

# GRILLE

THE IRISH CHRISTIAN LEFT

PRICE 2/6

# Revolution

# and

# Violence

Grille 3

Winter 1968



# Editorial

## Grille on Grille

When this Spring, those who were to become the editorial board of *Grille*, thought out the possibilities of a movement of the christian left in Ireland, they had little or no idea about how it would succeed. Our plans were vague, and while we believed that hopes were well founded, we were being continually frustrated by opposition from antagonistic christians and marxists and by despair from sympathisers who still thought that 'Ireland's not ready for it yet' or 'There are enough magazines already'. But we launched out, despite this, and the response to the review so far has assured us that we were right.

Since the magazine started, however, we found that a magazine could not in itself do all that had to be done. The Encyclical on birth control divided the christian world into two sharply defined categories; there were conservatives and progressives on this issue in every denomination, and the division mocked the conventional denominational boundaries. In the same week Russia invaded Czechoslovakia, and here again the recognisable borders between capitalist and socialist countries were blurred. The two events demanded spontaneous action, and we thought of a pray-in in Westland Row Church. Again, when the Chicago police came to Dublin soon after their now famous neo-fascist brutality, more was clearly needed than a comment in *Grille*, read by a maximum of two and a half thousand people three months later. So we held an all-day fast. On both events we were heavily criticised, now even by those who had supported us: liberals mostly, who said, 'A magazine is alright, which people can read in a civilised way. But don't sit on the street; don't break the law; don't be a nuisance'. But it was not possible to respect the limits they set us: we found in effect that they were preventing us being fully heard. A magazine was important but outrageous disreputable action was needed as well. It was the only way in which we could break through the set channels of critical thinking, and make the readers of the evening papers be challenged and upset. The liberal's answer of patient limited protest within conventional patterns was inadequate; we were compelled to extremism as is every christian, even at the risk of alienating our cautious middle-class supporters.

We do not intend therefore to restrict our challenge to society and the church to the magazine, though this will, we hope, remain the

# grille 3

## the irish christian left

Winter 1968

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Publishers: Thoreau Press,  
81 Aylesbury Road, Dublin 4

Annual Subscription: 10s. post free

Quarterly 2/6 post free

Editorial Address:  
44 Temple Road Dublin 6  
to which Ms should be sent.

Circulation Address:  
14 Kinvara Road, Dublin 7.

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articulate focus of our work. But we can see that an active organisation will have to be formed, with branches throughout the country, including the north. Through it christian marxists can work together in every part of the country, meeting regularly, and acting spontaneously on every manifestation of the present cruel society, which it is *Grille's* purpose to oppose and to help to change. Anybody who would like to join or to form such a branch locally is asked to write to the Editorial address.

—W.L.

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### Apologies

To Terence McCaughey and Conor Cruise O'Brien for typographical errors. This was totally the fault of our proof-reading and not our excellent printers. To Sheed & Ward, Burns Oates, Conradh na Gaeilge, Darton, Longman and Todd and Gills for books on the Eucharist, the Pill, Connolly, Violence and Marxism, which we hope we will be able to review in *Grill 4*.

# The Ecclesiology of Violence

by JOHN HORGAN

John Horgan is a journalist working for the *Irish Times*.

The fact that a Brazilian bishop who said that he could understand and sympathize with the motivation of people in his own country who wanted to promote a violent revolution found himself, on RTE, being asked to dissociate himself from Communism, is an indication of the shallow level at which these phenomena are still being discussed in Ireland. On one level, there is the facile equation of revolution and violence with Communism or neo-Communism: on another, there is the adoption of both these terms by people who fall into the category so aptly described by Bishop Helder Camara of Recife as "armchair guerillas". One of the main problems here, of course, is that Irish theoreticians are frequently more concerned, on the basis of accurate but probably inadequate information, to justify the need for revolution and violence in situations of which they have no actual knowledge and about which their statements will necessarily be subjective and to a large extent irrelevant, than they are in working out the implications of what is happening for our developing ideas about the nature and purpose of the Church.

## Magisterium

The attitude of the magisterium both to revolution and to violence has traditionally been ambiguous and pragmatic. In its careful elaboration of the conditions necessary for a just war, as in its equally careful casuistry about the conditions under which a revolution against tyranny may be endorsed, it has worked, by and large, on the principle that revolution and violence are justified wherever they succeed in remedying the situation to which they are applied without unleashing further disorder, i.e. a greater evil. The difficulty about this attitude, of course, is that the endorsement can only be post factum. In 1917 there would have been few articulate Christians, and fewer still clerics to say that what had happened in the previous year had been a success: it was to take another year, and more, before the popular reality that was to be the ultimate and valid expression of 1916 began to take shape. Nor was the magisterium any exception to this process of slow growth. In spite of the

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by now out of date identification of "Church" with the hierarchy, we can take a useful lesson, especially in these post-Conciliar days, from James Connolly<sup>1</sup>

*"To use a homely adage, the Church 'does not put all her eggs in one basket', and the man who imagines that in the supreme hour of the proletarian struggle for victory the Church will definitely line up with the forces of capitalism, and pledge her very existence as a Church upon the hazardous chance of the Capitalists winning, simply does not understand the first thing about the policy of the Church in the social or political revolutions of the past. Just as in Ireland the Church denounced every Irish revolutionary movement in its day of activity, as in 1798 1848 and 1867, and yet allowed its priests to deliver speeches in eulogy of the active spirits of those movements a generation afterwards, so in future the Church, which has its hand close upon the pulse of human society, when it realises that the cause of capitalism is a lost cause it will find excuse enough to allow freedom of speech and expression to those lowly priests whose socialist declarations it will then use to cover and hide the absolute anti-socialism of the Roman Propaganda".*

## Reaction

This is by no means complete as an analysis of the Church's self-understanding in relation to the world-wide movements for revolution, but it is particularly relevant at a time when a considerable and clearly excessive amount of attention is being focussed on the utterances of Pope Paul and other ecclesiastical leaders. It may well be regrettable that Pope Paul, at Bogotá, seemed to withdraw even from the position he had already enunciated in his social encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, just as it may be regrettable that he chose, on the first anniversary of its publication, to reject the term "theology of revolution". Anybody who believes that this is a disaster for the Church, however, has his priorities ungovernably mixed, and is running a serious risk of idolatry. Things may yet get worse; the conflict between the words of the Church's leaders and the reality presented by its members, clerical and lay, on the level of social and political action, may reach such proportions as seriously to strain the credibility of the institution, but this clearly has not yet

happened. There is a sense, indeed, in which it has seldom been further from happening: the forces of reaction in the Church as a whole are far larger, more powerful and in a way more representative of the socio-ecclesial reality of today than the actions of Fr. Berrigan or Camillo Torres.

This is nowhere more obvious than in the magisterium's present attitude to violence. It is sometimes forgotten that the equation of Christianity with non-violence is a modern, and in many important respects still incomplete, position. For many centuries, as more than one commentator has pointed out, war and violence in their most inhuman and brutal forms were the instrument of the apostolate, or at least of ecclesiastical policy. This was the ecclesiastical Stalinist period: it is only now being dismantled. There is a school of thought which holds that it is wrong to reinterpret ancient history in modern terms, and therefore that it is wrong to condemn the Church for actions like these. This school holds, equally, that in every age the Church, providentially, did the right thing: In short, that it has never made mistakes. This is just another form of triumphalism disguised as historical analysis: it should not mislead people who have an idea of the Church as a pilgrim people and who have based their idea on the Bible. Of course it is wrong to reinterpret ancient history in modern terms, but on the other hand there is no such thing as objective history (there are still some historians, I suppose, who are hopefully looking for "the facts"), and, furthermore, the contention that because such reinterpretation is wrong, one cannot condemn the Church, is a logical *non sequitur*. One can even come closer to home in a search for proof that the Church's attitude to violence is less than convincing. This can be found in the Council's cautious and in some respects rather pathetic re-endorsement (despite the magnificent opposition of Cardinal Ottaviani) of the concept of the just war. Set beside the present conditions in West Africa, for instance, this theoretical position is almost utterly devoid of relevance.

#### Stalinist Period

The fact is that in this Stalinist period, which is still in many important respects a reality, the Church's opposition to violent revolution became to a large extent an opposition to violent revolution directed against the *status quo*, more especially towards any *status quo* in which the Church was involved as a partner. Increasingly, in such circumstances, the magisterium took upon itself the task of distinguishing, in advance, between

just and unjust causes—a distinction which, history has shown us, can only be made in retrospect and by the collective consciousness of the People of God. This has led, in the active sense, to the condemnation by the Pope and some bishops of left-wing guerilla movements in countries like Guatemala and, in the passive sense, to the lack of condemnation by the Pope and the same bishops of the equally violent para-military right-wing organisation which exists in the same country. Even on this level, without having recourse to a definition of various oppressive systems of government as in themselves 'violent', the weakness of the magisterium's unilateral condemnations of "terrorism" is devastatingly clear.

The moral, on this level, is a simple one. It is that for Christians generally, and especially Christians in crisis situations such as those existing in Latin America, attempts by ecclesiastical and other leaders to prejudge the issues of violence and revolution will become increasingly irrelevant. This is already happening, and the degree to which Christianity will retain its credibility in these areas depends not so much on what the Pope may say but on the willingness of the local church to recognise and underwrite, even if only passively, these attempts at genuinely human revolution, and on the adequacy of communication between the local Church and the centre of unity which is the Papacy.

This does not, however, solve many of the problems. The chief of these is the establishment of some kind of objective criteria, flexible but not permissive in character, which will enable Christians to adopt a positive attitude to the violence they find in their world, and it is because I believe that a Christian's attitude to violence is to a very large extent a reflection of his idea of the Church that this discussion has a wider relevance, even in countries like Ireland where violence cannot be said to be a practical option, even if it were politically desirable.

#### Legalistic Violence

To start in a negative way: the least useful manner in which to approach the questions of violence and revolution is the legalistic one. If we look at a situation with a view to assessing how much violence can be used, we are immediately falling into casuistry—the casuistry in which it will be only a venial sin to give your enemy a black eye, but a mortal sin to give him two. The Church is not just, or even primarily, an exclusive club in which membership depends on keeping a stringent set of rules, but an imperfect community on an uncompleted journey. Faced with the intrinsic and in some cases structured vio-

lence of today's world, the Church has a two-fold response to make. In the first place, it has to attempt to do in the present situation what the original framers of its "just war" morality did several centuries ago: it has to articulate a framework, loose but convincing, within which the vast mass of Christians can recognise the sociological and political realities of their age in relation to violence, in order to encourage a positive attitude towards this most terrifying of subjects. In the words of Pere Pire<sup>2</sup>, the task of the modern Christian is to humanize violence, just as the mediaeval Christian attempted to humanize war; to make sure that when it is used by Christians, it is used as therapy and not as self-expression. Any attempt to meet the situation by the repetition of imprecise condemnations of violence not only reduces the credibility of the Church as a whole, but marks a more radical break with her past than most people are capable of accepting. Discussion of the whole problem, built on the wreck of the "just war" idea, is as yet only in its infancy, and pastoral policy must take this into account.

For the individual, in the second place, the problem remains, and here a major difficulty is making a decision about the use of violence (Camillo Torres decided that violence is necessary; Bishop Helder Camara believes, equally passionately, in non-violence) which will in some way go beyond the bounds of a purely subjective criteria and will be linked with the wider appreciation of man's nature and destiny which we believe exists in the Church. In broad terms, the discussion about violence is in many respects the same as the discussion about salvation which characterises the relationships between Rome and the Churches of the Reformation; and the analogy is not an idle one. This is all the more so in the face of a situation in which some people angered beyond the pain of exasperation by the unwillingness of the magisterium to realise that there are real human and political problems to be faced, opt increasingly for violence and lose sight of all other possible solutions. In such a case they construct a morality in which violence is not only optional, but virtually obligatory (opponents of the Papal decision on birth control can, if they are not careful, find themselves in an analogous position: arguing for compulsory contraception!).

### The Evangelicals

People who have ceased to regard the alternatives and who regard violence as the only and complete answer to the problems faced by any society in the world today are, I believe, in much

the same position as an extremely evangelical Protestant is with regard to salvation (on the political level, extremely evangelical Protestants would, I imagine, be more quietist than revolutionary, but this is beside the point). Both visions can be mistaken because they are incomplete: the revolutionary's because he thinks that only the violent are right; the evangelical's because he believes that only those who are "saved" are members of the community of believers. Both positions are, in a sense, Pelagian: they fail to see the historical community on the one hand, and of the Church on the other. In addition they have misjudged the relationship between the two.

