

# CATHOLIC WORKER



Vol. XXXI No. 10

MAY, 1965

Subscription  
25c Per Year

Price 1c

## PETITION

of American Citizens to Pope Paul VI for Further Leadership  
In the Work for World Peace

Holy Father,

At this moment, when war again defaces man, turning him from love to hatred, from service to violence, and as war threatens to become a global storm bringing unimaginable agony on the human family, we feel compelled to address you with a word of gratitude and petition.

To you, a man of peace who has spoken often for reconciliation among warring nations, we wish to express as believer and nonbeliever alike:

our deep concern as American citizens for the grave situation today in Vietnam, both in the suffering it has brought on that country and in its threat to mankind;

our recognition of our own responsibility for this situation by our past silence and inaction, both as American citizens and as men called to the work of making peace;

our deep gratitude and support for your enduring efforts for world peace in the spirit of *Pacem in Terris*, especially your appeals to nations to meet in negotiations; and to turn their efforts from arms-making to the needs of suffering mankind;

our hope that, confronted by deadlocked opponents in the Vietnam crisis, the Church will appeal even more clearly to government leaders for negotiations, by reminding them before the world that for negotiations to begin retaliation must end;

our further hope that the Church in the Second Vatican Council will lead in the work for peace;

first, by speaking out unequivocally against the preparations for total war that would desecrate man and creation;

second, by recognizing each man's right, when prompted by conscience, to refuse his participation in war;

third, by emphasizing nonviolent alternatives to war, the quest for a safeguarded disarmament, and the strengthening of international institutions for peace, such as the United Nations;

and finally, by committing the Church ever more deeply to her vocation of reconciling men whose continued resort to violence risks the destruction of their world.

(This petition is an expression of the hopes of men of good will for the work of the Church, and of the Pope in particular, for world peace. Signatures are therefore not limited to Catholics nor Christians, and all who agree with it in principle and purpose are urged to sign. If the signatures obtained indicate wide enough support, an effort will be made to present the petition personally to Pope Paul in Rome.)

Please return all petitions and supporting signatures to the following organization.

Catholic Peace Fellowship  
5 Beekman St., N.Y.C. 2, N.Y.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

## Peter Maurin, Personalist

By DOROTHY DAY

We are usually driving back and forth to the farm at Tivoli, but on the few occasions when I have taken the train from Grand Central station, I have enjoyed the view from the river side, and been oppressed by one aspect of the view from the land side. That is, the ugly habit of people to use as dumps the back yards of their houses as well as the swampy places and creek beds of the little streams flowing into the Hudson. In Yonkers especially there are some rows of houses that evidently front the street and where the front yards are probably well cared for. But garbage and trash have been thrown down the cliff side that leads to the railroad tracks and Hudson River, so that it hurts each time one sees it.

Suddenly I thought one day of one of the jobs Peter Maurin had undertaken on the first farm we owned at Easton, Pennsylvania. It was a job which illustrated many of his ideas but also his love of beauty, his sense of the fitness of things. It also illustrated what he used to call his philosophy of work.

There were two farms, actually, at Easton, the upper and lower farm, and it was on the lower farm that most of us were housed and where we had our retreats every summer. There was one old house, two large barns, one of which we

used for the animals, and the other of which we converted into chapel, meeting room, dormitories, and at the lower level, a long kitchen and dining room. The entire barn was built on a hillside so that on the road level the entrance was into the chapel and dormitories. It was below that, on a much lower level, that we had converted cowstalls into a long concrete floored room which made up the kitchen, in one corner and long dining room which could seat thirty or more guests. It was only later that we had electricity and running water in that kitchen. For several years we used lamplight and water from the spring house across the road.

At the very end of this large building, connected with it by one stone foundation wall, there was a foundation built up with field stone ceiling-high, which was overgrown with weeds when we first saw it that first summer, which was so hectic that we saw no further than that. We were too busy caring for the dozen children from Harlem and the numerous guests, most of whom were sick in one way or another.

But the winter disclosed the painful fact that this beautiful foundation, overlooking the fields below it and the Delaware river valley far below that, was actually

(Continued on page 2)



## EASY ESSAYS

By PETER MAURIN

(May 9, 1877 — May 15, 1949)

### FIGHTING COMMUNISM

The Catholic Worker proposes fighting Communism

the way the first Christians fought pagan Romanism, through the works of mercy.

The Catholic Worker proposes fighting Communism

the way the Irish scholars fought pagan feudalism, through Round-Table Discussions, Houses of Hospitality, Farming Communes.

The Communists do not build Communism, they build Socialism.

The Catholic Worker does not build Catholic Socialism, it builds Catholic Communism.

The Catholic Worker builds Catholic Communism

the way the first Christians and the Irish scholars built Catholic Communism.

The Catholic Worker believes that there is no better Communism than Catholic Communism,

and that there is no better way to build Catholic Communism than by building Catholic Communes.

Catholic Communes

are not a new thing, they are an old thing.

Catholic Communes are so old that Catholics have forgotten them.

Communists have not invented anything, not even the name Commune.

The Communist ideal is the Common Good Ideal—

the ideal of St. Thomas More, the ideal of St. Thomas Aquinas, the ideal of the Irish scholars, the ideal of the first Christians.

The doctrine of the Common Good of St. Thomas Aquinas is still a Catholic doctrine.

We don't need a new doctrine, we need an old technique.

We need the old technique, of the first Christians

and the Irish scholars.

What was good for the first Christians and the Irish scholars

ought to be good enough for us. What was practical for them

ought to be practical for us.

## We Strangers And Afraid

By KARL MEYER

I went to my first meeting of the Illinois Committee to Abolish Capital Punishment (28 E. Jackson, Chicago). I sat and listened. Near the end, Father James Jones (Episcopal), the chairman, suddenly asked me to contact a state representative, who was totally unknown to me. I was startled; I said, "Why me? Why has lightning suddenly struck here?" He replied, "Someone has to reach these people. You know, you can't walk to Moscow on this issue." What was his surprise to read in the papers a few days later, that I had set out on a two-hundred-sixty-mile walk to the state capital at Springfield to contact thousands of people I did not know.

"Convert your time to something that is constructive and don't interfere with God's laws or you may get the long end of the stick. We need the death penalty to make wicked men and women know they can't play around with sin and not pay." So wrote a man who saw my picture in the paper when I set out.

"We shoot rats, and think nothing of it; the death penalty still has its place," said a priest in Herscher, Illinois through a screen door, while he left me standing in pouring rain.

In the open spaces of the Illinois prairie, I found out why the death penalty still stands. People fear the stranger and have closed their hearts to his sufferings.

People waved and tooted their horns, signifying that they had seen me on TV or read about me in the papers; they stopped along the highway to satisfy their curiosity about my one-man project, but they did not offer help or hospitality.

I was alternately pushing or pulling a heavy two-wheeled cart, containing a washtub full of literature and my personal belongings. People passed me in their cars and trucks on the way to their homes; miles and hours later, they watched me toiling across the prairie toward their houses, then passing, then toiling away from them, sometimes in rain, battling strong winds from the southwest, with dusk falling, sometimes in darkness, until I disappeared across the southern horizon; and yet, no man, in all the farm country from Chicago to Springfield, came out to say: "Friend, you look tired and hungry; come in and rest awhile and have a bite to eat."

In Herscher, the Lowells have a rooming house. After talking with me awhile and weighing the matter gravely, they agreed to take me in, and then proved very kind and open-hearted. They showed me their collection of rocks from all over the world, and replicas of the American flag, made with thousands of sea shells. In the morning I offered my rent to Mrs. Lowell. "Two dollars," she said. I paid her. "Now," she said, "I am

(Continued on page 3)

The condition of people's moral consciousness may be gauged in a sense by their attitude to capital punishment. It is an ominous moral sign that the peoples of Western Europe and America approve of capital punishment.

NICHOLAS BERDYAEV.

# CATHOLIC WORKER

Published Monthly September to June, Bi-monthly July-August  
ORGAN OF THE CATHOLIC WORKER MOVEMENT

PETER MAURIN, Founder  
DOROTHY DAY, Editor and Publisher  
MARTIN J. CORBIN, Managing Editor

Associate Editors:  
CLARE BEE, CHARLES BUTTERWORTH, EDGAR FORAND, JUDITH GREGORY, WILLIAM HORVATH, WALTER KERELL, KARL MEYER, DEANE MOWRER, HELEN Q. RILEY, ARTHUR SHEEHAN, ROBERT STEED, ANNE TAILLEFER, EDWARD TURNER, STANLEY VISHNEVSKI, PETER LUMSDEN

New subscriptions and change of address:  
175 Chrystie St., New York 2, N. Y. 10002  
Telephone OR 4-9812

Editorial communications to: Box 32 Tivoli, N. Y. 12583

Subscription United States, 25c Yearly. Canada and Foreign 30c Yearly  
Subscription rate of one cent per copy plus postage applies to bundles of one hundred or more copies each month for one address.

Reentered as second class matter August 10, 1939, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., Under the Act of March 3, 1879



## Peter Maurin, Personalist

(Continued from page 1)

filled half way to the top with all the debris of years. The tenants of the farmhouse before us had used the foundation as a convenient dumping ground for garbage, tin cans, old machinery, discarded furniture, refrigerators, washing machines and other eye-sores such as I complain of seeing from the windows of the train. (What to do with all this waste, all these old cars and machines, is one of the problems of the day.)

Peter Maurin surveyed this dump and before we knew anything about his project, he was hard at work at it with wheel barrow and pick and shovel. He had undertaken, with no assistance, to clean this Augean stable. Actually we had no plans then, nor did we for several years, for utilizing the foundation and making an additional house on the property.

Fortunately, the ground sloped so steeply down back of the barns that Peter's engineering project was feasible. By dumping the refuse over the back and covering it with fill (another laborious job since he had to wheel loads of this heavy clay earth from the wooded hillside further down the road) he widened the foot path in back of the barn so that it became a narrow road around the back of the barn and in fact a little terrace where it was possible to sit and survey the long sloping valley below, a scene of incredible beauty, since we were high on what was called Mammy Morgan's Mountain, overlooking the conjunction of the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers.

I do not know how long this great task took Peter Maurin, the sturdy French peasant with the broad shoulders, the strong hands which were the hands of the scholar, more used to handling books than the shovel. He had taught in the Christian Brothers' schools in France in his youth and though peasant-born had received a good education.

### Philosophy of Work

I write this account of a piece of work which I remembered only because the sight of the dumps from the train window which had flashed by in one short instant had brought it suddenly to my mind so that I knew I should write about Peter in connection with it. It started a long train of thought which had to do with many of our problems today and Peter's solutions. I will try in this short space, and no matter how inadequately, to summarize them, although each of the points he used to make could be expanded into a day-long discussion.

First of all, it must be emphasized that Peter Maurin was a deeply religious man. He never missed daily Mass, and many a time I saw him sitting quietly in the church before or after Mass. When he lived on Fifteenth Street he walked to St. Francis of

Assisi noon-day Mass. When we moved to Mott Street, where he lived for fifteen years he walked to St. Andrew's near City Hall to go to the noon-day Mass there. He never rushed, but walked in most leisurely fashion, his hands clasped behind his back, ruminating no doubt, paying little attention to shops (except for book-shops) or to passersby or even to traffic.

He read and studied a great deal, delighting to find new authors who could contribute to what he called the new synthesis of Cult, Culture and Cultivation. Cult came first, emphasizing the primacy of the spiritual. (Poor proof reading overlooked the error "privacy of the spiritual" in last month's issue.) He never talked personally of his own spiritual life but recommended to us such writings as Karl Adams's *Spirit of Catholicism*; St. Francis of Assisi and the Rule of St. Benedict.

