them,  
Who knew the struggles, knew the ups and downs,  
It gives a boy a faith in this, our land.



Reading these lines, applauding is hard to resist; and their quality is typical of the play. The coronation speech of Ken O'Dunc is as good: "We celebrate in this uplifting hour,/A vict'ry not for person, nor for party,/But a promise of renewal for the realm." And, if we can maintain our detachment, after the assassination when Ted says "There's something rotten in the State of Texas," we recognize the obviousness about the line which makes great parody so appreciated and so rare.

As is often the case with parody, in *MacBird* it is the vehicle for another literary tradition related to it—that of burlesque. If the characters of the play were strangers to us, *MacBird* would be a lampoon. But because they are all too familiar, there is more to it than fun; the play seeks to present a truth about American life and, insofar as it follows the tradition of burlesque, *MacBird* presents truth not with the sharpness of its tongue, but with the irreverent and deliberate impropriety of its laughter. This wild burlesque tradition includes "The Rape of the Lock," "The Duniciaid," and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Clinton Baddeley calls burlesque "the rude school boy attacking pomposity with a pea-shooter."<sup>3</sup> And in *MacBird*, the details of the play are the peas. The costumes, especially, are burlesque in their mockery of our expectations. The prologue of the play is spoken by a "middle-aged man dressed in standard business attire except for a plume in his hat and a toy sword at his waist." A policeman wears his normal uniform, with the addition of a plaid cape; the brothers Ken O'Dunc, while debating their choice for the vice-presidency, toss around a globe of the world in their hotel suite. In the same scene burlesque is there when Ted reflects the thoughts of many, as he counts on his fingers:

So let's see . . . That means Jack in '60 and '64,  
then Bobby in '68 and '72, then me in . . .  
what would that make it . . . '76 and '80 and  
then in 1984. . . .

The details of the parodic parallels bring out the burlesque vein, as when Robert says to Stevenson, "The fault, dear Egg, is never in our stars/But in ourselves that we are underlings." The combination of traditions in this line is truly hilarious. The high-point of the burlesque influence in the play occurs in the second appearance of the three witches, the cauldron scene:

Taylor's tongue and Goldberg's slime,  
MacNamara's bloody crime  
Sizzling skin of napalmed child,  
Roasted eyeballs, sweet and mild.  
Now we add a fiery chunk  
From a burning Buddhist monk . . .

In these lines, and in such details as the accompaniment of Ken O'Dunc's coronation speech with the "Hallelujah Chorus," however, it is evident that the burlesque pea-shooter is more like a nuclear cannon. It is too dangerous to be only fun; it is more irreverent than mere burlesque. It is that mysterious type of literature called satire.

When *MacBird* was read to backers in New York, according to the author, their first reaction to the play was laughter. "Then," Mrs. Garson went on, "as if they were bowing to social decorum or something they all said, 'That's terrible!'" The author regarded this nod to society as a form of cowardice, the precise form *MacBird* combats. I think she is mistaken. The nod signifies a shifting of focus which recognizes more wisely perhaps than the author herself the "second reality" of her play. I mean the public reality.

For a work of satire such as *MacBird*, dealing with actual men and their immensely significant problems, becomes almost a magical potion or spell in the minds of the public. It may be naive of me to think so—or it may be the influence of the five years I spent in Washington—but I fear the effect *MacBird* may have on the innocent public. Not all of us are cognizant of the political evils of our day, nor can be. There are many, we must realize, whose business it is to keep the world going on more mundane, but no less vital levels. I venture to say "the public" is in the majority. And it is this element—the "people"—that is endangered by revolt, by *MacBird* which shatters innocent illusions without stopping to pick up the pieces. I am not for the perpetration of innocence; I merely fear its destruction without the construction of knowledge in replacement.

This power of destruction satire has always demonstrated in its history—*The Praise of Folly*, *A Modest Proposal*, and more recently Mark Twain's *To the Person Sitting in Darkness*—and for this reason those in power have a seemingly unnatural dread of the poet's pen. And for this reason responsibility is essential in all realms which touch the public. Bernard Shaw recognized the social effects of anything that appears in the guise of art when he commented that "all great art and literature is propaganda," and Meredith said, "the satirist is a moral agent."<sup>4</sup>

The distinction between burlesque and satire is almost imperceptible, impossible almost to define, if there were any reason for doing so. Here it is enough to realize that the two forms are often found together, and work toward the same ends.



Byron's Don Juan says, "And if I laugh at any mortal thing/'Tis that I may not weep," and it is clear that *MacBird's* laughter conceals tears. The tears, insofar as they stand in the tradition of satire, are not the author's alone, but in her role as poet, they are those of the spirit of man which she represents. Therefore they are to be appraised carefully; for they are dangerous tears, with a power about them. And the tears of *MacBird* are not of sadness, but of anger.

I do not wish to be numbered among those who, in the words of More's *Utopia*, "are so dull-minded that they fear all satire." What I fear is not all satire, but the peculiar brand which *MacBird* represents: invective satire whose purpose is derision and destruction, furthermore, destruction of those who are the leaders of society. When asked if she was afraid of the destructive power of her play, now that it was being directed to a more general public than originally intended, Mrs. Garson said, "I don't think *MacBird* can destroy. That would be wishful thinking." And, she adds, she "can't understand the mentality that refuses to think the worst of public figures." As a member of the audience, I feel I understand it fairly well; not all of us can be politicians. However worthy the aims of the revolution which *MacBird* foresees, it will not be successful until it regards the public as more than an emotional sounding board.

As Mr. Baddeley comments, satire exchanges burlesque's pea-shooter for the whip, and with it attacks dishonesty relentlessly. The 'star' of *MacBird's* satire is, of course, the title character who proclaims

Because I do bestride this narrow world like a  
Colossus,  
These petty men who crawl beneath my legs  
Turn up their envious eyes at my great prowess.

A satanic synthesis of the vanity of Caesar, the pure evil of Richard III, the showmanship of Bolingbroke, and the overpowering ambition of Macbeth, *MacBird* is the cynical manipulator of power, who is the very epitome of crassness and inhumanity. In his all-encompassing cynicism the spirit of the play finds its most accurate definition. The remorseless cynicism stifles the laughter normally expected as the by-product of satire.

*MacBird* claims the newspapers are against him, and the audience loses an opportunity of mitigating the horrible portrait of him they seem to be seeing; he is blamed for Ted's plane crash, and by Robert accused of the Egg of Head's death. The Buddhist immolations are directed personally at him, and even the power blackout on the eastern

coast is traced to his machinations. No possibility is spared as *MacBird* is shown mocking the memory of Ken O'Dunc in a drunken convention birthday party, declaring national prayer day as a political opiate covering doubts of his legitimacy, twisting the Earl of Warren's arm to pacify rumors of dissent by an investigation. Even the White House is suspect, and aides will not confer within it for fear of being bugged.

The cynicism and satire is not limited to *MacBird* by any means; the play clearly presents the rottenness that Ted noticed in Texas as characteristic of the entire country and all of its leaders, living and dead. Not a saving grace can be found, as even Ken O'Dunc, the fallen hero, is implicated in the evil which has poisoned the heart of things. Lady *MacBird* sermonizes:

The boldest deed, the biggest lie wins out.  
This lesson we have learned from Ken O'Dunc.  
Remember he attacked that rebel isle,  
Denied he did it, then announced: "Twas I"?  
The major thing is confidence and style,  
For still the world believes he'd never lie.

The picture of America which we see in *MacBird* is indeed a totally bleak and hopeless one. An Aide sums it up:

Alas, poor country!  
It can't be called our mother, but our grave  
Where no one but the ignorant feel safe.

The characters who walk on this stage are not men, but mechanical monsters, aberrational creations of the most evil human possibilities run amok.

All of these observations have been meant to indicate the traditions of which *MacBird* partakes. I hope its successes in each of these traditions is clear; and I hope it is clear that what *MacBird* attempts is indeed a vast undertaking literarily. For it seems to me that failure in such an undertaking is a greater evil than it is in an effort which has not the social implications that satire has so forcefully.

And, in the ultimate analysis, I think *MacBird* fails. In literature there must be a delicate balance maintained between matter and form, upon which the merit of the work rises or falls. Neither element can overcome the other. In *MacBird* the matter overshadows the form in such degree as to stand almost as the sole significance of the work. And, when the form is as good as it is in this play, such a lack of balance is indicative of less than success. It is a matter of artistic control.

Furthermore, *MacBird* is not free of technical flaws. The assassination scene is its theatrical nadir, from which it never really recovers as a stage presentation. The scene is much too flippant, and relieves the audience of whatever sympathy



they may have felt with the author until that point. Also, the parody breaks down because the contemporary characters which parallel *Macbeth* are still living; the author is forced to rely solely on Shakespeare's play for a conclusion, and it tends to be absurd. The cherry trees burning in Washington, to fulfill the predictions of the witches, and the revelation that Robert's heart is an artificial one implanted by his pragmatic father who knew that politics is no place for human hearts are, to say the least, a bit strained. The Egg of Head's "To see or not to see" speech is too much, since that speech even in Shakespeare has become terribly trite and almost unbearable on the stage. Ted's airplane crash, the Egg's assassination, Lady MacBird's attempt to rid herself of the smell of murder by deodorizing the country with flowers, all degenerate the parody into inanity, and deprive the play of whatever theatrical and literary conviction it may have retained otherwise.

These breakdowns in routine go to suggest what lies at the heart of the problem in *MacBird*: invective satire easily becomes prey to the danger of becoming all invective, and no longer satire. And precisely this happens in *MacBird*. As David Worcester says, "Satire is the engine of anger, rather than the direct expression of anger."<sup>5</sup> But *MacBird*, in the last analysis, becomes nothing more than the angry expression of revolt against American leaders, living and dead. The matter outweighs the form on the scales of art.

The line which distinguishes true literature from what is either the attempt at such, or a form of entertainment only, is a fine one indeed, hard to define. It is, however, quite possible, almost natural to recognize whether a given work does or does not cross that imaginary line into greatness. And *MacBird* falls short. I would not decry the attempt at such greatness, if I did not have the conviction that when the attempt involves the satiric form of literature with all of its implications, and when it offers no alternative to the corruption it portrays, it is socially irresponsible, and therefore a betrayal of both art and the political revolution it represents. To try so much and fail, when it comes to satire, is much worse than not to have tried at all.

The author is quite correct in recognizing, as she does, that organization is essential to political revolution; and at Berkeley, revolt was initiated with the disciplined direction of organization. In offering *MacBird* to a nationwide, undisciplined audience, however, it seems to me that the doctrine of organization has been lost sight of; and this indicates irresponsibility. It is,

of course, natural to want acclaim. But the "second reality" which the public audience automatically bestows on the play makes this irresponsibility a serious matter indeed. And in a way, the play's capitulation to public attention represents the evil element in our society on which the play capitalizes—a preference to talk about evil rather than do anything about it. This evil may even be seen in a preference for style over action, as William S. White observes in a recent editorial in the *New York World Journal Tribune*.<sup>6</sup> In becoming self-enamored with its possible fame, the play becomes the object of its own derision, the desire for ringing, if hollow words—whether in promise or in praise—having overcome the recognition of the necessity of action.

*MacBird*, for all of its faults and dangerous implications, is still a most significant literary event in this country, and a start in the right direction. Mr. Brustein has demonstrated its place in the theatre of gaiety and wildness, and I feel it may also be provocative of a renewal of the satiric tradition, greatly depleted in our country and times. John Wesley said in 1738 that "the glory of sporting with sacred things is peculiar to the English Nation." Now that this country has been founded, and is well on its way in history, Mrs. Garson is certainly the first to disprove conclusively Wesley's observation in America.

As a final observation, I mention the issues of sedition and suppression. Mr. Brustein calls *MacBird* clearly seditious, and (depending upon the definition of the term) it may well be. He predicts its suppression by subtle governmental and judicial pressures, and the author herself told me of the difficulty she had in finding a publisher and a theatre, regarding the dread and hesitation with which she was confronted as further proofs of cowardice and bureaucratic pressures. I hope there is another possible explanation. Perhaps these refusals were elements of decency and respect for the public welfare—or are those concepts today totally jejune and irrelevant?

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Copies of *MacBird* may be ordered by mail, by enclosing a dollar and addressing it to:

Grassy Knoll Press, Inc.  
P.O. Box 2273  
Grand Central Station  
New York, N.Y. 10017

<sup>2</sup> *Plays and Players*, October 1966.

<sup>3</sup> V. C. Clinton Baddeley. *The Burlesque Tradition in the English Theatre after 1660*. London, 1952, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Essay on Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit*.

<sup>5</sup> David Worcester. *The Art of Satire*. Cambridge, 1940, p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> "Professional LBJ Haters."



# NATIONAL SERVICE: an alternative to selective service

By WILLIAM A. JOHNSON

A popular quip on the Selective Service System is that if the system did not exist, it would be impossible to invent it. The magnitude and complexity of the System almost makes the wisecrack a truism. The System operates with 4,088 local draft boards staffed by more than 40,000 volunteers and 8,000 medical advisers, and processes 170,000 men monthly. This System is responsible for nearly 31 million prospective "men in khaki." Although one can point to an extraordinary number of arbitrary and unjust decisions which local boards have made in the past, it is a fact that the System works.

The System fits nicely into what the high priest of the organization, General Lewis Hershey, calls the "national interest." That means that the primary goal of our American society must be the guarantee of the continuation of our military might wherever we have a military interest. Even the discrimination by local draft boards for or against candidates for the military is based on how the candidate will or will not contribute to the goal of "guaranteeing the continuation of our military might."

The current discussions on the aims and achievements of Selective Service and serious looks at alternative patterns for national service are especially significant in light of the new legislation which will be enacted by the current Congress to succeed the Act now in effect (which expires June 30, 1967).

Any assessment of the current program must include both a frank appraisal of the present System and some evaluation of future needs and directions. (Regarding the future, Hanson Baldwin has written that a realistic assessment of manpower needs in

the next decade must start with a figure of about 3,000,000 for the armed forces. If past experience can be used as a guide, this will mean an annual average input of more than 70,000 men.<sup>1</sup>)

One unique American anomaly in the Selective Service System is that of educational deferment which grants a "bye" to individuals whose educational preparations seem to warrant his not participating in military preparedness. Thus, if an individual is involved in some complex engineering or scientific matters—and thereby contributing to the technology of modern warfare—then he is sure to be excluded from the service. General Hershey laid down the ground rules for this kind of military-roulette when he wrote: "Fairness, as a common denominator to the individual desires of each person, does not exist."<sup>2</sup>

The inequities of the selection process are legion. The deferment policies which postpone service for the college and graduate student (who normally are white and affluent) force the uneducated (who are generally non-white and poor) to bear the military burden in Viet Nam and elsewhere. Martin Luther King, Bayard Rustin and other civil rights leaders like to use this argument as another indication of the inherent injustices of our supposedly democratic society. Michael Harrington has related poverty to the inequitable draft selection procedures. And the New Left carries this argument to its logical conclusion in asserting that the war in Viet Nam is a "rich man's war" for which the poor provide the cannon fodder.

