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FAITH AND FREEDOM

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL DEBATE

WILLIAM JOHNSON

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FAITH AND FREEDOM

Faith and Freedom is a voice of the libertarian — persistently recommending the religious philosophy of limited government inherent in the Declaration of Independence. The chief intent of the libertarian is not pedagogy, but rather the further discovery and application of the Creator's changeless principles in a changing world.

While speaking against the present-day Goliath, the totalitarian state, we work for no special interest. Freedom under God is in the interest of *every* peaceful, self-respecting man of faith, whether he is in a factory or on a farm, in business or in the pulpit. If a government or a philosophy does not serve to safeguard his freedom — regardless of whether he is in a minority or a majority — then that government or philosophy is his enemy. A Communist, Socialist, Fascist or other authoritarian government is always such an enemy; and a democratic government espousing a paternalistic philosophy straightway becomes such an enemy.

As the journalists of Spiritual Mobilization, our editorial policy is based on a profound faith in God, the Author of liberty, and in Jesus Christ, who promoted persuasion in place of coercion as the means for accomplishing positive good.

Our credo is the long-standing credo of Spiritual Mobilization: Man, being created free as a child of God, has certain inalienable rights and responsibilities; the state must not be permitted to usurp them: it is the duty of the church to help protect them.

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WILLIAM JOHNSON, *Editor*

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THE SOCIAL GOSPEL DEBATE— A CASE STUDY

WILLIAM JOHNSON

CHURCHMEN ARE FINDING THEMSELVES IN LIVELY CONTROVERSY OVER WHAT CONSTITUTES THE CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS. THE UPSHOT IN THE CONGREGATIONAL DENOMINATION HAS BEEN AN INVESTIGATION OF ITS COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL ACTION.

President Lincoln did not have a church dispute in mind, but he could have had. A friend of the President's had said to him: "I hope that the Lord is on our side."

Lincoln startled the friend by abruptly replying that this was not his own hope. Lincoln explained: "I am not at all concerned about that, for we know that the Lord is always on the side of the right. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord's side."

As church members find themselves in heated controversies about the Christian approach to social problems, Lincoln's "prayer" might direct them to objective thinking rather than to subjective slander. One of the most active disputes within the church, centers around the meaning of the Gospel in its application to political and economic matters. There are few who would claim that the teachings of Christ do not apply to such matters. The main argument is over *how* the Christian Gospel should be applied — what means should be employed to achieve commonly-held goals.

An ever-growing number of churchmen have become concerned about the steps taken and measures advocated by their denominational "social action" agencies. The situation within the Congregational Christian Churches has been particularly acute. Their Council for Social Action (CSA) has undergone extensive investigation during the past two years. Because the outcome may have an important bearing on the eventual outcome of the social action debate in other Christian denominations, *Faith and Freedom* readers will want to know more of the details.

WILLIAM JOHNSON is editor of Faith and Freedom.

Introducing the Disputants

In the CSA dispute, both the concept of the Social Gospel and the propriety of the Congregational agency's activities and pronouncements are under question. The opposition to the CSA is led by a group of loosely-organized laymen who now call themselves "The League to Uphold Congregational Principles." Chairman of the League is a Minneapolis businessman, F. A. Bean, who has virtually given up his commercial pursuits in order to devote his time to seeking a solution of the knotty social action problem. Leadership of the forces defending the CSA is supplied by the Co-Chairman of the Council for Social Action, Dean Liston Pope of the Yale Divinity School, and by Ray Gibbons, Director in charge of the CSA staff.

Early in 1952, in an attempt to settle the controversy, a Board of Review was officially empowered to examine the claims and counterclaims in the light of Congregational polity and beliefs. After a year and a half of study, the Board issued its report this last October. The findings and recommendations stated in the report are to be reviewed by the individual Congregational churches with a view toward reaching a settlement at the next session of the denomination's General Council in the summer of 1954. Congregationalists must give careful

and prayerful attention to the issues involved because they affect the very foundation and future of their denomination.

To understand the problem facing the Congregationalists, one should be familiar with the "bill of particulars." Speaking as "an individual Congregational parish minister" affiliated neither with the laymen's League nor with the CSA, the Reverend Howard Conn divided the principal issues into the two categories of structure and message.

The Question of Structure

In the category of structure, Mr. Conn described the issue this way: "Congregationalism has chosen to stress local autonomy and individual freedom. We must recognize that this does put a limitation on our right to make denominational *pronouncements*. If this practice seems to anyone too high a price to pay for freedom, then he ought to join a denomination which operates under a different system."

This was the same understanding of Congregationalism that the League had evinced. It had charged that the CSA had been overstepping its bounds by giving the impression that it was the voice of the entire denomination on political matters.

In answering this charge, the CSA people said that only a minor part of their activity was directed toward publicly representing the denomination; that the major portion of their energies and finances were used to speak *to* the churches.

Furthermore, the CSA claimed that its "charter" authorized its propaganda efforts; for the denomination's by-laws called for an agency that would not only direct its educational efforts "primarily toward the local churches but [would] also envisage the cultivation of public opinion. . . ."

The CSA also advised that since January 1951 it had been introducing its testimony before congressional committees with a prepared statement designed to indicate that the CSA was speaking only for itself and not for the denomination. Regarding this formula, though, Mr. Conn observed that it bordered on double-talk: while the qualifying statement technically denied representation of the whole denomination, it bid for the moral effect of such.

However, the CSA was inclined to believe that clerical experts *should* apply the full weight of their denomination to the solution of social problems. A writer in one of the CSA publications put it this way: "While the church leaders do not have a special gift of the Holy Spirit, there are certain reasons why many professional workers, especially in social action agencies, are able to see above the narrow class interests which unhappily characterize large segments of their denominations."

But speaking to this issue, the Board of Review found that the CSA had not taken the limitations in its charter seriously enough. The Board further observed: "The Council has found it easy to turn aside from the slow task of education, which is often full of frustration, to the field of political action where tangible results seem to be more immediately in evidence." The Board cautioned that the main function of the CSA was to speak *to* the churches rather than *for* them. In making public pronouncements, the CSA was admonished to speak out only when it had the affirmative approval of fourteen of its eighteen members. The Board held that the CSA was an agent of the denomination and should not act as though independent of its control.

Yet, the Board's report concluded that in instances where the Council may be sure of substantial unanimity in the denomination as to a political course of action, the churches *can* look to the CSA as the agency to express their mind for them. But one of the Board, Congressman Walter Judd, could not agree with this conclusion, for he asked: "How does [the CSA] determine whether there is 'substantial unanimity . . .'?" Furthermore, thought Mr. Judd, if there were substantial unanimity in any instance, pronouncements ought to come from the

denomination's General Council (the representative body of the Congregational churches).

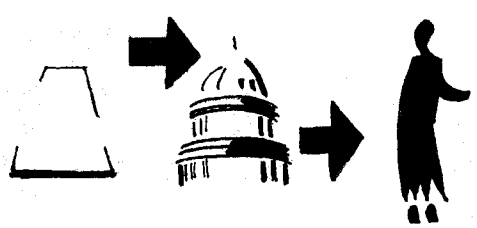
Second Major Issue: Message

In the category of message, the Congregational controversy came closer to the Social Gospel squabbles in other denominations. Most social action professionals have banded together in an interdenominational group called "Christian Action." In their publication, *Christianity and Society*, their executive secretary described the function of the professionals in this way:

"On account of the nature of our resources, . . . we are not sufficient in number, in strength, or in financial resources to have . . . a very profound . . . impact. On the other hand . . . many of us are in positions of leadership, I may say of power, within the churches. When we use our resources through the institutions of the churches we multiply our effectiveness because we use them where they carry some weight. All of us are in a position, and all of us can get ourselves into a better position, to advance our common convictions through the religious institutions to which we have direct access."

This use of the churches, however, is the reason why various denominations are having their revolts. Churchmen dislike being used as a means to implement someone's political program. In describing this aspect of the Congregational controversy, the League made two points: (1) The CSA — in suggesting solutions to social problems—had been acting primarily as a political agency; (2) The CSA had been partisan in its politics.

Regarding these points, the League concluded in its statement to the Board of Review: The CSA "has supported, almost without exception, legislation requiring greater governmental interference and governmental coercion." Examples of legislation endorsed by the CSA are:



compulsory health insurance, price control and rationing, public housing, the "Full Employment Act," federal aid to education, FECP, federal hydroelectric authorities, extension of social security, and farm supports.