He recommended the writings of the saints as they had to do with their practical lives, what their faith led them to be and do. When Ade Bethune came to us as a high-school girl with drawings of the saints, Peter urged her to picture the saints as workers, and she drew pictures of Our Lady feeding the chickens, sweeping a room, caring for a host of children; not someone to be worshipped but to be followed. Ade and others who followed her in this tradition (Carl Paulson in his stained glass picture, St. Benedict planting a field, St. Peter pulling in his nets, St. Martin de Porres feeding a sick man).

Work, according to Peter was as necessary to man as bread, and he placed great importance on physical work. I can remember a discussion he had with the great scholar Dom Virgil Michel, who was the pioneer of the liturgical movement in this country.

"St. Benedict emphasized manual labor, as well as intellectual," Peter said. "Man needs to work with his hands. He needs to work by the sweat of his brow, for bodily health's sake. We would have far less nervous breakdowns if men worked with their hands more, instead of just with their heads."

As a result of Peter's emphasis we were called romantic agrarians, and without paying attention to Peter's more profound vision, national leaders in the field of social justice and civil rights insisted on misunderstanding our whole message, which was one emphasizing the necessity of farming communes, rather than individual family farms, cooperative effort rather than the isolated and hopeless struggling with the problem of the land and earning a living from it. He cited the cooperative effort of Fr. Jimmy Tompkins and Father Coady of Nova Scotia, and the co-

(Continued on page 5)

## A Hard Row to Hoe

By HENRY ANDERSON

Every successful revolutionist, through all the ages, has had to be a kind of intuitive sociologist, with at least a subconscious inkling of how his society is put together, how it functions and moves, and what to do to make it move in a desired direction. For example, it would seem essential for any serious revolutionary to understand, either through intuition or through deliberation, the points at which the old order is weakest and most vulnerable to change, and to concentrate on those rather than flinging his revolutionary resources, which are always limited, in heroic assaults upon those points where the old order is strongest and least vulnerable.

It appears to me that voter registration drives—while obviously righteous and just, in terms of the professed code of the country as a whole—are assaults at precisely the level where the established order of the Old South is best prepared to defend itself: namely, the political level. Ever since the federal government lost interest in the Reconstruction experiment, in the 1870's, former slaveholders and their sons and grandsons have been building a massive, ingenious political Maginot line. In its construction, they have recognized certain demographic facts which civil-rights revolutionists ignore at their peril.

There was a time when Negroes were in a numerical majority in Mississippi and certain other parts of the South. They are not now. Taking the "hard core" states as a whole—Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina—Negroes make up just 32% of the population.\* In Mississippi, with the highest percentage, Negroes comprise 42% of the population, but less than that of the voting-age population. Furthermore, the Negro population is distributed unevenly. Among Mississippi's 83 counties, there are just 30—or 36%—in which Negroes of voting age outnumber whites of voting age. In the "hard core" states as a group, only 21% of the counties have a majority of Negro adults. Part of the political Maginot line which segregationists have been building so carefully is a county unit system which takes into account the Negro concentration in certain regions. The system ensures that even if every Negro in the South were somehow to become registered, and were to vote as a bloc, the political machinery of consequence would still rest with the racists.

Let us assume that voting rights are seriously enforced by the Department of Justice. It is quite conceivable that the segregationists may simply write off the relatively few areas in which Negroes are in a majority—turn them into county-wide ghettos with Negro aldermen, Negro justices of the peace, and so on—analogue to what we already have in Northern ghettos. But all statewide offices, the Democratic and Republican state central committees, the real power, would still reside firmly in the hand of the white supremacists, who would control over the greater number of counties. A political "revolution" of this type, far from breaking the pattern of segregation, could quite possibly consolidate it. It would not be the first movement in history so deflected from its starting purposes.

What were the beginnings of the peculiar social order of the Southwest? It began with the lust of a landholding class for servile agricultural labor. Negroes were not imported to work in factories or mines or forests. They were imported to work in tobacco, rice, sugar cane, indigo, and, above all, in cotton fields. They were imported to work for those who happened through accidents of history hap-

\* Statistics are from the 1960 census. Negro proportion is probably lower today.

pened to own the land, but considered it beneath their dignity to work on the land themselves. Everything else followed: The elaborate rationalizations about racial differences. The appeals to Scripture. The mythology about magnolias and crinoline and chivalry. The Civil War. The Ku Klux Klan. Lynch law. Jim Crow. All of it. The whole, long agony. Right down to the headline in this morning's newspaper.

Despite the changes which have taken place in the past few decades, the South generally, and Mississippi in particular, is still heavily rural. Over 62% of the population of Mississippi is classified as rural, compared, for example, to less than 14% in California. For all the steel mills in Birmingham, for all the factories runaway from New England, the economic base of the South is still agriculture. Taking the "hard core" states as a whole, in 65% of Mississippi's 83 counties—that is, 80%—agriculture is the main industry.



Rita Corbin

And this is agriculture of a characteristic type, with characteristic properties. For the most part, it is plantation agriculture, in which those who own the land but do not work on it are dependent—heavily dependent—upon the labor of those who do not own the land but do work on it. Agricultural labor in the South assumes two forms: wage labor paid by the hour or by the unit of production; and sharecropping or tenant farming, which in actual practice comes close to peonage. Fully 74% of the sharecroppers, and fully 81% of the wage workers in Mississippi agriculture are Negroes. The State — and, indeed, the South as a whole—could not survive for more than a few weeks without their labor.

This, I suggest, is the Achilles tendon of the entire racist system: the point at which all the violence and guilt and paranoia betray their essential weakness and vulnerability. The master is, in a potential sense, the captive of the slave—but neither knows it.

Negro sharecroppers and day laborers of Mississippi and the South possess immense latent power—leverage beyond that even of the ballot box—if it were utilized. There is a way to capitalize on it. That is to organize the people who have skill with the things that grow in the soil. So long as Negro sharecroppers and farm laborers are as isolated in spirit as their rude cabins are isolated geographically, they can be ignored by the power structure. But if they ever act in concert, they may wring concessions from the power structure more fundamental than anything that can be gained by demonstrations in the streets of urban centers.

### New Spins of Union

When I speak of rural organizing, I do not mean orthodox, hidebound unionism. Indeed, I would avoid any connection with the "labor movement." The organizing should be quiet, painstaking, door-to-door, without fanfare. First, starting a process of communication. Then, gaining con-

fidence of members and prospective members by proving the usefulness of the organization in small, concrete ways. To the disinherited, the problem of what you do when your child has a 105 degree fever may be much more meaningful than how you go about registering to vote. Organizing should, insofar as possible, begin with the lives of the disinherited as they perceive them, and build toward the type of inheritance they themselves envisage, rather than a vision imported from the urban, liberal or radical North, however rational or ennobling that imported vision might be.

If one built along these lines, surely, wisely and well, the time would come, soon enough, when the members of the organization would have enough confidence in their organization—which is to say, in themselves—to begin taking risks, making sacrifices, taking collective action, making demands. In the case of a worker organization, this means withholding, or threatening to withhold the labor of their hands, until justice, as they define it, is done.

Compared to marshalling a show of strength on the county courthouse lawn, it would be relatively uncomplicated. You wouldn't ask sharecroppers, from twenty miles around, to congregate in any one place, where they would be targets for police dogs, tear gas, and public cads. They would just stay at home, instead of going out and chopping cotton. If they were evicted, they would sit down beside the road, as sharecroppers did in Southeastern Missouri in 1939. You must have plans, of course, to provide food, and tents, and medical care. A civil-rights movement which is capable of raising millions of dollars for bail and fines and legal aid is surely capable of providing for the necessities of life.

Worker organizations have generally defined justice in terms of money in the pay envelope, job security, working conditions, grievance procedures, union recognition. Perhaps an organization of Southern Negro agricultural workers would conceive justice in the same terms. Perhaps it would not. There is no reason why labor could not be withheld until county voter registration procedures were changed or until Negroes were admitted to a school. It is not for me to say what the objectives should be. Nor, if a may make so bold as it for S.N.C.C. or CORE, or anybody else to say—anybody other than disinherited themselves.

But I do know this much: once the disinherited of the earth—whichever disinherited—through their efforts, a modicum of justice—however they define it—it starts a process which extends before it is through into every recess of the social order; which grows and gathers momentum until, in the words of the prophet, "justice rolls down like the waters."

In this brief space, I have naturally had to oversimplify. There would be strenuous opposition from the established order to the organizing of "rural development associations," by whatever name. There would be injunctions and special ordinances and night ridings and a whole battery of legal and extralegal counterrevolutionary measures.

But let me point out that it is not idle armchair speculation to talk of organizing the sharecroppers and day laborers of the rural South. It has been done. Everyone seriously interested in the civil-rights revolution ought to memorize the story of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, which, in the 1930's, organized at least 35,000 of the disinherited, mostly Negroes, mostly in the Mississippi delta. In many ways, the task was even more formidable than that now. The country was in the grip of its gravest depression. The Ku Klux Klan rode without challenge.

(Continued on page 6)

# We Strangers and Afraid

(Continued from page 1)

going to turn round and donate this to your cause," and so she did.

After fighting southwest winds all day and making only fourteen miles beyond Herscher, I came to a junction, around 6 P.M. A large weatherbeaten billboard pointed to: **KEMPTON—A LITTLE TOWN WITH A BIG HEART.** John Kearney, in Chicago, had given me the name of a liberal minister in Kempton. I locked my cart at the junction and started down the road to Kempton. I had not gone a quarter mile when a deputy sheriff pulled up to inquire about my mission in the town. The minister had moved from the town some months before, but the deputy agreed to take me to another Christian minister. He left me in the car while they talked for a long time. Then they came out and very cordially told me about a hotel in the town of Chatsworth, twenty miles away. The deputy drove me back to the junction. I unlocked my cart under the lengthening shadow of the billboard, and continued my journey. The wind had died. Thirteen miles and four hours brought me to the town of Piper City. A truckload of youths came out to watch me arrive, and they took literature. The town policeman appeared and also recommended the hotel in Chatsworth. I left my cart and hitchhiked to Chatsworth. The next morning, I walked back six miles because I was unable to hitch a ride.

Toward afternoon, I lay down by the roadside to take a nap. A young farmer drove out with a jar of ice water, and would have taken me home for a meal, but I had just eaten.

Beyond this town there were no hotels and I went on walking through the night, sleeping a few hours by the roadside, and making fifty-two miles, from Piper City to Champaign-Urbana, in two days.

### On the Road

I kept to the side roads and county roads to avoid the heavy traffic on the major two-lane highways to Springfield. There is something on the prairie, which the road maps describe as "improved roads." I was glad to see that one of the side roads out of Decatur was an "improved road" to Mount Auburn. I took it. Certainly, if one tried to cross the ploughed fields of southern Illinois in April, dragging a two-wheeled cart, one would soon bog down to the axles. From this point of view, it would surely be true that a thin layer of gravel with some tar poured over it would be an improvement, as a roadway, over the natural condition of the prairie. In this sense, I was on an improved road. I walked all day through heavy rain and the mud oozing out of the cracks in the improved road. Darkness had fallen when I struggled up Mount Auburn into the town. (One learns that the prairie is not flat as for-

merly seen and believed.) Inquiries in a tavern disclosed that there were no hotels or rooming houses. Light poured through stained-glass images from the life of Christ, at a church on a hill, where evening services for Wednesday in Holy Week were about to begin. I entered the church, identified myself and the purpose of my pilgrimage, and asked for a night's lodging. The pastor talked it over with members of the congregation. During the service we sang the moving hymns remembered from childhood. Afterwards the pastor said that no one had room, but offered to drive me to a motel in Illiopolis, eight miles distant. Two men of the congregation had agreed to ride along. One had seen me on TV. They were big strapping men, and the pastor wanted me to ride in the front seat. I can only conclude that he was afraid of me, afraid that I might prove to be a criminal or a lunatic. These contingencies provided for, he was most charitable and offered to pay the motel bill.