But the argument works the other way around, too; impoverished Negroes account for the most deferments through their

failure to pass military examinations. Daniel P. Moynihan, who is now Director of the Joint Center for Urban Studies of M.I.T. and Harvard, makes a great deal of this fact and asserts that the American armed forces, which he believes might become an immensely potent instrument for education and occupational mobility, "have been systematically excluding the least educated, least mobile young man." He cites President Kennedy's 1963 "Task Force for Manpower Conservation" (which was made up of the Directors of the Selective Service System and the Secretaries of Defense, Labor and Health, Education and Welfare) which was called together to help determine why in 1962 fifty percent of the persons called up for pre-induction examinations had been rejected for failing the mental or physical tests or both. The result of the investigations of rejectees by the Task Force became, as everyone knows, a disturbing profile of poverty, ghetto-living, urban squalor, as it existed in the '60's.

Moynihan was one of the first to recognize the correlation between poverty and Selective Service rejection: "These were young men already in trouble. Four out of five were dropouts. One in the ten had a court record. Three-quarters worked in unskilled, semiskilled or service jobs. Their unemployment rate (28 percent) was four times that of their age group. Moreover, they came from families in trouble: Twenty-one percent came from families that had received public assistance in the preceding five years, 31 percent came from families broken by divorce or separation. *But the single most dramatic fact to emerge was that 47 percent came from families*





DRAWING: JACKSON

with six or more children. A tiny fraction of all families, producing only 11 percent of all children in the United States, was producing half the mental rejectees. Seven out of 10 rejectees came from families with four or more

children. The ethnic ratio was askew and so was the regional one. Where only 3.6 percent of the youths called up in the state of Washington failed the qualifications test, 51.8 percent of those from South Carolina failed. To be

raised in the South was bad; to be raised in a large Southern family worse; to be raised in a large Southern Negro family . . . these young men were headed nowhere—and they knew it as the interviews showed.”<sup>3</sup> Not only is a great segment of the Negro community not permitted the educational and social value that military service would bring, Moynihan asserts, but even more, they are denied the most important psychological event in social relations, the opportunity to demonstrate military valor.

It would appear that a whole generation of poor Negroes (and whites) are missing their chance to get in touch with American society.

The inequities of the System, and the concomitant recognition that the minority poor is excluded even from this base form of democracy, has brought forth what has been termed the “Great Draft Debate.” The debate is occasioned by the conviction that when the draft law question comes around again (June 30, 1967) there ought to be a radical examination of the entire Selective Service System. When the draft was extended in 1963, for example, only three Congressmen voted “No,” and only a handful (primarily Republicans Thomas B. Curtis of Missouri and John V. Lindsay of New York and Democrats Robert W. Kastenmeier and Henry S. Reuss of Wisconsin) called for major revision. Curtis, who has been the draft’s leading critic, said at the time (1963): “The fact is that the draft is basically a crutch the military has used to avoid developing sounder personnel policies.” In 1964 Senator Kenneth B. Keating, then Republican Senator from New York, and Representative Curtis, initiated bills to appraise the draft. A long critique of draft policies was scheduled to come to the floor of the House in April, 1964, only to be tabled when President Johnson announced a new study of draft procedures by the Pentagon. An earlier study of the draft initiated during the Kennedy administration had still not appeared.

When the Johnson Ad-



ministration's report was completed in 1965 it was not released for a number of reasons: first, because the escalation of the war in Viet Nam made all statistical figures irrelevant; second, because the numbers of rejectees dramatically pointed out the horror of living in the cities; and third, because of the increasing number of public protests against the war, and especially the inequities of the draft that sent men to Viet Nam against their will.<sup>4</sup>

Subsequent revelations of the Administration indicate clearly that the draft is a proper subject for debate in '67. But the issues are not clear-cut. Everyone agrees that the System is unjust (it discriminates, serves only the military, allows a deferment to become an exemption), but what to do about it is the still unanswered question.<sup>5</sup>

A number of options appear in the literature of the "Draft Debate." They are: the professional army, universal military training, the lottery, national service (compulsory), and national service (voluntary).<sup>6</sup>

1. *The Professional army*: the merits of such a practice are obvious. No one would be discriminated against because everyone who was serving in the military was there because he wanted to be. If one did not want to serve, he was free to act accordingly. A long-term professional army would reduce greatly the constant turnover of manpower and the need for the continued cycle of training recruits. A professional army, furthermore, would mean an army prepared at all times, atune to the technological advances made in military science and logistics. The volunteer soldier, too, would be highly motivated to fight and kill, much more so than someone who was in the military against his will.

The dangers of such an army are equally obvious. A social grouping might evolve, the military class, with its own mores and morality, which might grow apart from the public sector of our society. Barbaric practices, such as

would not be permitted by civilians, might be condoned (although the dichotomy between civilian and soldier is blurred when atrocities are committed). A purely professional force conversely might become immured to technological change and remain narrowly militaristic.

On the basis of projected studies it would appear impossible to envisage a professional army of 3,000,000 men, all of whom have joined the ranks through volunteering.<sup>7</sup> Inducements for military service might change in the future; nonetheless, professional careerism does not appear at this time as a real alternative to the problems raised by the present draft structure. Then too, how does one establish a professional army and meet specific military needs occasioned by a changing international environment? How does one anticipate the military needs in Southeast Asia, for example? Furthermore, the Defense Department report on the draft estimated that the cost of a professional army of 2.7 million men would be a minimum of 17-20 billion dollars more than it costs now to operate the military. Hanson Baldwin is accurate, I believe, in assessing the negatives which exist in Washington and elsewhere regarding this possibility: "In any event, the enlistment and maintenance of such an all-volunteer professional force would require a complete change of philosophy in Washington and far greater emphasis upon the professional responsibility of the military officer than is now permitted under the extremely centralized management which Secretary of Defense McNamara has built up in the Pentagon. Also, the concept of a professional army is out of step—and hence unlikely of achievement—with the psychological sensitivity to and tight political control of military operations in recent Administrations."<sup>8</sup>

2. *Universal military training*: the advocates of this practice, which included Generals Marshall and Eisenhower, would require all young men of the age of 18

to train militarily for a period of from four months to a year. There would, of necessity, be no exemptions, except for the severest physically and mentally disabled. The Scandinavian countries have adopted a variety of UMT, and everyone must take his turn crawling through a machine-gunner's practice field.

Advocates of UMT usually are fond of pointing out the various side benefits of the system: the sense of camaraderie built up among the corps, a love of country and opportunity to serve it in an active way, incipient nationalism and patriotism, and the like.

However, UMT is a form of conscription not geared to the *rigueurs* of modern warfare, to rockets, H-bombs, intercontinental ballistic missiles and the like; it is a perfect response to the demand for a mass army. Its structure, which would include everyone, would make training impossible and military preparedness a fantasy. It would provide an army in terms of quantity, but quality would be another matter entirely. Furthermore, UMT might influence or alter basic social and philosophical commitments of a nation which supposedly is dedicated to the propagation of peace and good will rather than enmity and oppression.

3. *Lottery*: under such a practice, all men who soon were to become 18 would register for the draft. Their registration would then be placed in an electronic device, and a selected percentage (based upon current need) of names would be drawn. As in the past, one-third of those called would be rejected for physical and psychological reasons; hence one-third more names would have to be drawn. (Eli Ginzberg supports the lottery concept. See his article "The Case for a Lottery" in *The Public Interest*, Fall 1966, pp. 83-89.)

All of those chosen would serve for a prescribed period of time, probably one year; after this period of service they would not then be called to



serve in the military.

Advocates of this point of view insist that the military must call the younger age groups first, rather than the older ones. In this way, the standard objections to military service—that it breaks up family life, interrupts education and careers, etc.—would be eliminated. One would be inducted before career, higher education, and marriage usually occur. Hanson Baldwin supports the concept of a national lottery, but proposes that the lottery be used after the local boards have fulfilled their functions, and then only to assign "priorities for call-up." General Hershey vehemently opposes the lottery on the basis that a lottery would substitute chance for rational processes in the recruitment procedures for military manpower.

Men are conscripted by chance rather than by social position and education when a lottery is used. The present deferment "racket" could hardly subsist within such a system. It would be more just in its selections, though indiscriminate in those selections. But men would still be chosen to serve against their wills, and this time, it would be a machine making the choice. (Consider the kind of response the lottery will get from already depersonalized college men and women!) The determination of manpower need will still be made by people outside the age grouping of those who are to be inducted. The effect of caricaturing the younger generation as not being able to make decisions for themselves as to how they are to conduct their young lives is still present.

Because of this fact, national service becomes a real live alternative. There are two types; the first is:

4. *national service (compulsory)*, which suggests that as an alternative to the draft, all young people 18-25 years of age would be required to serve either in a military or a variety of civilian programs for two years. The idea has a venerable tradi-

tion behind it. William James in "The Moral Equivalent of War" spoke of "a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of years a part of the army enlisted against Nature. . ." <sup>9</sup> James directs the young people "to coal and iron mines, to freight trains, to fishing fleets in December, to dish-washing, clothes-washing, to window-washing, to road-building and tunnel-making, to foundaries and stokeholes, and to the frames of skyscrapers, would our gilded youths be drafted off, according to their choice, to get the childishness knocked out of them and to come back into society with healthier sympathies and soberer ideas. They would have paid their blood-tax, done their own part in the immemorial human warfare against nature; they would tread the earth more proudly, the women would value them more highly, they would be better fathers and teachers of the following generation." <sup>10</sup>

The concept of national service has widespread appeal. Young people are aware of the values of "amateur service" in the country. "Ask not what your country can do for you . . ." did not fall on deaf ears. The Peace Corps, VISTA, the Job Corps, the Teachers Corps, came into being as a result of young America's idealism. A "service ethic" has evolved. (Indeed, an ethic of service runs counter to what many feel about the Viet Nam war.) This ethic is compatible with new political configurations, especially those among student groups and social activists. It values personal loyalty higher than loyalty to an institution, an organization or an ideology. Huge national problems are going unsolved now, and there are cadres of capable, energetic young people who would respond favorably to a new concept and program of national service.

The war in Viet Nam can only confuse the young man of draft age. Students generally are cynical and bitter because of

their suspicion that the news is managed. There does not seem to be any way to involve oneself as a common citizen in the decision-making process in the seats of political and economic power. And then it is increasingly difficult to protest the war, or engage in conversation regarding alternatives to the war, and still be counted as a patriotic American. In this way, the war provides more than the rallying cry for the current protest movement; it becomes at the same time the occasion for the student generation to ask the question "how can I avoid/evoke military service altogether?"

The concept of "national service" is submitted as a means 1) by which one can avoid the draft if he so chooses and 2) to provide open-ended opportunities for service in a variety of projects, Peace Corps, Job Corps, VISTA, Teachers Corps, working in the ghetto, etc. Semantic difficulties abound, of course, with such a concept (especially with the term "service"). A fairly substantial statement of what it is all about was offered by Dr. Eberly's National Service Conference of May 7, 1966: "National service as a concept embraces the belief that an opportunity should be given each young person to serve his country in a manner consistent with the needs of the nation—recognizing national defense as the first priority—and consistent with the education and interests of those participating, without infringing on the personal or economic welfare of others but contributing to the liberty and well-being of all." <sup>10</sup>

National service has been given official sanction by many including President Kennedy in 1960 who, when announcing the Peace Corps, proposed it as "an alternative to peace-time Selective Service"; Senator Ted Kennedy who suggested in May 1966 the *idea* of "national service" (one month before having urged the abolishment of draft quotas at the regional level);



Corps.) The salary of the volunteer would come from the Federal government, and would be at a subsistence level. The sponsoring organization would be subsidized by the government to provide room and board for the volunteer.

The military would also be dependent upon a volunteer force. Those who did not believe in violence, or opposed war or conscription for a variety of reasons, would not have to serve. Such a volunteer military force is well within the bounds of feasibility, so long as there is not a national emergency. Inducements for military service would be the key to this program. Mitrisin and Waskow suggest four years of schooling at any educational institution in the country, with the government paying for tuition, room, board, and extra expenses. The educational subsidy would have to be at a level so that the serviceman would not have to work while getting his education.

The civilian volunteers could work to solve some of the gross problems confronting American society, such as urban blight, the ghetto dweller, social and civil inequities, civil rights, unemployment, the problems of the farm and rural America, etc. An Urban Renewal Corps might be a pilot project. Young people who are also slum dwellers could learn skills that would provide them with a trade, and at the same time they might rehabilitate the community in which they live.

A wide variety of programs could be devised for a "voluntary national service" program. We might have, in addition to the Urban Renewal Corps, a Police Cadet Corps, a National Health Corps, Domestic VISTA programs, a Disaster Corps, a Conservation Corps, an Air Transport Force, etc. Programs could be organized about the following designations: War on Poverty, Educational Programs, Special and Community Needs, Foreign Student Programs, Volunteer Service Agency Programs, etc.

(cf. the Eberly report "A Plan for National Service").

A voluntary national service program could absorb 700,000 volunteers (500,000 working with private organizations, 200,000 with governmental) and would cost 6 to 8 billion dollars a year. The total cost, including the educational bonus would be estimated to cost 12.5 billion.

The greatest advantage of the "voluntary national service" program is that the individual student would be the final surrogate for the way in which he is to live his life. He would not be compelled to serve either in the military or in the civilian service corps. To treat individuals as free beings would have a salutary effect upon them as persons. It would affect their total response to their environment, including their homes, parents, colleges, personal relationships, their government.

Volunteer programs, furthermore, would have an impact upon traditional political structures, interrupting the traditional political coalitions in favor of new ones. Slum dwellers would organize: Negroes would know about their constitutional rights as citizens. The government would be compelled to deal differently in the future with the impoverished and disenfranchised. Social problems, the slums, unemployment, would become visible, and issues to be dealt with in concrete political and economic ways.

A voluntary national service program too would have the advantage of distinguishing between service as a valuable personal activity and the existence of social ills. Service can be employed to aid in the redress of an injustice, but the existence of an injustice must be recognized for what it is, a breakdown of the brand of justice meted out in this country. A social malady is a national problem and calls for measures of social change and control to rectify it.

Getting students actively working at problems does not replace the government's re-

sponsibility for providing for the welfare of its citizens. Only a radical change in our social institutions will eradicate the evil in our society.



#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Hanson Baldwin, "The Draft is here to stay, but it should be changed," *The New York Times Magazine*, Nov. 20, 1966, pp. 90, 92.