It is important to stress, in this way, that violence can easily be wrong and misguided, if only because the recent emphasis on violence as a way of solving problems is in danger of obscuring the only recently re-discovered Christian form of witness that is pacifism. Both forms of response can be, and often are, valid forms of prophecy: neither is the only valid form. There is, moreover, yet another form of Christian ministry to the world, and it is one which, I believe, is also in danger of being underrated: non-violence. In spite of its name, it owes far more to violence than to pacifism—to violence understood in a constructive and not in a negative sense. A sit-in, for instance, is a non-violent form of radical action, and yet its concrete, physical effects can be just as devastating, in certain circumstances, as violence of the more open and obvious kind. It has worked, even if with varying degrees of effectiveness, in situations as desperate as those in India and Czechoslovakia, and even the deaths of Gandhi and Martin Luther King have had a positive function in this context. It is also a Christian reaction with which the vast majority of Christians, fearful of actual violence and unable to understand absolute pacifism, are more likely to come to terms.

### Pluriformity

What we have to discover, in our new situation, is the pluriformity which, within the Church, has always contributed enormously to the effectiveness of its mission. This will not be a pluriformity in which differences of opinion are submerged in a kind of bland hypocrisy under an increasingly platitudinous umbrella held by the shaking hand of "authority", but a conscious stretching of our horizons to include the witness of the guerilla as well as that of the pacifist. Only in this way will the Church be true to its real nature, and give meaningful expression to a unity more fundamental than that elaborated in and conditioned by the rigidity of the past century or so. The apostle

of violence needs the apostle of pacifism: both need the apostle of non-violence: the vast majority of us will lead our lives somewhere uneasily poised between revolution and liberalism, and the implication of the Gospel is that we should not be afraid of the consequences of the activities of any group. We should remember that without tension there is no real unity, and that Christianity expresses itself, best and has always

done so, in the confrontation with the new and the unknown. It was not for nothing that Paul went out to the Gentiles. The Church would have quietly expired if this process, in a real sense a process of permanent revolution, had not been decisively inaugurated.

1. *The Harp*, September 1908.

2. In an interview with Seán Mac Réamonn, RTE, 1968.

## COMMENTS

### GRILLE ON CREEPING SOCIALISTS

Marx's dictum that the executive of the State is largely a committee to manage the common affairs of the entire bourgeois classes would seem to have a logical corollary in the imposition of an automatic self-justification into the language of a capitalist society. Nowhere does this emerge with such clarity as in the self-righteousness of the condemnations that emanate from the consciences of the status quo, i.e., government ministers and newspapers, on the occasion of militant trade union action. The phrases, how often we have all heard them, ring with a poetic splendour—"the country will not tolerate", "the national good must have priority over sectional interests", "holding the public to blackmail".

What is disgusting about this hypocrisy is not just that it has by and large, been successful in implanting in trade unionists a feeling that they are responsible for inflation or the balance of payments. Nor just that it makes obscene any boast of a union leader of the increases he has won for his men (a meany of the worst sort) while any declaration of increasing profits from a capitalist produces happy photographs of board meetings and hearty congratulations all round, but, worst of all, it is pervaded by the consensus assumption of equality between 'labour' and 'management' in the economy with the State as the happy overseer looking after the rest of us.

What, of course, gives the lie to all this is the manifestations of social unrest in the past year. The agitation on the housing question brought out not only the ugly fact of 10,000 homeless families but also the conditions in the soulless corporation ghettos. Despite the government's schemes, the cards are still overwhelmingly loaded

against working class children in our educational system. And this stretches even into the law courts where the Moore case saw a middle-class jury enforcing its prejudices against an unfortunate and hounded child. Land distribution is scandalously unequal and still forces thousands of young people from small farms to the emigrant ship and the unemployment rate is getting worse rather than better. All these merely sketch the glaring inequalities in our society which the "welfare state" is increasingly failing to cover over.

It is in this context that the government's proposals for trade union legislation are to be viewed. The principal aim is to put a curb on unofficial action in the unions, and to "rationalise" their structures so as to build an easily controllable bureaucracy. The massive no in the Referendum, to a large extent due to the unity of the working class movement, must have sent shivers down the backs of the TACA men, and they will be quick to associate this no to the quite remarkable militancy exhibited in the most controversial of recent strikes in the ESB, EI and the Corporation workers. The containment of this is a number one priority. They have learned their lessons from British experience. There, 90% of industrial action is unofficial, brought about by the actions of militant and conscious shop stewards who confront the pressures of capitalist society in their day to day experience. Hillery's Irish proposals mirror those of the Tory party, designed to outlaw unofficial action by making unions financially responsible for losses incurred during an unofficial strike. He has seen that trends in Irish disputes have moved in the direction of shop floor power and its strangulation at birth is of vital significance.

## Irish Dunkirk

Precisely why this is so is to be found in government economic policies. Free trade, entry into the EEC have become national aims requiring of us something akin to the Dunkirk spirit. To this end, Fianna Fail is willing to let small native industries go into decline and the central position is now occupied by a small number of firms with monopoly power. To preserve this power, these firms need, above all else, a high growth rate, indeed this is their distinguishing feature. What Marx gave as the motto of the furies of private interest in his time "accumulate, accumulate, that is Moses and the prophets", is even more crucially relevant today to monopolists who must not only create high enough profits to satisfy shareholders but also to generate a large supply of internal funds to finance, what is often, capital-intensive growth. To this end, in the present Irish situation, capitalist requirements demand that the profits to wages ratio be shifted in the direction of greater profits. And hence to need to hit the unions.

In this situation it is clear that the defence of unions is a cause which presents an urgent claim on the solidarity of socialists. On the one hand it will be a fight for their very existence and on the other, within the unions themselves, it will be a fight for an extension of democracy so as to put real power where it should belong, i.e., in the hands of the men on the shop floor. Socialists who see trade unions solely in terms of a political struggle may reject the latter, as it is more likely that union leaders are more adept at politics than shop floor leaders but it must be insisted that the arena of the unions' struggle is the economic arena a struggle which arises from the very nature of capitalist society. Even in the political sense, only a strong, united labour movement can stand up to monopoly capital and relevant strength and unity for this fight can only arise within truly democratic structures.

## Sacrificial Capital

There are other aspects, also, of monopoly capital which will present demands on trade unions. The decline of small industries, sacrificed to the free trade god, will result in large scale redundancy. A similar situation will arise when profit maximization demands capital-intensive rather than labour intensive investment and automation will result in a lesser number of available jobs.<sup>2</sup> Only a strong labour movement will react in the right fashion, namely a militant demand for work-sharing instead of redundancy. Automation, so-called modernization, results in destruction of whole social experiences, of com-

munities and of people. Opposition to it is labelled "luddite" and "irresponsible" but many are proud of those names if it means opposition to the encroachment of a type of society described in the Mayday manifesto "There would be a limited number of exceedingly wealthy property owners, the proportion of the working population required to man the extremely profitable automated industries would be small, wage rates would thus be depressed, there would have to be a large expansion of the production of the labour-intensive goods and services which were in high demand by the few multi-multi millionaires, we would be back in a super-world of an immiserized proletariat and of butlers, footmen, kitchen maids and other hangers-on". There can be no doubt but that capitalists will oppose work-sharing—each new man requires extra space for cloakroom, canteens, wage clerks etc. but no amount of mystifying language about technological revolutions should blind us to the irrational misery which the capitalists' use of it brings.

## Enoch

"The more a ruling class is able to assimilate the most prominent men of a ruled class" wrote Marx, "the more solid and dangerous is its rule". This quote is well worth bearing in mind in analysing the attempts of the Taoiseach (and Enoch Powell in Britain) to present themselves as friends of the working class movement with their talk of "responsible leadership", participating in planning and modernizing the economy". What is involved here is the deification of modernization as a tactic for reinforcing the status quo, never does it involve a questioning of long term assessments of goals, especially social goals, in our society. To ask what qualitative traits we desire in our environment suddenly becomes a mystifying process, out of place amid the glitter of the gadgets the new technology has created. And this is precisely what is relevant here. These gadgets are the prop of the advanced capitalism of our times and this capitalism cannot afford to have its intricate and complex plans for growth and investment interfered with, especially by a labour force whose behaviour is unpredictable. The maintenance of stability, the quieting of social conflict, the compliance of labour are all vital for the success of monopolisation. This is the real clue to plans for worker participation on boards of directors, recommended by the ESB commission.

Frankly, I was surprised by the F.U.E. rejection of the plan. The sophisticated technocrats clearly have not yet got sufficient power in capitalists circles but I would guess that people like Mr.



Donal ("what we need is not the old-style conflict between communism and capitalism but something in-between") Carron would favour workers on the board. Why not? The new gods of technology, and free trade demand it and after all they would serve as wonderful emissaries to the men on the shop floor—keep them in their place, make them feel mean if they cause trouble while they have one of their own among the bosses upstairs. Who better than John Conroy to condemn unofficial action, or Jimmy Dunne to deplore outside interference in the E.I. strike? and why leave it to James Dillon to wax eloquently on communists. Subversives and anarchists infiltrating industry from the universities if Lord Carron will do it for you? So, in Britain one has the grotesque spectacle of the trade union barons and earls. In Ireland one has them on the boards of State companies or the N.I.E.C. It was good that at least one Labour Party branch (Walkinstown) deplored Jimmy Dunne's acceptance of a seat on the board of C.I.E. because he was appointed by the minister and not elected by the workers. He told the *Evening Herald* jokingly, that this meant he was now part of the Establishment. I doubt if the N.B.U. rolled in laughter. Talk about creeping socialism! Its not that we have but creeping socialists, daily coming with ritual offerings to the Jehovah of the Capitalists—Marcuse's One-Dimensional Society, a totally co-ordinated and monolithic social whole, free from conflict, restless, visionless, faithless, completely under the control of the gadgetry that our betters create. And of course, its all for our own good.

### The Church

What is especially horrifying is how the Church has fallen for it all. Even the fairly radical 'Gospel and Revolution' statement talks about subservience to lawful authority and always we find ancient Papal Encyclicals, resurrected from dust filled shelves, to discover justifying quotes for plans like 'participation' for the common good. It almost seems as if the consensus has been invented by some Pope. Adrian Cunningham in the *Slant* manifesto examines one passage from *Mater et Magister*—"One advantage which would result from the adoption of this plan would be that it would be easier to keep a check on the movement of the labour force set free by the progressive modernization of agriculture. Facilities could then be provided for the training of such people for their new kind of work and they would not be left without economic aid and the mental and spiritual assistance they need to ensure their proper integration in their new social milieu". Cunningham comments "Rhetorical opposition

collapses in an embracement of social engineering and managerialism. Confidence in scientific and technical progress which will "naturally" eliminate class conflicts, and create a "just" and "democratic" society in which each social group will find an adequate place . . . all are dealt with within the general perspective of world-wide neo-capitalism".

What an about turn from the Jesus that *Grille* acknowledges, the Jesus who sat at dinner unwashed and endured the wrath of the lawyers and told them "also for you lawyers, because you load on men burdens that are unendurable, burdens that you yourselves do not move a finger to lift" and told the Pharisees at the same time "alas for you, you who pay your tithes of mint and rue and all sorts of garden herbs and overlook justice and the love of God". Modern Christians seem determined to ignore the call of St. John to the people of Rome to dissociate from a society living off oppression and slavery "Come out from her, my people, that you do not share in her crimes and have any of her plagues to bear". We, in *Grille*, are determined to change this. When Martin Luther King was murdered in Memphis while fighting a recognition dispute for garbage workers, Terry Eagleton wrote in a memorial poem: "Though haute-culture, philosophy, were more your line, World-Spirit seemed about more unionised Black Memphis garbage workers".

P.C.