Fear that the stranger is a criminal, and the belief that the criminal is completely strange to us—these were the attitudes against which I struggled.

The next day I went on, but the west wind was strong against me. Near Rochester, seven miles short of Springfield, the wind came up so strong that I could go no farther. I left the cart and took refuge in an empty stone house by the roadside. I lay down and rested for several hours in a pile of straw. Darkness had come when I left the house and hitched into Springfield for a good night's sleep. But many eyes had watched me enter the stone house. In the morning, when I returned, I found a brown bag by the cart, with the word **FOOD** printed on it. In it were an orange and two rolls. A boy of about twelve rode out on a bicycle to talk with me. It was he who had left the food for my breakfast. His name was Kris Hasselbring. He thought I had spent the night in the stone house. He knew nothing of me or my mission, but perhaps he was too young and too small to be afraid of his fellow man.

The day was Good Friday. I fashioned three crosses from sticks, to mount on my sign, which was a replica of the electric chair, with the one word **NO** on face and back—three crosses to commemorate three criminals who suffered capital punishment on this day, many years ago, according to tradition. So I arrived in Springfield and rolled up to the steps of the State Capitol.

In Springfield, I went to visit the Rev. Richard Graebel of First Presbyterian Church. I said, "I am the man who just walked from Chicago to Springfield for the abolition of capital punishment." He replied, with a laugh, "You look as though you have been punished enough for that," and helped me to find a parking place for my

cart until I can bring it back by trailer to Chicago.

I have written of farmers and country people, and not of the people in the cities where I stopped, Chicago and suburbs, Kankakee, Champaign - Urbana, Decatur, and Springfield. I spent half of my time, in these cities, visiting people and talking abolition. Catholic Worker readers looked for me and did not find me; liberals took me into their homes and rescued me from the portent of tornadoes (though I for my part stood ready to carry my campaign to Oz); clergymen of many faiths agreed to work for abolition of the death penalty; the press received me with open pages; in Champaign the cops tried to run me off with threats of arrest for leafletting, but I ran them off to their City Attorney, with talk of civil rights and civil liberties, refusing to be intimidated. But all this was expected, because I was not "the stranger" to these people.

Perhaps it is because killers and lawbreakers are no strangers to me that I am still begging the people of Illinois to get in touch with their State Senators and urge total abolition of the death penalty. The abolition bills come to a vote in the Judiciary Committee on May 4th, and some time after that will come the decisive vote on the floor.

Here is a letter I received from Bill Witherspoon, the next man scheduled to get the chair in this state:

Felix (Singer) tells me you have planned a trip down into the southern part of the State relative to this death penalty bit. It is a good move for we do need to arouse some concern down that way. I wish I could go along with you.

My own case is not as tight as it was a few days ago. I have been given a stay as you may have heard which will allow us enough time to present this new petition thru the system of courts. It is a good petition and we just might get a favorable ruling from it. I am hoping for, not expecting the, a new trial. This would perhaps dissolve the death penalty in so far as I am concerned.

The pot of life just keeps right on boiling, don't it?

I'm not too sure about the pending bill in the Senate. I don't feel it will pass, for, too many times perhaps, it has gone down to defeat by a few votes. If we could pick up a few of those from the area where you are going this would indeed be a help. They look for the bill to perhaps lose by 2 to 4 votes and this is not too bad. Close counts only in horse-shoes, tho.

This bill is not total what with those "exceptions" (for those who kill prison guards, or police officers in the course of a felony—KM). Seems we are afraid to abolish the penalty all the way, but must try and reserve it for a very few. Heck, the last guard who was killed in prison was slain back in the 30's and the killer didn't get the death penalty for that. Police are vulnerable because a lot of times they have a gun out and shooting too fast. The burglar or what have you shoots back, either out of fear or to protect his life. Heck, we can read the statistics and in the states where there is no capital punishment, not one third of the number of police are killed there. Capital punishment seems to be no factor one way or the other. It certainly is not a deterrent but might, were a man to know he will get the chair, it might inspire him to kill more than once to avoid arrest and execution.

Who knows?

Well, this is meant to wish you success on your tour of Southern Illinois. I hope you can gather the people and that they will write their representatives about this thing. We certainly need someone to stir them up in the right direction.

Until later then, and I do hope you will let me know what kind of success you have, I will close with

Warm Regards,  
Bill Witherspoon



A. de Bethune

## Catholic Worker Positions

The general aim of the Catholic Worker Movement is to realize in the individual and in society the expressed and implied teachings of Christ. It must, therefore, begin with an analysis of our present society to determine whether we already have an order that meets with the requirements of justice and charity of Christ.

The society in which we live and which is generally called capitalist (because of its method of producing wealth) and bourgeois (because of the prevalent mentality) is not in accord with justice and charity—

**IN ECONOMICS**—because the guiding principle is production for profit and because production determines needs. A just order would provide the necessities of life for all, and needs would determine what would be produced. From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs. Today we have a non-producing class which is maintained by the labor of others with the consequence that the laborer is systematically robbed of that wealth which he produces over and above what is needed for his bare maintenance.

**IN PSYCHOLOGY**—because capitalist society fails to take in the whole nature of man but rather regards him as an economic factor in production. He is an item in the expense sheet of the employer. Profit determines what type of work he shall do. Hence, the deadly routine of assembly lines and the whole mode of factory production. In a just order the question will be whether a certain type of work is in accord with human values, not whether it will bring a profit to the exploiters of labor.

**IN MORALS**—because capitalism is maintained by class war. Since the aim of the capitalist employer is to obtain labor as cheaply as possible and the aim of labor is to sell itself as dearly as possible and buy the products produced as cheaply as possible there is an inevitable and persistent conflict which can only be overcome when the capitalist ceases to exist as a class. When there is but one class the members perform different functions but there is no longer an employer-wage-earner relationship.

### TO ACHIEVE THIS SOCIETY WE ADVOCATE:

A complete rejection of the present social order and a non-violent revolution to establish an order more in accord with Christian values. This can only be done by direct action since political means have failed as a method for bringing about this society. Therefore we advocate a personalism which takes on ourselves responsibility for changing conditions to the extent that we are able to do so. By establishing Houses of Hospitality we can take care of as many of them in need as we can rather than turn them over to the impersonal "charity" of the State. We do not do this in order to patch up the wrecks of the capitalist system but rather because there is always a shared responsibility in these things and the call to minister to our brother transcends any consideration of economics. We feel that what anyone possesses beyond basic needs does not belong to him but rather to the poor who are without it.

We believe in a withdrawal from the capitalist system so far as each one is able to do so. Toward this end we favor the establishment of a Distributist economy wherein those who have a vocation to the land will work on the farms surrounding the village and those who have other vocations will work in the village itself. In this way we will have a decentralized economy which will dispense with the State as we know it and will be federationist in character as was society during certain periods that preceded the rise of national states.

We believe in worker-ownership of the means of production and distribution, as distinguished from nationalization. This to be accomplished by decentralized co-operatives and the elimination of a distinct employer class. It is revolution from below and not (as political revolutions are) from above. It calls for widespread and universal ownership by all men of property as a stepping stone to a communism that will be in accord with the Christian teaching of detachment from material goods and which, when realized, will express itself in common ownership. "Property, the more common it is, the more holy it is," St. Gertrude writes.

We believe in the complete equality of all men as brothers under the Fatherhood of God. Racism in any form is blasphemy against God who created all mankind in His image and who offers redemption to all. Man comes to God freely or not at all and it is not the function of any man or institution to force the Faith on anyone. Persecution of any people is therefore a serious sin and denial of free will.

We believe further that the revolution that is to be pursued in ourselves and in society must be pacifist. Otherwise it will proceed by force and use means that are evil and which will never be outgrown, so that they will determine the END of the revolution and that end will again be tyranny. We believe that Christ went beyond natural ethics and the Old Dispensation in this matter of force and war and taught non-violence as a way of life. So that when we fight tyranny and injustice and the class war we must do so by spiritual weapons and by non-cooperation. Refusal to pay taxes, refusal to register for conscription, refusal to take part in civil-defense drills, non-violent strikes, withdrawal from the system are all methods that can be employed in this fight for justice.

We believe that success, as the world determines it, is not the criterion by which a movement should be judged. We must be prepared and ready to face seeming failure. The most important thing is that we adhere to these values which transcend time and for which we will be asked a personal accounting, not as to whether they succeeded (though we should hope that they do) but as to whether we remained true to them even though the whole world go otherwise.

### To Our Readers

Barney McCaffrey, New York teacher fired several years ago for refusal to lead children on shelter drills, and his wife of six months, Patricia, both friends of the Catholic Worker, are taking a VW bus camping trip around the country beginning in May. Besides carrying information about the CW, the Catholic Peace Fellowship and Catholics for Latin America, they will have slide and music programs to offer in exchange for room and board or minimum expenses.

Of particular interest to CW readers:

The Eastern Church (its history, a personal view of Mt. Athos and the McCaffreys' own Eastern Rite wedding.)

Modern Art and the Gospel and Future Trends in Christian Art (Mr. McCaffrey, a musician, photographer and teacher of art, examines Christian art and artists in New York City.)

Utopias Europe (based on personal visits to more than a dozen intentional communities in Europe.)

Pilgrimage in Song (a sing-along program in ten languages of a year and a half of personal experiences in the shrines, pilgrimages and monasteries of Europe and the Near East.)

The McCaffreys will be in New England in May, New York State and eastern Pennsylvania in June; the Washington, D.C. area in early July, Ohio and Michigan in July and August, then from September to December they will go south from Minnesota to southern Texas. Next spring they should reach the West Coast. In New England, write c/o General Delivery in Boston. Other, to 131-31 Fowler Ave., Flushing 55, N.Y.

# START OF THE CATHOLIC WORKER

By MAISIE WARD

Peter Maurin was perhaps the greatest inspiration of Catholic America in our generation. Yet having said this, I almost despair of bringing him to life in print. It was Dorothy Day far more than he who set on foot *The Catholic Worker*, both the newspaper and the Houses of Hospitality. It was she who was wanted to lecture everywhere; at first glance you would probably overlook Peter. He was a square, smallish, untidy man. To read he put on magnifying spectacles which he had bought for fifty cents and which sat crookedly on his nose. He was from southern France, of peasant stock, one of twenty-three children, some of the brothers and sisters being of his father's second marriage. He had traveled widely and worked at many jobs—in steel mills, lumber camps and railroads; as a travelling salesman, a janitor, a teacher of French language. For having covered France in his journeyings, he came to Canada and thence to the States. All the time he was reading—and you can trace in the little he published the influence of Charles Peguy—all the time he was thinking, all the time he was writing.

Peter did not care where he lived, comfort meant nothing to him. He worked for four years in a boys' camp—at first without pay, later at a dollar a day—which even at that time few would have thought sufficient. But Peter spent on food hardly a dollar a week, living chiefly on bread and vegetable soup. He did not care where he slept—he slept very little anyhow. Such money as he had went on books and papers. His pockets were always full of these and his mind of ideas, which he would spill out equally readily to "bums," to priests, to journalists, to philosophers. It was an unending stream. Peter never stopped until you stopped him, but then he did so with the utmost good humor. He might exhaust his audience, but a man who could not get annoyed himself would never annoy them, and even if exhausted one was never bored by him.

Frank got to know Peter well. He would drop in at Sheed and Ward and in the bookroom would read or talk—or write those *Easy Essays*, some of which we published, and which expressed his philosophy of life and action and his judgments on the world around us. We were in the very depth of the Depression, and college graduates felt themselves lucky if they could hold down a job in a restaurant or a department store. One day Peter was in the bookroom talking to Frank when a total stranger came in. Peter suddenly swung around and addressed him in an "Easy Essay."