<sup>2</sup> General Lewis Hershey, Selective Service System Fact Paper.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel P. Moynihan, "Who Gets in the Army?", *The New Republic*, November 5, 1966, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the sensitive argument of a college student against the draft: Jeffrey Goodman, "How to be Patriotic and Live with Yourself," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Feb. 1966, pp. 61-62.

<sup>5</sup> The Library of Congress Legislative Reference Service offers an attractive bulletin entitled "Continuation of the Draft: Summary of the Arguments Pro and Con" by Thomas C. Lyons, Jr. (UB 340 U.S.B.). Lyons is able to dig up 26 arguments on the "pro" side, and 25 for the "con" side. (Hopefully, governmental policies are not developed according to the numbers game.)

<sup>6</sup> Four of these five alternatives to Selective Service were suggested in a paper on "Voluntary National Service" by John Mitrisin and Arthur Waskow of the Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas D. Morris, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower), in a statement before the House Committee on the Armed Forces, June 30, 1966, indicated that even if it were desirable to recruit a professional army, few would volunteer.

<sup>8</sup> Hanson Baldwin, *op. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Donald J. Eberly (ed.) *A Profile of National Service*, a publication of the Overseas Educational Service, New York, N.Y. 10036. Dr. Eberly directs the *National Service Secretariat*, 522 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y., publishes a national service newsletter, and the best authority is about the concept of national service. He has, as well, published a report (mimeographed, a private document) of 90 pages on "A Plan for National Service," November 1966. Dr. Eberly is an employee of the Overseas Educational Service organization.

<sup>10</sup> Eberly, *A Profile of National Service*, p. 3. cf. also the definition of "national service" put into a more educational context; Morris Janowitz, "The Case for a National Service System," *The Public Interest*, Fall, 1966, pp. 90-109.

<sup>11</sup> Janowitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-102.

<sup>12</sup> This point of view is best expressed by John Mitrisin and Arthur Waskow in their paper "Voluntary National Service." Much of my concluding argument has been influenced by this paper.





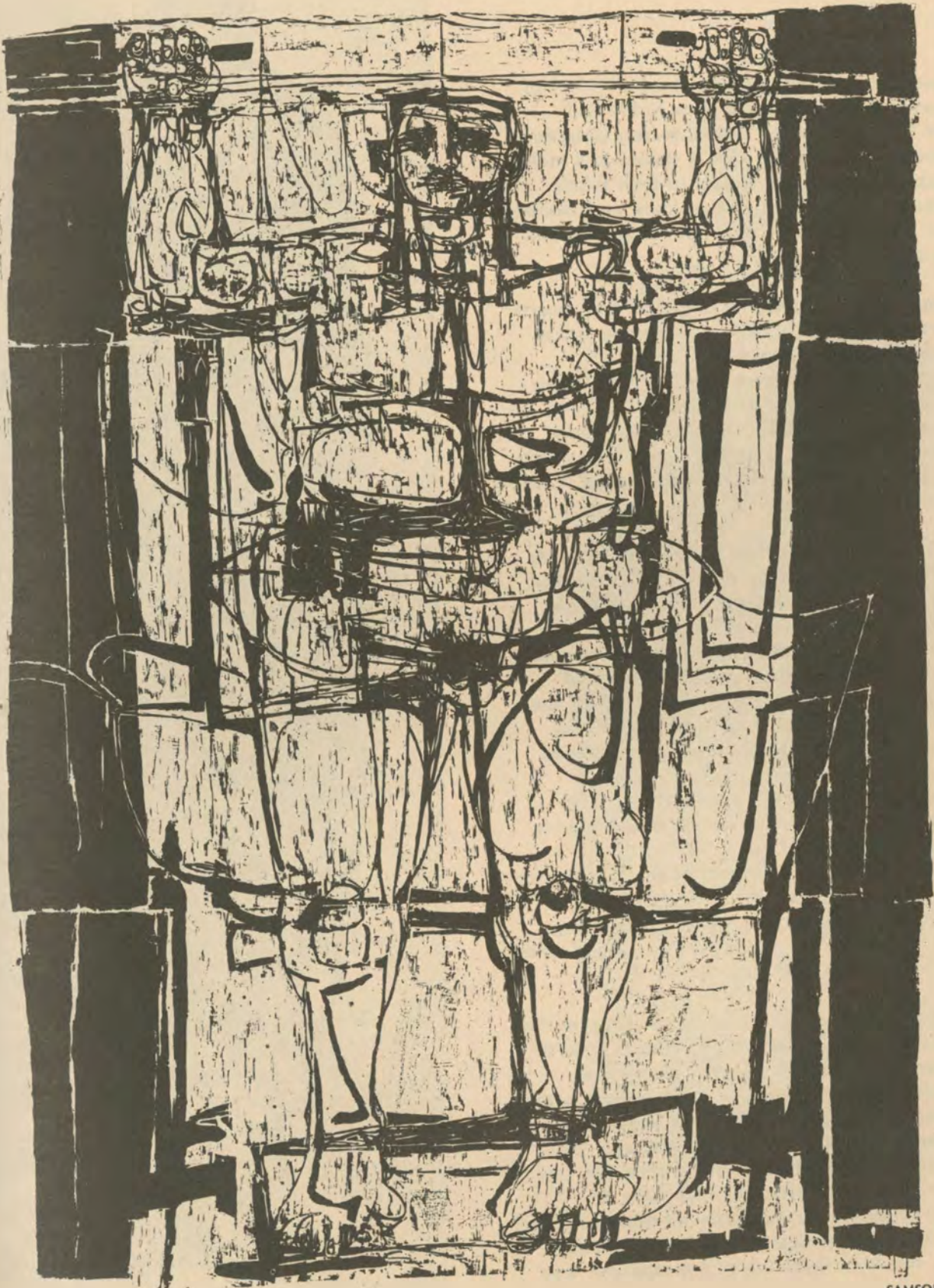
## BEN SMITH—PRINTMAKER

By JIM McLEAN

The introduction of woodcut printing into Europe was one of the significant events of the Renaissance. It made possible the use of what William Ivins, Jr., calls "exactly repeatable pictorial statements." Some single sheet prints were produced in the 15th and 16th centuries, but the woodcut print was used primarily for the decoration and illustration of books. It provided a practical means of spreading information and reproducing playing cards and devotional pictures.

The basic concept was simple. A drawing was made on a plank of wood. The negative areas were cut away, leaving a raised image approximating the drawing. This image was inked and transferred to paper by handrubbing or the use of a press. The woodcut was eventually dropped in favor of wood and metal engraving, methods that allowed the use of more elaborate detail.





SAMSON



The twentieth century has witnessed a revival of the woodcut print. Artists such as Nolde and Munch helped to free it from a merely didactic or reproductive role and gave it stature as a major medium of creative expression. In their hands the interaction between cutting knife and wooden surface produced works of simple directness and strong emotional impact.

Ben Smith is a young Atlanta artist who has chosen the venerable woodcut over a staggering variety of options currently available in the print-making field. The woodcut imposes restrictions upon the artist because its realization requires an expenditure of great physical energy before any kind of image is possible. Ben works within these restrictions to develop a new sense of scale and emotional power.

Literary content is important to Ben, and his work is continually nurtured by references to classical mythology, literature, and the drama of the Old Testament. And yet, because Ben feels that "the image is created with the medium, not copied by it," his work rises above a predictable kind of illustration that advances "story-telling" at the expense of aesthetic wholeness. He accepts his responsibility as an "object-maker" and seeks to create prints that measure up to their own internal constructive or formal canons. "The Suppliant" is an excellent example of this double concern. On one level the subject matter is a sensitive response to an aspect of the human condition. On another level the large dark shape of the body and the white surrounding space are played beautifully against the incisive specification of the head, hands, and feet.

Churchmen who are serious about revitalizing the relationship between art and the church need to be aware of this double concern. They need to see that literary content, when it is used, is only one of several tools with which the artist works. The sensitive artist is one who continually views his world and his materials with a fresh eye, one who seeks to create objects which have an integrity of their own, apart from all other considerations. Ben Smith struggles to unite both literary content and form invention in a meaningful way.







JOB

FEBRUARY 1967



THE PROPHET





SUPPLICANT

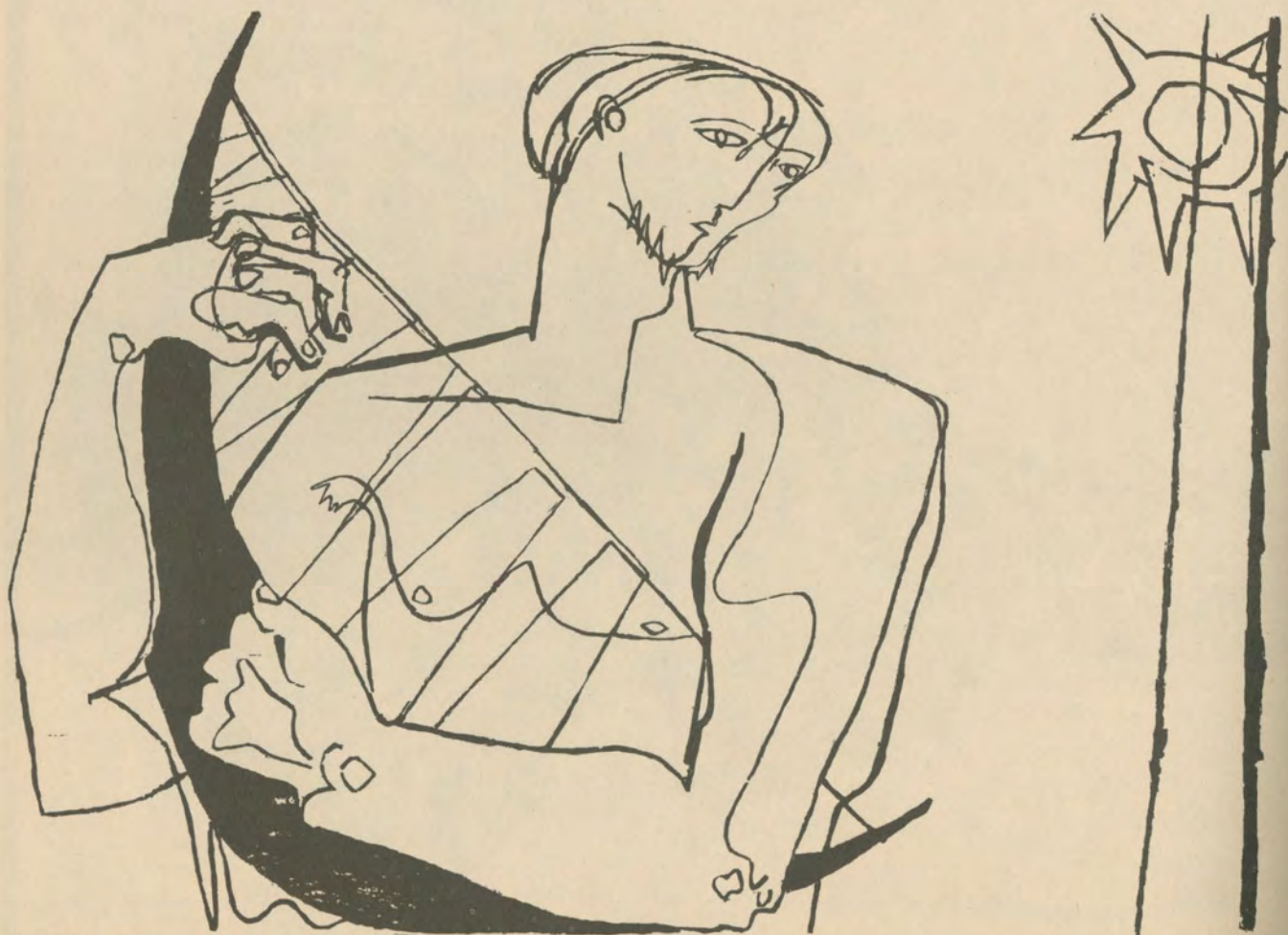






BEN SMITH was born in 1941. He attended the Atlanta School of Art and holds a four year professional certificate from that school. He is currently on the staff of the school's non-credit program. His prints have been shown in regional and national shows, where he has won a number of prizes and purchase awards.

The photograph of Ben is by JOHN H. FERDON, an Atlanta photographer who will move to New York in 1967. He was used to exemplify photography as an art in a recent issue of ATLANTA magazine.



ORPHEUS PLAYING



# INSTEAD

poems by Margaret Wilde and Grover Lewis

## THE BLUES PROJECT

Dewey Hogg, a good old boy  
and a rock hound to boot,  
Purely loved to play gittar.  
(Lay down your weary tune,  
lay down.)  
But somebody stole his dreadnaught Martin  
out of the billet  
The first night we hit Saigon  
and the next day  
He killed  
114 Viet Congs—  
All sexes.

—Grover Lewis



# OF ELEGIES

## TO A VIETNAMESE CHILD

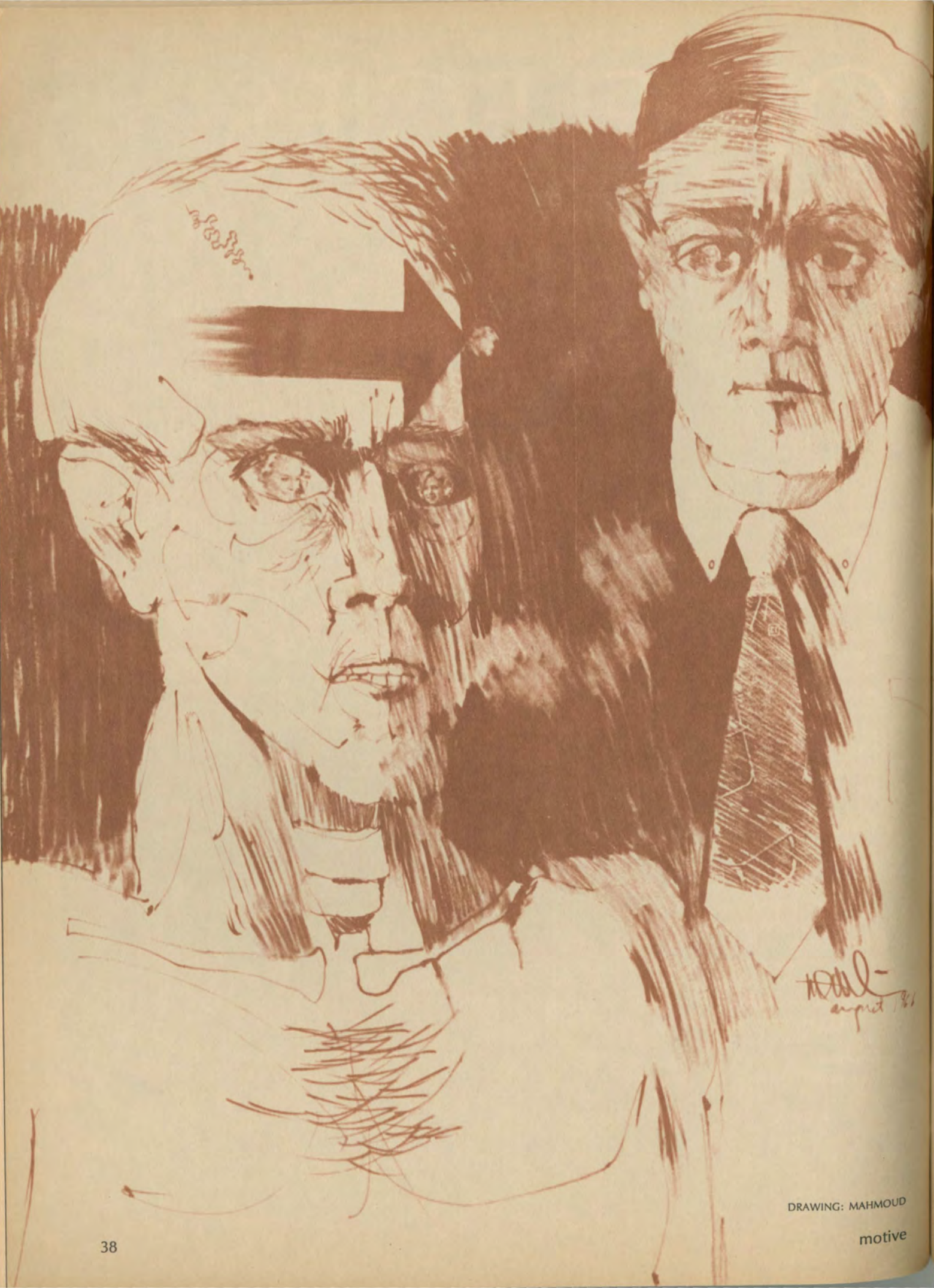
Don't  
look at me like that. I haven't patience  
or even language to explain  
what happened to your village—  
so stop your screaming. I have a job  
to do, it isn't a pleasant one;  
I didn't choose it, but here I am  
and here  
are bodies to be buried.