The CSA defense was not constructed to deal with these accusations. There was not much it could say except to reaffirm a belief in the American economy — with a qualified statement. This the defense did by quoting from the CSA magazine: "We seek a relationship of free enterprise and social control. . . ." They explained that they believe social controls are "needed in the areas of (1) the total money demand for goods: that is, economic stabilization; (2) the distribution of income and property; and (3) private monopoly." In effect, the CSA statement lent support to the allegations of the League.

So it was not surprising when the Board of Review found that the CSA's "literature has sometimes been definitely slanted in the direction of a particular political or economic program." The Board became even more critical when it opined, for instance, that the CSA "should never assume the prerogative of committing the denomination to any specific political or economic program."

The CSA had gotten off the track at the very outset when it equated Christian action with its own Social Gospel political program. The Reverend Howard Conn, in his statement to the Board of Review, defended the Social Gospel on the grounds that Jesus had shown a special concern for the problems of society. Conn made a distinction, however, between social problems and the social means of attacking these problems. Mr. Conn wrote: "Jesus was as interested in social problems as individual problems; His approach to the solution was from the personal rather than the collective angle." Thus Mr. Conn saw no cause for Christian action to be equated with political action.

In addition to the leftist slant of the CSA materials, the League charged that the CSA had been acting primarily as a propaganda rather than an educational institution. By this was meant that the CSA had been partisan in its research; that its publications did not present all the dominant points of view on social,

economic, philosophic and political questions.

The League employed a chart to indicate the CSA's one-sidedness. The chart compared the major planks in the CSA domestic program with the stand taken by the CIO, the Methodist Federation for Social Action and the Communist Party. The League concluded: "The real tragedy in this situation is that a research and educational agency . . . which should presumably be approaching social problems from a critical basis, finds itself so continuously in agreement with three organizations which are known not to have done so." Mr. F. A. Bean, speaking the sentiments of League members, lamented the fact that the CSA had not "approached these controversial matters in the judicial manner which would help Congregationalists to evaluate truly their Christian social responsibilities."

At one of numerous Congregational forums where CSA policies and practices were discussed, a member of the audience asked speaker Ray Gibbons, the CSA Director: "How are we to know that the CSA representative knows anything more about the Will of God than anybody else?"

Mr. Gibbons replied, "The answer is he does not, but he is given time and a group of fellow Congregationalists to work at the problem. . . . But we do not stand and say the position that we take is a Christian position, and other positions are not Christian."

No reply could have been more definite. Yet it was another CSA admission that it usually advances a particular line of thinking, instead of presenting *various* Christian points of view. Another time Mr. Gibbons *directly* rejected the "both sides and educate" approach: "The critics want to reduce the CSA to uttering innocuous platitudes. How can an agency 'educate' unless it has some goals, some positions to which it leads people?"

The CSA believed it had a "democratic mandate to witness to the conviction of an advanced minority." Co-Chairman Liston Pope was proud that the CSA had "charted the way for establishing . . . agencies to speak without being chained to majority or consensus."

In replying to the "propaganda versus education" issue, the Board of Review criticized the CSA for its partiality: "That the By-Laws provide 'In its research the Council will aim to be impartial' seems to have been forgotten by the Council in its activities." The CSA "should present all essential aspects of every controversial question with which it deals on which Christians may fairly differ. It ought even to present views which have no support within the church if they are important to contemporary thought. . . . We do not wish . . . to imply that the Council should not present its own view, which would be properly assessed in such a framework. . . . "

Appraising the Board's Report

When all was considered, the findings of the Board of Review tended to support the allegations of the laymen's League. But in view of these findings, how closely did the Board's *recommendations* then follow the League's recommendations?

★ League recommendation: *Funds for CSA use should be kept separate from funds going to the benevolences.* The Board disregarded this one. All it said was that sufficient denominational funds should be provided for the CSA.

★ League recommendation: *CSA publications should adopt an educational approach rather than a propaganda line.* Board recommendations supported the League by requiring the CSA to "present the principal positions on which Congregational Christians may fairly differ."

★ League recommendation: *Shake up the CSA staff to get representation of all dominant social viewpoints.* The Board did recommend that CSA staff members be competent and "happy to work" under an educational rather than a propaganda setup. But it made no provision for replacing the present staff.

★ League recommendation: *The CSA should make no pronouncements on behalf of anyone, even itself.* Despite words of criticism and caution, the Board was disposed to leave the CSA with some leeway to continue making pronouncements directed to both the public and to government legislative bodies.

A person looking objectively at the report of the Board of Review would be apt to conclude that although the judge found in favor of the

plaintiff, the court's specific ruling did little to change the status quo.

Nevertheless, this social action episode in the Congregational denomination has been of real help in that it has pointed up some of the issues which must be settled before there can be a harmonious Christian approach to social problems. Some of the issues might be summarized as follows:

(1) The argument that legislation can be influenced by the weight of moral authority as well as by weight of numbers appears to be logical. But there is a serious question about whether an agency selected and financially supported by a *religious* denomination can qualify its testimony so that legislators will place no significance on the identity and size of the sponsoring organization. That is the dilemma facing those Christians who want their church to speak to government without appearing to apply political pressure.

(2) The church professionals who are active in the social action movements want to be recognized as reflecting their churches' thoughts on economic and political matters. Yet at the same time, they want to look to themselves as the vanguard, out in front of laity positions in these matters. We would not be overstating the case to say that this is no mean task.

(3) Many Christians cry: "Enough of social action, give us Christian conduct instead." The philosophy underlying this outcry questions whether the Social Gospel (of the social actionists) is truly any part of the Christian Gospel.

If there *is* a distinction to be made between the Christian Gospel and the Social Gospel, there is the question of whether adherence to the latter Gospel is a proper function of the clergy. In other words, do the professional church leaders have a proper basis for declaring a specialized or altered meaning into Christ's methods of dealing with mankind's problems? Without the professional vanguard's manifesto and without church "social action" in politics, would Christians thereby be disregarding Christ's exhortations to brotherly love and responsibility?

Congregational Minister Russell Clinchy observes that *with* social political action, and its concomitant reliance on the coercive force of government, Christians adopt an inconsistent, evil means for accomplishing good: "The compulsion and the law can prevent an act of murder but it cannot erase the desire to murder from the heart of man. Only the [Christian] Gospel possesses such cleansing power, and so the attempt to equate the Gospel with the physical coercion of the law can have only one end—the death of the Gospel."

The social actionists themselves admit that it is not the function of the church to control society. This leads to the provocative question: Then is it proper for the church to advocate that *any* collection of men control other men?

Who Is on the Side of the Lord?

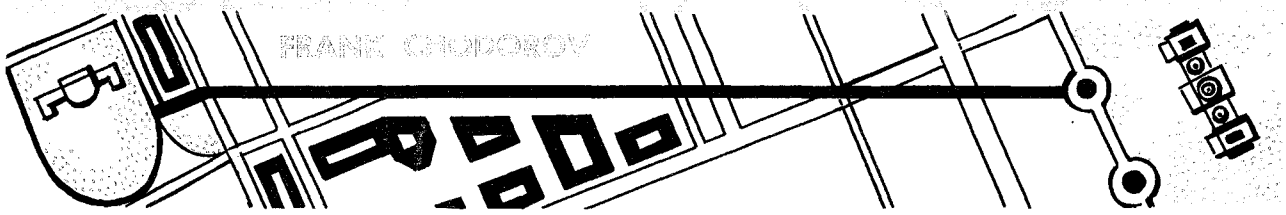
One thing is certain. The social action unrest indicates an awakening of lay concern about the behavior of church hierarchies and their secular policies. Such awakening is good, for the public airing of the CSA's strategy has revealed how a small group of professionals is able to sway and control a whole church if the membership remains apathetic.

When church people allow group thinking to take the place of independent personal thinking, the Voice from the Kingdom Within tends to be drowned out. Thinking begins to gravitate toward worldly matters instead of matters of the spirit. And thereupon, we find a Council for Social Action devoting its energies chiefly to politics instead of to the Christian religion.

If church people must appoint groups to deal with social matters, let them at least establish all possible safeguards to prevent overemphasis on political matters to the detriment of religion. For the principle of the separation of the church from political dominance has just as much importance within the church as between the church and the state. To the extent that the Social Gospel makes social change the principal duty of Christians, it veers into materialism and humanism.