**The Vincentians were founded to work among the poor.**

**But instead they run colleges, in competition with the Jesuits. Don't you think it would be better**

**if instead of competing with the Jesuits**

**they co-operated with them by running Houses of Hospitality for graduates of Jesuit colleges who cannot get jobs?**

Our startled visitor made for the door but Peter was not disconcerted. Like ourselves on the outdoor platform, he often had the experience of losing an audience—but he also kept many. And on his arrival in New York he had gone, as if by special guidance, to the family of the second genius in the Catholic Worker Movement: Dorothy Day.

Dorothy had been away, following the march to Washington of the hunger strikers: when she got home she found Peter in the kitchen lecturing to her Communist sister-in-law. This is what he was saying:

**People go to Washington**

**Asking the Federal Government to solve their economic problems.**

**But the Federal Government was never meant**

**to solve men's economic problems.**

**Thomas Jefferson says, "The less government there is the better it is."**

**If the less government there is the better it is,**

**the best kind of government is self-government.**

**If the best kind of government then the best kind of organization is self-organization.**

**When the organizers try to organize the unorganized they often do it for the benefit of the organizers.**

**The organizers don't organize themselves.**

**And when the organizers don't**

**organize themselves,**

**nobody organizes himself.**

**And when nobody organizes himself,**

**nothing is organized.**

**It was probably not as startling to Dorothy as to her sister-in-law.**

Dorothy was a convert from Communism, but she had probably not yet been cured fully of the notion of throwing responsibility on governments which were increasingly, and everywhere, at once claiming more and more of it and failing more and more miserably to make good their claims. She discovered, anyhow, right away that Peter had read some articles of hers and had come in search of her that she might help him to begin a work of social reconstruction. "If it were not for Peter," she says, "there would be no Houses of Hospitality and Farming Communes. Peter has changed the lives of thousands of people."

The leaders in the Hunger March, says Dorothy, were Communists, but 90% of the marchers were not and had only accepted this leadership because "no other leaders had presented themselves." This was part of the tragedy, which she felt more and more profoundly, which had prepared her for Peter's appeal and for the work she was to undertake. She described her impressions during the march, her reflections upon it.

I do not blame the harried police, the firemen, the reserves, even though they cursed and bullied and taunted the marchers as though they were trying to provoke a bloody conflict. I blame the press which for a few ghastly headlines, a few gruesome pictures, was ready to precipitate useless violence towards a group of unemployed human beings who were being used a "Communist tactic," as "shock troops" in the "class struggle." I watched the ragged horde and thought to myself, "These are Christ's poor." He was one of them.

He was a man like other men, and He chose his friends among the ordinary workers. These men feel they have been betrayed by Christianity. Men are not Christian today. If they were, this sight would not be possible. For dearer in the sight of God perhaps are these hungry ragged ones, than all those smug, well-fed Christians who sit in their homes, cowering in fear of the Communist menace. I felt that they were my people, that I was part of them. I had worked for them and with them in the past, and now I was a Catholic and so could not be a Communist. I could not join this united front of protest and wanted to . . . The feast of the Immaculate Conception was the



next day and I went out to the National Shrine and assisted at solemn high Mass there. And the prayer that I offered up was that some way would be shown me, some way would be opened up for me to work for the poor and the oppressed.

When I got back to New York, Peter Maurin was in the house waiting for me. (House of Hospitality, publ. by Sheed & Ward)

Peter's programme was: A Catholic Labour paper, Houses of Hospitality to meet the immediate and continuing needs of cities, farming communes for the country. He often echoed Father Vincent: "There is no unemployment on the land." "On the land you need not lose a minute of time or scrap of material." And, unlike his co-worker, Peter did know a great deal about the land. Dorothy was by upbringing a city woman, a journalist, had not only been a Communist but had also married one. She has one daughter and one of the difficulties she felt most keenly about the work she was about to undertake was the problem of educating Tamar in the heart of the Catholic Worker Movement.

Both Peter and Dorothy, like the Antagonist co-operators of whom I must speak in a later chapter, felt that a philosophy of labour, much study and discussion, must accompany and inspire their active work. They must learn, through books, through discussion—and through action. Peter had read a good deal of history and was in particular keenly aware of what Dawson so much stresses—the creation by the Church of a new social order in the crumbling Empire. The word "personalism" he probably got from Emmanuel Mounier, but he often echoes the Fathers. It was St. Basil who established on the grand scale hospices and hospitals that grew into a city; it was St. John Chrysostom who begged his

flock to have, each man, a guest-room not for his friends only but for the poor.

A theologian of some note declaimed in my hearing against the impertinence of the little group who brought into being the newspaper entitled *The Catholic Worker* and the movement of the same name. But the vast majority of priests and laity welcomed them enthusiastically. My own feeling was and is that the courage shamed us all which could confront so desperate a situation not with the usual "Something must be done," but with the resolve, "We must do something."

"We are liable," Dorothy wrote, "to make mistakes in the paper, not being theologians or philosophers, nor experts in the line of economics and sociology; but we can make no mistake in feeding God's hungry ones."

The paper had to be written at a kitchen table, in the back yard, waiting in the relief agency, in the momentary intervals between handling an immense breadline, sorting and distributing clothes, helping evicted families to move their goods, taking sick people to hospitals, calming drunks, very occasionally cleaning house, washing clothes, and trudging to the municipal baths to wash oneself—for the slum tenement acquired for purposes of hospitality contained no bathroom. It was always full to overflowing.

The story is told of the first years, 1933-8, in *House of Hospitality*, which I found on a rereading almost more moving than I did twenty years ago when first we published it. Dorothy Day is a poet and a seeker after perfection. Not least interesting is the record of the books she chose for spiritual reading, liberally quoted from, of the early efforts at carrying out some part of the Liturgy, of the determination to achieve daily meditation before or after the Mass that was never missed. She faces all the difficulties, describes the profound despondency resulting from overwork, strain, lack of sleep and often of adequate food. She tells of the immense generosity shown by fellow Catholics. And she gives us glimpses of the sudden joy coming in prayer, in moments of quiet, in glimpses of beauty through music, people and growing things. Here is a passage that seems to me to give the atmosphere of this remarkable book and brings back the days in which Dorothy was writing:

The sun was shining and a little girl was dead, a little girl from one of these crowded tenements hereabouts . . . where the rats, as little Felicia said, are chased by her father with a broomstick.

There is sun in the street but from the cellars and area-ways a dank and musty smell redolent of death rises. There is sun and gaiety in the streets, and the little girls skip rope around the pushcart of pineapples, but one little girl was carried in a coffin down the street, while the band played its slow, mournful and yet triumphant dirge. She was through with this short and dangerous life which is yet so dear to all. There is one less to skip from beneath the wheels of trucks and gather around the crowded kitchen table in the tenement. There is one less mouth to feed, one less pair of shoes for the father (who supports eight on fifteen dollars a week) to buy.

One less little girl.

I am only, in this chapter, glancing at the *Catholic Worker* during the Depression years—and at the two people who brought it into being, a movement that was certainly in these years a chief feature of New York Catholic life. I imagine St. John Chrysostom found it no easier in pleasure-loving Antioch or wealthy Constantinople to persuade people to bring the poor into their houses than did Dorothy Day in Depression-stricken New York. She records one or two instances—and I knew another a little later, of two sisters

who rented a big apartment with no heating, with none of the comforts they could well have afforded for themselves. They managed with two of their friends to take care of four other girls, who were by health or circumstances unable to pay their own way. Such generosity is rare; giving money, food, clothes is commoner, and probably Chrysostom, like Peter and Dorothy, found purse-strings loosened, if only in shame by those who refuse to go any further.

One thing this movement began to express I find a little hard to explain adequately. When you get back to a realization of the value of a man as a man, still more when you become aware of the doctrine of the Mystical Body, you can no longer think in terms of "going down to help" your fellow man. We are all part of a body that is impoverished, that is diseased. St. Basil used to tell the rich that they were the "fellow slaves" of the poor—because all rich are God's property with the duty to work in God's vineyard.

And psychologists today are becoming increasingly alive to the fact that those who have suffered from a mental or spiritual disease are often best able to help in curing it; thus Alcoholics Anonymous cure their fellow drunks, Divorcees Anonymous persuade other women against divorce, people once racked by nerve trouble lead others into calm. Those who worked in the Depression were learning to realize that the principle of "like to like" enunciated by Canon Cardijn (worker to worker; student to student) did not merely apply to fellow workers at a machine or a desk, but to the fundamental oneness of humanity. We help, if we help, from inside, not outside.

The *Catholic Worker* in America quickly realized, as had the Catholic Evidence Guild in England, that lack of education did not prevent men from studying serious books and discussing what they were reading. In *House of Hospitality*, real or imaginary dialogues present frankly both the aims of these studies and some of the current criticisms from outside and even inside on the running of the *Worker*. It is interesting to note how deeply these discouraged Dorothy, yet how well she did it. There were soon half-a-dozen Houses in different cities, and going from one to another she had to bear to a great extent the burden of them all. "If you are discouraged," she writes, "others will relapse into a state of discouragement and hopeless anger at the circumstances and each other. And if you are not discouraged everyone tries to make you so and is angry because you are not . . . The only thing is to be oblivious, as Peter is, and go right on."

They had a cat called Social Justice and Dorothy found one of their less intelligent guests washing him one day with her washcloth, drying him with her towel! Another took one of Dorothy's blankets to cover an old horse "who helps us deliver our Manhattan bundles of papers every month. He is a truly Catholic Worker horse, Dan says, and when they go up Fifth Avenue and pass St. Patrick's Cathedral, the horse genuflects!"

She tells these stories with perfect good humour, even if wryly—and faces the fact that with a house filled with people broken in body and soul you cannot expect very good order or even great cleanliness. Notes that she has washed A.B.'s sheets or sprayed furniture infested with bed-bugs come between resolutions against impatience and criticisms of others—and renewed assertions that all work done must be voluntary, not by rule. I cannot but feel that here, by all the rules of psychology, the founders of the movement were making a serious mistake. So many of their guests were broken in mind and body that they would not insist on work from any individual—and Dorothy tells of the grumbings and dissensions resulting be-

tween those who volunteered to work and those who idled. But I think they would have mended up these broken lives much better by a gentle discipline of work, while not putting so great a strain on those of better will and—perhaps—more capacity. Dorothy in her poetic way sometimes idealizes in her book the picture of what was being done—as, for instance, when she describes the garden at Staten Island. I remember visiting that "Garden Commune" and looking with dismay amounting to horror at the undug land positively crying out for work while four men spent a beautiful afternoon talking around the fire. Later experience at another Worker House in the Mid-West, where rules of work were made and kept, convinced me that in this view I was right.

But how those worked who did work—the chief of them being Dorothy. And I smiled as I thought of any attempt to translate what she and Peter were doing into the sort of pattern that we should have offered had we tried to give from our platforms "the social teaching of the Church." These two were not thinking in terms of the worker's rights or even "duties" in the social order. They had come to realize that in this hour of crisis only the supernatural could save the natural. Their movement was an expression of the Christian Revolution.

In two "Easy Essays" Peter put the bare bones of the changed outlook in (almost) natural terms.

The training of social workers enables them to help people to adjust themselves to the existing environment.  
The training of social workers does not enable them to help people to change the environment.  
The Communitarian Movement aims to create a new society within the shell of the old with the philosophy of the new which is not a new philosophy but a very old philosophy a philosophy so old that it looks new.

The Communist party stands for proletarian dictatorship.

The Communitarian Movement stands for personalist leadership.