Time enough  
when I go home again, to think  
of lives and futures—wasted; cancelled  
with the short swift flight of bombers  
sent from a ship I never saw  
by men I've never met, who are,  
nonetheless,  
my countrymen. Time enough,  
I hope, to think  
of the slow corruption of endangered power  
when I get home. But now—

please—  
take your little stick and go away . . .

—Margaret Wilde






DRAWING: MAHMOUD

motive





# DIETRICH BONHOEFFER: the letters and the legacy

By JOHN A. PHILLIPS

No theologian in the history of Christian thought has been quoted so often, yet studied with such carelessness and critical unawareness as Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The literary legacy is astonishingly sparse when one compares the amount of material written *about* Bonhoeffer to that which is somehow indebted to his work. All we really have are a scattering of articles, most of which simply link quotations from the prison letters together with superfluous paraphrases heavily salted with exclamation marks; a dissertation by John Godsey which was turned into a non-book; and a quirkish, uneven yet fascinating Marxist interpretation by an East German, Hanfried Mueller (which was also a dissertation, and which remains in untranslated and untranslatable German).

Although the secular city dweller and the death of God theologian, the liturgical renewer and the ecumenist, the Marxist Christian and the Niebuhrian Western liberal all claim to be following in some way in the footsteps of the martyr, none yet has succeeded in throwing much light on the path these footsteps themselves followed. Nor do we know much more than we did about where those footsteps stopped twenty-one years ago on April 9, 1945.

During the year, some of the more valuable German critical essays from the past will appear in English. Various early writings from Bonhoeffer's own hand have already been translated, edited and made available. Some of these have been helpful, while others have simply made the task more difficult.

There is no doubt that the fog has begun to clear. Yet one suspects that Bonhoeffer will continue to elude us even when we have set the biographical and theological evidence in a better order than we have thus far.



### WILL THE REAL BONHOEFFER PLEASE STAND UP?

Who can blame the interpreters? The problems of Bonhoeffer research are certainly formidable ones, and it may be that no one will ever come up with a satisfactory answer to the question of why Bonhoeffer's earlier works sit so uneasily on the bookshelf alongside the later ones. If we did not have the evidence, it would be hard to prove that *The Cost of Discipleship* and *The Letters and Papers from Prison* were written by the same man. Yet we remember that we can and have read one book one day and the other the next, and have been simultaneously upset and delighted by both. We respond appreciatively to both and suspect that they are really not so different in spite of their language and divergent interests, yet we aren't satisfied.

Most of Bonhoeffer's interpreters have said that there really is no basic change in Bonhoeffer's outlook, and they proceed to explain the inconsistencies, fluctuations, self-criticism and retractions in Bonhoeffer's theological output by locating "phases" in his life and thought. Are there or are there not "phases"? If there are, what is responsible for them? Was it the socio-political upheaval in Weimar and Berlin between 1921 and 1945 which led Bonhoeffer to agonize over the question of which was the "true" Germany and what the responsibility of the *bourgeoisie* ought to be toward it? (Mueller's thesis.) Was it the ecclesiastical battle of the Confessing Church against the German Christian heresy coupled with the struggle to find a place within the area of the theology of revelation Barth had delineated? (Godsey's thesis.)

Or are the basic clues to be found in Bonhoeffer's inner life, thus far hidden by the inscrutability of the man? He had the irritating, but somehow attractive and characteristic, ability to shift gears as occasion demanded from socio-ecclesiologist to Barthian biblicist, from the worldly freedom of the Christian man to experimentation with monastic vows, from Gandhian pacifism to active participation in a doomed plot to carry off a tyrannicide.

Can we expect even Eberhard Bethge, Bonhoeffer's closest friend and most trustworthy interpreter, to cut these Gordian knots in his forthcoming definitive biography? And how much should we be disappointed if we discover after all that we simply cannot—as most German theologians have been warning us—make the real Dietrich Bonhoeffer stand up?

Certainly it will be useful to know a little more about Bonhoeffer and to have set down before us, in some clearer manner than we now have, who the man was and what it was he was trying to tell us. But it is one of the peculiarities of Bonhoeffer studies that it may be a greater blessing in the long run if we cannot get too clear a picture of him. By now, Bonhoeffer has given birth to many useful revolutions and the cause of theology would not be greatly served if our ultimate goal in Bonhoeffer study were to legitimize one or the other by proving that this is the direction Bonhoeffer would have taken had he lived.

The prison letters represent, as Karl Barth once put it so nicely (before he went on to shake his head over them), "a particular thorn" whose greatest value is that of nettling us into looking in some direction we wouldn't otherwise have looked. There is enough cohesion, in at least that period of Bonhoeffer's writing which most interests us today, to enable us to spell out with some confidence what it was he was driving at when he died, and to allow ourselves to be bothered by the questions which bothered him. To listen to Bonhoeffer requires of the hearer a willingness to leave the familiar in order to take up new conversations and carry them further by himself.

Some lines of Bonhoeffer's legacy have been rather well established by now and may even have become a bit stale: renewal of the church, liturgical renewal, the importance of the secular as a theological fact of life. But several "particular thorns" in the letters and papers from prison still remain thorny and promise to be so for some time to come. There are those three phrases from the letters which, although they have become an accepted part of theological vocabulary in the past ten years, have hardly been drained of their meaning: "Religionless Christianity," "the world come of age," and "sharing in the sufferings of God." There is still another question which arises from the prison letters which has scarcely been touched thus far, although it may in the long run prove to be the most important for the future of theology. It is the letters themselves—a collection of indefinite and unsystematic letters, a series of broken, disjointed conversations with a friend about various matters they found important—which have been taken seriously as a legitimate way of doing theology. Let us first examine the phrases.

### THE COMING OF AGE OF THE WORLD

Had Bonhoeffer never written his letters from prison, he might be remembered today for the example of his life and for three works which have



become minor classics of their kind: *Sanctorum Communio* (his student dissertation), *The Cost of Discipleship*, and *Life Together*, the account of the monastic experiments at Finkenwalde. But it is the posthumous works which really trouble us in an oddly creative way. In them, Bonhoeffer seems to reach out beyond his own time to an age in which the radical rejection of the world as evil, the renunciation of a "worldly" life as a compromise with the powers of this age, would not be the major problem of Christian faith and ethics. How he saw what he saw from his prison cell I do not know (and I have never been able to follow that argument which qualifies the letters as "obviously the products of a man in prison." Why *obviously*?) What he did see were some extremely important clues to whether and how it is possible to be a Christian and a theologian in the second half of the twentieth century.

Bonhoeffer began his letter of April 30, 1944 by speaking of our having entered into a time of no religion. He first carried this line of thought farther by looking at cultural and theological history as the gradual but irresistible triumph of secularism and pronounced this to be a good thing (extraordinary coming from a Christian theologian!). He speaks of the "coming of age" of the world, the entering of the world into its rights to be itself, free of religious guardianship and clerical control (and even, it is hinted darkly, of "theological" explanations). He rejects the traditional lamentation and condemnation by religious interests of the world's attempts to stand on her own. Instead, he suggests that the world has reached a point where it *can* get along without God and the church's religious solutions to otherwise insoluble intellectual, psychological, philosophical, scientific, and moral problems.

With a fascinating and disturbing metaphor, Bonhoeffer sees in this situation a cultural-historical fulfillment of the meaning of the crucifixion itself—that God comes in Jesus, is rejected and crucified, shoved out of the world by a world which does not want or need him and who blesses, as his last act, that same world. The world from which God has disappeared is, Bonhoeffer writes, closer to God than it was before because it has freed itself of all false conceptions of God as some kind of working hypothesis for which it really has no need. The starting point of Christian theology must therefore be the rejection of a kind of *a priori* "problematic nature" of the world itself, its incompleteness, its forsakenness unless it has God to give it a reality it otherwise lacks.

The world has come of age: fundamentally it is neither good nor bad as far as Christian apologetics is concerned; its descriptions of itself and its life as autonomous are to be taken seriously and its independence is to be looked upon as something God himself wills.

#### A TIME OF NO RELIGION

Closely allied with this is Bonhoeffer's second line of attack on the same problem: theology may no longer begin with the assumption that *man* is innately religious. Christianity therefore must not present itself as a need-fulfilling mechanism, a way to overcome despair, a means of completing an otherwise incomplete life, a problem-solving structure. No doubt there are real and terrifying problems in the world; needs to be fulfilled. But this is no longer to be considered the sacred domain of the theologian.

For many centuries, the religious intellectual has felt that he ruled certain areas of knowledge by divine right. Thus the world has been witness to the spectacle of Christian theology fighting for acceptance within the area of the intellectually-as-yet-unknown. Christianity was the explanation for the unknown origin of man until Darwin's *Origin of Species* offered an alternative; of conscience and the inner life until Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* crossed the threshold into the unconscious. We had better give up this kind of rear guard action, Bonhoeffer claims, and say quite simply that the *whole* life and death of man and his world from beginning to end is open to quite good and persuasive alternatives to the "Christian answer," and that that answer is *prima facie* neither inevitable nor necessary.

Not only religious intellectualism, but something one might call religious psychotherapy is rejected in the prison letters. The nineteenth-century theologian was quite willing to admit that *revelation* was an embarrassment to man's intellectual pretensions and that he could and should feel at home and at ease with the possibilities of man's reason and technological abilities. But the nineteenth century had the best of both worlds—the Christian theologian could fall back upon man's "innate religious nature" as the true abode of divinity; "secular" man was at the same time "religious" man. Bonhoeffer questions whether this and its twentieth-century substitutes might not have to go.

Man may not after all have a "religious" nature susceptible to the tricky devices of Christian apologetics. If Bonhoeffer is right—and at least he has opened up the question—no less than nineteen



hundred years of Christian apologetics are going to have to be set aside. I mean those attempts down through the years to convince man that he was a sinner, or guilty, or unhappy, or uneasy in his world without God or salvation to provide rest for what we could show him was his restless heart. What if Christian theology no longer begins at this point where it can convince a man that he has a problem only the theologian can answer? What if it no longer hangs its hat, intellectually, with the philosophical theologian who demonstrates the necessity of God for one's world view, or the existentialist theologian who points out the terrifying reality of the human condition which man won't own up to? What if, in short, the Christian apologist is quite willing to affirm the world optimistically, to declare it to be morally neutral or even good; to say that it does not, in fact, "need" God and that he may even be a way by which man can and does escape his earthly jobs and problems and responsibilities? Where does the theologian go from there?

If Bonhoeffer is correct so far, it will mean at the very least, for some who choose to take him seriously, an end to the assumption by theologians that those who are not believers or fellow-travellers are simply blinded by intellectual naïveté or social circumstance, or are too stupid or inattentive to our arguments and just don't see the truth of the matter. The theologian will learn to *listen* without attempting while he listens to inform himself as to which god his victim has falsely attached his ultimate concern. Christian faith will present itself as one alternative among a varied and inviting number of alternatives, possibilities for laying hold upon, as Lionel Trilling recently put it, the magic at the source of life.

The Christian faith may be attractive to some and may be unattractive to many, and one must and may learn to live with and listen to those who consciously and deliberately reject it "without lording it over them," to use Bonhoeffer's phrase. Those who listen to Bonhoeffer may therefore find themselves able to make more sense out of that growing group of people (certainly and especially present on college campuses) who cannot or do not understand themselves as basically "guilty" and confused and neurotic. They have learned to get along with their guilt, confusion and neuroticism in some way which enables them to get on with the business of living. Such men and women will not be answered by our looking for a way to prove that their guilt is the more insidious, the more demonic, the more despairing because of their refusal to own up to it.

### SHARING IN THE SUFFERINGS OF GOD

What Christianity will have to offer will be a certain kind of life, a life in the process of working itself out, something of the sort Bonhoeffer tried to articulate at the end of his prison letters. He called this "sharing in the suffering of God in a world without God"—a peculiar way of putting it which will need some elaboration, and certainly more than Bonhoeffer was able to give.

Luther, one of the great influences on Bonhoeffer's theology throughout his lifetime, once remarked that theology is not a matter of reading or writing many books but of living and dying and being damned for the glory of God. He meant that Christian theology must always have to do with the lived life and center its meditation upon that one lived life of Christ for its expression. It will be, in a way, an invitation to Christ and an imitation of him. For it is in Christ, in the events centered in him, in his being and attitude as well as the teaching which followed out of that attitude, that men have been able to see a certain way of living, a style which directs them to a humble self-forgetfulness and a kind of service which makes it possible for them to share in the joy and suffering of the world without despairing. Protestant theology has often regarded the theme of the imitation of Christ as too pious, too Roman, too works-oriented, too anti-intellectual to be a proper theme for investigation. But it has never been entirely lost even in the Protestant tradition.