### GROSVENOR SQUARE AND WILSON'S HACK'S

'Grosvenor Square, a police triumph', 'yes our police are wonderful'. For three months the press had performed its given function; (a) titillate people's consciousness en passant on a superficial level; (b) in the process build up popular prejudice; (c) by pleasing and consolidating people as they are, help sales in a financially powerful but democratically powerless society. It had built the march into a massive confrontation between lawlessness and order, planned abroad by a clever clique, infiltrated and duped. It encouraged students by their long invective to behave as people really want them to, as an unruly escape from facing a problem. "If students are involved, then it's none of my business".

And when the actual march happened they had a problem. 50,000 students with hardly any organisation marched in a cheerful disciplined manner despite everything. Six or seven hundred

marched into disciplined brutality. Why then was it a police victory?

Unfortunately for the press the police did not suffer any provocation and unlike last time the number of injured aggressive students outnumbered police by 10:1 quite apart from those who were afraid to go to hospital. So the press quietly drops (a) titillation (no stories of bombs, etc.) But it cannot drop the whole story after its long Summer of hysteria. So it plumps for (b) reinforces prejudice (if you can't titillate please them). So one had dyspeptic stories of OUR great police who like all British stood apart. And when assaulted were brutal in a BRITISH way. Just like all British they cleared the square good humouredly and efficiently (shades of 'heroes' on saturation bombing missions).

As one who saw the first wave of demonstrators decimated I admire the London police for their skill in (a) fooling the press (b) playing to their image (c) their subtle brutality.

For the press it was (a) a triumph for the police that there was little violence (b) a triumph that when there was they dealt with it.

In the archetypal primitive non-analytical coverage by the press the badies could not become heroes. So that when they were good the others were responsible and when they were bad they got what was coming to them in an ordered way.

We are used to reading laughing stories about the jargon of Mao's press (hacks, bedbugs, running dogs, etc.). The western press cannot be so open in a mythically free competitive market but none the less is more jargonistic in that one does not know where one stands. It is dangerous that through Guatemala, Cuba, Vietnam, Grosvenor Square the same old cant is peddled in the same language but in new words.

Bourgeois press is a cant slogan perhaps. Our limited consciousness hopping from toy to toy

cannot but dissent from this phrase. In the nightmarish surrealist world of the consumer society full of bright new totems enmeshed in the cash nexus of enforced de-personalisation, newspapers do not escape. Their function is to juggle a limited vocabulary daily for the masses not for integration but absorption and unconscious disposal. 'News' is presented as something new, different, yet the very tolerance level of acceptance in our womb-manipulated world makes this impossible. Real news would upset people. Break a feebly superstructured consciousness. If a paper brought the ghastly realisation into light; that the carnage in Vietnam was different, so different that the perpetuation of both worlds (ours and theirs) would be a spiritual impossibility it would lose its circulation. It could only have two effects in our society; mass nervous breakdown or cause people to use an old escape mechanism, go to a new trinket. People do not choose between the issues but between the products.

This is how newspapers operate, the radical things are placed in the glutinous mess of common mass media. Popular papers place Vietnam among gaping blondes. Their prose carrying the frivolity, their analysis the "depth" of the advertising media. Heavier newspapers admit the problem but place it in the sophisticated ramifications of upper middle class jargon. The human issue, that of burnt flesh and napalm is put on the diplomatic level. Peace conferences are seen to solve issues, not a heroic people driving the aggressor from their mother earth. The upper middle classes even if they cannot avoid the issue have the comfort of knowing that it will be solved by pleasant upper middle class means. For us the great struggles of humanity are drowned in gossip and coffee in Paris.

J.F.

## Theology of Violence

by JOHN FEENEY

*Q. Whether heretics should be tolerated.*

(i) *There is the sin whereby they deserve not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but also to be shut off from the world by death (Summa Theologica II Qxi III).*

St. Thomas as a conservative theologian agrees with Aristotle's definition of violence. Within

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scholastic dialectic Thomas epitomises that capability of a domineering class in society (whether it be slave society of Athens or the peasant based conservatism of mediaeval orthodoxy) to rationalise within a sophisticated language a semitribalistic view of the role of violence. Thus to St. Thomas violence was defined not by the subject or perpetrator of the violence but by the object. It was a reified view of violence, one

that saw in an endemic characteristic of all society the resort to a means of communication that was incapable or explication except by opting out of ones cultural metaphysic. Violence was something that one could use to correct that which fell outside ones normal pattern of control, but its morality depended on its effect rather than the perpetrator's own ethic. Violence was moral then for St. Thomas when it was used to place the subject within the domain of the ruling class of his society. The uncontrolled nature of the violent impulse could be justified by its capability of putting society in its natural (or understood) order. Violence was right when it was ordered, legal, controlled by and controlling class structures.

Violence then was seen essentially as something outside society; an aberration which signified an over-dominance of a part of dualistic man or as a necessary resort. It was not a commentary on the whole of Man's psychic life, but operated on the edges of morality. That St. Thomas should have believed so is not surprising, this was the only thing he could have believed. In semi tribal society violence was the basis by which a tribe continued its pattern of cultural norms. And it was seen as the ethic of a language which operated when the whole of the tribe, its culture, taboos and mythologies contacted an outside force, something that was not part of them. (heresy, Islam, witchcraft, etc.).

### Tribal Violence

In tribal society so well described in the *Necessity of Art, a Marxist View* by Fischer, the whole of its initiation, fertility and mythological ritual could be orientated towards the creation of a warrior class. Yet that violence of the contact with an outside group (another tribe) while the basis of the tribe's psychic life was not part of it. It was a vicious circle; a tribe based its life (both the life and death of its members in a symbiotic unity) on this conflict, and the conflict was the preservation of it and the tribe's survival-role-needs. Outside and underneath it, a part of it yet never integrated.

In more sophisticated technologies where a group could exist without taking an active part in a society's process of cannibalisation and dominance this reification of violence took on a further level. A whole society that lived for violence, where the violence protected something that was not violence now had a class, which to protect themselves as the ruling class, had to differentiate themselves from that basic process. The technological necessity of directing functions could now be placed on a multi-cultural basis of

commingling functions. But now different groups while united for protection also had languages which each other did not understand. Thus the whole society used violence for its needs, but different groups used violence for their own psychic needs and would use their superior dialectic to dominate whole groups for this. Thus violence a part of society and outside it became an intimate part of the class war. Groups performed violence for superior classes and raised their own status by this.

### Racialism

A group would use this alienated view of violence to justify a superior position. Negroes were exploited because they were penile and feared for the same reason. They embodied the basis which a society did not want, were civilised by whites because of it and feared and envied also. Victorian Cocoa advertisements had as a symbol the innocent 'darkies'; Victorian national mythology correspondingly saw the negro as brutal. They hoped as any dominant class to make the negro innocent, but at the same time envied him for embodying their own needs. Griffin in *Black Like Me* and Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* show a white envy which thought that the brutal negro embodying suppressed violence or libido, must also embody wonderful sexual powers. Griffin shows how whites who hated negroes for their genital size also desired these suppressed powers. Fanon shows how the negro felt the savagery of this class war by realising he failed in the other edge of the white man's ambivalence and knew he was not oversexed.

### Children

Thus part of the class war and its violence was the sense of domination because of psychic violence and sexual superiority of lower orders which were spurned by the bourgeois and the envy of this class. Paternalism and fear, hatred and envy, gollywog and gorilla; Class war brought dominance and fear.

The best way of seeing a dominant class's exteriorised narcissism can be seen in Victorian attitudes to children. They were innocent simples in need of strict discipline to protect them from the evil world (just like all middle-class paternalism). But they were envied for their 'trailing clouds of glory', for their 'sitting in the bosom of Abraham'. Thus they were to be envied, these innocent children who fondled their genitals and dreamed dreams, (Jack and the Beanstalk, etc.) could be laughed at, dominated, but could fascinate. The hypnotic fascination of

exteriorising interior dichotomy, the masochistic romanticism of knowing that it was gone forever. They had to grow up but nevertheless would as Rosseau showed lose that simplicity, lose their innocence.

The shock of the Edwardian response to the breakthrough of Freudian language that now fused these ambivalences in an overtly narcissist way shows that the class war has another edge. Not only did one group justify its position by the violence of another, but it created a new phenomenon in their own group. This lack of comprehension of the psychic basis of the class war meant that the very justification (their savagery) for exploitation arose in the dominant group. The bourgeoisie which feared the working class also felt the very same violence towards them. The hysterics of the Peterloo massacre in 1819, Catholic Emancipation in 1829, the Lock out 1913, the Zhinoviev red letter scare, etc. showed that the ruling class had the same instincts as the working class. How could it then justify its position? Only by a new delegation of functions whereby this violence they felt could be dealt with by groups outside themselves, the army, police, courts. These groups were semi-middle class, both inside and spurned. Thus the middle class were not violent, but rather were anti-violent and channelled their violence into punishment. They thus developed a new hierarchy of reified functions, which were sacrosanct and carried in a brutal but hidden way middle class violence; prison terms, fines, probation, etc.

### Reified Violence

This process then of the development of hierarchies of class structures that were violent yet kept the peace brought a society where the class war was not talked of in terms of killing the rebels, but keeping the peace. To keep this peace was the basis of all the achievements of Western Christian civilisation, as any orthodox bourgeois thought.

This tension then was speedened by two factors, class mobility within a society based not on a landed familial basis but the vagaries of capital growth. This never, of course, was a full process, capital came largely from landed gentry and the primary aim of many bourgeois was to appropriate the status of land. And the proletariat were not part of this at all. But nevertheless a delegation of different languages became impossible and society with many classes was felt as a whole in its aims and fears. This had the effect of a neo-symbiotic racial cum geographic nationalism and also a sense of, if not a common,

a potential sharing in one society. A society that developed Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* and Smile's *Self Help* was one where social growth was the primary aim but where the opposite was a real possibility. (Witness the importance Marx and Blanc gave the great crashes of the nineteenth century when social falling became a preoccupation of society). A society of lemmings clinging to Queens' and Popes' skirts as the mythological basis for any security seemed to be fading into a racial or religious memory. The desire for mediaeval Catholicism of Pagan 'Volk' was a similar phenomenon of a society that felt in flux. Both Smile and Marx overestimated this potential mobility, bourgeois mythology always did.

### Violence inside

Thus in the great age of Marx and later of Plekhanov a society existed where the continually reified vision of violence as outside and protective was supplanted. The violent linguistic nausea of a society that had to develop new justifications as it went up and new lies when it went down (Palmerstonian England; Hitlerian Germany) destroyed itself. The bourgeois world was to give way to the messianic proleteriati. The proletariat knew that the garbled structures of social growth were violent, they had to go to prison, etc., but these violent structures were seen as a part of power change. For those with no power, the violence, the change had to be total.

Violence or social inter-relationship could no longer be seen for the socially perspicacious as an emulsion to keep ones eyes on heaven, or about parliament; but about people. It became an intimate of all relationships and must be used as Plekhanov showed in 'In Defence of Materialism' by the proleteriati who stood outside all the linguistic niceties to create a new society. Those outside learned from their masters that violence was an intimate in making a new social order. A new social order created violence and caused its open centrality.

### Theology

What then does a modern theology of violence proclaim? Firstly it proclaims that violence (incomprehension) is evil. Violence with unchannelled aggression in an inarticulate society is totally evil. This is the violence that picks the simplest social outlet to catharcise itself. This is the cause of pub-brawls and soccer vandalism. These are the social mores of a society where the division between work and play created by capitalism is held together by a common Earth Mother technocratic

disapproval and control of aggressive channels. Here only outside the bingo-halls, television and factories can people be violent in 'traditional' activities.

Similarly violence in a society of thoughtcontrol is wrong. In our society there is a concious channelling of aggression towards the ends desired by the exigencies of capital growth. This society's media create hateful archetypes of Yellow Man in China or North Vietnam. This society of ours creates a confused, anal, semi-penile fear of aggressive communism exploiting the gullible in our society (i.e. proletariat, those who do not understand the language) students, negroes, peaceniks, etc. This civilisation of ours builds up unexteriorised aggression against these people. Builds up pride in its own institutions by selective use of news. People live in a society of frustrated hatred which is channelled into a triumphing in its own structures, British parliament, Western moderation, liberal freedom. It creates intolerance of dissent within itself by purposely channelling aggression into a incomprehended internal political straight-jacket. Thus the peace-protesters of Chicago suffer the media of capitalism linking Viet-Cong, black power, China and McCarthy in one big racial hate. This re-channelled hatred sees a refusal to accept home structures as an automatic sign of a hippie, anarchist and communist. (All dissent is the same).