And Dorothy, pouring into the work the tiny rent from her cottage and money she managed to make despite her energies in the House, writes, "I do feel strongly that we must put everything we have into the work in embracing voluntary poverty for ourselves. It is only when we do this that we can expect God to provide for us . . . This is one of the fundamental points of our work in stressing personal responsibility before State responsibility. It is only when we have used all our material resources . . . that in good conscience we can demand and expect help from the State."

But I should have hated to recite to an out-of-work crowd the end of Peter's "Easy Essay" on making a living:

But they say that there is no work to do.  
There is plenty of work to do but no wages.  
But people do not need to work for wages.  
They can offer their services as a gift.

And Dorothy suggests:

If each unemployed nurse went to her pastor and got a list of the sick, and gave up the idea of working for wages and gave her services to the poor of the parish, is there not security in the trust that God will provide?

And Peter again:

There are guest rooms in the houses of the rich but they are not for those who need them.  
They are not for those who

need them because those who need them are no longer considered as the Ambassadors of God.

And in another essay:

We need Houses of Hospitality to give to the rich the opportunity to serve the poor.

We need Houses of Hospitality to bring the scholars to the workers and the workers to the scholars.

This was a favourite idea of both his and Dorothy's—but the complains that part of her problem in the House is that while students are heroically working with their hands, some of the manual labourers are joyfully seizing on any sit-down clerical jobs and avoiding hard work. She calls it the difficulty of "a time of transition"—but just at moments she is as realist as Peter always is about original sin and the desire to shirk personal responsibility and, even more, hard work.

People say:

"They don't do this, they don't do that, they ought to do this, they ought to do that." Always "They" and never "I".

Rejecting the suggestion of one of the young hotheads of a united front with the Communists in demands for social justice, Dorothy rejects it on the ground that it would result in physical violence and class war—"Hate your enemies, which is all wrong." She goes on to say, "We are not working for the dictatorship of the proletariat, so why work with the Communists? We believe not in acquisitive classes but in functional classes."

I italicise these words as they are so important a statement of the temporal aim of the movement. But it must never be purely temporal. Her one temptation to violence is, she admits, against the movie men and the advertisers "who have corrupted the minds and desires of the youth of the country." I have commonly given only fragments when quoting Peter's Easy Essays but this chapter may best be ended by his full Credo in one complete essay and by a brief quotation from Dorothy in House of Hospitality. Peter says:

The Catholic Worker believes in the gentle personalism or traditional Catholicism.

The Catholic Worker believes in the personal obligation of looking after the needs of our brother.

The Catholic Worker believes in the daily practice of the Works of Mercy.

The Catholic Worker believes in Houses of Hospitality for the immediate relief of those who are in need.

The Catholic Worker believes in the establishment of Farming Communes where each one works according to his capacity and gets according to his need.

The Catholic Worker believes in creating a new society within the shell of the old with the philosophy of the new.

Dorothy says:

The only remedy is a new life in the Holy Ghost, a return of all of us to the paradox of the supernatural, a determined assent to the poor, crucified Jesus. That is the road to the rebirth of the West; there is no other way.

(Excerpt from Unfinished Business by Maisie Ward, copyright Maisie Ward 1964, \$5.95, Published by Sheed & Ward Inc., New York.)

Ed. Note: Maisie Ward is the co-founder (with her husband, Mr. Frank Sheed) of the well-known Catholic publishing house of Sheed & Ward. She is the author of *Be*

Not Solicitous, Caryl Houselander, and Saints Who Made History. Her account of the founding of the Catholic Worker constitutes part of a chapter in her recently published autobiography Unfinished Business.

## Personalist

(Continued from page 2)

operative teaching of the Extension department of St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, where there is still active leadership in the cooperative movement. He was deeply interested in the kibbutzim of Israel.

Work, Not Wages

A philosophy of work meant an abolition of the wage system. An explanation of that phrase would mean another long article. It would mean "Work, not wages," a slogan which Peter delighted in, as he did all slogans which made man think. (There is new slogan now "Wages, not work.")

It is to be remembered that the first plank in Peter Maurin's program for the world was "clarification of thought." I remember John Cogley's comment one time that all slogans, all such phrases, became cliches in time, and Peter, the Frenchman, tried to keep up with the slang phrases of the day and to probe to the root of them as to what they meant, what they signified at the time. I remember one of his essays ending in a long list of such slang phrases, the last of which was "So's your old man!" capped by the sardonic, "So what!"

Once when I looked around our crowded house of hospitality and asked Peter if this is what he



meant when he talked about houses of hospitality where the works of mercy could be performed at a personal sacrifice, by practicing voluntary poverty, which meant in turn stripping one's self of the "old man" and putting on the "new" which meant Christ, so that we could be other Christs to our brothers, in whom we were also to see Christ.—Peter sighed and said, "It arouses the conscience."

Yes, it has aroused the conscience to the extent that some of our readers, (now we are printing 80,000 copies of the Catholic Worker each month), have supported us in this work to which we in turn have given our labor for the past thirty-two years, but it indeed is a precarious existence and it demands a great exercise of our faith to remain cheerful and confident in it.

Right now Ed Forand who pays the bills for farm and city House of Hospitality, and Walter Kerell, who gets the mail and opens it hopefully each morning are talking of the summer ahead and the bills piling up, and reproaching me for being late in sending out what was supposed to be an appeal. "And you did not really make an appeal," they said.

I find they are right. This morning's mail brings me a letter, which begins, "Your form letter of a month or so back did not come right out and ask for money; so I sent none. Today I got around to reading the April Catholic Worker with its *On Pilgrimage* . . . Here is \$5 from my \$60 a month social security." Our correspondent was an itinerant linotype operator and is a member of the United Church of Christ and the rest of his letter, his statement of his beliefs, is most interesting and we will print part of it later.

It is good we live still today, sixteen years after Peter's death, in such precarity that sudden large

(Continued on page 6)

# Peter Maurin Revisited

By WALTER DOYLE

Almost without wanting to, the general run of Catholics have been thrust into the position of facing the important issues of the relationship between the Church and other religions, the Church and social justice, the Church and society. All of these problems focus on the issue which Catholics have too often been reluctant to face squarely: What does it mean to be a Catholic in a changing world that needs direction but does not always acknowledge the significance of the Catholic message?

In view of the current urgent need for Catholics to reconsider the meaning of Catholicism and the relationship between Catholicism and the world, it is important to review the ideas and ideals of Peter Maurin. His work contains a theory of revolution necessary for the needed Catholic reconstruction of society. The purpose of this discussion is, first, to recall the essential points of Peter Maurin's thought and, second, to relate the meaning of these concepts to some aspects of the present situation confronting Catholics. It is striking to discover that his concepts are relevant and refreshing; it is sad to discover that the Catholic inadequacies that he identifies still exist today.

Most of Peter Maurin's ideas were expressed in essay form in the pages of *The Catholic Worker*. The best collection of his most important essays appears in *The Green Revolution* (Fresno, California: Academy Guild Press, 1961). The central thesis of his essays is that the chaos of the social situation demands that the Catholic message be revitalized in order to re-unite the spiritual and the material in a reconstruction of society by means of Catholic Action based on Catholic Thought and realized through Catholic Institutions.

Since Peter Maurin was not a systematic theorist, it is helpful to organize his ideas according to the requirements he gave for a theory of revolution. He contended that a complete theory of revolution must tell what things are like in the present situation, what things would be like if they were as they should be, and how to go about making things as they should be. This generally is what he tried to do in his "easy essays."

Peter Maurin classifies the social situation as one of chaos. The primary reason that he gives for this chaos is the widespread presence of secularism—the separation of the spiritual from the material. This separation has resulted in business becoming commercialism, politics becoming factionalism, and education becoming facts without understanding. Business has become commercialism because, against the teachings of the Prophets of Israel and the Irish Fathers of the Church, money lending has been allowed. This practice has added to the prestige of the money lenders at the expense of the worker. Work has been separated from art and is no longer a means of self-expression and the worker's gift to the Common Good. Work, rather, has become a thing to be sold by the worker to pay his debts to the money lenders. Politics, in connection with this development, has been reduced to class struggle, dividing the people from the Common Good. In addition, education has become concerned with facts and specialization and has failed to bring about understanding. Professors, mastering subjects rather than situations, do not profess anything. Separating thought from action, they idealize the academic rather than working on universal concepts for Catholic Action. Moreover, students are no longer agitators. They are more interested in jobs than work. All of this has destroyed culture (which is closely related to cult

and cultivation) and has created the chaos of the social situation.

Hidden Dynamite

Peter Maurin contends that the solution to the problems of the day can be found in the Catholic message. Catholics, however, are more bourgeois than Catholic. He defines the bourgeois as the man who tries to be somebody by trying to be like everybody, which makes him nobody. The Catholic bourgeois is trying to be like the non-Catholic bourgeois. In addition, Catholic scholars have hidden the dynamite of the Catholic message. They have neither the knowledge nor the courage to bring Catholic social thought into Catholic Action. The function of Catholic universities—to educate in Catholic thought and action—has been forsaken for facts and specialization. In general, Catholics live in a changing world, trying to be like the non-Catholics, and have no knowledge of how to keep it from changing or how to change it for the better.

One major aspect of his thought is that if the Catholic Church is to be the dynamic social force in society, it is necessary to blow the dynamite in the Catholic message. Christianity must be tried. Eternal principles must be translated into the vernacular of the man on the street. The Sermon on the Mount and the Works of Mercy must be practiced daily. The spiritual must be expressed in the material. There is a need to combine cult (liturgy) with culture (philosophy) and cultivation (agriculture). In this way it is possible to create a society based on creed, systematic unselfishness, and gentle personalism. The reconstruction of the social means the creation of a Catholic society within the shell of a non-Catholic society with the philosophy of a Catholic society.

His concept of the Catholic society is based on the doctrine of the Common Good of Saint Thomas Aquinas. According to this concept, the goal is the development of the Personalist Communitarian. Such a person is a go-giver rather than a go-getter. He feels a personal obligation to look after the needs of his fellow man. He gives what he has and does not try to get what the other person has. Through thought and deed, he brings into existence the common unity of the community. In all, he refuses to be what the other person is and tries to be what he wants the other person to be.

The method that Peter Maurin proposes, to reconstruct the society, is that of Catholic Action based on Catholic Thought and realized through Catholic Institutions. He credits this method to the Irish scholars who reconstructed the fallen Roman Empire. It involves a three point program: Round-Table Discussions; Houses of Hospitality; and Farming Communes. The Round-Table Discussions keep the scholars from being academic. The Houses of Hospitality provide a Catholic institution (as distinct from corporations which are for the few) for the practice of the Works of Mercy. The poor are viewed as the Ambassadors of God. The Farming Communes help the unemployed help themselves and make workers out of scholars so that the workers can become scholars. These are the Agronomic Universities, in which thought and action are combined.

This social reconstruction will be the result of social indoctrination. The college students must be told why things are what they are; how things would be if they were as they should be; and how a path can be made from the things as they are to the things as they should be. In this way religion will be put into politics, into business, into education. The only way to take the profanity out of the profane is to bring religion into the profane. The only way to fight Communism is to practice

(Continued on page 6)

# Peter Maurin, Personalist

(Continued from page 5)

bills frighten us—such as a tremendous plumbing bill for the dingy old loft building which is part of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality on Chrystie Street; and an electric bill at Tivoli where we need new poles to convey electricity to our house of hospitality on the land, which is pretty much what our farm amounts to.

But Peter's faith was invincible. God would supply our needs, provided we were generous with our work and sacrifice. He had never failed any of the saints, and we were all called to be saints, as St. Paul said. Again he would call our attention to those who should be our leaders and teachers, the saints.

Also such a crisis, he would point out hopefully, could lead us to a truer practice of poverty so that we would set a better example to the destitute. "Eat what you raise, and raise what you eat," was another slogan. Which meant of course that you would eat apples and tomatoes, in this New York region, instead of oranges and grapefruit. You would have wine, but not tobacco! You would have honey but not cane sugar. All to which means work, and the knowledge of how to work in the fields.