Bonhoeffer meant his "sharing in the suffering of God" to be the conclusion of that meditation on the theme of imitation which began with the final chapter of *The Cost of Discipleship*. The prison letters provided a worldly rather than an ecclesiological setting. It is unfortunate that the word "suffering" which he uses has a melancholy, Kierkegaardian ring to it which he did not intend. Elsewhere he defined the word in the old King James Version sense ("Suffer the little children . . .") of "bearing," "allowing," "putting up with." He saw the shape of the Christian life as an attitude of forbearance and acceptance—eating and drinking, weeping, rejoicing, sacrificing, entering with a cheerful conscience into the life of the world in which one confronts an infinite variety of human beings and possibilities.

Bonhoeffer was not naïve about the ugliness, stupidity, injustice and rapacity of men, but he was willing to take these things in stride and do what he could to alter them without undue anxiety about the future and death and the coming



eschaton. In fact, he spoke of the Christian possibility of life as a possibility he personally found *only* in Christ—"the reversal of all human value and expectation." He suggested that the reason he could remain a Christian with integrity and joy was because the man Jesus had lived and therefore, for him, the alternatives simply weren't attractive enough.

If Bonhoeffer is right in his "sharing in the sufferings of God in a world without him," one task for theology today is the investigation and description of the Christian life through the attempt to live that life, and to allow this to serve as its central apologetical statement. Bonhoeffer saw Christian theology—and by this he meant the Church, theological language, teaching and preaching and ethics—as emerging once more with an overwhelming power and force somewhere at the end of this process. He was relentless in his insistence that theology must lose itself in order to find itself. What he did not answer for us, of course, was the question of whether by losing itself, it might not simply remain lost.

Perhaps a Kierkegaardian anecdote will help us here. It is recognized by most Kierkegaard scholars that the broken engagement to Regina Olsen became a symbol of his own ruptured relationship to the world, his suffering discipleship of having no where to lay his head. Regina, an eminently sensible woman as it turned out, married a man who later became the governor of the Virgin Islands while they were still a Danish possession. (Unfortunately, she lived long enough to be plagued by philosophers writing doctoral dissertations on her former fiancé.) Throughout his lifetime, Kierkegaard—tortured by her failure to play the game of suffering—kept up a steady barrage of correspondence to Regina which she (and her husband) fielded with sensitivity and understanding. A story told of Kierkegaard (perhaps apochryphal, but no matter) is that during his last years, he once mused aloud to a friend: "If I had had faith, I would have married Regina!"

The real man of faith, the true theologian, is the one who plunges himself into the life of the world and allows his theology to follow from *that* rather than from a gulf between himself and his world. Kierkegaard could describe the "knight of faith" but he could not *be* him. Can a parable be constructed out of our anecdote to explain the final rejection on Bonhoeffer's part of the dialectical theology of Karl Barth, Kierkegaard's successor? Is it, after all, the task of the theologian to marry the world in a manner

that Barth's methodology prohibits? Or had one better, remembering the injunction to be as wise as a serpent, remind oneself that a kiss can, at least in the gospels, be a kiss of death?

#### THE END OF THEOLOGY?

Possibly the most interesting and revolutionary relic Bonhoeffer has left behind him is the *form* in which he chose, finally, to do his theology—the letter to a friend. A prestigious German theologian once remarked that one could not do anything with Bonhoeffer because he was too fragmentary: he defies systematization. An American's reaction to this might be rather that it is a pity that the letters seem to fall too neatly into place; that there are not more fragments. But the prison letters really *are* subversive—they seem to signal the end of the dominance of care, clarity, and system in theology; the triumph of the communique; the note scribbled for him who must run; disconnected observations on things that matter, written in haste and with passion, to a close friend.

Bonhoeffer's legacy and its acceptance by some Americans may mean that American theology can now do what European theology cannot: say "yes" to the communications revolution and the end of the Gutenberg era—as Marshall McLuhan has described the intellectual and cultural past—in order to see if it really is possible to express oneself intellectually and theologically in the style of the anti-novel, the New Wave movie, the Campbell Soup can, New Left politics, and random musical notes played on electronic gadgets. Part of Bonhoeffer's appeal to the young and reckless, often rowdy and usually ignored or condescended to, fast-moving and supremely impatient student, is surely just his own impulsiveness, passion, and recklessness. The theologian who tries haltingly to follow him will soon hear what has been said to Bonhoeffer himself—the grandfatherly call to responsibility, the system, careful articulation and due regard for the foundation which has been carefully constructed by several generations of his betters. But if he is persuaded that he "has something," if he stops his ears and plunges on ahead, he is apt to find some peculiar things happening to his vocation.

He will find it hard to distinguish his job from his hobby as his work takes on more and more the appearance of a piecing together and giving some order to whatever he finds lively and delightful and important in his late night reading, at the movies and on television. The final breakup for him of that long and frequently uneasy marriage between religion and philosophy will not



trouble him greatly for he will by then have lost his nervousness concerning those affairs he has cultivated from time to time with literature, psychology, sociology, the arts, political science, and intellectual history. He will feel free to use any means he thinks will say what he wants to say, without regard for the niceties of traditional theological communication which have governed the past, and all this because he recognizes that the academic and intellectual and cultural life are in the process of being democratized, that he has given up worrying about mass-cult and middle-brow and suburban banalities. He will speak to and try to be understood by any audience he finds open to him.

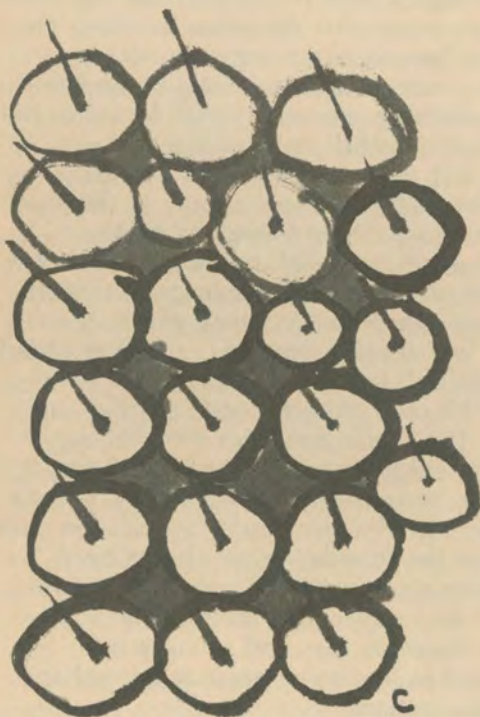
Thus far, the only theological movement to have taken up this challenge of the prison letters is the death-of-God theology. It is not a book movement, a journal movement. It has moved even, at this point, from the theological journals to the world of the popular weekly and CBS News. The cries of "foul" coming from proper middle-aged institutional theology have been many and loud but, thus far, completely beside the point and

singularly unaware of what is going on. The question is this: if theology is really to come of age in the terms of a world which has come of age, why can it not ally itself to the communications revolution, the style which has helped to bring that age into being? Isn't a truly worldly theology bound to look not only for its content but also for its style precisely to the culture in which it lives; hopefully finding in its fragments what Bonhoeffer called "fragments which illuminate the whole"?

#### AN INVITATION TO THE DANCE

This report is not intended to invite researchers to explore Bonhoeffer's theology—although it would certainly be helpful if a few more did. It wishes much more to invite readers to consider accepting Bonhoeffer's invitation. Rightly or wrongly, the prison letters have altered in a profound and permanent way how some men of today conceive of the world, themselves, and the life of faith from a Christian perspective. Few Christian thinkers accomplish this much even though they end their lives filled with years and honors. Can we really expect any to do more than this?

DRAWING: CRANE



picked  
out  
of  
death's  
teeth

I was picked out of death's teeth by dragonflies,  
but the city was still caught in my flesh.

Before me private clubs scattering burnt pigeons,  
before me bank lobbies covering the log containing the gull's nest,  
before me the school rooms selling lottery tickets.

But I never forgot the dragonflies and I asked for their roadmaps;  
now my hands watch a cotton flower become eternal.

—DUANE LOCKE



# THE LINEN SEA

## I (to my father)

They've laid him, still, in a clean white linen sea,  
But there howls a hollow wind with teeth inside him,  
A tarantella frantically grinds a cavern  
Out of the coral marrow.

A goat of snow feeds on the roots of a song,  
Stopping the flow of garnet globes from their womb  
Now only the chalk impression of a world  
Of rich pine-scented tallow.

He opens his eyes in the shadow of a shark,  
And at night, in the sky, the scorpion's stinger throbs.  
A pincer stains the white wings whose green  
Shadow holds him up.

The dawn seen through the scales of a translucent fish,  
The cicada interred in the dreaming astral roots  
And waiting the dark years of its life to fly  
With its sunflower-seeded voice!

But the multitudes passing through the calcium cage  
Have eaten all the fishes and loaves, and left  
No mirrors here for the sun to turn to blood.

## II (to my mother)

The song that's finished leaves no sea on the tongue,  
The shimmering stars are clams in a drying bog,  
The absorbent sweep of an angel's wings ascending  
Leaves the leaves to dry.

Though silence and empty vases may cause a torrent,  
It's good when the edge of a silver cup of wind,  
The crescent moon, cuts the scorpion's jaw  
And the blood-filled clouds burst open:

The lightning tongues of gazelles that the minnows glimpse,  
Cascades of roses down the silver-shivering  
Slowly turning mouth of the bowl of dawn  
Under the wineskin clouds.

And when they cover the quiet face with linen,  
The swooping bird and its shadow meet in the spray  
Among the hungry falling feathers of snow  
That cover the slopes of bread,

Then what will you have left? A seed of sea,  
A way of seeing things, a moistened sight,  
A cup for newborn scarlet songs among  
The devouring feathers of snow.

## III (to joy)

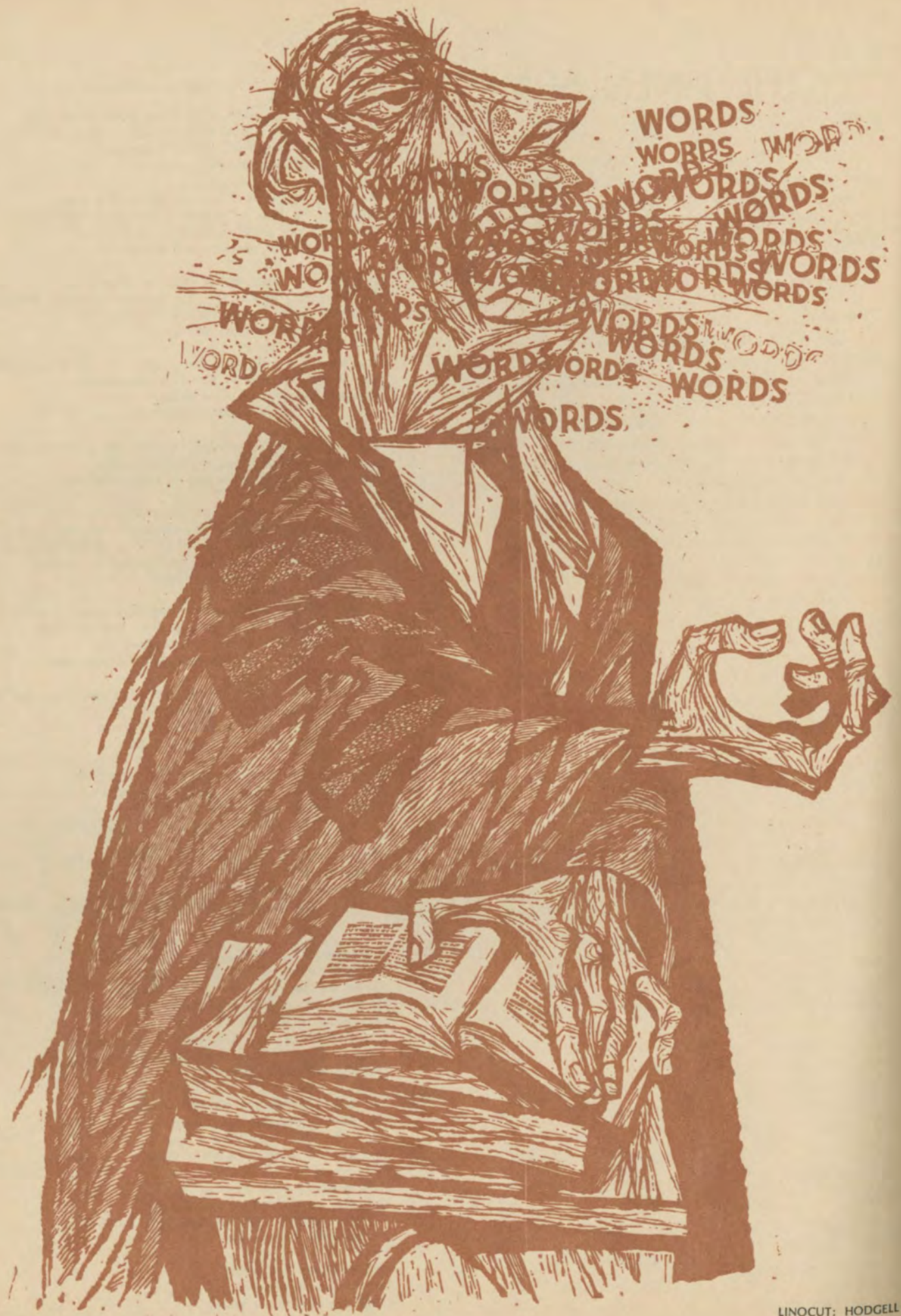
You offered me the blood of your concern.  
This is the way it always is,  
When the heart of one of us bleeds  
He pours his scarlet sunset dawn  
The throat of the nearest ravine.  
And when you bled, you poured your blood  
Toward where I happened to stand  
Holding an empty cup.

The poet's hands are always bloody.  
The poet is the one who gathers up the blood  
From the sand's gluttonous lips  
And gives it back in a silver cup.  
Because of the shimmering pattern  
He's wrought with his own hands,  
We who stand bleeding believe him  
When he gives us our offering back and says,  
"Drink this. This is joy."

And at dawn the priest  
Lays the white linen  
Over the communal wine.

—BENNY McADAMS





LINOCUT: HODGELL

motive



# 'HOLY' IS A FOUR-LETTER WORD

The Christian predicament in the century of the common man

By WILLIAM ROBERT MILLER

It is my privilege"—so begins a form letter I recently received, thanking me for my annual pledge to the church. The phrase is a familiar one, part of a flowery vocabulary one seldom finds in use in the secular world. "If I may be permitted to say so" is another of these expressions—I will spare you a complete list—which make up the gingerbread of genteel conversation.

A couple of generations ago, every gentleman signed his letters "your most humble and obedient servant," or words to that effect; but if he were ever called upon to exhibit humility, obedience or service, it is more likely that he would be prepared to stand on his indignant prerogatives and skewer the applicant for his "impertinence."