#### New Violence

Thus violence in our society combines old aggressions of a breakdown in Lorenz's pecking-order, class war, to a new semi-hysterical inter-class internationalisation of controlled violence. It is the kind of society where enormously different sources of aggression; Northern fiscal dominance, unemployment, housing, racialism can culminate in a fetish, Nixon. This must be rejected.

Furthermore theology must accept that not only is it living in an age of senseless violence and financially controlled violence but in the post Marxian era. It must accept that there is class-war based on society's mutual incomprehension. That the old theological arguments though often necessary and good were part of this process. That Jesus abolished the class war by accepting it and transcending it. And finally by seeing theology not as a static thing or as an evolutionary development of doctrine but as a clash of languages.

Theology is the clash firstly of Jesus with his Judaism, of his transcending first century Galileia by integrating all the problems of it. Secondly it is the clash between the traditional sayings of Jesus and their formation in a growing transitional

church. Thus the Synoptics and especially 'M' and 'Q' are records of a proletarian Jesus of great wonder and insight meeting a Church's needs. And finally theology is the clash of the written record of this with the thought patterns of any age. And if one accepts the revolutionary nature of human thought the Church with its bible and its record of earlier clashes must again attempt to join Jesus to a new world and in the process experience a new creation.

#### Revolution in depth

This could be called a pragmatic theology but is primarily a theology of depth within revolution. A theology which realises that Mediaeval Europe is dead as a duck, lost forever, that nobody can be a mediaeval man only a neurotic escapist. That nobody can do what Luther tried to announce, a gospel freed from history. The Church must realise that death is death, gone to dust or left in Chartres. It must realise that death rises not by being relived but by being part of a new age. Thus theology must be a revolution within a revolution. The mythology and thought patterns of every doctrinal age must come in conflict with the present and make one profoundly discomfited by this and revolutionise in depth the revolution which the Church is a part of. The Christian must play out the tension of a life in the twentieth century which he founds on history. Like the marxist the emphasis he places on history as such rather than pragmatic political decisions may be *the* crucial ethical problem.

#### Rejection of War

The Christian must firstly reject war, or rather with his view of a hostile '*world*' presume the unjust war. The traditional just war advocated by Augustine, St. Thomas, Luther and St. Bernard was really the organised use by a society of force to impress its own structure and power on the world. Thus one had the crusades which one can see as a sacralised socio-economic demographic movement. Pacifists can point to in practically every instance the deification of war by the Church when its political needs so demanded. Thus one had the sorry spectacle once the Church embraced the same ruling classes in all Europe and had been dispossessed of the territory which made it take sides in the nineteenth century, of it sacralising all sides in a war with its head in Rome keeping an embarrassed and self-interested silence. This new view must spring from a radical Christian theology of a fallen world where *the powers, the gates of hell* use various classes in their power struggle.

## Paul's View

Theology then must reject all violence that the Church has been used to sacralising. Paul could say *Let every soul be subject to higher powers; for there is no power but from God, and that are, are ordained by God. Therefore he that resists, resists the law of God. And they that resist purchase damnation. And worse For princes are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil, for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on the evildoer.* It must reject that tory Paul for the healthy cynicism of *render unto Caesar what is Caesars, God what is Gods* for the synoptic tradition of hostility to secular power.

Theology must reject the traditional sacralisation of a friendly culture, the use of christian eschatology for the expansion of this culture. Theology of violence then must take a stance which any organised language could not have taken before the advent of widespread literacy. And which the Church as a part of the economic, romantic power structures of Europe could not take without subversion from the edges; a theology of violent revolution.

*This theology is one that is in its basis hostile to violence.* Revolution needs an articulate driving force. It needs a people who will not respond to the usual pattern of violence. That will relate the inadequacies of their society to belief in the overthrow of an understood basis of their failings. It needs a proletariat who politically and economically feel apart from society whose message is that the sources of violence must be removed.

## Revolution in Faith

Revolution thus must be based on faith. It depends on the capability of people to use the means of their oppression to create a better world. It is thus, as Chinese and Cuban Marxism, Messianic. It is a revolution of mythological resurrection where a proletariat by their sense of guilt in using the means of the oppressing class, project their belief into a resurrected world. Violence thus by being consciously channelled into language takes a whole new pattern that is healing and destroys violence. Cuba is a new society in unity of a common task where the continuing success of the revolution and sense of unity in poverty with South America creates a resurrection of revolution not disillusionment. Cuba does not use the revolution to free itself to imitate the Western world but to carry the revolution on for others. Thus the resurrection is a genuine one in that it does not join the old

order, change its technology, except in democratic productivity.

## Before the Revolution

Violent revolution then can be said to create the bases for a society that is not violent. Similarly in a pre-revolutionary situation the resort to violence is a healing one. It is healing in that it joins the revolutionaries who carry a faith to the people who suffer. By their rejection of the reified norms of social improvement they are forced by the hostility of the ruling class into a sharing situation. Thus Mao's turning to the peasantry, and Guevara's failure in Bolivia were breakthroughs for modern society. It denoted that the revolutionaries unlike Lenin were to turn to a class outside society and were not to form a revolutionary party that survived by imitating the elitism of dominant Tsarism, as did Lenin. Lenin's party was small, urban, articulate; Che went to the people. Lenin cannot be blamed we are living in an age created by his revolution. Thus violent revolution can be seen as a destruction of violence, a means of evangelism and especially the unification of an articulate language to the people with no opportunity to share this language. Violent revolution then, is a means of forcing a shared experience on the hoped for new world (the classless society). Thus in many ways violent revolution has evolved to a peculiarly christian standpoint without the least help from the Church. One can say that it is messianic, resurrective, apart from society yet using its means, and populist. Marxism seems to have reached the stage where the inadequacies pointed out by Populist and Anarchist thinkers have merged in some societies or potential microcosmic societies.

## Revolution in Hope

Often, of course, this is not so. A situation of planned co-ordinated violence means that in any violent revolutionary movement those who share a common task will be those seeking a new world and those who are using revolutionary language to justify paranoic anti-social feelings. But then in this world where a group prove their solidarity not by being a perfect group but by changing the world, it is necessary that good people and evil work together just as they do in every structure. The language of the revolution will weed the chaff from the wheat, the Stalins from the Dubceks. It is also true that a revolution need not be a glorifying experience, undoubtedly it can be debasing but similarly one must doubt if one can opt out of such a choice without far more permanent damage. A damage based on living in a totally reified sick world. Theology

then must realise that in our world no group is exclusive in relationships and no action is wholly creative. It especially must regain the doctrine of hope. Hope means that one must integrate the possibility of failure, that a revolution can bring about domination. In other words that a new society exists provisionally in faith outside the control of people who seek it except in internalised belief and experience. Thus the Church must follow the injunctions of Christ; to join the proletariat to call for a new world, to subject its language to outside influences (lepers, sick, blind, poor, etc. the carriers of the kingdom; to whom the message must be preached all over the world so that the world may be changed by the message being changed). It must lose its traditional sense of isolation, ontological superiority, of being a pilgrim Church. A pilgrimage knows where it is going, revolution means that it does not. The resurrection transcends in its ascension, it can only be talked about in opposites, in the cross, the triumph of all that gets crucified.

#### Certain Failure

Theology of violence (though usually not killing) must not only be justified in situations of potential success but in areas of certain short-term failure. Thus it could be said that by breaking the norms of society in the ghettos of U.S.A. or the slums of Dublin one performs many functions. Firstly it shows in a dramatic way like the cross the real basis of that society, one of violence and domination. A truth lost in talk of order, peace, and reform. It unites a people such as the negro people in a sense of a common guilt of their situation. It turns the racial guilt from an introverted hatred of ones own race to a healing sense of the guilt of society. Thus violence is an analytic force. In this the tactical non-violence of M. Luther King rather than Ghandi is of tantamount importance in that it betrays the false front of white reified morality. And unites negroes in a sense of their ethical superiority which can be a first step to revolutionary superiority. In this age then violence is potentially creative, it need not be an abortive uprising which changes nothing, a continual tortured self-cannibalisation of a group, a senseless thing; but a creative weapon. Christians must take note of this or they may be doomed to a further century or irrelevancy in their linguistic incomprehension of all the forces (Nazism, fascism, Communism, liberalism) in their society. It must begin to talk about itself in terms not of other worldly things but of the things of factories and trade unions.

#### Church Tradition

The Church then must do this but is there any basis for such an accommodation in its tradition?

To begin with one must reject any form of neo-fundamentalist politics based on the political decisions of Jesus\*. This is to say that faith is good works; to be pharisaical. Jesus announced a faith based on people and their relations. He saw and pronounced that the people of God were the proletariat. His answer to John the Baptist's disciples questioning him on his messiahship is that *'the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to them.* The proof of his special relationship to the father is that he has transcended the old order and turned to the proletariat, those who have no place in society. He is hostile to all the forces of dominance in society; *woe to you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men and you do not enter in, and force others not to enter.* To these forces of dominance he cannot communicate; *'And when he was accused by the chief priests and ancients, he answered nothing'.* And to Herod *'he questioned him in many words, he answered nothing'.*

Those who were not part of the poor were not rejected but had to sell all and join the poor, accepted the leadership of the proletariat. Thus the rich man *went away very sad* and the rich while not spurned found the authority reversal so difficult that it was *easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle.*

#### Jesus the Worker

Jesus then in the peculiar situation of Galileia was a man of the proletariat. His violence in face of the people who confuted a populist Jewish history by deifying it is frightening; *'Woe to the scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, that build sepulchres of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the just. And say if we had been in the days of our fathers we would not have shared with them in the blood of prophets. Wherefore you are witnesses against yourselves'.* His view of the fulfillment of the world while dualistic is of the triumph of the proletariat, witness his wonderful parable of the sheeps and goats *'Amen as long as you did not do this to the least of these, you did not do it to me. And these shall go to everlasting punishment'.* He is fully identified with the proletariat he is a shepherd not a hireling, fully dependent and involved in his flock. And the salvation of the flock depends on the one lost sheep, the one lost talent, the prodigal son. In the world of sinners, those who do not partake of the morality of the pharisees, lies the kingdom.

## Jesus and Marx

Just as with Marxist thought there is a seeming unfairness in this. The Jews are to lose the kingdom, (c.f. the parable of the workers in the vineyard, the marriage feast.) And of Jerusalem he says *'often would I have gathered your children together, as the hen gathers her chickens . . . Behold your house shall be left to you desolate'*. The new society shall be built by those who did not share in the building of the old;—the Gentiles, by children who are not part of the dominant culture; *'unless you become as one of these you shall not enter the kingdom'*. Violence is a part of this overthrowal; Jerusalem falls because it failed to accept the kingdom, *'the kingdom is broken into by the violent'*.

Jesus based himself on history yet completely overthrew the old bearers of that historical language. The kingdom is unfair because God is opposed to the structures of man, sitting first at the table, praying in the market-place, class hierarchies that devour the houses of widows while saying long prayers or could one say reified nonsensities. So Jesus was in the sophisticated society of Rome a proletarian, he was thus apolitical. He did not side with the Zealots (though in many ways he did) or the puppet king or with Rome. His view of the working-class kingdom was such that it was uni-structural. The only way that the new message could be lived was by living in a single structure which to be part of one had to *'sell all, take up thy cross and follow me. Turn against ones family; they cannot even bury their own dead, the kingdom turns sister against brother etc. invoke the anger of the dominant society; 'blessed are you when they revile and persecute you'* In a pre-industrial society one created a new age not by changing society in politics—a technological impossibility—but by creating a microcosmic prophetic society dominated by the proletariat that was *'the salt of the earth', 'the light of the world'. 'A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid'*.

## Church as Parody

The Church then was in the Synoptic tradition to change the world by the perfection of itself not in ethics but in its personnel and faith (closely linked). It was to be a parody on the fallen world that by its hegemony of the proletariat would be an embarrassment to it *'One cannot serve God and mammon, no man can serve two masters'*. The Church was to transcend all dominant structures and ethics. It was to be mobile, birds of the air and foxes in the fields had a resting place but the son of man has none. It was to have no money,

and to consciously avoid the morality of the competitive world, *'if a man takes away your coat, give him also your cloak, and if someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two'*. It was to be dependent on the world aware that, its perfection came from openness to the gentiles; *'Go teach you all the nations', 'Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you'*. It was to be a prophet of the perfect eschatology; *'Be you therefore perfect as also your heavenly father is perfect. Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father who is in heaven'*.