And as for electricity! The old mansion on the Tivoli farm has cisterns all around it (which we cleaned out last summer during the drought) and newly painted metal roofs and if it rained (the drought is three years old now and farmers are talking of seeding the clouds if there were any clouds to seed, to produce rain) we would have water in the cisterns and a hand pump would give us water even if the electric pump of the artesian well failed us. And we could build an ice house and cut ice from the river to conserve our food and find other ways to preserve it also, though raising roots would be better. — I can hear him now with all the solutions to a problem of survival.

In addition to a philosophy of work, and a philosophy of poverty which would intensify the need to work, and provide work for others who are without work in time of crisis, not to speak of the health attendant upon such efforts — there was also the study of man's freedom and this seemed to be the foundation of all Peter's thought, in that time of dictatorships, when a Hitler, a Stalin, a Mussolini dominated men's minds and bodies. Man was created with freedom to choose to love God or not to love him, to serve or not to serve, according to divinely inspired Scriptures. Even this statement presupposes faith. He is made in the image and likeness of God and his most precious prerogative is his freedom. It is essentially a religious concept. It is in that he most resembles God.

Man, knowing his own personal responsibility, should not say, "They don't do this or they don't do that." Whether it was Church or State that was being criticized and judged. Instead Peter Maurin went back, as Cardinal Newman did before him, and studied the teachings of the Fathers of the Church. "Except," said the Abbot Allols, "a man shall say in his heart, I alone and God are in this world, he shall not find peace."

These are extreme times when man feels helpless against the forces of the State in the problems of poverty and the problems of war, the weapons for which are being forged to a great extent by the fearful genius of our own country. "With our neighbor," St. Anthony of the desert said, "in life and death," and we feel a fearful sense of our responsibility as a nation, and our helplessness as an individual.

Peter Maurin's teaching was

that just as each one of us is responsible, for the ills of the world, so too each one of us has freedom to choose to work in "the little way" for our brother. It may seem to take heroic sanctity to do so go against the world, but God's grace is sufficient. He will provide the means, will show the way if we ask Him. And the Way, of course, is Christ Himself. To follow Him.

### A CASE FOR UTOPIA

The world would be better off if people tried to become better, and people would become better

If they stopped trying to become better off.

When everyone tries to become better off

nobody is better off.

But when everyone tries to become better everyone is better off.

Everyone would be rich if nobody tried to become richer, and nobody would be poor if everybody tried to be the poorest.

And everybody would be what he ought to be

if everybody tried to be what he wants the other fellow to be.

Peter Maurin

# Peter Maurin Revisited

(Continued from page 5)

Communitarianism. The only way to prevent a Red Revolution is to promote a Green Revolution.

The most enduring theme of his essays is the constant cry for order and unity. In an age of distinctions and separations in which love is separated from sex, religion from life, the spiritual from the material, it is refreshing and encouraging to recall such a knowledgeable and dedicated effort to achieve unity. He not only laments the lack of unity, but takes positive steps to identify the causes, indicate the possibilities, and define the steps that can be taken to improve the situation.

Of most importance to Catholics today is the point that Peter Maurin makes about the need to bring Catholicism out from under the bushel and show it to the world for what it really is. It is unnecessary and unfortunate for Catholics to apologize for being Catholic. It seems, however, that most Catholics do not know what to do with their religion. It gets in the way of their life in the world and their life in the world gets in the way of their religion. The result is again a separation of the spiritual and the material.

### Practical Catholicism

Catholics complain that Catholicism is not practical. As Peter Maurin points out, however, the present approaches to society's problems can hardly be called practical even though they are practiced. The Catholic message, which presents society as it should be and can be if Catholics would only live up to it, offers the hope for the reconstruction of the world. Catholics, more interested in proving to their fellow-non-Catholics that they are "just as good," fail to see the imitations that they become. This point is especially apparent in the current Catholic emphasis on the similarity of their school programs to that of the public schools in order to receive public funds. It would seem that being a Catholic means nothing for their approach to the world. Peter Maurin's emphasis on the Catholic message also has relevance to the false concepts of ecumenism and "band-wagon" thinking which fail to take into account what it means to be a Catholic. As he points out the Catholic message is hard to live by, but it must be tried.

Peter Maurin's concept of the reconstruction of society by means of Catholic Action based on Catholic Thought in Catholic Institutions has importance in relation to the purpose of Catholic education today. The recent questioning of the existence of Catholic schools might more profitably be directed toward the problem of what is the purpose of these Catholic institutions here and now.

It is not a question of whether they should exist, but rather a question of whether they are to exist as protection shelters or as the outgoing, dynamic institutions for the development of agitators for the reconstruction of society in terms of the Catholic social message, to use Peter Maurin's terms. It would seem that he has given Catholic education a significant purpose and a method for carrying out that purpose. It

is important now to translate his message into action.

By analyzing what it means to be a Catholic, Peter Maurin makes it difficult for the Catholic to accept the present social institutions with complacency and the assumption that they are somehow "Christian." His total message is startling and disconcerting. He demands that the person live, in a personal, giving way, according to the things he professes to believe. He accomplished what he set out to do: "to blow some of the dynamite of the Catholic message." It remains for dedicated Catholics today to continue this work.

Editor's note: Walter Doyle is supervisor of field studies for the Masters of Arts in Teaching Program of the Department of Education at the University of Notre Dame, in Indiana.

# A Hard Row

(Continued from page 2)

But the Southern Tenant Farmers Union lived and grew. The machinations of domestic Communists, and the guns of World War II brought its demise, but while it lasted it was one of the more important ventures in the history of American radicalism.

Not the least of the practical problems in an essentially rural revolution, such as I am suggesting, is that the civil-rights movement has already taken on many of the aspects of institutionalization. In a real sense, it has a vested interest in urbanism. Most of its leaders think in urban terms; its tactics are peculiarly suited to urban settings. An agrarian emphasis would require a change within the civil-rights movement itself scarcely less dramatic than the change the civil-rights movement seeks within the racist social order.

The most that can realistically be asked of the civil rights revolution, I suppose, is that it diversify—that it allocate some of its resources to developing the latent economic power or rural Southern Negroes at the same time that it continues to do what it can to channel the rage and frustration of urban Negroes. If the revolution diversifies in such a manner, I believe the economic approach, while less spectacular, may prove more effective, and sooner, than direct confrontations in the political arena and clashes in the bubbling asphalt streets.

Ed Note: Henry Anderson edits Farm Labor (P.O. Box 1173, Berkeley, California 94701; \$3 a year), to which all our readers ought to subscribe. He was formerly research director for the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO. His article in this issue is based on a commentary he broadcast over KPFA (Berkeley) last summer. We plan to publish Mr. Anderson's articles on a regular basis in future issues; they will deal with the plight of agricultural workers and related problems.

# Recollections of Peter Maurin

By WILLIAM GAUCHAT

I remember well the first time I met Peter Maurin. The place was a darkened bedroom in my home, where I was confined with a serious eye injury. It was the time of Munich; and the radio crackled with the excited voice of H. V. Kaltenborn explaining to his listeners the meaning of the meeting between Hitler and Chamberlain: "Peace in our time."

A fratricidal war was being waged in Spain. In Mexico there was a determined effort to expiate God and those who loved Him. A sickening wave of anti-Semitism was sweeping America along with the endemic injustice to the Negro. Big business, led by Big Steel, was waging rearguard actions against the workers' right to bargain collectively. In Cleveland, as in other cities, there were thousands without food, adequate shelter or clothing. That is the way it was in September, 1938.

Peter was a legendary figure I never expected to meet. I had first heard of him in 1935 when I was visiting Assumption College, in Windsor, Canada, my alma mater. Peter had given a talk there not long before, and evidently aroused in many of his hearers a great enthusiasm for his message and for the Catholic Worker. Some of my old professors gave me back copies of the Catholic Worker with its radical message, a message so old and forgotten that it had an excit-

It was in September that Peter came and visited me at home. I mentioned my admiration for Henry David Thoreau. "There is a man in Boston," Peter said with animation, "who gave a talk at Walden Pond on Thoreau's anniversary. His name is Arthur Sheehan." Peter had a very deep affection for Arthur, I could tell. He spoke of the many activities of the Boston Catholic Worker led by Arthur. "You write an article on Thoreau for the Catholic Worker," Peter said to me as he left.

I must confess that after 26 years I have still not written that article. But after Peter left I did think of the many things he had said, and two months later I went to live and work at Blessed Martin House, an amateur scholar finally beginning his life as an amateur worker.

"Unemployed college graduates" Peter wrote, "must be told how a path can be made from the things as they are to things as they should be . . . how to create a new society within the shell of the old with the philosophy of the new."

With this ideal, more or less, in mind, our Cleveland group planned a Summer School at Our Lady of the Wayside Farm, in Avon, in July 1941. Since none of us had any experience or knowledge of folk schools there was a minimum of planning. We received permission to have daily mass at the farm; Ade Bethune taught the elements of lettering, from the making of the reed pens to the correct strokes of each letter of the alphabet; Leonard Austin directed the folk dances in the evening; and Peter Maurin led a lively discussion each morning based on The History of the Church by Joseph Lortz. Peter had made a fine synopsis of this book and one of us would read aloud from it with repeated interruptions from the finger-pointing Peter and his eager pupils. There were also classes on woodcarving, knitting, playing a flute or recorder, and the Liturgy, and a thousand impromptu discussions. There were blackberries to pick, meals to prepare and serve, dishes to wash, and cleaning to be done. Everyone pitched in with a will.

One afternoon, one of the members of our group damaged the oil pan on the car by striking a rock in the lane. Later in the afternoon, when I walked down the lane on some errand, I found Peter with a shovel digging away to uncover the stone. He had gone to work by himself, without a word to anyone. It was a hot day, the sweat was running from his bare head, and his shirt was soaked. I watched him for a minute amazed; then I reached for the shovel. He handed it to me with a grunt, and began explaining how to remove the rock. We took turns digging around it until we could move it slightly. Then I got the tractor and a chan from the shed; and after some maneuvering the boulder pulled loose. It was very pleasant to hear folk songs in the background as we worked. Peter taught me that afternoon the most important lesson of the Summer School.

When unemployed college graduates will have learned how to use their hands they will find out that the use of their hands will greatly improve the working of their heads.

Ed. note: To mark the 32d anniversary of the founding of the Catholic Worker, we plan to re-publish some of Peter Maurin's essays in future issues. We want people who knew Peter to send their recollections in to accompany them.



ing revolutionary sound to it when taken seriously (as Peter Maurin took it) as a practical blueprint for the Green Revolution.

To blow the dynamite of a message is the only way to make the message dynamic.

If the Catholic Church is not today the dominant social, dynamic force, it is because Catholic scholars have failed to blow the dynamite of the Church.

Catholic scholars have taken the dynamite of the Church, have wrapped it up in nice phraseology, placed it in an hermetic container, and sat on the lid.

It is about time to blow the lid off so the Catholic Church may again become the dominant social dynamic force.

Father Stan Murphy, C.S.B., told me how Peter had almost failed to make it to the college; the immigration officials had been baffled by him; he did not fit any standard classification, and they were unwilling to accept his own: "Agitator." It had taken a phone call to the college office to cut the red tape on the border and to blow the dynamite of his message.

As soon as I returned home from that visit to Assumption, I entered subscriptions to the Catholic Worker for myself and a number of my friends. A year or so later, a group of Cleveland subscribers met to form a CW cell or discussion group. We later rented a storefront room, and opened a House of Hospitality — Blessed Martin de Porres House—in June, 1938.