That, at least, is the opinion of those who disbelieve in the Social Gospel. They say we must be more careful about writing the Lord over to our side. They would prefer to see us seek His side. To be sure, the final question facing both sides will be: Who is on the side of the Lord?

ALONG PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE



If President Eisenhower plans to run for re-election in 1956, he must of necessity keep in mind the probable effect of his policies—including appointments and patronage—on the voters in the state of New York. Neither the Republican nor the Democratic candidate can ignore the state's bloc of 45 electoral votes.

But, the political center of the state is the *city* of New York. If the large Democratic vote in the city is held below a certain percentage, the normally Republican upstate vote is sufficient to carry the commonwealth. Hence, the strategy of both Republicans and Democrats is to court the on-the-fence voter in the city.

Organized labor is strongly entrenched in the city, and it would be unsound politics for any candidate to alienate that body. The Negro population is so important that in the last city election each of the parties had a member of that race on its ticket; the prospective candidate must weigh that fact. The Italians, the Jews, the Irish – the city is made up of islands of emotional voters; all must be placated. Then, there is the strong internalistic and socialistic flavor in public opinion, fostered by the Americans for Democratic Action, the American Labor Party, and other similar pressure groups, to say nothing of the press under their influence. With over eighteen per cent of the Electoral College at stake, the prospective candidate cannot take a nationalistic position or oppose welfarism. New York City must be won.

Then come Pennsylvania and California, each with 32 votes in the Electoral College. And in these states the pivotal points are Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, Los Angeles and San Francisco; what do the folks in these cities want in the way of a presidential policy? Illinois, with its bloc of 27 electors, is mainly Chicago, where voters of central European extraction play no mean part.

And so it goes: The fifteen larger states in the Union have a total of 313 electoral votes (266 elect a president), and in each of them one or two cities are large enough to dominate the entire state.

It will be seen that as a matter of political necessity the policies of the Administration must be largely influenced by urban interests. This is so not only because of the population figures, but more so because it is easier to activate pressure groups in congested areas. So, whoever can capture the pressure groups in the cities can walk off with the states' entire *blocs* of electoral votes, thus negating the choice of the rural sections. For example, when Roosevelt captured the state of New York in 1936 (mainly because of the overwhelming majority he obtained in the metropolis), the *Republicans* won 16 of the state's 45 seats in the House. The citizens who elected these Republican congressmen probably cast their votes for the Republican candidate for the presidency. But their vote was ineffective in that respect, because of the bloc system of choosing electors. Roosevelt was awarded all 45 electoral votes.

The Mundt-Coudert Amendment

It is to correct this preponderance of urban influence on the White House that an amendment is being sponsored by Senator Mundt of South Dakota and Representative Coudert of New York. The proposed amendment would abolish the bloc system; presidential electors would be chosen by congressional districts, each voting in the Electoral College according to the political mandate of his district. Thus, if a district chooses a Republican to represent it in the House, it would be represented on the Electoral College by a Republican, even if the rest of the state went Democratic.

The effect of this change would be to give the rural areas an influence in the White House commensurate with their voting strength; they could not be counted out. And the White House would not be compelled by political considerations to give the cities a disproportionate amount of attention.

The big city political machines are for obvious reasons opposed to the proposed amendment and are doing their utmost to keep it from coming up for debate. Its sponsors, however, are confident that they can bring it to the floor of Congress in the coming session.

It sometimes happens that what begins as a "crackpot" idea gains stature by the adherents it wins as well as by its intrinsic validity. Your reporter witnessed such a metamorphosis in October.

To begin at the beginning, an old-time newspaperman was disturbed, as are many of us, over the trend toward collectivism; and he decided to "do something about it." He had an idea and a list of about 15 hundred organizations in the country—organizations which are protesting about this, that and the other thing. This dedicated newspaperman, Arnold Kruckman, with the help of his devoted wife, sent a mimeographed letter to the list, in which he suggested a meeting of delegates for the purpose of finding a program they could agree to work for. It seemed to be a fatuous undertaking; the usual result of such meetings is that nothing is agreed upon, because each delegate comes for the sole purpose of selling his panacea to the others. They leave with a grab bag of resolutions and do nothing.

But, the replies to his letter were encouraging, and Mr. Kruckman announced a "Congress of Freedom." It was held in Omaha in the early part of October, and about 400 delegates from thirty states took part.

It was an orderly and inspiring affair. Under the agreed upon rules, no speeches from the floor were allowed, and an able chairman, Archibald Roosevelt — only living son of the famous T.R., firmly but politely enforced this rule. The keynote was struck by Willis Ballinger, Washington news commentator; he was for limited, constitutional government, less spending, lower taxes; he was for getting out of the world mess and minding our own business. That was apparently what the crowd was for, judging by the generous applause given.

In the limited space of this column it is impossible to list all the speeches. Representative Ralph Gwinn, in his speech of summation, gave a concise description of the Congress of Freedom in these words: "I have never in my life heard more sound knowledge of the American Constitution and of the American tradition than was displayed here."

To mention a few highlights, Frank Holman, former president of the American Bar Association, delivered a brilliant speech on the Bricker amendment; Robert Dresser, prominent Rhode Island lawyer, read a carefully prepared paper on the proposal to limit income taxation to twenty-five per cent of income; Mary Cain, the Mississippi editor who is defying the U. S. Treasury, made an impassioned demand for repeal of the Sixteenth Amendment; Major General (Ret.) Bonner Fellers outlined the sea-air program of defense advocated by Herbert Hoover and General MacArthur; Lucille Crain spoke on education and Professor Merrill Root on communism in the colleges. For three days there came from the platform a seemingly endless stream of sound reasoning and sincerity.

Mr. Kruckman Is Now "In Business"

Finally, the various panels reported their findings and, as expected, too many resolutions were adopted: nineteen. However, the Congress voted that the resolutions be resubmitted to the organizations represented, for further sifting. It was also agreed to empower Mr. Kruckman, through his organization known as Operation America, to form a permanent committee of organization representatives, for the purpose of proposing a program of action. Though some talk of a "third party" was heard, the consensus was that the need was for a national pressure group, working on local politicians for specific measures, rather than a political party.

The most interesting part of the Congress of Freedom was its aftermath. Somehow the character of the meeting became known and substantial citizens who were not there expressed interest in the movement. Consultations now going on in Washington, New York and Chicago indicate that the next session of the Congress, scheduled for Omaha next April, will be even more successful.

ALBERT JAY NOCK—

A SUPERFLUOUS MAN

JACK SCHWARTZMAN

"MERE . . . TOUTING OF 'RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM' AND . . . FUSTIAN ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION ARE SO SPECIOUS, SO . . . UNSCRUPULOUS, THAT THEY HAVE BECOME CONTEMPTIBLE"

You are gone these hundred months, Mr. Nock, yet to a fragmentary number, whom you once called the "remnant," your work — they say — will live forever. This is very perplexing to us—a collectivist delegation that has come all the way to this Place to interview you. Why do you smile? You are indeed a puzzling relic of a breed that used to be known as individualists. What were you individualists like? Were you believers in democracy?

"I could see how 'democracy' might do very well in a society of saints and sages. . . . Short of that, I was unable to see how it could come to anything. . . . Socrates could not have got votes enough of the Athenian mass-men to be worth counting. . . . As against a Jesus, the historic choice of the mass-man goes regularly to some Barabbas." (III:131)

Weren't you proud of our Western culture?

"Western society was entirely given over to economism. (This word is not in any dictionary . . . .) It had no other philosophy. . . . It interpreted the whole of human life in terms of the production, acquisition and distribution of wealth. . . . Its god was belly." (III:111)

Wouldn't you say that our civilization has produced a group of superior intellectuals?

"Above all things the mass-mind is most bitterly resentful of superiority. It will not tolerate the thought of an elite. . . . Under this system . . . the test of the great mind is its power of agreement with the opinions of small minds. . . . An equalitarian and democratic regime must by consequence assume, tacitly or avowedly, that everybody is educable." (III:88)

Nevertheless, is not our compulsory educational system the pride of our nation?

"I have never been able to find anyone who would tell me what the net social value of a compulsory universal literacy actually comes to. . . . On the debit side, it enables scoundrels to beset, dishevel and debauch such intelligence as is in the power of the vast majority of mankind to exercise." (III:49)

What about the credit side of our educational system?