## Failure of the Church

The Church failed abysmally, not merely because Jesus like all messianic personalities expected too much of his people and felt the crucial incisiveness of his call but because this proletarian message was never fully integrated by the Church. In the Synoptics—the Sermon on the Mount and Luke (10-13)—these sayings are collected around a rationalising framework. Jesus was taken seriously enough as a person for non-integrated sayings to be collected, a genuine anti-gnosticism. In Pauline writing and Johannine one can see a Church that saw Jesus as God apart from his identity with the proletariat. This is not neo-fundamentalism the process had begun in the Synoptics, for linguistic and geographic reasons it was not so developed. The effect of Jesus was not comprehension but openness. The Church began to talk of itself ontologically rather than relationally. In John, Jesus can say *'Abraham your father rejoiced that he might see my day: he saw it and was glad. Amen, Amen before Abraham was I am'*. Jesus calls himself Messiah not by proving his transcendence but by telling people about it in a rather arrogant nasty way. His anger at the exploiters in the Synoptics is now turned to petulance at the failure of the Jews to recognise that he is the Son of God. His divinity is not that of a man of the poor but of a status-seeking Church. A Church that through the 2nd epistle of Peter, the early patristic writings of Ignatius of Antioch, apocryphal third Epistle to the Corinthians and in the victorious (Ephesus) Alexandrine school of theology pushed the figure of Jesus into a pagan upper class Neo-Platonic philosophy with much philosophical embarrassment (notably in the Gospel of John) and gave itself a new status. The incarnation now became that God had taken flesh rather than this man must be God, to whom else could one turn.



## Church Embarrassed

However one must say that this was inevitable; any development of theological thinking about Jesus would have had to be like this. Once the Church broke from its Judaic base it had no language but upper class language. This was a pre-industrial age when the masses had no articulation. An age when heresy was a garbled form of social protest often clearly not understanding either biblical or platonic discussion of Jesus. Augustine's long-winded diatribes against the agricultural worker Donatists is an example of class-based orthodoxy.

This view of the Church as the carrier of the proletariat has been lost for a very long time. It is a mark of the transcendence of Jesus that it was so lost and that even now it is still the most perfect example of artistic social protest in existence. It is also a mark of Jesus' transcendence that this misunderstood proletarian stream should have been an embarrassment to the Church in all ages. And that it could have created an other worldly language that was very earthy. Thus Ambrose's God though the centre of concern includes in his regimen all creation and a desire for justice in this. (c.f. W. Ledwich quote in *Grille 1; The Morals of the Clergy*). This was not true of Augustine but was part of most dialectical thinkers of the Middle Ages and the basis for all forms of social protest, notably the Poor Men of Lyons, Waldo, St. Francis of Assisi, Muenzer and so on. Revolt expressed itself in Christian eschatology.

## Feudal Europe

However as Marx has pointed out this is a new age. This is an age when violence can be used creatively, when society has many languages. Thus one could say that it was necessary for Christendom that all classes were Christian. It had a humanising effect in a society that for technological reasons had to be based on a feudal system. Similarly theology of this age could not have been proletarian as even the incipient consciousness of a community of the poor which was possible in Rome was not possible. In Feudal Europe productivity was particularist, uncertain, with common uncertainty of life for all classes. Christianity provided a mythological justification, binding structure and eschatology for a people to whom life must have appeared pretty grim. The other worldly nature of theology in this age was nothing to be ashamed of. When everything good appeared past, when invasion continued perpetually, when agricultural technology was poor, only in another world could people create a new world, share a common pleasure, a common hope. Although Hell upset this somewhat.

## Jesus To-day

But the final question remains a moral problem. In this age people have no unity of poor technology. One class can take control and create a new world. Unlike the time of Jesus perfection can be sought by conflict with people who cannot understand a proletarian message. The faith of Jesus in a people and in their moral superiority in a decadent society must be expressed in a new way. No longer is it sufficient to create a perfect institution, a parody, an embarrassment, one must act structurally. Those who see this parody and the bases of it must force people into a position where they too can share in it. The alternative is to create a perfect institution which would be impossible and forget the unregenerate, the half-saved, the lost. The Church must take part in a violent revolution if it is to be faithful to the Pauline strictures against seeing good works as faith, seeing turn the other cheek as the last word on christian politics. This is to de-historicise Jesus, make him either a twentieth century Quaker or a trans-historical Josef Stalin.

## Roof Top Shouting

To do this the Church must do firstly what Jesus commanded. Lose its capitalist wealth, throw off oppressors, have no home. This will be some job as there is hardly anybody else in the Church at the moment. It must be done by creating a theology of revolution and becoming the proletariat. By rejecting a universalist, ontological view of the Church growing from lost technologies. The Church will have to start proving rather than presuming its superior role in the world, once again cast out devils, work miracles, reconcile by taking sides. This will be done by shouting the message of Jesus in this age so loudly from the rooftops that the bourgeois scuttle out and are finally thrown out. And a proletarian Church can again proclaim the resurrection.

## Exclusivism

But does this new Church not create the peace that Paul exulted in his beautiful passage on charity in Corinthians. This Church will have all the politico-sociological characteristics of the New Testament Church. It will be highly exclusivist *'the gate that leads to life is small, and the road narrow, and those who find it are few'*.

It will also be populist; *'who makes the sun rise on good and bad alike and sends the rain on honest and dishonest'*: A Church aware of itself as saved by its acceptance of a faith caused by its social background and dissatisfaction with it. An inarticulate dismay at the plight of leprosy, of social outcasts, turned to confidence in the miracle of this dismay being the key to the whole system

which causes it; *'The cripple entered the temple with them leaping and praising God'*. This church by its very unity with the huge struggling masses and its awareness of the dehumanising effects of lack of vocabulary (only *'Jesus take pity on us'*, not long articulate prayers) and public social disgrace can be open to the world which was the basis of its conversion. Only by being forced as the *Anowim* and the *poor people of Jahweh* could they have accepted the message of Christ that was a folly to every dominant language of the age. But at the same time this very awareness of the basis of faith (non-acceptance) it would be exclusivist, only a few, the fortunate, can reach or fortuitously be put in a position of capability to overturn a world, to put mountains in the sea. Thus the proletarian Church would be completely different from the fallen sub-proletariat but feel a numinous identity with it (note Paul on persecution).

### Faith and Guilt

Faith is remembered in its historical context. Only by remaining with the people one has radically left can this Act of Faith grow into charity that bears all things, that comprehends the source of all human works. Thus the characteristic of the Acts of the Apostles is one of rejection of people one depends on. Charity springs from an act of faith made in a historical situation that grows by continually integrating the basis of that act. Old and new, 'flesh and spirit', schizoid tension between fall and faith join. Thus the New Testament christian grows in understanding by perilously balancing a new world of joy and the continued awareness in a heightened form of the corruption, death, of the old world. The glory of miracles is in liberation from the old, God must be affirmed in both his allowing a world of human misery, lack of control (*'every hair is numbered'*, yet *'they will flog you in Synagogues'*). And affirmed in his centrality in a change to control, acceptance and joy. Jesus rescues from God's creation. Thus God for this Church would be a contradiction, he is evil (note book of Job) and liberates people from his own creation. Jesus as our contemporary—a man—stands against any attempt at conceptualising God. In Jesus is both theism and atheism. Thereby in God are both.

### Answer in Cuba

Thus this Church will be exclusivist in both class and faith. It will carry the perilous ambivalence of the communist party. How can a party who understand the basis of society keep in contact with their fellow class who do not

understand. Perhaps only Mao and Castro have attempted an answer to this. Secondly it will have an ambivalence seen sharply in Cuba. How does the resurrected society which has destroyed the bases of violence and is pacifist within itself keep unity with the world it has left, still struggling in domination? How can it enjoy the fruits of its success without losing its ethic and a sense of guilt at its enjoyment of new life? Perhaps only by a New Testament tension between guilt at its own joy and a sense, dominant in Cuba, of it being the centre for the imminent overthrowal of dominance, the end of this tension. An imminent messianic success: Christ will come in the clouds, South America will reject the Yankees. Perfection would no longer disunify but fulfill an urgent sense of unity. The Church, as regenerate communism, must yearn for the situation where ambivalence between violence and non-violence is gone, where internal communication is merged properly with the necessity of carrying on a war of violence based on forced non-communication. Fulfillment is destruction. Perhaps it can only do this by erecting a rather ridiculous eschatology as Cuba and the synoptics did, an over confidence in the success of the revolution or of the Messiah. Note the arrogance of Mathew, *'go teach you all nations'*, a group of fishermen being silly; Paul in the Agora, what arrogance.

### Peace and War

The Church then should be not only working class but torn between violence and non-violence. The peace of Paul's royal priesthood intermingled with open drawing and provocation of violence which the early christians sought eagerly by seemingly ridiculous accuracy of conscience. An eagerness for violence that brought persecutions from Nero, pharisees, priests, etc. The resurrection clearly forced the old world by its overt challenge to all its norms to be violent in an overt way. The Church then always sought violence from others, now it must join in being violent. The old parody of creating open violence should be changed to open confrontation.

Also the Church cannot by its clear unity with the proletariat, indulge in its present frivolities. It cannot distinguish between throwing stones and sacking priests, between responsible protest and priests' petitions. It will see violence in the context in which it is seen in the New Testament; simplicity in complexity. The wheat shall be separated from the chaff, sheep from goats, *'you are either with me or against me; he who does not sow scatters'*. Violence is not just riots but the pharisees, whitened sepulchres, shiny chalices, harbouring corruption within the so-called non-

violent religious system. The Church could not talk of social reform with provisos, either one is with the downtrodden or against, to talk of means is to equivocate in a world that is against such intellectual idealisms. It is nice to ask Columbian landowners to be nice, difficult to do something about it.

#### Lukewarm

The Church will have to say; 'I know all your ways; you are neither hot nor cold. How I wish you were either hot or cold! But because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spew you out of my mouth'. In faith there are no half-ways, no reformism, one is either with Christ or against him, one cannot take a side without an openness to its methods. Methods developed from experience of capitalism. The evidence of the prophets, chiefly Jesus, is that the Church in this age will reject Christ. *All prophets are not heard in their own land*, in their own body or branches. *Jerusalem had not a stone upon a stone*. God is violent with those who reject him, they will be culturally and physically decimated, outside God's providence who is changing the world. The generation and the Church that rejected Jesus bore the judgement of all ages. Jesus said '*woe to this wicked generation*'. It was wicked not just be-

cause it rejected a prophet as had other ages, but a *great prophet*. If the Church, as all the evidence shows, similarly rejects a great prophecy in our age when it is so obvious to the converted, *those who have ears to hear let them hear, the eye is the lamp of the body, if the eye is sound then is the whole body filled with light*, the protection of God will cease. '*For if this is done with the wood when it is green what shall be done with it when it is dry?*' All the piousities of the Church shall be destroyed and a new Jerusalem may arise with no 'temple' no 'church' (Revelations). Once again it shall be the Samaritans, the outcasts, Gentiles who hear Christ's call. This time overtly rejecting Christ as historically now he symbolises the dominant system. Already the Church is receiving measure for measure for its failure; laughed at for 'Humanae Vitae', decimated, doubt ridden. One can only pray that at last it will respond to Christ to violent revolution and that its atheistic collaborators will help it in its task of internal self-understanding.

\*This is only a part of Jesus' political consciousness. It ignores his special relationship to God and Israel in history and politics. But it stresses His strong class-consciousness in an indigenous culture. More than Marx ever attained.

## BLACK POWER

by PATRICK CARROLL

**BLACK POWER.** The politics of liberation in America, STOKELY CARMICHAEL and CHARLES V. HAMILTON. Jonathan Cape. 30s.

"We are beginning to witness in this country a new thing. I am not at all sure", states one prominent negro, who is not a muslim, "that I want to be integrated into a burning house" "I might", says another, "consider being integrated into something more honest—but this? no, thank you, man, who needs it?" And this searching disaffection has everything to do with the emergence of Africa.