# BOOK REVIEWS

**CENTERS OF CHRISTIAN RENAISSANCE**, by Donald G. Bloesch; United Church Press, Philadelphia; 173 pp.; \$3.00. Reviewed by STANLEY VISHNEVSKI.

The creeping secularization of Protestant Christianity and the renewal of the Spirit in these churches is the theme of this account of present-day Protestant communities. For the purpose of this study, Donald G. Bloesch, an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ, has selected only those communities which are evangelical and which seek to work within the framework of the institutionalized Protestant church.

The story of Koinonia Farm, in Americus, Georgia, is a thrilling account of the persecution by a community of Christians who attempted to buck the un-Christian attitudes of racial injustice.

St. Julian's Community, in England, is an example of an intentional community originally founded as a guest house for missionaries on furlough. A place where Christian workers could come for a time of prayer and renewal—a retreat house. The community is noted for its degree of freedom—I especially loved the notation that "the guests are given full service, including breakfast served in bed."

The Community of Taize in France is an example of an attempt to found a monastic community within the confines of the Protestant church.

Other communities mentioned in the book are: The Lee Abbey Community, in England; The Agape Community, in Italy; the Iona Community, in Scotland; The Ecumenical Sisterhood of Mary, in Germany; The Bethany Fellowship near Minneapolis.

The danger of communal living lies in the fact that persons attempting to live in common tend to look upon themselves as super-Christians and look down with disfavor upon the poor struggling Christians of the world. "They haven't got the strength to live the heroic life as we do." There is the ever-present danger of looking upon community life as an end in itself and setting it up in opposition against the traditional Church—it then becomes a sect and loses its power to act as a beacon light. A community must never become an end in itself; it must be the means whereby the Christian is strengthened to live for Christ. The Christian does not exist to serve the community—the purpose of the community is to serve the Christian.

The author makes several references to *The Catholic Worker* as an example of "a relatively new pattern of Christian action." However, we of *The Catholic Worker* consider ourselves not so much an intentional community as a community of "need." We are made up of both those who come to serve the poor and those who come because of some need—spiritual or physical. *The Catholic Worker* is more of a "family" than a community.

**A NEW DIRECTIONS READER**, edited by Hayden Carruth & James Laughlin, ND Paperback 135, 244 pp. \$1.95. Reviewed by CHARLES MILLER

We think of anthologies as whoppers, but this is a neat 244 pages of literary dessert that can be carried in the pocket and nibbled with or without sauce. Its protein, fruit, nut and rather dark flavor will satisfy all but the rabid hamburger hounds. The richness here is harvested from 25 years of New Directions books, with tidbits from before Apollinaire and after W. C. Williams (Tennessee included). Start thinking, dear reader, right away; on page 5, Ezra Pound talking, "... intelligence increases through the process of looking straight into one's heart and acting on the results." Who's looking? Anyhow, it's good to

know that 17 of ole Ezra's books are in ND print.

We skip along to Flaubert's *Dictionary of Accepted Ideas*: "Art. Shortest path to the poorhouse." (Ain't necessarily so, Ez). And, "Radicalism. All the more dangerous that it is latent." (Oul, Mais ou sont les Hotwaters of yester-years?).

Then there's Samuel B. Greenberg, whom we might have met in a CW hospice; he spent the last five years of his brief and penniless life in NYC hospital wards, died of TB at the age of 23, and left hundreds of mystical, primitive poems, a few of which Hart Crane grandly cribbed and published in more formal verse, thus setting off the Greenberg hunt. Greenberg's poem "Conduct" is reprinted here.

Also, Bertolt Brecht's "The Jewish Wife," a playlet this reviewer was lucky in seeking performed by friends of Brecht a few years ago, just off B'way (and 72nd); this piece is worth the price of the book. But read on: Nabakov's romping riddle that raddles our language, "That In Aleppo Once . . ." a solve-it-yourself fable of passports and portents. Then there's Paul Goodman's playful (with God) admonition, "Terry Fleming, Are You Planning a Universe?" If so, "Do show a little pity. . . . Don't have any 'chosen people.' . . . Do try to make it clear what is nature and what is violence." Touche. James Purdy has both nature and violence in his raucous story, "Don't Call Me By My Right Name."

Other Directions: Scott Fitzgerald's "The Crack-Up"; and Henry Miller's transcendental monologue from *Capricorn*: "I was like an equals sign through which the algebraic swarm of humanity was passing." . . . and, "Whether the human race is immortal or not is not my concern, but the vitality of the race does mean something to me."

And poems: Patchen, Neruda, Paz, Dylan Thomas (early poems), Pasternak, Merton, Rexroth, Schwartz, Eberhart, down to Ginsberg, and others.

Of course, we can't be purely positive applauding this pudding: there's Yvor Winters' dissatisfaction with Emily Dickinson's poems, poems whose imperfections satisfy us more than Mr. Winters' prediction (in 1938) that Emily's vogue "may soon commence to diminish." Never!—Blake's little lonely lost sister shall prod and prick wintry critics forever!

Anyhow, here's holiday cheer. If not everyman's feast or anybody's breviary, this Reader is rich fare. It's a pleasure, that's what it is.

**ANARCHIST THOUGHT IN INDIA**, by Adi H. Doctor, Asia Publishing House. N. P. Reviewed by PETER LUMSDEN.

It would be nice sometime to have a book on anarchism written by an anarchist. Several books on this subject have appeared recently, and while their authors have been generous to a fault in their assessment of the various anarchist thinkers, they are convinced that the anarchist position is false and that anarchism as a social force belongs irretrievably to the past.

To the above Mr. Doctor is no exception. His book is divided into four parts: (1) a summary of Western anarchist thought, (2) the political ideas of ancient India, (3) a discussion of the ideas of Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave, (4) a refutation of these ideas.

It is with the refutation of these ideas and their bearing on our position as Catholic Anarchists that we are principally concerned. But our position is derived from different sources than Gandhi's or Vinoba's and it is necessary to outline here briefly where we stand. The basis of Catholic Anarchism is the principle of subsidiarity, stated by Pius XI in

the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. It runs as follows: "It is a fundamental principle of social philosophy, fixed and unchangeable, that one should not withdraw from individuals and commit to the community what they can accomplish by their own enterprise and industry. So, too, it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and a disturbance of right order to transfer to the larger and higher collectivity functions which can be performed and provided for by the lesser and subordinate bodies. Inasmuch as every social activity should by its very nature prove a help to the members of the body social, it should never destroy and absorb them." If such a principle were put into effect, there would be a steady and orderly transfer of power downwards through the social structure, and society itself would change in the direction advocated by anarchists. The purpose of such a transfer (and of all human activity) should be the furtherance of the common good. Two conditions are necessary for such a transfer: first, both those who have power and those who haven't should agree that the end of all human activity is the ad-



vance of the common good, and second, the common good must be advanced by the particular transfer of power contemplated. The Catholic Anarchist's case against the state rests solely on the assertion that it does not advance the common good. The first and most obvious requirement of the common good is that everyone should have enough to eat. As the state is manifestly incapable of doing even this (as a visit to Chrystie Street will show), the state must go.

I don't imagine that Gandhi or Vinoba would disagree with any of this, and so Mr. Doctor's refutation concerns us also. But first we must assert that it is only because we are followers of Christ that our position is tenable and our program workable. Working for such a social change is part and parcel of our religion, the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. We pray "Thy kingdom come . . . on earth as it is in Heaven."

Mr. Doctor denies the assumption of Gandhi and Vinoba that man is naturally good and corrupted only by false ideas and institutions. This assumption is held by most anarchists, but not by Catholics, who say that man is potentially capable of both good and evil and can become good by, first, listening to the voice of God in his conscience and, second, in an infinitely clearer and more direct way, hearing the voice of Christ in revelation. Further, he asserts that human nature is fundamentally unchangeable and that any radical improvement in human society which demands that human beings behave in a manner very different from their present pattern is doomed to failure. And

so it is, without God's help. For any upward leap of civilization which is not to fall ignominiously to the ground again must be sustained by God's power. But as Christians we know that He will help us if we call on Him. Mr. Doctor brackets Christ with Gandhi and Vinoba as failures. But as Chesterton pointed out, Christianity has not yet even been tried. If such a social change is impossible then our religion is in vain.

**THE TEACHING OF CONTEMPT: Christian Roots of Anti-Semitism** by Jules Isaac, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York 1964, 154 p. Reviewed by JAMES E. MILORD.

The appalling abuse, calumny, slander, contempt and butchery inflicted on the Chosen People of God, who gave the world the One God, the Bible, the rich pattern of Judaic culture, the Decalogue, and Jesus, the Redeemer, is a crime of such black proportion that speech can find no adequate words for it.

Those who point cynically to the anonymous herding of humanity today and sneer at individual effort as wasted motion, will find in this single-handed, monumental work of Jules Isaac, that a voice of incontrovertible dissent still has powerful implications and consequences in our alien times.

With the patience of his forefather Job, Professor Isaac has collected unassailable evidence to show that the roots of anti-Semitism are sunk to their deepest level in Christianity. Isaac's indictment brings to a conclusion the unexcelled exploration of the same problem in Catholic author John Malcolm Hay's *Europe and the Jews*.

The three big lies that are lifeblood of the Christian teaching of contempt for the Jews are (1) the Dispersion of the Jews, i.e., that God punished His People for the crucifixion by causing the destruction of their temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and the scattering of the Jews throughout the world; (2) that Judaism was in a degenerate state at the time of Jesus, and the Jews got what was coming to them; and (3) that the Jewish people of all the nations of the earth, from that dark hour on Calvary's hill—even to this very moment—all Jews, men, women and children, are "guilty" of the crime of deicide (God-murder).

The Jews are no more guilty of killing Jesus than the Greeks were guilty of killing Socrates. Who would be so foolish as to hold all Greeks guilty today? Who holds the Italians guilty for what Pilate and his gangsters did. But the Jews continue to pay and pay with the torrent of their blood through the ages.

Forced into baptism, ghettoized, segregated, oppressed by Papal Bulls, refused permission to enter the trades, barred from pursuing agriculture, the Jews turned of necessity to money-lending—a fault they were held accountable for by the Christians. This fault did not prohibit the Christians (who were forbidden to engage in money-lending) from borrowing from the Jews! Even the Papacy often borrowed from them.

Professor Isaac shows that the Romans and they alone had the power in Palestine, and that a mere handful of petty Jewish priests could never had put Jesus to death even if they so desired. They were pathetically weak stooges of the conquerors, and did not even hold the keys to their own temple. Pilate ordered Jesus' death, with the co-operation of a few hirelings and false witnesses, who could be persuaded for a few shekels to shout "Crucify him!" Lest we forget, there were mourners on the route to Calvary, and the majority left Calvary beating their breasts. These were not people bent on destroying Jesus, but

a people deeply outraged, stupefied with sadness and fear.

The Jews have been held by Christians to be the scattered people of the earth, born to wander forever in suffering and exile. This is called the Dispersion, and was supposed to have begun shortly after Christ's death, following His alleged prophecy. But the diffusion, as any historian knows, began some eight hundred years before Christ and was a fait accompli some five hundred years before Jesus was born. Emigration had spread at that time into Egypt, Assyria, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Mediterranean islands and Spain. The vast majority of Jews had never heard of Christ in His short life of evangelism.

Did Jesus condemn the people of Israel?

Never, says Isaac. Jesus did condemn the pharisaism that is to be found in all times in all peoples, in every religion, in every church. Actually Jesus found the to-the-letter religion of the upper-class priests to be lacking in warmth and spirit. What would Jesus have to say to the Church in the United States upon His return? How many among its affluent, comfortable pews would not meet with his condemnation? How many in what has been crushingly called the "second richest corporation in the United States" would not receive His designation of "hypocrite?" He never referred to the common people of His time in any such way.