"As a state-controlled enterprise maintained by taxation . . . the system [has] become an association . . . for the extreme of hidebound nationalism and of a superstitious servile reverence for a sacrosanct state." (III:263)

A Man of Odd Opinions

You are odd indeed. Don't you have any regard for our society?

"When the great general movement toward collectivism set in, . . . 'society,' rather than the individual, became the criterion of hedonists. . . . The greatest happiness of society was first to be considered, because in that the individual would find a condition conducive of his greatest happiness. Comte invented the term *altruism* as an antonym for egoism. . . . This hybrid or rather this degenerate form of hedonism served powerfully to invest collectivism's principles with a specious moral sanction, and collectivists . . . made the most of it." (III:305-6)

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Still, does this "moral sanction" wholly explain why collectivism has been found acceptable by man?

"Considering mankind's indifference to freedom, their easy gullibility and their facile response to conditioning, one might very plausibly argue that collectivism is the political mode best suited to their disposition and their capacities. Under its regime the citizen, like the soldier, is relieved of the burden of initiative and is divested of all responsibility, save for doing as he is told. He takes what is allotted to him, obeys orders, and beyond that he has no care." (III:318-9)

Won't you admit that only collective power can do away with iniquity and misery? (But you are smiling again!)

"Something like this appears to be the basic assumption of collectivism. Let but the state confiscate *all* social power, and its interests will become identical with those of society. . . . It is an attractive idea. . . . A closer examination of the state's activities, however, will show that this idea, attractive though it be, goes to pieces against the iron law of fundamental economics, that *man tends always to satisfy his needs and desires with the least possible exertion.*" (II:58-9)

Now it is our turn to smile, Mr. Nock. Do you actually believe in "iron" laws, or any laws other than those granted by the state?

Epstean's Law

"I was at lunch . . . with an old friend. . . . It led to Mr. Epstean's . . . saying . . . 'If self-preservation is the first law of human conduct, exploitation is the second.' This remark instantly touched off a tremendous flashlight in my mind. . . . Spencer and Henry George had familiarized me with the formula that man tends always to satisfy his needs and desires with the least possible exertion; but they had given me no idea of its immense scope, its almost illimitable range of action. . . . Having occasion to refer to this formula, I gave it the name of Epstean's Law. . . . Why was it impossible to improve society or the individual through political action? Simply because all such well-meant enterprises ran hard aground on Epstean's Law." (II:132-3)

We don't understand what political action has to do with your so-called Epstean's Law.

"There are two . . . means, and only two, whereby man's needs and desires can be satisfied. One is the production and exchange of wealth; this is the *economic means.* The other is the uncompensated appropriation of wealth produced by others; this is the *political means.* (II:59)

"The state, then, whether primitive, feudal, or merchant, is *the organization of the political means.* Now, since man tends always to satisfy his needs and desires with the least possible exertion, he will employ the political means whenever he can—exclusively if possible; otherwise, in association with the economic means. He will, at the present time, that is, have recourse to the state's modern apparatus of exploitation; the apparatus of tariffs, concessions, rent-monopoly and the like." (II:60-1)

Do you mean to imply that the state is not brought into being to serve the needs of *all* mankind?

"The positive testimony of history is that the state invariably had its origin in conquest and confiscation. No primitive state known to history originated in any other manner." (II:44)

Don't we, in this country, however, have something different: a *republican* state?

Not Afraid to Call a State a State

A state is a state is a state. "Thus colonial America, oppressed by the monarchical state, brings in the republican state; Germany gives up the republican state for the Hitlerian state; Russia exchanges the monocratic state for the collectivist state; Italy exchanges the constitutionalist state for the 'totalitarian' state." (II:31)

At least you will admit, Mr. Nock, that the purpose of the state is to abolish crime.

"The State claims and exercises the monopoly of crime. . . . It forbids private murder, but itself organizes murder on a colossal scale. It punishes private theft, but itself lays unscrupulous hands on anything it wants, whether the property of citizen or of alien." (I:143)

If there are any abuses in the administration of the state, is it not because people like you fail to participate in *your own* state?

"Republicanism permits the individual to

persuade himself that the state is his creation, that state action is his action, that when it expresses itself it expresses him, and when it is glorified he is glorified. (II:57)

"Instead of recognizing the state as 'the common enemy of all well-disposed, industrious and decent men,' the run of mankind, with rare exceptions, regards it not only as a final indispensable entity, but also as, in the main, beneficent. The mass-man, ignorant of its history, regards its character and intentions as social rather than anti-social; and in that faith he is willing to put at its disposal an indefinite credit of knavery, mendacity and chicane, upon which its administrators may draw at will." (II:148-9)

But surely the state *is* social in character and in achievements. It provides for social security, gives aid to the needy, and takes over essential industries.

A Parasitic Existence

"State power has an unbroken record of inability to do anything efficiently, economically, disinterestedly or honestly; yet when the slightest dissatisfaction arises over any exercise of social power, the aid of the agent least qualified to give aid is immediately called for. (II:194)

"The State has no money. It produces nothing. Its existence is purely parasitic, maintained by taxation; that is to say, by forced levies on the production of others. . . . A naive ignorance of this fact underlies the pernicious measures of 'social security.' . . . What such schemes actually come to is that the workman pays . . . the whole bill." (III:246-7)

Don't you recognize the need of the state to intervene in cases of emergency?

"Every intervention by the state enables another, and this in turn another, and so on indefinitely. . . . When this takes place, the logical thing, obviously, is to recede, and let the disorder be settled in the slower and more troublesome way . . . through the operation of natural laws. . . . The state then intervenes by imposing another set of complications upon the first . . . until the recurrent disorder becomes acute enough to open the way for a sharking political adventurer to come forward and, always alleging 'necessity,' the tyrant's plea, to organize a *coup d'etat*. (II:187-9) In Russia, Italy, Germany, the *coup d'etat* was violent and spectacular; it had to be; but here it was neither." (II:23-4)

Do you deny the good that the power of our state has done?

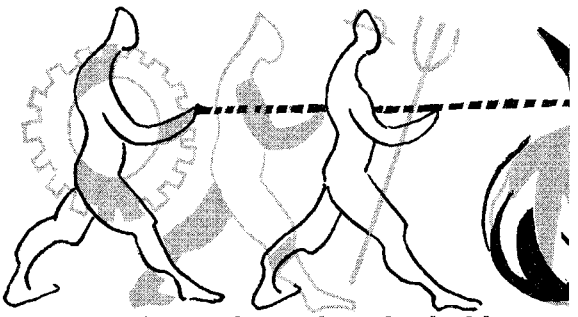
"Just as the state has no money of its own, so it has no power of its own. All the power it has is what society gives it, plus what it confiscates from time to time on one pretext or another; there is no other source from which state power can be drawn. (II:3-4)

But Government Corrects the State

"Under a regime of natural order, that is to say under *government*, which makes no positive interventions whatever on the individual . . . misuses of social power would be effectively corrected. . . . Under a regime of actual individualism, actual free competition, actual *laissez-faire* . . . a serious or continuous misuse of social power would be virtually impracticable." (II:199)

Just what do you mean by your peculiar distinction between state and government?

"Based on the idea of natural rights, govern-



ment secures those rights to the individual by strictly negative intervention, making justice costless and easy of access; and beyond that it does not go. The state, on the other hand, both in its genesis and by its primary intention, is purely anti-social. It is not based on the idea of natural rights, but on the idea that the individual has no rights except those that the state may provisionally grant him. (II:49-50)

"While government is by its nature concerned with the administration of justice, the state is by its nature concerned with the administration of law – law, which the state itself manufactures for . . . its own primary ends. (II:196)

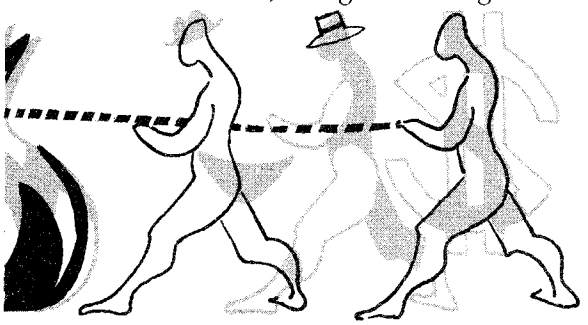
"The code of government should be that of the legendary King Pausole, who prescribed but two laws for his subjects, the first being, *Hurt no man*, and the second, *Then do as you please.* . . . The whole business of government should be the purely negative one of seeing that this code is carried out." (II:36)

If you feel so strongly about state abuses, why did you not join *reform* movements to bring about proper government?