This quote from James Baldwin sums up eloquently much of the disaffection of the Afro-American people with the struggle for their emancipation. The ghetto uprisings in Watts, Harlem, Newark have brought out into the open the reality of what I.F. Stone has called "an

underdeveloped people in our very own midst". The official investigating commission, under Governor Kerner, has concluded that the U.S.A. is becoming polarized into two hostile nations, black and white and that the racism of the latter had produced the explosive mixture which had been accumulating for years in the cities. Gunnar Myrdal's assertion of an ameliorative trend in the position of the black man has been finally shattered as a growing number of black people realise that their struggle is not against the individual racism of Americans but rather against the institutional racism of the social structures.

The most potent expression of disaffection and the most radical solution comes from the notion of *Black Power*, developed and analysed in this book with a calm and professional eloquence that gives the lie to those who are so quick with accusa-

tions of extremism and reverse racism. The claim is that black Americans constitute an internal colonial people within the structures of white America, that black people should rally together and recognize their common heritage and then, united from a base of strength and pride, enter as full participants into a renewed and humanized open society.

They are at first concerned with demonstrating the colonial status of Afro-America, which they consider along three lines, social, economic and political.

### Social

Malcolm X recalls in his autobiography how he told his teacher that he planned to be a lawyer and was told that as a negro he should be realistic and settle for carpentry. To Carmichael-Hamilton this would be typical of the degradaton which the black people suffered, with their ambitions defined by the simple fact of being black and for no other reason. They would live according to the white man's definitions and any advance was to be in accordance with the white man's interests. Integration merely meant the assimilation into the very same white cultural milieu which set the limits on black ambitions and demanded the renunciation of black heritage as something unAmerican. Again the phrase is Malcolm X's "Integration is an image, it's a foxy northern liberal's smoke-screen that confuses the true wants of the American black man". Racial prejudice has been ingrained into American psychology since the Dred Scott judgement had declared that the black man was bereft of rights which the white man was bound to respect.

In reading the section on social colonialism I was reminded of a passage from one of Baldwin's novels—

"There seemed no woman who had not seen her father, her brother, or her son cut down without mercy, who had not seen her sister become part of the white man's great whorehouse, who had not all too narrowly, escaped that house herself, no man . . . who had not been made to bend his head and drink white man's muddy water, no man whose manhood had not been at the root sickened . . . yes, their parts were all cut off, they were dishonored . . . a bastard people, far from God, singing and crying in the wilderness".

### Economic

Up to the turn of the century the majority of black Americans lived in the Southern states, with only about 10% living in states towards the

north. This began to change drastically during the First World War and today up to 65% are urbanized, mainly outside the south. Up till 1914 the lowest rungs of the economic ladder were occupied by waves of immigrants, e.g. Irish and German. These took a step upwards when there arose a demand for qualified labour and their place at the bottom was taken by Italians and Poles. However with the war this source of labour ended. Despite this there arose a new demand for labour as the U.S. became a source of war materials to the allies in Europe. The Italians and Poles rose up on the economic ladder to supply the needs for skills but no immigrants came to fill their places at the bottom.

It was at this time that many negroes in the south began to lose their jobs on the farms due to mechanization and more intensive cultivation. For this reason the relative trickle of migration north shot up rapidly and became a flood:

1900's	.....	216,000
1910's	.....	480,000
1920's	.....	769,000
1950's	.....	1,170,000

The 3:1 rural-urban bias of the black population became completely reversed. For these migrants the future was to be much different than that for immigrants from abroad. For the latter there was the continuous "moving up the ladder" process which offered chances of amelioration to a whole ethnic group as demands for skills arose and the bottom rung became vacant for a new group. But for the new group of black migrants the only change was the transfer from one ladder (rural peasantry) to another (urban labourer).

This change has been economically beneficial to the negro but benefits stopped at that. "When we look at the figures for the Northern and Central states we find that the occupational status of the negro relative to the white has not improved appreciably since 1940".

### Ghetto Squalor

The conditions of life in black ghettos are now common knowledge—the Kerner Report gives a figure of 2-2.5 million blacks living in total squalor, 41% live below the poverty line and most explosive of all the rate of unemployment among non-white youths was 22.6% in 1965. General unemployment is over twice as high among negroes than among whites and these constitute a specially large group among the hard-core unemployed i.e. they make up 25% of all workers unemployed for 6 months or more.

And it is the young black people who suffer the most. Not only is the jobless rate so high among them but even for those with education opportunities are slim. "Even after completing college and spending at least one year in graduate school, a non-white can expect to do about as well as a white who only completed high school". "Non-white college graduates seem to be able to find professional jobs in large numbers but there is one big difference: Non-whites are concentrated in the lowest-paid professions".

What makes all this add up to a conclusion of colonial status for blacks is the fact that the status quo benefits many people who are adamant in having it maintained. These would include ghetto real estate agents who are adept at overcrowding and overcharging, employers who desire a large pool of unemployed to keep labour charges down, white workers who want protection from negro competition. Furthermore many white businesses outside the ghettos derive a significant custom from them and oppose any attempt to provide credit for the establishment of local businesses. One survey reported:

"The white power structure has collaborated in the economic serfdom of negroes by its reluctance to give loans and insurance to negro businesses". Small wonder then that some of the main targets of looters in riots are white businesses connected with the ghetto who 'keep the hated structure of oppression intact'".

### Political

Closely connected with the economic colonialism of blacks is the manipulation of their politics, ultimately designed to weaken any revolutionary potential in the black masses. To the latter the whites are seen to unite into a monolithic power structure in the face of black demands, considering their advantages as theirs "by right", sanctified by precedent and social consensus. Not only this, but the black man lives daily under the shadow of the "white power structure" and he sees its collaboration with rack-renting landlords, corrupt real estate agents and he sees its tardy approach to providing any form of basic civic facilities. The incidents in New York last September during Huey Newton's trial involving the ultra-rightist police group "the Law Enforcement Society" and the Black Panthers inspired me to read simultaneously James Baldwin's account of the role of the white police in black ghettos and Frantz Fanon's account of the role of the colonial police in a colony. The extraordinary similarity was eloquent proof of the Carmichael-Hamilton assertions.

### Tokenism

Like their counterparts in Africa, the domestic colonists in America use the negro establishment as a means of perpetuating their rule. Malcolm X is obsessed throughout his autobiography with sneering at the "yessir-bossing, foot-shuffling, head-scratching, token-integrated negroes". His attack on the 1963 march on Washington, which he calls the farce on Washington, while to my mind, as extremely funny as it is bitterly unfair, does however, provide a good clue to the attitude of militants. Initially the idea to march grew up spontaneously among the poverty stricken blacks. Realising this the white power structure sought to contain its fervour by calling in civil rights leaders, the result of which was the declaration from the white house that the march had official endorsement and approval. "It was like a movie", continues Malcolm X—"white philanthropists donating money, white liberal leaders joining upon the march, those very same liberals who had previously been march-nervous. Then the integration-mad negroes, who previously had vied with each other in attacks on the idea of the march, "ran over each other trying to find out where to sign up".

To Malcolm X, it was a circus "angry revolutionists . . . tripping and swaying along arm-in-arm with the very people they were supposed to be angrily revolting against . . . 'I have a dream' speeches while the black masses were having a nightmare".

What is important in this example is the skill with which the revolutionary mood was contained and it also shows how whites, even well-meaning ones, can too-often see blacks as objects and not subjects of politics. To Carmichael-Hamilton, token-integrated leaders lack a real power base in their own communities and are seen merely as emissaries of their white kingmakers who set the limits of their power. All too often these black representatives sell the pride and dignity of their communities in return for a few token crumbs.

### Co-optation

The real tragedy of tokenism is that it gives the potential leaders of the masses a stake in the existing order, while doing little or nothing for the masses. It is within this context that we must see the civil rights legislation. To preserve the loyalty of the black bourgeoisie and simultaneously to present a fair image abroad, it is necessary for the oligarchy to appear anti-racist. Token-integrated leaders will not be satisfied if they are continually harassed by Jim Crow signs in restaurants and hotels and it is important that there

should be no discrimination in housing so that the bourgeoisie can buy comfortable middle-class houses. The latter law is irrelevant to the mass of blacks who can't afford good houses and slum clearance programmes merely result in their being moved to worse slums. (There used to be a bitter joke among negroes equating "urban renewal" with "negro removal").

Similarly the minority chosen for integration are given access to power machines in industry and education while giving the impression that these are hard-won concessions by established civil-rights organisations (e.g. NAACP, GDRE). Any real revolutionary leadership that emerges is co-opted by money or flattery, those that refuse (H. Rap Brown, Huey Newton, Elridge Cleaver, Dick Gregory), all have seen the inside of American jails.

### Human, not Civil Rights

To the mass of American negroes the concessions offered to the chosen few become irrelevant when viewed against the revolutionary fervour in the third world. This brings the consciousness that the existing order of things means that they stay at the bottom of the ladder. All they can hope for is the overthrow of the status quo and its replacement by a society in which they will get not Civil Rights but full Human Rights.

One of the special features of black power is the declaration of identification with the Third World. Above all there is sympathy with those parts, e.g. Latin America and Vietnam, who suffer from the imperialist policies of White America. And this serves to reinforce their separation from white America, that former European colony which itself had now become "a monster in which the taints, the sickness and the inhumanity of Europe have grown to appalling dimensions". And to oppose or at least to neutralize the efforts of white America to oppress the Third World. Therefore SNNC denounces the war in Vietnam.

"We believe the U.S. government has been deceptive in claims of concern for the freedom of the Vietnamese . . . our work has taught us that the U.S. government has never guaranteed the freedom of oppressed citizens. We take note of the fact that 16% of the draftees are negro, called on to stifle the liberation of Vietnam, to preserve a "democracy" which does not exist for them at home".

And for H. Rap Brown the hour has come when black Americans must support their blood brothers "who have launched a revolutionary armed struggle against the fascist white governments of Rhodesia and South Africa".

### Africa

I have been especially impressed by the extraordinary change in the attitude of a new generation of blacks in America to Africa. Even Malcolm X, though his father was an avid disciple of Marcus Garvey's "Back to Africa" creed, recalls that his vision of Africa was of naked savages, cannibals, monkeys and steaming jungles. But now to Carmichael and Hamilton and one detects a complete new pride as they quote with approval the impressions of a black who had toured Africa.

"Everywhere I went people called me brother . . . It was good to be in Africa—to walk in a land knowing that your colour would not be held against you". I would think this vindicates the claim of Lewis Nkosi, the South African writer, that the greatest impetus to racial equality possible would be the liberation of South Africa so as to release her economic wealth for the benefit of the rest of Africa, thus giving that continent a greater status in the world which in turn would benefit all blacks throughout the world. And Nkosi goes on to examine how American black poets consider Africa. To many of the best ones, the black American was enduring an enforced exile from the scenes his ancestors loved.

"If we must die let it not be like hogs hunted and penned in an inglorious spot". But this is coupled with a desire to seek identity in a pluralistic American society but also, to some extent, to remain apart from that society. This enables a negro to say "look at the mess white people have made of this country. Only Negroes still have the moral strength and beauty to save this country".

Saving America links the politics of Black Power to the politics of modernization because any campaign to "deniggerize" the earth must recognize that the whole American system, i.e., the complex of institutions, values and beliefs, is racist in nature and calls for modernization. Consequently any structures derived from that system are inadequate for the demands of the black people who must then evolve parallel political structures especially by broadening political participation. Black Power also rejects the ends of white power with its emphasis on the sanctity of property—"this competitive, materialistic dog eat dog white man's world", as Malcolm X called it—"The creation of a new system is based on free people and not free enterprise.

Carmichael and Hamilton reject, out of hand, any idea of integration into middle-class America. This class, they claim, with its demands for "good government, law and order, free enterprise" is the class which reaps the rewards of the exploitation

of black ghettos, and is adamant in its vicious denial of equal opportunity to black people. It is thus, the backbone of institutional racism.

What Black Power argues is that blacks will only obtain a proper share in the power of the total society when they consolidate behind their own. It means that blacks should form and lead their own organisations and where they form a majority in the total society they can appoint their own sheriff, their own civic officials who will act to protect them from exploitation. Where they form a minority, black power demands proper representation—not black faces on boards but black representatives alive to the needs of their people who have a real power base in their own communities.