Part of the verbiage to which I refer is of biblical conception and origin—for example, Paul extols the notion of bondage to Christ, who himself was the "suffering servant" foretold in the prophecy of Isaiah. One need not endorse all the implications of Paul's concept of obedience, a concept framed in a setting in which slavery had a definite socio-legal status. But the point is that the idea of humility and obedience is related, through Christ, to a new message of freedom, which also carries implications of conscience and resistance to the demands of pagan Rome.

From Paul to Luther there evolved a subtle and complex bifurcation of the doctrine of submissiveness. In Paul's day the "principalities and powers" were the very ones that sent Jesus to Calvary and Paul to a later martyrdom at the hands of Caesar; the realm of which Christ was king was clearly opposed to this one. In Luther's time the division was conceived along quite different lines, the secular and the sacred, and earthly kings within Christendom received their authority from an eternal king enthroned in a celestial court. Luther's quarrel with Rome was not over this feudal conception of kingship, but rather over the position of the church within it.

When we come to the threshold of the nineteenth century, however, we encounter an anomaly. Not surprisingly, the key figures in the American and French revolutions were Deists for the simple reason that Deism offered an image of God without a crown.

Nowadays we tend to take it for granted that there should be free elections everywhere, and that full citi-

zenship is the birthright of every adult human being of sound mind who is not a criminal—and we can find good precedents for this in Christian doctrine and the polity of the earliest followers of Christ.

But we forget too easily that, until just a few generations ago, most people in Christendom did not have these rights at all in practice. Scarcely more than a century ago, peasants in Russia and a few other countries were still serfs bound by feudal law. Even in Great Britain, then the world's most advanced industrial nation, industrial workers had not yet attained the right to vote. And not until our own century did women secure that right.

What we call the "Victorian era" is a period in English history that began five years before Queen Victoria was crowned—with the passage of the Reform Bill which granted the middle class, first heir of the industrial era, the right to vote. That is why America, France, Germany, Russia all by mid-century or a little later underwent a "Victorian" period whether or not they had a monarch. Everywhere, new fortunes were in the making and new styles of life developed for people whose ancestors had held the lowest rank in the social order.

Unlike the old, pre-industrial ruling class, the Victorian middle class could not fall back on ancestral claims to a divinely ordained position of leadership—hence the characteristically Victorian insistence upon "respectability," good manners and other visible signs of status and security, all of which have declined in importance in recent decades with the advent of new social forces.

Nowadays, "everybody"—except the pathologically destitute—belongs to the middle class. Never mind that this larger middle class is a different social reality supported by a different economy, technology, etc. The Victorian style of life was not simply the invention of mill-owners, bankers, tradesmen and the like, but the product of the encounter of such people "on the make" with those already in power.

It is no accident that Deism vanished after the political revolutions of the middle class had given power to the latter. What it represented found expression in other ways, such as the gradual rise of liberal Protestant theology behind the facade of religious conventions.



It is difficult to chart, in brief outline, the exact course of religion during the past two centuries and its relationship to the successive rise of Victorianism and of the labor movement. It is, however, generally recognized by acute observers from Kierkegaard onwards, that the heyday of Victorianism was also the heyday of a peculiarly middle-class religious sentimentality and conventionality. John and Charles Wesley stand at the threshold of that period, ardent and sincere Tories exclaiming volubly their devotion to Jesus as Lord and King. A generation later, the movers and shakers of the secular order are quite clearly not lords or kings. In the twilight of the bourgeois period, a Bruce Barton would take a stab at a businessman's equivalent of the traditional language, but it was too crass and ephemeral to fill the bill. So by force of habit, desire to emulate hallowed traditions (and thus be "respectable"), hymns and sermons continued to be adorned with images and symbols that had now lost force and relevance. A cleavage developed between what people really thought and how they felt they *should* think about religious matters. In an increasingly urban situation, practical men whose success depended on conscious action found themselves repeating homilies designed for herdsmen and peasants dependent upon the incalculable benevolence of nature.

**T**he Puritans and Pietists of the 17th and 18th centuries were a hardy and devout breed of Christians, whatever their shortcomings, and their piety was blunt and relevant. The so-called "puritanism" and "pietism" of the 19th and early 20th centuries is, by contrast, largely inauthentic, becoming more a matter of status than of relevance—becoming, that is, a veneer of pseudo-faith, a facade bearing no functional relationship to the realities of the age.

Most of us today grant blurry recognition to these facts, to the extent at least that we don't want to be labeled "puritans." But do we really know where we stand?

In Europe, where class lines have generally been more clearly visible, one can see how, historically, Christendom was transformed into a religious convention of the Victorian middle class, alienating the industrial workers and turning them toward secular ideologies such as Marxism. In Germany, it is estimated that only 5 per cent of the entire population attends church services regularly, and whatever his personal beliefs the typical citizen does not find an overtly "Christian" style of life at all congenial. Dedicated missionaries, willing to smash the Victorian idols and develop new images of relevance, are struggling for renewal through Evangelical Academies and the like, but they have a long, hard way to go. And the mainstream of church activity continues to consist of middle-class Christians ministering generously to their own "religious" needs, enjoying the blessings of a well-appointed sanctuary, confirming their social status, promoting good manners and the like. It is all done in a more "modern" way, but it is rather a matter of adjusting a fundamentally uncriticized structure of values,

altering the outward shape of the facade—giving the King of Heaven an electronic halo or making space for a Rouault painting of Christ among a thousand Sallmans.

The missionaries—in Glasgow, Sheffield, Detroit and elsewhere, for example—are accorded a special dispensation to depart from the established conventions. And the truth of the matter, of course, is that there are contradictory motives and purposes at work not only here but elsewhere in the church, both among radicals and renewalists and among the self-satisfied and shortsighted who entertain an overriding if covert nostalgia for the Victorian age.

That age was not without its virtues. Both politeness and thrift, for example, undoubtedly contributed to the rise of civilization. The Victorians also inherited and adapted many values from the Puritans, such as individual responsibility and self-restraint, which served a twofold purpose: helping the middle-class individual to achieve and maintain his own position and enabling him to disdain responsibility for those conquered and exploited in the process. The Victorians were not lavish in their display of wealth, but they kept it within the family and doled out just enough to allay the most bitter deprivations of the poor. It never occurred to them that they, proper and well-behaved as they were, in fact had created the wretched squalor of the industrial slums.

**T**he point here is not to saddle the Victorians with blame. We can't remake history, although we can have the candor to review it and attempt to dispose of the illusions and conventions we have inherited. Certainly our quest for honesty in the church must involve this. But it must also involve recognition and acceptance of something else, and that is the rise of the democratic idea and the emergence of the worker as a claimant and participant in the post-Victorian society. I would prefer not to call attention to the rise of the labor movement as such, or to make any wistful boasts about the character of its leadership at any given time, but the development is one which the church has been slow to acknowledge. More than that, it has resisted it. Yes, there was the Social Gospel and there are today the editors of *Christianity and Crisis*, and as a result the church's center of gravity has shifted to the left. But if "to the left" is the right expression, the center of gravity of the world outside has shifted far more in that direction. In the Victorian era, deacons and congressmen were united in their scorn for labor leaders. Today it is the deacon who is the odd man out. Nor is it merely that the AFL-CIO has achieved political and economic power—a fact which can be greatly exaggerated for good or ill, and which for our present purposes may be regarded as merely symptomatic.

The point, rather, is that the emergence of the worker consummates the process of democratization which the middle class began. When we speak of "urbanization," "rapid social change" and the like, this fact is an important ingredient. "Mass communications" signifies not only a technological but a social development; ours is an era of mass culture, a time in which hypo-



thetically every man, woman and child is conceded to have inalienable rights not only to liberty but also security, sexual fulfilment, mental health and a variety of other things.

This is not the place to evaluate in detail the quality of mass culture, most of which is tasteless, garish and sentimental to a degree undreamed of by the Victorians. The Crystal Palace has given way to Disneyland, and status is easily conferred with the synthetic sexuality of the Playboy Club rather than with the Old School Tie. Together with enhanced social mobility goes a different set of values; the Room at the Top has been redecorated and bears little resemblance to the Victorian drawing room.

The ruling problem for the church is that, although it is somehow trying to move with the times, it remains rooted in Victorianism. Its encounter with "the world" is ill defined because it retains a sentimental attachment to the world in which its older members and largest contributors grew up, and in which they felt comfortable. Despite the precipitous decline in membership throughout Europe and especially in Eastern Europe, where the church's bankruptcy paved the way for Leninism, the church has barely even begun to see the handwriting on the wall. There is much clutching at straws, much self-congratulation over astonishingly small and inadequately supported efforts by a bare handful of dedicated souls, while increasing numbers of people are bypassing the church.

Does modern man in a mass society need the church at all? Is there anything *in* the church that he needs? If it is a question of social concern, he can join any number of secular organizations from SNCC to Kiwanis. If it is a question of God he can, like Tom Paine, erect a church in his own mind. He is literate and no longer needs to have someone read the Bible aloud to him on Sunday morning. If it is counseling he needs, there are social agencies better equipped than the pastor. If he wants great sacred music, let him go to the concert hall; and the museum or print shop will provide him with a richer harvest of religious painting and sculpture.

Let us leave aside the question of whether an individual believes in God or specifically in the God of the Bible or the creeds—or indeed whether he believes in anything at all of a religious sort. There are undoubtedly persons of little or no faith within the church, just as there are those of little or much faith outside it. Are those inside thereby helped to become better persons, more responsive to the kind of conduct Jesus was talking about? Or are they more narrowminded, more conscious of their status in the world, more committed to outmoded ways of thinking and acting?

These are provocative, not rhetorical questions; but they are also not without relevance to the present and future of man and of the church. Secular man in the 1960's no longer needs, nor can afford, to be genteel. He thanks you straightforwardly by saying "thank you" or "many thanks"; the notion that it is a "privilege" to do this is just so much gingerbread. It is, moreover, the kind of gingerbread that he has become accustomed to identifying with the church. Who needs it?

Underneath the gentility, the operative ethic of the Victorian middle class was harshly competitive and acquisitive—not by design, but by the nature of the economic system. Hence the civilizing character of the code of decorum, honor, etc., which the church's conventions provided. The rudeness of the working man was of a different sort, since his struggle for survival took a different form; he had no reason to curb his tongue when speaking among equals—hence his style of expression was simpler and more direct; and more "vulgar." If he wanted either to josh or to insult someone (which he was freer to do), he did not need to resort to circumlocutions nor to soften his form of expression. The Victorian middle class was both literally and figuratively strait-laced, placing its women in tight corsets to make them ladies, and repressing enthusiasm and anger so as to make business a pleasure. Or, to choose another metaphor, the oil of politeness reduced the friction of commerce to a minimum.

We recognize it at its utilitarian worst in the Victorian caricature of Dickens' miserly Uriah Heep. But do we recognize it also in ourselves? It was originally a mannerism of the royal court, adapted for middle-class needs, and cultivated in the middle-class church. Nowadays, with the rise of the worker and of a new middle class only partly rooted in the old, there is both greater occasion and opportunity for plain speaking. We can get along with less show of courtesy; we can afford to be less decorous in our attitudes—we can be less concerned about being "ladies" and "gentlemen," readier to function as "just folks." And this includes failing to take umbrage at someone else's "impertinence."

Gone are the days when we can make an issue out of an opponent's uncouth language. It is even possible to print such words as "hell" and "damn" in a church magazine or to hear them used in secular parlance by modern churchmen without undue alarm. Workers, however, have been telling each other to go to hell for a long, long time without meaning anything theological by it. In another generation it may even become permissible to quote freely in church from books like *Candy* and *Eros Denied*, or even to examine Luther's scatology as well as his eschatology. The world outside the church has learned that common and ancient sexual terms possess no demoniacal powers to wreck the moral lives of our citizenry, and eventually perhaps this information will penetrate the church.

It is not my purpose to flood the church with "profanity" or "smut," although I do not see how their presence could soil our holy places if they are truly holy. What I am pointing out, rather, is that the issue, while highly symptomatic is not one of substance. The church has a prior task and a higher calling than its continuing preoccupation with false and meaningless appearances. In the century of the common man and common language, when status comes with the "first-name basis" rather than with the conferring of titles, the church is becoming an anomaly.

In an age when power resides with the commons,



the church still calls its savior "Lord." In an age when the few remaining kings and queens are trying to be "just folks," taking their cues from the Beatles, Jesus is still hailed as "King." In an age when people at home and in public are casual, informal and direct, the church still clings to formalities. And who is "the church"? A considerable part of it consists of the very people who are reading *Candy* and talking candidly among themselves, for whom "King" and "Lord" have absolutely no secular meaning. However little they may wish to be "fools for Christ," they wish still less to be fools for their grandfather's idiosyncrasies. This is not to say that the Gospel has no secular relevance for them; but its relevance is at variance with much of the church's preoccupation with arcane language and gestures. The church is not leading them; it is not challenged by them. These are people who go their way in life, trying to be good Christians by their own lights and not really expecting the church to do more than provide a familiar if anachronistic meeting place, a useful center for the religious inoculation of their children, a place for a stylish wedding, a baptism, a burial; a showcase for the new Easter outfit.

"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." One recent book, Pierre Berton's *The Comfortable Pew*, contains a good deal of unpalatable but nourishing truth for the church. If taken seriously, it could be a hopeful source of renewal. But the depth of the church's crisis will not be found only in its declining membership or in an assessment of its failure to respond to the visible challenge of the contemporary world. It would be all too simple to say that we need a thousand more Bonhoeffers and a whole network of inner-city missions. For to put the matter this way is to place the means before the ends and to make the assumption that the church can change externals—the world's or its own—without re-examining the underlying realities.

Suppose that the chief reason most church members now belong is totally alien to the purposes of God? Suppose there is no spiritual substance underneath the worn-out and irrelevant "visible signs"? Suppose, for example, that there are no resources for true kindness and compassion, no sense of human brotherhood, beneath the verbiage of politeness? Can the church teach God's love by demonstrating it in action instead of explaining it in theological propositions? Can it use this love to minister to people's needs in the spirit of Christ instead of insisting that ordinary acts of human kindness become exalted and consecrated when performed by churchmen "in the name of Christ"? In what way do Christians excel Jews or Taoists, if indeed they do? And to what extent is church membership conducive to being a Christian rather than a superannuated Victorian moralist?

I believe that there are answers to these questions and others like them, and I do not mean proof texts from former centuries or theological adjustments to modern conditions, both of which bypass the empirical reality of the church. From a very pragmatic point of view, regarding the church as a social institution and

nothing more, we must begin to accept it on secular terms, to "desacralize" it, to regard it as one among many institutions through which the Holy Spirit can and should do the work of redemption. Seeing it this way, we must disabuse ourselves of the notion that the Holy Spirit is some sort of holy pigeon which automatically comes to roost wherever it sees a cross or a gothic arch. The Holy Spirit is an inner and communal reality of *people*, not of any organization or creed, and it is up to us as people to take responsibility for its presence in this or that assemblage which we want to be our church.