A Tussle Between Mass-Men

"When one brushed aside the reformers verbiage, the situation was perfectly clear. . . . What I was looking at was simply a tussle between two groups of mass-men, one large and poor, the other small and rich. . . . The object of the tussle was the material gains accruing from the control of the state's machinery. It is easier to seize wealth than to produce it. (III:121)

"It is easy to prescribe improvements for others; it is easy to organize something, to institutionalize this or that, to pass laws, multiply bureaucratic agencies, form pressure groups, start revolutions, change forms of government,



tinker at political theory. The fact that these expedients have been tried unsuccessfully in every conceivable combination for six thousand years has not noticeably impaired a credulous unintelligent willingness to keep on trying them again and again. (III:307-8)

"The only thing that the psychically-human being can do to improve society is to present society with *one improved unit.* In a word, ages of experience testify that the only way society can be improved is by the individualistic method which Jesus apparently regarded as the only one whereby the Kingdom of Heaven can be established as a going concern; that is, the method of each *one* doing his very best to improve *one.*" (III:307)

But just about all men believe in conforming to our practical group system of improving others, rather than following the individualist method of improving oneself. Can we ever expect to find those individualists of yours among us any more?

"In every civilization . . . there are always certain alien spirits who, while outwardly conforming to the requirements of the civilization around them, still keep a disinterested regard for the plain intelligible law of things, irrespective of any practical end." (II:208-9)

How does your creed of Individualism square with the theory of society?

Nock's "Dangerous Theory"

"There is no such thing as society. . . . I have never been able to see 'society' otherwise than as a concourse of very various individuals. . . . The individual seems to be the fundamental thing; all the character society has is what the prevailing character of the individuals in its environment gives it. (III:306)

"I found myself settled in convictions which I suppose might be summed up as a philosophy of intelligent selfishness, intelligent egoism, intelligent hedonism. . . . To know oneself as well as one can; to avoid self-deception and to foster no illusions; to learn what one can about the plain natural truth of things, and make one's valuations accordingly . . . this . . . is what a practical philosophy keeps steadily in view." (III:304-5)

What a dangerous theory! If every one were permitted to *act* freely in accordance with his own valuations there would be no end to crime.

"It seems to be a fond notion with the legalists and authoritarians that the vast majority of mankind would at once begin to thieve and murder and generally misconduct itself if the restraints of law and authority were removed. (I:175)

"The practical reason for freedom . . . is that freedom seems to be the only condition under which any kind of substantial moral fiber can be developed. Everything else has been tried, world without end. (I:173)

"Freedom, for example, . . . undoubtedly

means freedom to drink oneself to death. . . . It also means freedom to say . . . 'I have studied, I have graduated, I never drink.' It unquestionably means freedom to go on without any code of morals at all but it also means freedom to rationalize, construct and adhere to a code of one's own. . . . Freedom to do the one without correlative freedom to do the other is impossible; and . . . just here comes in the moral education which legalism and authoritarianism, with their denial of freedom, can never furnish." (I:174-5)

A Prediction Coming True

Will you at least admit, Mr. Nock, that our collectivist government will ensure a future that our children will enjoy?

"However just and generous an administration of collectivism may be at the outset . . . it is immediately set upon and honeycombed by hordes of the most venal and untrustworthy persons . . . and in virtually no time every one of the regime's innumerable . . . departments is rotted to the core. . . . (III:319)

"What we and our more nearly immediate descendants shall see is a steady progress in collectivism running off into a military despotism of a severe type. Closer centralization; a steadily growing bureaucracy; state power and faith in state power increasing; social power and faith in social power diminishing; the state absorbing a continually larger proportion of the national income; production languishing, the state in consequence taking over one 'essential industry' after another, managing them with ever-increasing corruption, inefficiency and prodigality, and finally resorting to a system of forced labor." (II:205-6)

Well, if you individualists are so fearful of the increase of state power, what do you *do* about it?

"Simply nothing. . . . The student of civilized man will offer no conclusion but that nothing can be done. He can regard the course of our civilization only as he would regard the course of a man in a rowboat on the lower reaches of the Niagara – as an instance of nature's unconquerable intolerance of disorder, and in the end, an example of the penalty which she puts upon any attempt at interference. (II:203)

"If it were in my power to pull down its whole structure overnight and set up another of my own devising – to abolish the state out of hand, and replace it by an organization of the economic means – I would not do it, for the minds of Americans are far from fitted to any such great change as this, and the effect would be only to lay open the way for the worse enormities of usurpation – possibly, who knows? with myself as the usurper! After the French Revolution, Napoleon!" (I:159)

Well, Mr. Nock, thank you for the interview. It has been most enlightening. When we return to Earth, we will ask our legislators to study your proposals, and have our committees debate them in open forums. (But why *do* you smile?) Meanwhile, is there any final statement that you would care to make which would best summarize your life?

His Final Statement

"I learned early with Thoreau that a man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to let alone; and in view of this I have always considered myself extremely well-to-do. All I ever asked of life was the freedom to think and say exactly what I pleased, when I pleased, and as I pleased. . . . It is true that one can never get something for nothing; it is true that in a society like ours one who takes the course which I have taken must reconcile himself to the status of a superfluous man; but the price seems to me by no means exorbitant, and I have paid it gladly, without a shadow of doubt that I was getting all the best of the bargain." (III:321-2)

Bibliography

(Roman letters in parentheses following above quotations refer to the three books written by Albert Jay Nock, appearing below; and the numbers refer to the pages thereof.)

I–*On Doing the Right Thing, and Other Essays,* Harper & Brothers, New York, 1928.

II–*Our Enemy, the State,* The Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, Idaho, 1935, 1946.

III–*Memoirs of a Superfluous Man,* Harper & Brothers, New York, 1943.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE LOS ANGELES PRESS carried word in October that Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam had been denied the use of Philharmonic Auditorium for speaking purposes. The actual request for the use of the Auditorium (owned by the Temple Baptist Church of Los Angeles) was made by the American Civil Liberties Union—with the intention of having the Methodist Bishop speak under its auspices on Bill of Rights Day.

The ACLU reportedly labeled the denial of the Auditorium's use as being contrary to the doctrine of freedom of speech, as representing discrimination against Bishop Oxnam because of some of his views, and as endangering the whole future of the Republic.

The following day, I released to the press a statement – in part as follows:

> "The refusal . . . to permit Bishop Oxnam to lecture [at the Philharmonic] on Bill of Rights Day is based on one of our most cherished constitutional freedoms, of which Bill of Rights Day is intended to remind us. It is a travesty that the ACLU should so confuse the issues in this instance. . . .
>
> "Bishop Oxnam and I have had many arguments and are in fundamental disagreement on many issues. However, if he wants to speak in Los Angeles, and if the people who wish to hear him cannot find a place for him, I shall be glad to try to find a place.
>
> "Certainly we must not deny him the freedom of speech on Bill of Rights Day – nor must we deny the freedom of the Philharmonic to run its own business.
>
> "Both freedoms are vital to the future of our country – and one is just as sacred as the other. Any organization truly interested in freedom would champion the one as vigorously as the other, instead of making out the Philharmonic owners as 'villains' and the Oxnam friends as 'heroes.' "

But a short time later, the Board of the Los Angeles Church Federation – reportedly by unanimous vote of those who were present at the Board meeting which I could not attend – condemned the Philharmonic for its refusal to make its facilities available to Bishop Oxnam. Other groups across the nation joined in the protest, either not understanding the issue or being collectivist-minded and therefore minded to ignore the property rights of private American citizens.

The statement adopted by the Los Angeles Church Federation Board said, among other things, that the Philharmonic's action "is a denial of the spirit of the first article of the Bill of Rights. . . . "

However, the First Amendment – and in fact, the entire Bill of Rights – was established to safeguard the rights of citizens against the unjust acts of government. In this case, for instance, the government would not be permitted to use its power of compulsion to prevent Bishop Oxnam from speaking. But to suggest, as the Federation Board seems to, that "the spirit of the Bill of Rights" imposes on a private person an obligation to make privately owned facilities available to whomsoever wants them for any legal purpose is a unique interpretation, to say the least.

Does the action of the Federation Board mean that anyone who owns an office building, or church, theater, newspaper or magazine, has the duty to make that facility available to anyone who wants it for any legal purpose?