### White Power

The generation Carmichael represents has learned the hard way how white power, completely confident with its vast aggressive technology, has exercised its obscene menacing of the non-white world. The Third World suffers because it lacks as yet the political and economic power to hit back. Lewis Nkosi, in a telling story tells how young Africans feel ashamed that the Industrial Revolution did not start in Dahomey so that a sharp edge could be given to the humanistic cultures of Africa. What they recognise is that dignity and self-respect come with power and he goes on to tell of white settlers in Africa who had sworn they could never sit beside those "smelly blacks", yet they would sit quite happily with them once the country got independence.

The usual sneer at this analysis is that it amounts to reverse racism. But racism is concerned with the subjugation of a group—Black Power is a demand for participation in decision-making processes which govern the lives of black people. Blacks have been oppressed as a group, so they must seek justice as a group. Seeking justice for individuals merely forces them to forswear their identity as Afro-Americans. A group of black churchmen summed up the situation well: "Without the capacity to participate with power, i.e., to have some organised political and economic strength to really influence people with whom one interacts, integration is not meaningful.

... America has asked its negro citizens to fight as individuals, whereas at certain points in our history what we have needed most has been opportunity for the whole group. We must not apologise for the existence of this form of group power, for we have been oppressed as a group and not as individuals".

### Coalitions

The latter part of this book is a study of various case histories in the evolution of the Black Power idea. The authors throughout this section are obsessed with demonstrating the lack of value to the blacks in joining coalitions with other interest groups, e.g., labour unions and liberal bodies. The latter exist for pursuing their own specific goals which may only marginally coincide with the demands of black people and the former, which explicitly uphold capitalism, is often itself openly racist in behaviour, e.g., on gaining recognition by employers union leaders often demanded dismissal of black workers. Anyway the idea of coalition presupposes that what is good for America is good for its black people, when in fact the liberation of the latter clearly demands a complete re-orientation of American society and its values.

Therefore, Black Power is crucially linked with the politics of modernization. To effect this, SNCC decided to challenge the racist-segregationist Mississippi Democratic Party at the National election convention in 1964. This they did by putting into effect the notion of parallel political structures—setting up power bases openly in conflict with the racist power base of the local Democrats. This resulted in the formation of MFDP—Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. This was an open party, which supported the National party loyally, even to the extent of signing a loyalty oath (which few regulars did). They sought coalition with liberal bodies in the north in their fight for recognition. Initially support came but when it came to the crunch the liberals found that support for MFDP could mean the loss of Humphrey's candidature for Vice-President—this they were not able to countenance and so the coalition collapsed. The reason, non-identity of interests.

### LCFO

With this experience SNCC decided to choose a community with a black majority and to organise this community into an independent black majority and to organise this community into an independent black political party. Their workers chose Lowndes County and founded LCFO, Lowndes County Freedom Organisation with the black panther as its symbol. Here black people suffered in their domestic colony—86 white farmers owned 90% of the land and the whole power structure was under white control. In March 1965 no black had a vote—but by Nov. 1966, election-day, thousands were registered, the party LCFD was founded. Schools and workshops on civic offices started, booklets printed, and

6 candidates chosen for public offices. Predictably the white machine fought with every means from sheer terrorism (including murder) to economic intimidation (many tenants were evicted for political activity). But for blacks the act of registration was a demonstration of "a sense of being", of a rejection of other people's definitions of their abilities.

But the LCFO lost the election—whites acted in union with Democrats and Republicans not challenging each other. Furthermore, many blacks did not vote for their own people, some due to intimidation, some because they had simply been embedded in the belief that politics was "white folks business". But LCFO had got enough votes for it to be confident of future victory the unity shown in their experience convinced them that it was "an idea whose time has come".

### Urban Life

It is, however, in urban America that Black power is most relevant. An increasing proportion of Americans are becoming urbanized, the blacks especially. It is among these people, for whom institutional racism has created conditions of de facto segregation in e.g. ghetto schools, that talk of integration is meaningless. What is relevant is the quality of facilities. In education, the quality is hopelessly inadequate, one authority saying that 75% of black children graduating in 1967 were functional illiterates. "The reason is the attitude of school administrators to black people". Black power's response is a call to black parents to organise and to demand control over schooling—over hiring and firing teachers, over standards, etc. They cite a case in Harlem where parents, knowing that only when there were white pupils would a quality education be given, demanded integration of a new school. The local schools board failed to do this, so the parents reacted by demanding control of the school. They even went to the extent of moving from the public gallery into the meeting hall during a board meeting and elected a people's board. (They were, of course, arrested). Again the creation of a parallel structure failed but again the notion of potential power was implanted.

And in other spheres Black Power comes into its own with calls to black people in slums to organize rent strikes against absentee landlords who fail to maintain their houses, to organize demands on white merchants operating in the black community to return a portion of their profits to the community in the form of jobs for blacks, to create unions of welfare recipients actually taking an official role in administering the welfare departments.

### White Liberals

And in all this, where stands the poor white liberal. Neil Middleton quotes an analogy used by Carmichael at an English conference. He compared a white liberal with a man who sees another pulling a gun on a defenceless third person—the liberal goes to the threatened man and declares his solidarity in this moment of test instead of doing something about the attacker. The white man can help by preaching non-violence in the white community and doing something about the racist institutions of capitalist society. The black man does not want a tolerable life in an intolerable society—he wants a more human, more open society, a demand reflected in the quote at the outset.

### A New Culture

What emerges from all this is a new culture, one of resistance to imperialism, whose echoes are now to be heard from Newark to the sound of freedom fighters' bullets in Southern Africa. And it is a culture which has its own intellectuals to articulate it—from Che Guevara in Latin America to Frantz Fanon in Algeria to Elridge Cleaver in Black America. And it is the latter, now in a Californian jail, who has said: "We shall have our manhood. We shall have it or the earth will be levelled by our attempts to gain it".

At the turn of the century W.E.B. Dubois defined the problem of the 20th century as the problem of the colour-line. It is a heartening thought that "new and self-justifying voices" such as the ones in this book are there to present solutions and it is from these voices that we can humbly learn some lessons in practical socialism and Christianity.



# The Educational Policy of the Irish Labour Party—Part II

By GARRETH BYRNE

Based on the (we hope) outmoded Labour policy *Challenge and Change in Education* (March 1963).

He is still teaching in Zambia in Kawambwa to be exact. Write to him if you like.

In the section on vocational education the Labour Party proposes to close down or amalgamate one or two-room schools and to provide larger schools serving general areas, with subsidised school transport. It recommends the establishment of regional or provincial colleges to provide advanced technological instruction similar to that obtainable currently in Kevin St., Bolton St. and Rathmines. But as McElligot has observed (see my previous article in *Grille* 2) the already existing vocational schools have "only partially corrected" regional imbalance in the provision of post-primary facilities. More secondary type, non-vocational facilities are needed and while admitting this the Labour Party says it will be done in accordance with the OECD survey (which at the time, 1963, was still under preparation). As a result of the OECD findings "persons or bodies should be encouraged by school building grants to set up sizable central secondary schools or expand existing schools in the areas of greatest need".<sup>1</sup>

I find this statement curious coming from a Party which has lately declared its belief in Socialism. Mr. Brendan Corish has stated that in his view Socialism entails State initiative in various fields, and for the Labour document to suggest that new regional secondary schools be built by "persons or (presumably religious) bodies" rather than by the State, is a *negation of State initiative*.<sup>2</sup> The Labour Party must surely realise that regional imbalance in secondary school facilities is a result of such schools being left solely in the hands of non-State organisations.

Indeed the Party's founder, James Connolly, would be the first to point out the importance of State planning in the building of schools. Speaking in a different context over 50 years ago he said: "In order to cater to the rival churches the question of school accommodation has been left to the zeal of the various denominations, with the result that there are at least

ten small schools where one large one could more efficiently and economically meet the requirements of the district. Instead of the magnificent public schools of American, Scottish or English towns we have in our cities squalid, unhealthy, wretched abominations where teaching is a torture to the teacher and learning a punishment to the taught".<sup>3</sup> Connolly was referring to primary schools but the same could be said for secondary schools, if we ignore the tailpiece about unhealthy conditions (which is certainly valid for primary schools as the I.N.T.O. strike in Ardfert, Co. Kerry demonstrated in January 1968). He went on to suggest that: "The democracy of Ireland . . . must address itself to the extension of its ownership and administration of the schools of Erin".<sup>4</sup>

Here then is a major weakness in Labour's educational policy. It appears to be vague as to how secondary schools will be provided and fails to mention the possibility of building comprehensive schools. Since the document has mentioned the desirability of ending the system whereby education will no longer be regarded as ". . . divided into four watertight compartments—primary, secondary, vocational and university . . ." <sup>5</sup> it is reasonable to expect proposals for the establishment of comprehensives. In England such schools are being built, among other reasons, as an attempt to eliminate distinctions between technical, grammar and public school education. But all Labour suggests is an easier method of transferring from secondary to vocational school and vice versa.<sup>6</sup>

Fine Gael's Education Policy makes little mention of comprehensive schools. It proposes to increase capitation grants to privately owned lay schools so as to encourage the building of more such schools where the lay teacher can exercise the sort of responsibility and imagination so often tragically denied to him in clerically-controlled schools. It proposes also to increase grants to existing State-owned comprehensive schools for the same purpose. Fine Gael however does not intend to merge existing secondary schools with vocational schools. The policy of the three largest parties in the 26 counties is to preserve, intentionally or otherwise, the present distinctions between vocational and secondary education. Fine Gael states: "We have been fortunate hitherto

that our secondary (post-primary) system in the clear-cut way that the English system is, viz. between secondary modern, grammar and public schools. A division does exist here between vocational and secondary schools, but because our secondary (post-primary) education is provided on a far more extensive scale in Ireland than grammar and public school education is provided in England, the class element that undoubtedly exists between vocational and secondary schools here is *less obtrusive* and *less harmful*". (my emphasis). Far from trying to break down the barriers between secondary and vocational schools the Fine Gael Party is content to sweep the dust under the carpet by enabling more and more pupils to be accommodated in vocational institutions and somehow make distinctions appear "less obtrusive". The Labour Party is no better on this matter.

I would suggest that when Labour is drawing up a new educational policy it should deal with the subject of comprehensive schools. They will not eliminate classes or make for an egalitarian society<sup>7</sup> for this could only come about through a total transformation of the socio-economic structures and institutions within this society. But they will aid the development of maturity and co-operation. I would suggest also the advisability of all primary and post-primary schools being appropriated by the State. Let me not be misunderstood here. I do not advocate State control of the school curriculum (there is too much of that already c.f. Mr. Brian Lenihan's attempt to neglect the vernacular, English or Irish, in the Leaving Certificate. We also see the danger of State control of the curriculum in France and the Soviet Union). I do however support State ownership and planning of school buildings. This has two advantages: it corrects the disparity between the rural and urban areas caused by a laissez faire policy, and it ensures that physical conditions of schools, particularly primary schools, will be adequate if the central or local government is directly responsible for maintenance. The managerial system of primary schools is particularly ineffective, many of the clergy being already overburdened with other pastoral duties which often prevent them from devoting sufficient attention to the school buildings under their care. A third advantage I have mentioned, above: if post-primary schools were nationalised lay teachers could work on an equal footing with their qualified clerical colleagues and would have an equal chance of gaining administrative posts such as headmaster.

It would be feasible for a Socialist Government to implement a policy of clamping down on the building of new schools by religious orders and other private groups. The next step would be the building of state comprehensives in needy areas or the conversion of secondary and vocational schools into comprehensive institutions. The curriculum (including the subject of religion) would be laid down and suitably altered from time to time by parents, teachers and, where possible, pupils, in consultation with the Ministry of Education which would preserve democratic decision-making from the threat of authoritarian interference. Where religious education is concerned the hierarchical interests would probably have to be allowed a substantial say in the matter. However this wish would be granted provided the remainder of the curriculum were left in the hands of the triangular control.

Such are a few of the suggestions I would offer as an alternative socialist educational program to the present system. I would hope that parties such as Labour, Sinn Fein and the Irish Workers Party would give them some consideration and adopt what they think suitable.

In two articles I have only been able to deal with a small part of Labour's educational policy. The policy was drawn up before the appearance of Investment in Education and the Report on Higher Education and this accounts for lack of detail in certain crucial sections of the policy. Accordingly a new policy document would be welcome.