Some such conception, which happens to be consonant with the Bible, might well serve as a contemporary equivalent to earlier notions of "kingship." Ours is a world come of age, and in no mystifying way. God is not dead, but the Kingdom of God conceptually patterned after that of David, Constantine, Charlemagne or Victoria has lost its validity for democracies where each individual is entitled to one vote. Bishop Robinson and Paul Tillich undertook to discover the fatherhood of God in an abstract Ground of Being. This strikes me as a kind of neo-Deism that Tom Paine would have found congenial, though he would have found it hard to see the connection between such a doctrine and the church. The solution to our problem lies in a different direction: not in trying to find philosophical equivalents for the personae of the ancient revelations (nor, I might add, in opening the canon to new messages from Yahweh), but first of all in a critical self-examination of our own "hunger and thirst."

What is it *in us* that responds to the figure and message of Jesus? Why does he bother us to the extent that we take the trouble to falsify and prettify him without ever really succeeding? Is it not perhaps just this—whatever we call it—that constitutes the religious dimension of our existence? The impulse to generosity, love, forgiveness, trust—it is this which attracts us in Jesus; and it is the unreliability of our own will to govern this impulse which bids us to place our faith in his spirit rather than in ourselves. Is there any difference between that spirit, which we call the Spirit of Christ, and the Holy Spirit which is supposed to be the touchstone of the church? The doctrine of the Trinity was an attempt to express this spiritual unity by finding it alike in the Creator, in Jesus as a particular incarnation, and in the followers of Jesus after his death. We can honor this doctrine best not by mindlessly reciting that the Triune God is the only true God—who turns out to be King Yahweh after all—but by giving our attention to the point where it touches us now. We are no longer present at the beginning of the world, and the man Jesus is dead. What lives on, creative and redemptive as always, is the Holy Spirit which Jesus embodied in the flesh.

Robinson is right in one respect: our faith is misplaced if we look for God somewhere "out there" or "up there." And we must be frank enough—"honest to God"—to admit that Jesus was a creature of his age who believed that the Creator dwelt in the sky. To pray, "Our Father in Heaven," is to reaffirm an ancient cos-





LINOCUT: HODGELL

mology that is quite irrelevant to the meaning of the Gospel. Its retention in worship is only one of the many ways in which Christians tacitly disavow their allegiance to the Holy Spirit for the present world and assert their faith in the incidental ornamentation of the past. If we are to speak effectively of a "new Reformation," we must be prepared to dispense with many such trappings for the sake of honesty.

We must also be prepared to let academic theology take a back seat. In no country on earth in recent times has more theological scholarship produced less evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit than in Germany. The souls of six million Jews cry out against the utter impotence of their Christian brothers, meticulously tutored in Bible lore, to rescue them from a fate by comparison with which the agony of Jesus becomes a paltry incident. Every Christian must face that indictment and that challenge. When life poses such questions as this, a well-rehearsed catechism is of no avail. "Without vision the people perish." Vision, insight, perception—discerning the signs of the times. Prophecy, the utterance of vision—that is true preaching. These are the signs of the Holy Spirit, and the Bible provides valuable clues for recognizing them. Misused, the Bible also can provide ways of abandoning present realities and taking refuge in mental images of the Holy Land.

But the Holy Land is not holy. It, as well as the ground beneath your feet, is the "holy land" only by virtue of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit. That spirit is the living God among all men—that same spirit whereby mankind evolved "in the image of God"

from the apparent dross of primordial matter and energy. It is still the spirit of the image of God, the spirit of what man may become and potentially is. It is not to be conscripted for the service of kings or businessmen, however virtuous or deserving, nor of the "noble poor" either. The Holy Spirit is finally for all mankind and indeed for all of life, and if that fallible institution called the church chooses to become what it is now called in name only, it must look not to rituals but to the processes of vision. It must cultivate a social psychology of insight and concern, and develop ways of bringing it to bear on human problems in our time. It must recognize the divisive and selfish proclivities of its members, but spend less energy on hypocritical and abstract confessions of guilt and more energy on finding effective ways to see through and beyond these divisions and this selfishness.

Judaism is one of the world religions that has sometimes given more evidence of the Holy Spirit than Christianity; and if we sought to emulate "in spirit and in truth" the humility of the presumptuous rabbi, Jesus, we could learn some things from it. One of them is a challenging and humane alternative to the problematic eschatology of the Kingdom of God—"to hallow this life." The objective does not prescribe the means of its attainment, but surely that is just where we must have ever-renewed vision rather than rules. The core of that vision, pointed to by Jesus' incarnation of love in a deceptively simple way, is summed up by these words of William Blake, which are words of insight rather than of mere observation: "All that lives is holy."



# BOOKS

John C. Bennett, *Foreign Policy in Christian Perspective*. Scribner's (1966), 160 pp., \$3.50; paperbound, \$1.25.

The theme is stated early: ". . . It is morally impossible for citizens who share the concerns emphasized in this book to be silent." Like all of Dr. Bennett's writing it is low key, logical, and understated. One might prefer a sharper, more hard-hitting attack, but it may well be that the author's approach is a strength rather than a weakness.

While literature in the field of Christian social ethics has increased greatly in recent years, there has been far too little material dealing with ethical problems in the area of international affairs. Dr. Bennett has helped to close this gap. Although largely concerned with propositional analysis, significant sections of substantive material are included. This book could well become a standard reference in the field and will wear well over the years.

The difficulties and hazards of ethical applications are fully explored early in the book. Singled out for special attention are the dangers of "moralism" and the "holy war." Absolutes are rejected, and the situational ethic found lacking. "Instead of announcing clear-cut moral laws that have applications that can be predicted in advance, we might speak of moral pressures that remain in force in all situations."

The Christian perspective is crisply stated: "All nations live under the providence, the judgment and the love of God, the commandment of love, the Christian teaching about human nature . . . 'the grace of God that seeks out the sinner and seeks out those who turn to Him in faith' and the Church as an international fact. The influence of Reinhold Niebuhr is clear, especially in the concept of Christian realism as developed by Dr. Bennett. 'Christian realism helped us recognize the role of power. . . . Sometimes aggressive and malignant power, sometimes power as an instrument of justice and freedom, always power as a source of temptation. It helps us to see how limited are the possibilities that policy-makers confront at a given time.'"

Pacifism is rejected as the source of political answers. The writer feels strongly "that no government responsible to an existing nation can adopt a policy based upon pacifist convictions," and that they "cannot renounce the use of military power to deter a nuclear attack." This may become a problem to some of his readers, but every thoughtful pacifist will want to review his arguments carefully.

"God is Dead" theorists should give careful attention to the emphasis Dr. Bennett places on the affirmation of the secular world. For the author, God is at work positively (and not only in judgment) in the rising of neglected peoples in their struggle for justice and dignity. "The tidy, white, Western world, which happens also to be that world that has been Christendom, feels threatened by the tumultuous events connected with revolution. . . . It makes a difference whether our first word is the 'yes' of acceptance to the revolutionary change or the 'no' of timid fear from the *status quo* from which the writer and most readers of this book profit."

His emphasis on the "just means" rather than the "just cause" is helpful and should receive careful thought. The contrast between Protestant and Catholic thinking is handled constructively and might cause our Protestant readers to rethink their ancient prejudices. The chapter discussing "The Interest and Power of Nations" will give a new dimension of loyalty to every American reader (and possibly to those of other ethnic backgrounds as well). It is suggested that the United States might "drop its most automatic opposition to revolutions that have a left-wing orientation" . . . "we are right in helping nations find alternatives to communist revolutions, but this should not mean that they should be denied the possibility of

revolutionary change in every situation, if no alternative to a communist revolution is available."

The endless capacity of nations for self-deception is a most helpful corrective to the concept of "national honor" so widely held today. "It seems to me that more often than not, what is called 'national honor' lacks any moral significance and is little more than a rhetorical defense of whatever policy a nation chooses." His discussion of the "keeping of pledges" has great importance for us today as we consider our "commitments" in Viet Nam.

The analysis of the cold war helps us to free ourselves from some ideological positions that became frozen many years ago. We see more clearly the changing face of communism. It is important that we see problems as they are now as well as how they used to be. "At no point in the conflict with communism should Christians and other non-communists have allowed the communist rejection of religion and its official atheism to turn that conflict into a holy war between Christians and communists . . . to allow any political conflict to become a holy war is to intensify the fury on both sides and to make impossible the resolution of political differences." While we have been right in our resistance to the spread of communism as the instrument of social change, we must nevertheless "help nations find forms and instruments of revolution that are more favorable than communism to the development of an open society, but that at all costs they should avoid an anti-revolutionary or counter-revolutionary stand."

Dr. Bennett is seriously concerned, however, that American attitudes formed by the cold war have been so largely frozen that it will be difficult for us as a nation to respond creatively to the rapid changes. These are clearly delineated and provide a fresh and helpful counter-action to the propaganda with which we are currently engulfed. He rejects the old "red or dead" dichotomy. "We want no people to be either red or dead, but we should be careful about asking any nation to risk annihilation when the alternative is not permanent slavery; and we should avoid policies that bring the risk of annihilation to hundreds of millions of people who never had a chance to make a choice." He concludes this section with an examination of the hypothesis that Viet Nam represents the test case for wars of liberation. His analysis of the "domino theory" is quite refreshing: "it is one thing to help prop up a domino but it is quite another to have to create a domino."

The one moral absolute is found in the discussion of the "Ethics of Force in the Nuclear Age." He contends that the ". . . Christian Churches should say to the state that any strategies that have as their effect the destruction of populations on a large scale and that render another nation unable to recover are murderous, out of all bounds morally and theologically, incapable of justification by any political calculations."

Dr. Bennett's essentially Christian hope comes through to us strongly and clearly throughout his work even though he says, "We cannot reduce a secure view of the future of man in history from Christian teaching of Man, but Christians should face the future with hope as well as with a sense of the precariousness of all human achievements."

Throughout we find an emphasis upon responsible decision-making through Church structures and by churchmen, both formally and informally in helping to make the changes so necessary for us to live together in peace—or just to live.

—WILLIAM S. VAN METER

Ronald Gregor Smith, *Secular Christianity*. Harper and Row (1966), 209 pp., \$5.00.

One of the obvious characteristics of modern theology is its this-worldly emphasis. Whether the cause be the criticism of pie-in-the-sky religion by Marx and Freud, or the winsome nobility of modern non-theistic humanisms, or the rediscovery of Christianity's Hebrew heritage (and Luther), theology from the "Social Gospel" to Teilhard de Chardin has been intent on taking this world seriously.

Traditional theologies that have distracted man from the glories and needs of *this* world have been condemned by consensus. Every effort has been made to show that Christian faith, properly conceived, hallows this world rather than condemns it. Attendent to this movement has been a reevaluation of the



meaning of the secular. The works of Harvey Cox, Dietrich von Oppen, and others are cases in point.

Ronald Gregor Smith's *Secular Christianity* is a recent contribution to this discussion. Formally stated Smith's concern is to investigate the relationship between the secular order and Christian faith. His key themes are (1) faith can be rightly understood only in the context of history, (2) history can be rightly understood only in light of the eschatological events of Jesus Christ, and (3) secularity is the authentic possibility offered in and through faith.

Faith, for Smith, is historical in two senses: It "arises as the consequence of certain events in history" (p. 27), and its "shape and content" are "constituted" by these events (p. 27). Faith implies no "metaphysical scheme," "mythological world-view," or "moralistic" view of man. All are unhistorical. The first two false views distract man from his historical involvement; the third falsifies the truth of man's historical dilemma, impotence of the will. Faith rather is to be understood on the model of friendship, the "I-Thou" encounter. Faith, according to Smith, is man's trusting response to the "act of God" mediated by historical events.

The event that makes Christian faith possible is Jesus Christ. This does not mean, of course, that Jesus Christ is an "objective security" for faith. But Jesus Christ does present man with the occasion by which God can make clear the true meaning of history. In the cross, the limit of history is clarified; in the resurrection the limit is revealed as gracious love. In this sense, Jesus Christ is the "eschatological" event.

The man of faith, having seen the idolatrous claims of this world as vanity in the cross, is freed from the world—but this does not lead to cynicism, for the man of faith is confident that the finite order, while not divine, is good; the resurrection has revealed it as grounded in God's acceptance. Thus, the man of faith is also free for the world. He is freed from anxiety and illusions for wholehearted concern for the world. In this sense, the faithful man is the true secular man and Christian revelation is the source of genuine secularity.

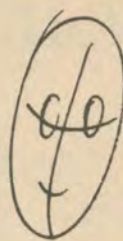
These three central themes are familiar; but they bear frequent repetition, and we can be grateful that Smith has stated in a moving and concise way what many have been saying. But this general position is, on the whole, an unstable one, in my judgment. Its instability revolves around its most basic affirmation, the reality of faith. Put bluntly, is faith rooted in God, who exists *extra nos, sine nobis, et contra nos*, or is it simply a subjective disposition of man, devoid of an object? If one cannot make intelligible language about a transcendent reference for faith, then Christianity adds nothing to nihilistic humanism except pious double-talk. And I regret to report that one looking for a critical advance in regard to this dilemma will not find any help in Smith's book.

Smith clearly does not intend to deny that faith is elicited by and grounded in God (in spite of his unfortunate remark that faith does not find meaning in reality but rather posits it [pp. 93 f.]). Smith realizes that some who have followed something similar to his line have ended by confessing the "Death of God," i.e. denying a transcendent referent for faith and hence faith itself. Smith wants to avoid this *cul de sac*. He sets against this reductionism his conviction that faith is grounded in an "act of God."

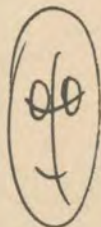
But what is an "act of God"? Certainly it is nothing visible or tangible. For example, about the crucial act, the resurrection, Smith freely confesses that "we may . . . say that the bones of Jesus lie somewhere in Palestine." Rather an act of God is something seen only by faith. This seems circular: Faith is created by an act of God which, in turn, seems to be created solely by faith (cf. Langdon Gilkey, "Cosmology, Ontology, and The Travail of Biblical theology," *Journal of Religion*, July, 1961, pp. 194 ff.) (And we will do no more than mention the potent philosophers who attack the idea of a disembodied act: Farrer, Anscombe and Ryle.)

Smith tries to pour material content into this notion of an act of God by recourse to the familiar model of the "I-Thou" relationship. Faith, Smith contends, is the trust evoked by encounter with the divine Thou. But this move is incapable, I think, of stemming the tide of subjective reductionism. The main problem is that the model is equivocal.