Needed: "More Light and Less Heat"

It finally came out that Bishop Oxnam had not even accepted an invitation to come to Los Angeles; the ACLU's effort to secure a facility had apparently been a bit premature. So perhaps the unfortunate incident will soon pass into forgotten history. Yet it has pointed up the imperative for a more discriminating and careful judgment – with more light and less heat.

I have been as much criticized for undertaking to help Bishop Oxnam as I have been criticized for undertaking to help protect the rights of the Philharmonic. I do not defend Bishop Oxnam. I simply defend the traditional constitutional rights of our nation as they apply to him and also as they apply to the Philharmonic. Unless we preachers and others become more aware of infringements upon these rights and take more courageous steps to defend them, we shall lose them.

DR. JAMES W. FIFIELD, JR.

HOW THE RECENT N.C.C. CONFERENCE IMPRESSED ONE LIBERTARIAN OBSERVING ITS ACTION AS A SOUNDING BOARD FOR CHRISTIANS ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

EDMUND A. OPITZ

THE CLEVELAND AFFAIR

The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. sponsored a Study Conference in Cleveland, Ohio, October 27-30. This, the fourth National Study Conference on the Churches and World Order, was convened by the Department of International Justice and Goodwill, on the theme: "Christian Faith and International Responsibility." More than four hundred delegates from all parts of the nation were present, and news stories about the Conference were front-paged from coast to coast.

The Conference was newsworthy because it was presumed in many quarters to speak not for itself, nor even for the National Council of Churches, but for *the* Church, or at least for a majority of church members. A cautious statement of this presumption was voiced prior to the Conference by Dr. Walter Van Kirk of the National Council of Churches when he said, "While the Conference will speak only for itself in its findings, I believe it will come close to voicing the international concerns and objectives of the majority of American church members." The next sentence in the press release where this statement occurs, reads, "Member denominations in the National Council embrace more than 147 thousand local churches with more than 35 million communicants."

If the "findings" of the Cleveland Conference really brought into focus the scattered thoughts of 35 million church members – even apart from what the 50 million other church members in the nation are thinking – that would be quite an achievement. As a matter of fact, however, the Cleveland Conference made no effort to draw up a statement that would win the support of a majority of the constituents of even the member churches of the N.C.C. To quote Dr. Van Kirk himself once more: The four hundred delegates came together to "consider and adopt the findings of four special commissions which have been grappling with major issues affecting world peace and welfare for the past six months."

Yet, in some quarters there seemed a belief that Conference ratification was to be the alchemy which would transmute the pedestrian thoughts of several N.C.C. commissions into "the international concerns and objectives of the majority of American church members."

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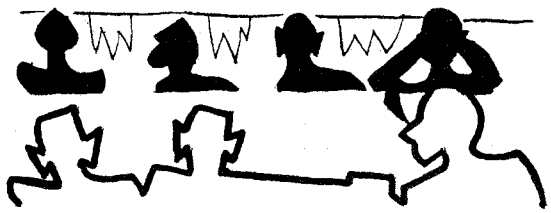
The Tangible Results

The immediate, tangible results of the Cleveland affair are five papers, four commission reports and a "Message," about twenty thousand words in all, which the Conference recommends to the churches and the public for study and action. These papers are being published by the N.C.C. as a 48-page booklet, together with a companion booklet of equal length, presumably staff-written, telling how to use the "Message and Findings" of Cleveland. The Cleveland Conference also passed a number of resolutions which were solemnly reported in the nation's press because they purport to record how the church people of America stand on certain controversial public issues.

The five commissions which brought their "findings" to Cleveland had about twenty-five members each, and were set up six months prior to the Conference by a committee of the Department of International Justice and Goodwill of the N.C.C. The commission topics and



chairmen were: 1) "The Christian Faith and International Responsibility," the Rt. Rev. Angus Dun, Bishop, Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Washington, D.C.; 2) "The U.S. and the UN," Mrs. Edith Sampson, former U.S. delegate to the UN; 3) "The U.S. and Foreign Economic Policy," Willard L. Thorp, a former Assistant Secretary of State; 4) "The U.S. and the Underdeveloped Areas," Dr. Emory Ross, formerly of the N.C.C. and now of the Phelps-Stokes Fund; 5) "The U.S. and Collective Security," Frank P. Graham, UN representative in India and Pakistan.

The papers submitted to the Cleveland Conference by these commissions were in religious phrases, but were cut from the same bolt as the materials issued by the several propaganda agencies in the field of foreign affairs, such as the American Association for the United Nations, the Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., and the Foreign Policy Association. The promise of these organizations, if it could be reduced to a slogan, would be: "Universal peace, even if we have to wage continuous war to get it." Looming in the background, ready to supply the sinews of war for these and other "peace" outfits, are such tremendous pools of wealth as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Rockefeller and other Foundations.

The ideas expressed in the five commission papers are just such everyday ideas as right-thinking internationalists are supposed to have; they are not newsworthy in themselves. But if these ideas can be represented as the "findings" of a delegate body representing 35 million people, then the event is news.

So, the most important function of such a conference as that held at Cleveland is to act as a sounding board. The delegates discussed the commission reports and made minor changes, but they did not lock horns with the basic issues; neither the major premises of our foreign policy nor the philosophy underlying the United Nations was subject to scrutiny.

The two questions uppermost in the minds of the delegates were: How can we help strengthen the UN? and How can we thwart the hellish machinations of the "isolationists"? There was debate and argument in the efforts to answer these questions, but there was no hint of a suggestion that there might be a serious defect in a foreign policy which has not enabled us to avoid the three bloody conflicts of the present century. There was no discussion of the idea that the UN might not be an instrument of peace, and that it might be the embodiment of a philosophy inimical to human freedom.

Instead, the delegates were told that "the United Nations operates on a frontier of international anarchy; it is threatened by a jungle of dashing nationalism, social systems and power blocs." They listened to stories about the "frenzied chauvinists" who lurk in the shadows in nearly every community, and who are even now plotting to destroy our old Constitution by amending it. Why, if we had had the Bricker amendment in force, asserted Dr. Van Kirk, twelve of the last twenty-three treaties made by the U. S. would have been unconstitutional!

Gideons Surrounded by McCarthy

The delegates were reached emotionally. They pictured themselves as a Gideon's band, surrounded on one side by someone named McCarthy, but nevertheless eager to hurl themselves on the Midianites. In this mood the 400 delegates became like an electronic device — to amplify enormously the sound created by the politicos, professional uplifters, and social actionists who made up the five commissions.

Some effort was made to allay the suspicion that these N.C.C. conferences are mere rubber stamp affairs which serve as elaborate and expensive promotional devices for the opinions of the N.C.C. bureaucracy. At the opening session the Conference chairman, Mrs. Douglas Horton, said, "No one must leave feeling he had a bright idea and couldn't express it. Nobody wants to put anything over on you. Look-

ing over this audience I can't imagine anybody using you. Nobody's going to try." But "there are times," Mrs. Horton concluded, "when a minority should rise up proudly and say 'we are a minority. Thank you!' and let the majority go about its business."

There have been charges that earlier conferences were dominated by the clergy, so Mrs. Horton asked all clergymen to rise, then all laymen. There was little imbalance either way. If there was an imbalance in the selection of delegates it was an understandable overweighting with professionals who live for this sort of thing. In this category I would include executives and employees of the N.C.C., and of the several denominations and their agencies, of state and local councils of churches, of the Y.M. & Y.W.C.A., educators, and government officials. People in these categories constituted a disproportionate number of those present.

The Vehicle for "Internationalism"

A brief report on a single N.C.C. conference is hardly the place to undertake an adequate refutation of the cult and myths of "Internationalism" for which this Conference was a vehicle, but mention of a few points is in order. In the first place, the so-called Internationalists are not true Internationalists at all; they are, in my opinion, misguided men who have embraced the evil policy of nationalism, whose evils they think they can exercise by making the policy global in scope.

Patriotism must not be confused with nationalism. A patriot is one who works for the well-being, the freedom, and the advancement of his fellow citizens; and who loves his *patria.* Nationalism is one of several methods proposed for the attainment of these ends.

Nationalism, in its domestic aspect, is the use of political machinery to promote the well-being of some citizens at the expense of others—taxes for all and subsidies for a few. In its global aspect, nationalism aims "to promote the well-being of the whole nation, or of some groups within it, by inflicting harm on foreigners," to quote from a definition of nationalism supplied by Ludwig von Mises. An integral part of the foreign policy of the bogus Internationalists for more than a generation has been the selection of foreign devils or "aggressor nations" whom they could put down by the force of our arms to the accompaniment of their moralistic exhortations.