In January last (1968) a Labour research group, LORG, was formed to study economic, social, legal and educational matters. One expects something useful on Education will eventually emerge from the activities of the Group.

1. *Challenge and Change in Education*, P. 12.
2. cf. article "Corish Speaks" in an issue of *The Irish Student*, Michaelmas Term, 1967. "My basic idea of Socialism is that the State should be held responsible and take the initiative for the development of the economy and looking after its citizens as far as social welfare, health, housing and education are concerned". (This is an inaccurate definition of Socialism: it is merely State Capitalism).
3. James Connolly: *Labour in Ireland* (Dublin) 1922, PP. 311-12.
4. *ibid*: P. 312.
5. *op. cit*: P. 2.
6. *ibid*: PP. 19-20.
7. The following quotation from A. H. Halsey's review of *Resources in Education* by John Kaizey could also be applied to comprehensive schools: "The chances of higher education have risen fourfold since the 1920's but the class gradient of unequal chances is substantially unaltered". *The Listener*, 4 July, 1968. P. 21.

# Student Unrest: A Test Case

by ERWIN STRUNZ

The Senior member of our editorial board who has himself seen many of the great movements of this century analyses a new phenomenon.

The universities accentuate, legitimise and perpetuate class differences. The present trend in our society is the abolition of such differences. Hence the crisis in the universities. In the march of time students feel to be out of step. This realisation and the attempts to bring the universities into line with the spirit of the time is the historic merit of student movements. The protests, sometimes riots, are the expression of dissatisfaction not only with academic conditions but with the whole state of our society, its crimes, follies and stifling conformity. The young people loath a society which maximizes prestige, status and profits and minimises the principles of the common good and of utility in general.

By all their youthful exuberance the students have a far clearer and more realistic appraisal of the state of our society than any other section of the community. They go down to fundamentals, to the things that count in human life and make it meaningful and dignified. The rest of us judge student revolts from a bourgeois point of view in terms of good jobs, positions and honours. Most of us have either forgotten or don't want to see the evils in our society, still fewer dare to change them.

## The May Revolution

The May revolution in France has shown the weakness of the present order. It has also proved the practical possibility of a non-violent social revolution. It only collapsed because it had not developed a sound social theory with a unifying programme and because the government was supported by the army and the class society. The French students, like the American students before, felt that the reforms in the universities were inseparably linked with sweeping reforms in society.

Many students have come under the influence of the thinking of Che Guevara, Marcuse, Debray, Fanon and Reich, and revolt against the unfreedom of a formal democratic freedom and the fetters of repression in the traditional Western type of tolerance. This was reflected in a student's press conference in Paris, June 25, in which they

systemized the thoughts of the May revolution in the 14 articles of the Charter of Nanterre. The new man of the future is to be unoppressed, creative, uninhibited and unclassed. "Critical" universities should be founded, completely freed from the ties of the class society. The barrier between study and labour must be broken down and the "meritocratic" division between intellectuals and workers abolished. Those of the elder generation like myself will recall the thoughts of Tolstoy who believed that the ills of the world were the result of the deep rift between scholars and workers.

## Neo Nazism

The students of West Germany were the last to revolt. West Germany had come again under the control of the same all-powerful financial and industrial corporations who had financed Hitler to break the power of the labour movement. The leading generals, the justices the captains of finance and industry as well as the higher government officials are, with very few exceptions, former nazis. The students believe that the machinations of those people have encouraged the growth of the neo-nazi party which gained 1,800,000 votes at the last provincial elections. The students watch with apprehension the revanchist policy of the Bonn government. The students had opposed the Emergency Laws which the government succeeded in getting through parliament, because they abolish personal freedom and make opposition organisations illegal. Demonstrations against the war in Vietnam had been suppressed by the police with batons, waterguns, tear gas and on-the-spot jailing. The German students face the most authoritarian apparatus in the universities and find themselves like the working people robbed of elementary human and democratic rights.

They were naturally alarmed by the attempted assassination of their popular leader Rudi Dutschke in Berlin, earlier this year. Fittingly, the assassin is a self-confessed admirer of Hitler. While many students were far from agreeing with Dutschke's views, they regarded him as a symbol of constructive unrest. The radical right circles have enraged students opinion by bringing the gun into student politics. The number of critical students grew so vastly that it constituted an extra-parliamentary movement which

drew the justification for its actions from the fact that parliament no longer expressed the true wishes of the people. The arguments in favour of police terror and the inspiration for inflammatory anti-student speeches had first been insinuated and were later shouted from the rooftops by the most unscrupulous manipulator of public opinion the crypto-nazi press baron Springer. His publishing concern fed its readers with lurid reports about student violence but never gave any reasons for this to satisfy the curiosity of the less mentally retarded.

"Der Christ in der Welt", a catholic quarterly published in Vienna had in its June issue an article by Rolf Niemann: "The critical students and our society" which analyses the German student unrest.

### Irresponsibility

The writer touches upon the conflict between the irresponsibility of science which lacks moral purposes and the demands of a future professional life which insists upon complete subordination to a reign of purposes and gain values. Present scientific approaches offer no solutions acceptable to young people who are deeply disturbed by their special situation. Some academic teachers can't just cope with the questions of their students, some don't take them seriously and others satisfy their scientific ambitions outside the lecture rooms. Lectures often degenerated into routine exercises, seminars are improvised. University professors should therefore not be surprised to see their authority questioned. As it is, this authority rests often enough on hardly more than office, tradition and picturesque medieval display which no longer impresses the critical student.

Social pressures increased the tension. The conflicts in the universities are the expression of the conflicts outside. The Wirtschaftswunder resulted in a formidable German lead on the world market. The closing of this competitive gap disclosed the neglect of scientific and technical training during the hay days and the educational apparatus could no longer cope with the new situation. The economic leaders begun to worry about the danger of falling below world standards and pressed for urgent reforms in higher education, to permit a fuller and quickened use of the work potential. University courses were cut down, matriculations hurried up and a host of new types of interim and final examinations were introduced, all of which nourished a job-orientated opportunism which critical students defined as intellectual pressure.

### Economic Dependence

The dependence of universities and students on the vicissitudes of the economic situation is demonstrated as much by the cuts in state subsidies as by the character of the present reforms which seek to utilize the absolvent immediately after his finals. Student demands for a democratisation of university life significantly met the resistance of university authorities and conservative elements outside.

Other reasons for the student unrest in West Germany were found in the growing demand for a dialogue with the East, in the defects inherent in the parliamentary coalition between the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats, in the pro and contra of German participation in NATO. And particularly in the opposition to the introduction in parliament of the Emergency Laws demanded by aggressive and powerful conservative circles, which, if enacted would nullify human and democratic rights again at the lifting of a nazi general's baton. German students found that the policy of their government had become too sterile and too immobile for a quickly changing world and the disastrous moral impact of the war in Vietnam as well as that of the occupation of Czechoslovakia resulted in a degeneration of the sense of international justice. As for justice in Germany itself, their bloody experiences taught them a lesson of the practices of a nazi-run police and a legal profession which shared in the prosecution of democratic students, in violation of their oath of loyalty to the democratic constitution.

### Extra Parliamentary

All these reasons have prompted students to create an extra-parliamentary opposition, since parliament itself had failed to form critical democratic organs for the control and correction of evil forces in West German society. Critical students feel a deep need for a scientific and analytic penetration of the forces and forms of our society and for a better understanding of the social-economic process which should enable them to act and intervene in the light of everyday experience and participation. For this basic idea of a critical university neither the traditional nor the reformed academical bodies have any sympathy. In discussions going on since 1967, students of the university and the technical colleges of West Berlin formulated the following programme: (1) Critical Universities are to make the political aims and actions of the radical-democratic opposition more effective and popular through critical and

scientific analysis. (2) The Critical University is a new form of organisation for academical reforms and permanent university critique. It shall on all occasions, independently, and with the help of interested lecturers and experts, organise the studies of such subjects and methods which have been hindered or excluded from the work of the universities. (3) The Critical University seeks to prepare students for a political role in their future professions to resolve the conflict between individual political convictions and the non-political professional work which is nevertheless interest-directed by privileged pressure groups. Such a political role must be organised and have solidarity to avoid the ineffectiveness of individual critique which endangers the success of such a critique together with the social and professional

position of the critic and make him an easy target for reactionaries.

#### Christian Renewal

The would-be assassin of Rude Dutschke is the misguided tool of a far reaching conspiracy of extremely powerful industrialists, generals and opinion-mongers like Springer. Dutschke towers morally over them. In one of his last speeches in the Evangelical Academy in Bad Boll he declared: "it would be counter-revolutionary and politically dangerous to use force in the transforming process of our society as the Vietcong do in Vietnam". The fascinating fact is that student revolts, while occasionally perhaps fanned by communists, are most effective whenever they remain within the terms of reference of a Christian renewal.

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# LETTERS

17 Clonmel Road,  
Dublin.

Dear Editor,

I read *Grille 2* with interest and annoyance. I am a Marxist and not a Christian and therefore maybe I am not entitled to write for the magazine. I am not even Irish. And though I can appreciate that certain of the philosophical criticisms of capitalism made by Marx and Engels can be safely repeated and even furthered by Christian thinkers and that the superiority of a socialist system can be happily explained, I do not see how you can come to terms with the real meaning of Marx's words that philosophers have sufficiently explained the world and that it is time now to change it. From this point on, I only see endless clashes, taking it purely on a philosophical plane, between Christianity and Marxism. Marx himself made this plain enough. I think therefore your magazine needs a discussion on this basic point. To misquote Lenin, it is hardly appropriate to learn syntax before you have grasped the alphabet.

Yours etc.,  
Harry Gilbert

Piperstown,  
Tallaght.

Dear Sir,

I read your second issue from cover to cover with great interest and eyes ever widening. Perhaps what I found most exceptionable were a couple of remarks in your editorial. Unintentionally perhaps they spoil a lot of the other material for me. They gave it a slant, if I may put like that.

First, there should be no "must" about the coalescing of Marxists and Christians for the future well being of Irish society. If Ireland is not big enough to hold both groups in all their strict individuality then I for one would think it time to leave. Would I not be right to think that your magazine wants to hold the balance in a dialogue? If that is so don't force the dialogue to become a monologue. The vision of *Grille* becoming establishment and going out of business seems a bit premature.

Also, whether from temperamental deficiency or not, I really find a phrase like "brotherhood of hatred of the bright whizz boys of Fine Gael and Fail" very unpleasant. One may hate the sin but must one hate the sinner? Modern egalitarianism

may be based on resentment but Christianity is not. To talk of a brotherhood of hatred is, in Christian terms, a frivolity, if nothing worse. But the trouble with revolutionaries is that they have this terrible lust for "results". "There is no time", they say: we've heard the cry before.

Yours, etc.,  
Patrick Pye

## Editor's Note

The 'strict individuality' of these groups must go. We do not demand in frigid isolation the forced integration of Christians and Marxists under the strict tutelage of Big Brother *Grille*. What we demand to be clear is that neither group could be the same and very often would coalesce if the Church which is stifling its history had its power basis kicked from under it by a political revolution. Christians for the sake of Christ and their own fulfillment must upset the bandwagon of the church as it careers through the suffering world with cabman Paul reading the Encyclicals of Pius XII.

I used the word hatred because we are all human. And because to me it is quite clear that Christ (and Marx) saw that the sinner becomes the sin to use some christian jargon. Pharisees and businessmen may not be conscious of individual transgression of their moral code but they are sinners in a very real brutal sense. They are part of a sinful class. One loves the human who is degraded by being part of this dominant system but one hates him as a non-person in most senses of the word. 'Brotherhood of hatred' comes from a situation where human aggression and hatred are channelled into an understood language of emancipation. One ceases to hate a striking dustman and hates the dehumanised face of militant bourgeois TACA organisation. Brotherhood lies not in the hatred but in the understanding.

It is very difficult to humanise the faceless directorial class of Ireland as they manipulate Irish capital and people: (Maurice Dockrell—perhaps, James Dillon—probably, TACA—NO!). At least Jesus could walk in with dirty feet to dinner with a Pharisee and insult him to his face. Now one might only barely reach the steps of the club. We feel no shame whatsoever in hating the behaviour of the blind guides who run our country and hire politicians, or in having a lust for results. Results that would liberate both them and us in a new Ireland.

J.F.

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