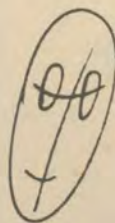
The everyday interpersonal "I-Thou" encounter is not devoid of objective knowledge. It involves *knowledge about* the other, as well as *knowledge of* the other. One knows *that* there is another and something of what he is like (whether he is asleep or awake, normal or mentally retarded, hostile or friendly, etc.). The inadequacy of the model of *pure* relationship has



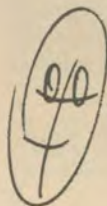
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THAT'S ONE OF THE MOST IRRELEVANT  
VOCATIONS I CAN THINK OF —



WELL, YES. THERE IS BILL COFFIN,  
HE'S DOING SOME INTERESTING  
THINGS....



AND MALCOLM BOVD, HE'S  
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been subjected to stringent criticisms in the past five years by such philosophers as Ronald Hepburn, Frederick Ferre and Kai Nielson. Nielson, for example, has argued persuasively that faith alone cannot validate "God-Talk." Without metaphysical description of the object of faith, faith can founder only in inarticulate subjectivism (cf. "Can Faith Validate God-Talk," *New Theology* No. 7, pp. 131-151). It is not self-evident, of course, that Smith could not sustain his basic insistence upon the I-Thou interpretation, but I for one do not think that he can do so without going beyond his present position to metaphysical description.

But Smith categorically rejects metaphysical analysis and description. His grounds for doing so are that metaphysics involves the language of substance, and substance ontology is "static." He overlooks the work of such philosophers as Austin Farrer, Paul Weiss and W. A. Christian who have argued that there are notions of substance that are not static. Charles Hartshorne, D. D. Williams, John Cobb, Schubert M. Ogden and others have pointed out that the idea of metaphysics and the idea of substance are by no means synonymous. There is also process metaphysics as well as substance metaphysics (cf. especially Ogden's paper, "Bultmann's Demythologizing and Hartshorne's Dipolar Theism," in *Process and Divinity*, pp. 493-514).

Unfortunately Smith's discussion ignores the work of these men. Therefore, it remains to be seen whether his positive affirmations can be completed and hence made intelligible by reference to current metaphysical options, or whether they must be dissolved into a van Buren-like description of the believer's attitude. As it stands, Smith's position is unstable. It contains the virtues and the defects of almost all the current "worldly-theology." It adds to this important discussion neither logical-linguistic clarification nor a constructive advance. Perhaps it can be recommended as a warm-hearted statement of a first step toward providing a new alternative to the classical theology vs. nontheistic humanism stalemate. But the sound articulation of such an option will have to go much further. I think that there are such works, but this would involve other books and other reviews.

Two final points: Smith slightly misrepresents Barth when he approvingly says that Barth "denounces" (p. 177) religion in the name of revelation. Barth is more subtle. The word he uses in *Kirchliche Dogmatik* is "aufhebung" (1/2, 304) which means "transformation (not 'abolition') through dissolution and restoration" (Hegel).

Also Smith cites with approval a passage from Barth on providence, but adds that he must qualify Barth's utterance and then states qualifications that Barth himself has clearly made a few pages before (Smith, pp. 201 f; Barth III/3, pp. 14 ff.).

—JOHN C. ROBERTSON, JR.

William Robert Miller, *Nonviolence, a Christian Interpretation*. Schocken (1964), \$2.45.

Peter Mayer, *The Pacifist Conscience*. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston (1966), \$7.95.

"Onward, Christian Soldiers!"

—old song

It goes without saying: everyone is against violence and therefore in favor of nonviolence. Didn't Gandhi work wonders with nonviolence? Hasn't Martin Luther King made civil rights for Negroes respectable with it? Nonviolent social action seems to satisfy everybody. No one gets hurt, everyone gains.

Put aside for a moment your natural reservations about having and eating cake. The more important hitch comes when you try to interpret nonviolence in Christian terms, when you try to make Christianity necessary to nonviolent social action. William Robert Miller has a mighty struggle on his hands when he tries to do this in *Nonviolence, a Christian Interpretation*. Miller sets forth a thesis for the role of Christianity in social reform, but then discovers that he can barely live with the thesis he proposes.

Miller says nonviolence is a way of waging social conflict that is compatible with *agape* and hence with Christianity. In social conflict, the liberal or radical Christian activist is equipped uniquely to connect his opponent—segregationist, war hawk, brutal cop or whatever—with the circuit of love that runs from



God to the Christian himself, thus opening the way to ultimate reconciliation. The Christian accomplishes this by showing and having authentic concern for his opponent; this concern is possible only with faith. Thus, Martin Luther King seeks justice for segregationists as well as for their victims. Miller's point is that King's effectiveness in his nonviolent struggle derives at least in part from his use of *agape* for his opponents. What Miller seeks is a theological foundation in *agape* for Christian social action. It seems that this search is valid. Without a theological basis, the Christian engagement in social conflict necessarily will be tenuous, ineffective and perhaps a bit pathetic.

Miller proceeds to nail down the practical applications of *agape* in social conflict. He tells us where, when and how *agape* can and cannot work. The limitations he discovers on *agape* are severe. In social conflict, some opponents simply will not respond to it. Furthermore, Miller agrees with Niebuhr that "the relevance of *agape* is conditioned" because such love is bound to be adulterated in any human situation. So, he says, "we are not entitled to abandon existing social conventions or laws simply because we think we are prepared to act in accordance with a higher law of love." The prior consideration—even before holy love—is the protection of society. And nonviolence itself is only one of many strategies available in a revolutionary situation, and it is not always the indicated strategy. Miller sees situations where coercion and violence itself are indicated.

The difficulties with a Christian interpretation of nonviolence mount. Miller confesses his debt to Mahatma Gandhi, a Hindu, who engineered the first successful modern nonviolent social action. It was Gandhi who originally proposed international peace brigades to stand between warring powers to melt their belligerence. It is still Gandhi's concept of *satyagraha* (a sort of "soul force") which informs nonviolent social action today—Gandhi the Hindu, not the Christian.

John Cogley, in a recent column in the *New York Times*, reported on a study of Berkeley students from which sociologist Nathan Glazer drew the conclusion that even the radical expression of religion is looked upon by student militants as a reflection of religion's vigorous past, not a promise of its future. The students, Glazer said, give religion "grudging respect, but their own minds are militantly secular." It is not *agape* that informs student nonviolent social action; it is sheer strategic common sense. How could it be otherwise, when the Gospel itself is uncertain on the point of nonviolence? Christ did advise turning the other cheek. But he also warned: "think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace, but a sword."

When all this is said, what, if anything, remains of a Christian interpretation? Plainly, William Robert Miller is torn between his desire for social reform at almost any price, and his desire to work that reform in the name of Christ. Note especially the last 147 pages—over a third of the book. This is Miller's "Case-book of Nonviolence." Obviously he relished writing these detailed histories ranging from the nonresistance of the Moravian Indians in 1782 through the Hungarian Revolt of 1956 and the civil rights struggle in the American South since 1955. Most of these heroic histories are purely secular. Yet presumably they demonstrate the effectiveness of *agape* love in social conflict. I wonder if they really do. In most of these stories, the one big thing you sense is the simple and tremendous power of secular outrage at tyranny.

If the Christian is faced with grave limitations in applying his faith to social conflict, the Christian churches are in an even graver predicament. Miller hardly mentions the churches in his book. Indeed, he may have written them off altogether from any real role in modern society. Instead, he sees nonviolent cadres acting and worshiping outside the churches, but very much in the world. He writes at length on the activities and organization of these cadres—when they should send delegations to the mayor, how they can benefit from the support of community prayer, how they should set up weekend retreats. In all this, Miller seems tacitly to be daring the churches to take him up on a scheme for social action.

This may remain an unanswered challenge. Liberal public Christianity has yet to settle on its own theology and on its view toward society and toward violence. Miller's book fairly cries out that these decisions be made and soon. Until this is done, it is well to remember that other faiths and other churches have foundered on milder uncertainties. If Christians and their churches do find a relevant role in the social revolutions of our time, it will develop from the troubled and troubling thinking of men like William Robert Miller.

Miller perhaps is too Hamlet-like to appear in Peter Mayer's



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anthology, *The Pacifist Conscience*. The 44 people represented here, from Buddha to Dorothy Day, definitely have made up their minds about a great many subjects. So many subjects, in fact, that they can be called pacifists only in the most general sense of the word.

Gandhi, for example, was not against all violence. He favored selective nonviolence, when it suited him. In this anthology he says, "I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence."

C. Wright Mills knows what he wants, too. In his furious "Pagan Sermon to the Christian Clergy" he challenges Christians either to be pacifists or to cease calling themselves Christians. Even that quiet, rational Quaker John Woolman reached a kind of decision when he was confronted with having to billet a British soldier against his pacifist conscience. Woolman put up the soldier for two weeks, he says, but then refused to take pay for it. Of course, there is no shadow of compromise at all about the pacifism of A. J. Muste. In "The Individual Conscience" he insists that the individual stand absolutely against war and conscription. Pacifists have consciences, but they do not have a conscientious party line.

Mayer introduces each of his writers with a page or so of biographical material. He might have given us more information on the historical context in which his people wrote. He might have reminded us that Adin Ballou, for instance, wrote "Christian Nonresistance" while this country was preparing to wrest the American Southwest by force from Mexico in 1846. David Dodge's "War Inconsistent with the Religion of Jesus Christ" appeared in the middle of the war hawk's favorite fight, the War of 1812. It would be interesting to know if such special events had any special bearing on these writings.

But what Mayer really wants to do is to call our attention to the long and honorable tradition of pacifism and pacifists. In this he succeeds. The next time you feel like a Christian soldier, pick up *The Pacifist Conscience*. Read in it awhile, then see if you still feel the same way.

—RAY KARRAS



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**JOHN A. PHILLIPS** teaches religion at Stephens College in Missouri. His doctorate is from the University of Glasgow, where he was a World Council of Churches Fellow. His book on Bonhoeffer is soon to be published by Harper & Row.

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**MALCOLM BOYD** is widely known for his innovative efforts to relate the Church to the world.

**FEBRUARY POETS** are, for once, all from the Academy. Professor-poets include **WINSTON WEATHERS**, University of Tulsa; **SUZANNE GROSS**, St. Norbert College; and **DUANE LOCKE**, University of Tampa. Student-poets are **BENNY McADAMS**, University of Texas; **MARGARET WILDE**, Yale; and **GROVER LEWIS**, University of Houston.

**BOOK REVIEWERS** are **WILLIAM S. VAN METER**, executive secretary of the Protestant Council of the City of New York; **JOHN C. ROBERTSON, JR.**, who is teaching religion at Stephens College; and **RAY KARRAS**, formerly radio news editor for the United Nations and now free lancing.

**ARTISTS** include: **NICHOLAS GEORGE SPERAKIS**, very exciting young New York painter and printmaker; **RICHARD LONG**, whose drawings and paintings dealing with the Kennedy assassination were recently exhibited at Northern Illinois University where he teaches; **ALGIMANTAS KEZYS**, Lithuanian Jesuit priest from Chicago, who is an excellent photographer and the editor of *ZVAIGZDE*; **LISA LYONS** illustrated *MacBird*; **BILLY MORROW JACKSON** is associate professor of art at the University of Illinois; **BEN MAHMOUD** teaches painting at Northern Illinois University; **JIM CRANE** and **BOB HODGELL** both teach at Florida Presbyterian College; and **TOM HAMMOND** teaches printmaking at Madison College in Virginia.





FEBRUARY FIELD

ETCHING

TOM HAMMOND



# ONCE UPON A TIME A CHURCH OPENED A COFFEE HOUSE

Once upon a time a church made up its mind to open a coffee house, to be located in a bohemian section of the city, many miles away from the church building itself. The congregation felt it was time to be daring and *avant-garde*. In fact, the evening newspaper congratulated them for it on the church page.

Church board members were generally rather enthusiastic. They believed church-operated coffee houses would keep young people out of non-church-operated coffee houses, and at the same time the church would show its involvement with the real world. At least, that was the majority argument at the decisive board meeting.

A discreet censorship, it was felt, could be placed on all dramatic and musical material to be used in the place. The profanity of the theater of the absurd might be toned down without scandal, but it was understood from the outset that folk songs would have to be substituted for hymns.

"There will be conversions," one church board member had said at a morning meeting over coffee and doughnuts. "Jesus himself mixed with winebibbers and publicans."

The name of the coffee house had to be both biblical and interesting to secularists. It was decided, after considerable discussion, to call it "The Scapegoat." A gold sign, with a goat drawn on it in deep red, was placed outside. Some advertisements were placed in student, beatnik, and civil rights publications, but they avoided any explicit reference to Christianity and utilized a galloping italic type copied from a French film ad in a recent Sunday *Times*.

The site of the coffee house was a converted bar, though the house itself had served a number of different purposes. It was in a neighborhood where many students wore beards, interracial couples could be seen on the street, and what one church official described as "queer people of all stripes" hung out.

Although expensive, a real espresso coffee machine was mandatory. People could be served espresso coffee, cappuccino, cider, tea, a slightly more expensive punch made with a fruit-juice base, sweet rolls, and sandwiches. But all this was just a subterfuge: what the place was really serving was *dialogue*.

There would be folk singing, with an emphasis on the very fashionable freedom songs. In fact, a couple of talented folk singers would be lured away from a non-church-operated coffee house to provide the desired musical setting. Lighting would be romantic, but in the brusque, acceptable fashion:

candlelight would pick up the strong beam of the wood on the ceiling and the old bar.

Publicity posed problems, but it was recognized that "The Scapegoat" must do something rather special to attract people. Finally, a terse, succinct press release was okayed by the board and sent to all local publications:

We want dialogue with YOU. We are *trying* to be Christians. Do you know who YOU are? We are all bound together by the crucial problem of identity.

We invite you to share the existential journey (within the pilgrimage of being) with us at "The Scapegoat." There will be coffee, ideas, and ourselves. We are motivated by no idea of religious paternalism, but seek only a genuine person-to-person encounter. Be with us next Thursday night to help us create the spirit of agape as we open our new Christian coffee house.

Well, the opening night finally arrived. Even some church board members came, having decided to mingle unobtrusively with whatever crowd might be coming.

A graduate student wearing a beard (he was white) was photographed with a white ex-freedom-rider and a Negro woman social worker for the front page of the big-circulation Sunday edition of the most important paper. This took care of all p. r. problems; the place was "in" for the outs who were "in."

In fact, "The Scapegoat's" success surprised even its strongest early advocates. Six months later it was moved to much larger quarters in the basement of the church building; the church board was delighted that it had learned to *listen* to the world, and stated that a coffee house is a "must" for today's evangelism.

Some of the younger business executives in the congregation started wearing beards, hymns were substituted for folk songs, New Testament readings began to be favored over one-act plays, and twenty-three conversions were specifically credited to "The Scapegoat."

One Sunday evening, after prayers, the coffee house in the church basement was renamed. One of the clergy described it as being "like a dramatic baptism of our very culture."

From then on "The Scapegoat" was officially called "Lazarus' Tomb."

—MALCOLM BOYD