The true internationalist, on the other hand, favors a world society or community but he believes that this is established as local society is established. A society or a community is a natural growth which occurs in the absence of arbitrary, coercive, political interventions. Its quality depends on the degree of social skills brought to it by the persons composing it. The common, or garden variety of Internationalist originally may have had a world society in mind as a goal which he thought to attain by elaborating political machinery. But now he has forgotten the goal in his fascination with ever more complicated machinery, such as that of the United Nations. He has confused the means with the end, and the more power he has attained over the direction of policy the faster has the goal of a world society receded.

Secondly, the bogus Internationalist has done his best to stifle free, scholarly inquiry into the background and origins of World Wars I and II, such as the inquiry projected by men like H. E. Barnes and C. C. Tansill in this country. Before you can correct the evils that plague the nations you must come to some openly arrived at consensus as to what they are. This, the Internationalists have tried their best to prevent.

Dissenters Tagged as "Isolationists"

Third, the so-called Internationalists have distorted history and shunted off real discussion by labeling all dissenters with the intellectually vacant tag, "isolationist." Someone ventured to define "isolationism" for Charles A. Beard as "the creed that America owes nothing to other countries and has no moral responsibilities in the world; that foreign wars are none of our business; that the United States should shrink behind high nationalist walls, let the world go hang, and refuse to cooperate in efforts to maintain peace in the world." Beard commented, "If that is a correct definition of isolationism, I must say I never heard of an American of the slightest importance in public life who favors isolationism."

Fourth, the policy of the Internationalist cult

demands that the government of the United States underwrite virtually unlimited commitments abroad. Such a policy is obviously incompatible with the ideal of limited government at home. The concept of limited government is a derived, or secondary, concept. It is an inference drawn from the primary, religious concept of the person, which is basic to Christianity. To deny a legitimate inference of a concept causes an undermining of the concept itself.

In the agony to which millions of people in our time have been subjected, as a result of misguided policies, there is much testimony to the degradation of our understanding of man as a creature of God. If documentation is needed to buttress this point, one finds it in such books as *Advance to Barbarism,* by the British lawyer, F. J. P. Veale.

N.C.C. Conduct Questioned

Finally, a question needs to be raised about the propriety of a representative organization, such as the National Council of Churches, advocating flagrantly partisan views in both domestic and foreign affairs. There is a legitimate and useful place for the frankly partisan organization, oriented around a given set of convictions, trying to gain such support as it can from those who want to have a share in furthering these convictions. But the N.C.C. is not such an organization; its open partisanship is in conflict with its representative character.

If the Council is "a practical expression of the unity of spirit and purpose which Christian people have because of their common loyalty to Christ, even though they belong to different denominations," and if "the Council is not something apart from the churches but the churches themselves doing together those things which can be better done unitedly than separately," as its own literature states, then it is wrong and an abuse of its position for the Council personnel to use it to advance personal and partisan ends, even if they sincerely cherish these ends and regard them as best for mankind. The National Council of Churches has great value and potential; to raise a question about abuses within it is not to deny, but to affirm this.

WITH THE OPINION MAKERS

Out of the dull routine of a college class in English composition, a discerning instructor by the name of Robert S. Hunting has extracted a news story of colossal importance. And the news is all bad. In *The Christian Century,* Professor Hunting tells how he picked the minds of his students at Purdue University by asking them to write about the effect of war upon their education. The typical reaction: "For me, war is good." The reason: the government, through college military training programs or the G.I. Bill of Rights, is footing most of the bills.

Profoundly disturbed by his students' replies, Professor Hunting poses two questions: "Where," he asks, "is the spirit of free and *unbiased* inquiry, the broad liberal education, on today's subsidized campus – busy training men for war?" Further, he inquires, "*Is* this education free?" Far from it. Today's boys are just getting a ride at the expense of their fellow citizens. Even if it were free, the price of the "government-issued" diploma is high – at least it means years of subservience, and at the most, much much more.

In our era the term "planning" is in style. And it is hard to criticize planning; it sounds like good sense to look ahead. But planning one's own activities is one thing; planning how others shall behave is quite another. The latter form of planning involves governmental action, and the proper word is not planning at all, but control.

The National Planning Association has just issued a report on U. S. defense capabilities, which specifies how much we can spend on the military without "straining" our economy.

By some process that is not revealed, the NPA concludes that our country could, two years hence, spend $70 billion for defense "without any undue strain." The planners assert that the nation could undertake these huge outlays without the need of any "substantial" tax increase or going "substantially" further into debt.

Those who deal in such large figures so glibly must, it would appear, know what they are talking about. But what is a "substantial" tax increase? If we increase defense expenditures $15 billion above our present $55 billion, how shall we pay for them? Either by raising taxes or going further into debt. Is $15 billion "substantial"? The NPA planners seem to think not, judging from their report.

When one can plan for others – a whole nation of them – it is easy to forget what a "strain" it may be on each of the millions of taxpayers who must pony up the money for the gigantic spending program. The Planning Association callously assumes that it is no "strain" on the average family today to pay between $1200 and $1500 a year for this budget, and thus it will be no strain to spend between $1600 and $2000!

So it is with those who plan for others. From a grandiose collective point of view, everything will be fine – particularly if we just forget about individuals.

Last year there was an explosion at the University of Chicago. One of the University's divinity students who thought his alma mater was dominated by a leftist faculty and student body, said so in an article for a national student magazine. He was subsequently denied admission to candidacy for his divinity degree. This meant that although he had completed part of his training to become a minister, he was not allowed to enter into his final studies. There was no question that the academic roadblock stemmed directly from his authorship of the controversial magazine article.

An "official" viewpoint on this case is expressed – in the Summer issue of *Christianity and Society* – by Bernard M. Loomer, Dean of the Chicago theological faculty. According to Professor Loomer, the faculty unanimously concluded that the student "did not possess a sufficient amount of personal integrity and freedom to warrant its recommending him to a position of religious leadership." Mr. Loomer makes it plain that lack of "integrity," in this

case, did not mean dishonesty or lack of sincerity; it meant that the student had not achieved "a sense of wholeness."

The student's real deficiency, the Dean explained, was that he did not have a "willingness to accept and absorb judgment and forgiveness." He was not "open to further light and criticism." This condition, the faculty felt, severely restricted the theological student's "personal freedom."

Just what is the meaning of the Dean's ponderous academic language? What was the student's offense? Was he rude? Did he deliberately circulate falsehoods about the University of Chicago? No, admittedly not. Dean Loomer says the faculty simply found that the student was not a whole person because he would not accept the faculty's forgiveness. He would not accept forgiveness, because he felt he was right and there was nothing to forgive. The reluctant but obvious conclusion is that the student just didn't see things his professors' way.

Every day some college student is disciplined or denied advancement, and in most cases the punishment is deserved. But this is different, and Dean Loomer knows it; that is why he has taken such pains to justify himself and his colleagues. And it would seem he has justified so much that he has given himself away.

This is not a bona fide example of an unruly or incompetent student. It is a case of a student who stood by his convictions and was punished for doing so. Such action makes a mockery of academic freedom. Moreover, in trying to camouflage the real facts in academic verbiage about "lack of integrity," the faculty has, at best, badly fooled itself.

he late George Bernard Shaw, British playwright and philosopher not always respected for his wisdom, was nonetheless famed for his wit and respected for his candor. He was a Socialist who admitted the consequences.

"Social reforms," like state unemployment insurance programs, are difficult to combat because folks see the obvious benefits, but do not look ahead to the consequences. The English periodical *Time and Tide*, commenting recently on this, remarked that Shaw was one Socialist who never made any bones about this. "Socialism," he declared, "implied the right of the state to tell every citizen what work he must do and the power to shoot him if he refused to do it."

Proponents of the Welfare State could use some of George Bernard Shaw's candor. How much support would they have if they frankly admitted that the ultimate consequence of socialism is enslavement?

ost of the pins in this country, we are told, are made by eight manufacturers employing about 1500 workers. These companies and their employers are complaining loudly that their business is being hurt by 247 thousand pounds of foreign pins which, last year, came into our country. This means—say the local pinmakers—that nearly a tenth of their business has gone to foreign competitors. In step with the current vogue, they are clamoring for government protection, either through a tariff or an embargo.

Now government measures could no doubt keep foreign pins off American markets. And this would make sailing easier for the domestic industries. But, as usual, there is a forgotten person somewhere. This time, it's the American housewife. She's been buying foreign pins because they sell below the prices of American-

made ones. The local manufacturer, in effect, wants to tax the American housewife to help keep him in business.

This would, as *The Individualist* pointed out last month, deny to our housewives the chance "to save a little pin money on pins."

SHAME AND GLORY OF THE INTELLECTUALS

PETER VIERECK

(Beacon Press, Boston, 1953, Pp. 320, $4.00)

This book, in parts, takes on the aspect of an uninterrupted monologue, sometimes brilliant and epigrammatic. It is like a mosaic, in that it incorporates fragments of Viereck's writings which have appeared earlier in thirty-eight journals and papers. While an underlying theme holds the book together, it is nevertheless something like a variety show.

Viereck comes by his virtuosity with words naturally, as a paternal endowment. Joubert remarked that "To write well a man should have a natural facility and an acquired difficulty." It is the acquired difficulty that is not apparent in this book.

The glory of the intellectuals, according to Viereck, was when they "were the spearhead of anti-Nazi militancy." Their shame, according to the same source, is that they are not now "taking the lead in uniting the West behind an anti-communism more fervent than before, yet more fair-minded."

The strength of the book lies in Viereck's incisive treatment of the anti-anti-Communists. He brings out a gross inconsistency of these intellectuals by showing that the major considerations which led them to denounce naziism, apply to communism with even more force—the secret police, political murders, concentration camps and so on. Thus the author's treatment eliminates one of the inconsistencies of the intellectuals who are soft on communism; *but the nub of the problem is somewhat deeper.*

The intellectuals seem to hear voices in the air. Their wellwethers told them that naziism was a dreadful thing—which was true—so they were against it. But they were not given a full understanding of its real inwardness, linking it to its twin totalitarianism, communism, which they favored in a vague sort of way. At the time, these two totalitarianisms were in conflict, so that "anti-Nazi militancy" was but another phrase for "pro-Communist sympathy." The bellwethers are at last telling the intellectuals that communism, too, is a dreadful thing (which is true), so that the intellectuals can work up a full head of moral indignation over it.

What needs pointing out is that the "militancy" of the intellectuals finds expression in relatively indirect, "peaceful" ways. The anti-Nazi militants, with few exceptions, content themselves with firing barrages of words at the enemy from a safe distance.

Typical of such militant intellectuals in many ways is a man who has made a real contribution to thought in certain realms, but whose understanding fails lamentably in other respects. In World War I this American was a pacifist. But he thought World War II a good war for other Americans to fight. In case other Americans felt differently about this, he urged that they be conscripted against their will. Yet writing in 1953 he is able to speak of modern times as an "era when *we* have had to defend civilization against various demonries." [My italics. E.A.O.]

This is a clue to the shame of the intellectuals; their tragedy, rather. As a class they are characterized by a fondness for words, and a society avid for words has gratefully given them a niche where they may teach and write with reasonable assurance of handsome support while so doing.

But the people who actually fought the wars have a right to expect and demand something more of such a group of men: that each of them be his own man; that he be animated by an intelligent and reverent desire to know; that he have a point of reference immune to the passing fads and shibboleths of his society; that he report his findings with integrity and in plain language; that he guard his intellectual productions from the pull of popularity and power; and finally, that he show a sensitive appreciation of the only kind of a society in which his kind of scholarship is possible.

Some magnificent scholarship has been attained during the past two generations by men

who fulfilled these conditions. But with rare exceptions, these men won neither acclaim nor a following. They are not among the "intellectuals" whose influence among us has been so disastrous. Viereck's book holds out little promise of mitigating this influence.

EDMUND A. OPITZ

THE CLAIMS OF SOCIOLOGY

(The Stackpole Company, Harrisburg, Pa., 1951, Pp. 185, $2.75)

SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND SCIENTISM

(The Stackpole Company, Harrisburg, Pa., 1953, Pp. 418, $4.75)

A. H. HOBBS

Dr. Hobbs, a professor of sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, has authored two books which deserve thoughtful consideration. He is well grounded in the discipline of his own subject, sociology, and has rendered a real service to his profession by analyzing the false claims of many books in the field.

Those people who think they detect a note of quackery in the teaching of what passes for "social science" in our educational curriculum, will find in these two books an extensive documentation to support their suspicion. Dr. Hobbs has done an expert job of dissection, and has made his books readable by virtue of a witty and casual style.

An analysis of books teaching social theory or advocating social change was a task that badly needed doing. *The Claims of Sociology* is an examination of eighty-three textbooks widely used in college sociology courses over the past twenty years, to discover what, if any, persistent biases and prejudices they indicate. As the analysis proceeds, it becomes more and more evident that these textbook authors aim at inoculating the student with a one-sided viewpoint in such important fields of study as economics, education, government, personality, and the family.

This flagrant special pleading by the social theorists is represented by them as having the support of the latest scientific findings. Thus the prestige of science is used to lend a specious plausibility to implausible theories. When the social theorist is challenged on the ground that his theories won't hold water and are destructive of our institutions, he feels able to beat a graceful retreat and admit that while this may be true, we must nevertheless accept his notions because they alone have the sanction of science.

This false use of science Dr. Hobbs names "scientism." In *Social Problems and Scientism*, there is an examination of the scientific method which shows its limitations as applied to social theory. Social thought demands a discipline of its own, different in several important particulars from the discipline suitable to the physical sciences. The prestige of science, deriving from its success in dealing with the physical world, has wrongfully been appropriated by the apostles of social change in an effort to stifle debate and embarrass their opponents with the charge of being unscientific.

Dr. Hobbs has disclosed the unreliability of many textbooks used in "social science" courses. The next step which follows logically is for Dr. Hobbs to write a sociology text himself. There are indications that when he does so it will be an expert job.

Meanwhile, attention might be called to a recent textbook appropriate for a "social science" course, although it is designed as a text in elementary economics. The book is: *Understanding Our Free Economy*, by Fred R. Fairchild and Thomas J. Shelley (Van Nostrand, New York, 1952, Pp. 598, $4.50). This volume is addressed primarily to the high school level, but almost anyone will find it a useful exposition. It is written with clarity and with frequent references to everyday occurrences. If your local school system is looking for the right textbook you would render a service by acquainting the school board with this one.

E.A.O.

WINGS FOR PEACE

BONNER FELLERS

(Henry Regnery Co., Chicago 4, Ill., 1953, Pp. 248, $3.50)

General Bonner Fellers has made an excellent statement of the case for air power.

But perhaps one should not begin reading his book with the idea that the case is one of strategy alone. The reader would be better prepared if he were first acquainted with the views of *British* General J. F. C. Fuller—who is widely regarded as the foremost military theorist of

modern times. This British general has observed, in his book *Armament and History*, that military considerations are not "the sole, let alone the highest, values in war. . . . " In his opinion:

> War can only be considered sane when it is looked upon as a political instrument, an instrument subservient to policy, which, to be curative, must be based on moral principles. . . . The peace aimed at should be a better peace than the one war has broken; for should it be a worse peace, then, morally, the war will be lost, however decisively the enemy may have been beaten.

We of the United States are confronted with this possibility (if not actuality) of "a worse peace." For the military problem facing us is how to defend ourselves without losing in the process those values for which the defense is undertaken. General Bonner Fellers is aware of the collectivistic import of such measures as Universal Military Training and other coercive devices which we rely on to raise huge mass armies. And although Fellers is a ground force general, he is convinced that no mass armies we could raise would be a threat or determent to a possible aggressor.

A feasible defense strategy, as outlined by Fellers, would include these points: a) Avoid war, if possible. b) Win, if war cannot be avoided. c) Maintain free economy and initiative. d) Meet treaty obligations. e) Conserve lives. He argues that the best way to implement this strategy is to raise our air strength to a 250 group air force supported by an adequate army and navy. This the United States could do without strain if our policy called for such a program.

This whole matter needs to be thoroughly ventilated by public discussion, for the Pentagon seems bent on staffing our defenses with huge masses of manpower despite the fact that we have but one-sixteenth of the world's population—while the potential enemy controls one-third. *Wings for Peace* makes a significant contribution to this discussion; its outcome will affect the life of every American.

E.A.O.