Hatred of the Jews still lives and thrives. Hate literature pours through the mail. Housing covenants go on and on. And the mile-long pits of emaciated skeletons of gassed and starved of Auschwitz, Dubno, Treblinka, Belsen and Dachau cry their agonies in vain.

Anti-Semitism is spittle in the Face of Christ. Was He not called Rabbi? Did he not lead and preach daily in the synagogue? Did He not take his Bar-Mitzvah there?

Julian Green observes fittingly: "We cannot raise our hand against a Jew without striking with the same blow Him who is the man par excellence and at the same time, the flower of Israel; and it is Jesus who suffered in the concentration camps . . ."

For all of us who are humbled by our record and our shared guilt in this epoch of degradation of God's closest friends, Green hopes; "Ah, to be done with all this, and to begin all over again! To meet on the morning of the Resurrection and to clasp Israel to our hearts, weeping, without a word. For after Auschwitz, only tears can have meaning. Christian, wipe the tears and blood from the face of your Jewish brother, and the countenance of your Christ will shine upon you both."

Criminals do not die by the hands of the law. They die by the hands of other men.

Assassination on the scaffold is the worst form of assassination because there it is invested with the approval of society.

It is the death that teaches, not the name we give it. Murder and capital punishment are not opposites that cancel one another, but similars that breed their kind.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW.

**ANARCHIST-PACIFIST YOUTH RALLY**  
June 11-14

at Maryland Line, Md. (near US Routes 63 & 30). Discussions, Talks, Workshops, Folksinging, Outdoor Activities, etc.

A gathering of people concerned with individual freedom, community and survival.

For details write to:  
**MUTUAL AID FELLOWSHIP**  
BOX 3760 HARBOR STATION  
EAST CHICAGO, INDIANA

# LETTERS

## Cooperative Anarchism

Havana, Cuba

To the Catholic Anarchists:

Americans have no moral right to solve or pretend to solve the problems in Vietnam, the Congo or Cuba when a simple domestic problem like the Bowery cannot be solved for those who, having little means of subsistence, have therefore little freedom to dispose of.

It is said that in the future Cubans will get so used to having factories and farms as public utilities that no one will believe they could possibly have been privately owned in the ancient regime. This is plausible, since even the American capitalist has become accustomed to the post office and similar state institutions. Again, the new Czechoslovakian plans for decentralization justify the belief that present totalitarian structures must eventually give way to some form of cooperative anarchism.

We are living a process of historical development that is too complex for our limited understanding. The skeptic and the agnostic must continue to hesitate and feel baffled and bewildered by accidents and incidents that puzzle the mind with contradictions. Others with simpler minds and greater faith may find reasons to be against or in favor without qualifications. We must eventually hope that some way will be found to solve the question of violence, which is indeed inevitable in the place of Latin America, where the psychology of the people is predisposed to hasty reactions and living conditions are of a kind to cause despair.

In the future automation and abundance will liberate all human beings from the anxiety of economic insecurity and the competitive struggle for a place in the sun. But even then life will be infernal if the disparity between the population growth and productive capacity is not overcome or the means of production continue to be used in the interest of coercive minorities and power elites as blind as those that rule in the U.S.

It is not enough to have an emotional predisposition to imitate Thomas a Kempis and Loyola in their saintly devotion. The Catholic who refuses to study Marxist theories because of the prejudice against Marx will never be able to understand why one third of the world population is under the influence of Marxist ideology and why the whole world may eventually take the same path. Marx has been in essence the instrument that discovered the irrational in those rationalizations that are rooted in economics. This is his central contribution, and his materialist materialism need not be in contradiction with the Catholic formulation. Hence the so-called differences between Marxists and Catholics may not be as irreconcilable as many would like to pretend.

Some Marxists underestimate the psychological significance of religion as a force of social cohesion, just as some Catholics underestimate the ability of Marxists to discover more adequate explanations of reality. They fail to realize the religious devotion of Marxists to the brotherhood of man, and they are not aware of the economic explanations a Catholic like Peter Maurin has made in regard to the failure of the Church. Nevertheless there does seem to be an increasing awareness on the part of Marxists of the value of religion as a world view that helps some individuals to gain a psychological integration that they otherwise would not. Let us hope likewise that Catholics will ultimately realize the importance of Marxism as a flexible method of action and interpretation of historical change.

The concrete situation in Cuba

remains dependent on the pressure of the American government, which unwittingly aided the progress of state Socialism by taking an ultra-reactionary stand against any meaningful reform that would get at the root of injustice. Fidel is still trying to persuade the people to fight bureaucracy. In his last New Year's speech he suggested that 1965 be named the Year against Bureaucracy, but the public at the square rejected this proposal and actually forced him, in a gentle and amicable way, to call it the Year of Agriculture.

Mario Gonzalez

## Death and Taxes

114 Ferme Park Road  
London N. 8, England  
March 8, 1965

Dear Friends:

Here is the substance of the letter I sent today to the Director of Internal Revenue, in Brooklyn, New York:

Sir:

As required by law I herewith submit my 1964 income tax return. You will note that my calculated tax is \$330.12. \$257.90 was withheld by my employer and has already been paid. \$72.22 therefore remains due in income tax for 1964. However, for the reasons set forth herein, I cannot pay this tax, and no check to cover the amount due is enclosed.

I am sick at heart and ashamed because of the evil being done by the Government of the United States in its war in Vietnam. As a Christian and an American I must dissociate myself from this criminal and inhuman behavior of the Government of my country. Being absent from the United States and having already written letters of protest and demonstrated, I see no alternative but to withhold my tax due as a form of resistance and protest.

To sum up the above: the war in Vietnam was costing the United States one and a half million dollars per day before the addition of the cost of another 100,000 men in the South Vietnamese army and 3,500 marines. In addition we are supplying arms to the Vietcong, our "enemy," at the rate of two for every one captured from them. We must also add the cost of the aircraft lost daily in the war, including jet bombers and fighters and innumerable helicopters. For example:

The American war in Vietnam is a blatant contradiction of the ideals of freedom and self-determination that our country was founded upon. The war being waged by the US in Vietnam is in direct violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the 1954 Geneva Agreement which established the two sectors of Vietnam after the defeat of the French. This war is also being waged by the US in violation of whatever international law exists, our pious words to the contrary notwithstanding.

I cannot support our criminal and inhuman action in Southeast Asia.

Therefore I must withhold from the government whatever assistance I can, and in this respect I cannot pay the portion of my income tax still due. I would willingly give this amount to an unarmed United Nations peace-keeping mission in Southeast Asia. I will hope for the opportunity to do so. I will also look forward to the day when the United States is prepared to give as much to the relief of suffering as it is presently giving to the infliction of suffering.

In the meantime, I am sending a check for the amount of the tax due, \$72.22, to the Catholic Worker, 175 Christie Street, New York City 10002, to be used either in its own work against the war in Vietnam and for the relief of human

suffering, or to be sent by the Catholic Worker to a Catholic relief agency working in Vietnam. (I am a Protestant, but know of no Protestant church body calling for an end to the war.)

May God forgive us.

Brewster B. Kneen

## 12 Little Indians

524 W. 4th St.  
Williston, N. Dak. 58801

Dear Dorothy Day:

Here's a small gift for your work. Out here I'm trying to help a family of Indian people on the reservation in the Turtle Mountains. There are seven children and five foster children, besides the parents. I found them through tracing four Indian children who had lived in Williston and have now become foster children in this home. They live on land which is a twenty-five-year lease from the Tribal Council. The mother is part German and Scotch, the father is part French; his name is Gene Grandbois.

Our Congregational United Church of Christ used to do Indian Mission work in the early days,



WATER CRESS

but now it lets the government do it, which isn't very satisfactory. I do my bit by myself because I want to. I spent a night with them last summer and found that I could help best with love and personal time.

M. Anderson

## Lay Monks

Monastery of Erlach  
P.O. Nleder-Waldkirchen  
Upper Austria

Dear Friends:

Erlach is a small monastery, following the Rule of St. Benedict, situated in the northern part of Austria, near the Czech border. It was founded in 1954 by Father Jacobus Straif and a community of lay monks. The monastery, very generously helped by Americans, is beginning to sink roots in its native soil and is on the verge of attracting the attention of the Austrian public. Retreats and conferences are held for the benefit of students and seminarians. Because the Divine Office is celebrated in the vernacular and the liturgy and life of the community are carried out in the spirit of simplicity and authenticity so much stressed by the Second Vatican Council, an increasing number of priests have been visiting. In the ecumenical field, the community is instructing a group of young Swedish Lutherans who are planning to set up their own monastic foundation in Sweden.

Once more, we must appeal to the charity of the people in America in order to complete the transformation of the farm buildings that constitute our monastery.

This is our present situation: Guests are numerous, but the tradition of Austrian monastic hospitality precludes their leaving an offering. Consequently, the monastery receives no income from its guest house and is even obliged on occasion to provide financial help to its guests as they set out to return to university or seminary. In Austria, donations to religious institutions are not tax-deductible, and the institution must itself pay a tax on all gifts of Austrian currency. Last year, the monastery's cows had to be depopulated because of a local epidemic of bovine tuberculosis. The possibility of self-support depends partly on completion of a barn that is now under construction and acquisition of a new dairy herd to inhabit it. Immediate financial needs are for the modernization of the farm and remodeling of the old barn into a chapel and guest house.

Funds needed to bring these construction projects to fruition total forty thousand dollars. Contributions made payable to Mount Saviour Monastery (Pine City, New York, 14871) and sent there are tax-deductible.

The Community

## Beyond Control?

Box 184  
Moss Beach, Calif.

Dear Miss Day:

I have been watching the Catholic Worker the last few months for some mention of a recently published book, *The Technological Society*, by Jacques Ellul (Knopf, \$10.95). Perhaps you are not aware of it (I saw it reviewed only in the *Herald-Tribune*), but I found the book particularly pertinent to your interests in our society.

M. Ellul sees and recounts evidences that what he calls "Technique" (I have always called it "the machine") is going entirely beyond human control. By techniques he means the sum-total of the various techniques we have adopted to run our lives, including communications, transportation, educational systems, recreational organizations, etc., as well as the obvious machinery of material production. He shows many instances of Technique maintaining and extending itself to the detriment of the humanity which it is meant to sustain.

One of his conclusions is that every organization within the technological society inevitably becomes a servant of Technique. I was active in the Peace Movement some years ago (I became acquainted with Ammon Hennacy and through him with your paper at that time) and saw clearly how it served Technique, at least here locally. The peace activity I saw functioned to relieve the minds of the participants and to give expression to their deep and sincere feelings for peace. With this relief and expression taken care of, we could all go back to our parts in the system of which war is an integral part without further disturbance, at least until the next meeting or demonstration. Your group, with its emphasis on the need to separate oneself from some aspects of society, escapes somewhat from the compelling pressures of Technique.

The problem of overcoming Technique, which, I fear, will destroy either man or his humanness, has been my preoccupation above all others. We become increasingly dependent on Technique every day; can we ever extricate ourselves from its comforting costs? How many, even of your sturdy group, can claim to stand outside the engulfing machinery?

I can only suggest here what the author develops completely. M. Ellul teaches at the University of Bordeaux and is active in the Ecu-

menical Movement; beyond that I know only that he is the most perceptive economist and sociologist I have ever come across. May I urge you to read and review this book?

Sincerely,

Debbie Brennan

Ed. note: Thomas Merton, writing in the *Commonweal*; has described *The Technological Society* in these terms: "One of the most important books of this mid-century, this study in sociology is required reading for anyone who wants to seriously evaluate the relation of the Church with the contemporary world."

## Appalachian Spring

Resurrection Farm  
R.D. No. 7-Box 14A  
Chillicothe, Ohio

Dear Marty:

Spring indeed must be close upon us, the daffodils are up, the fields show the first trace of green and flocks of robins are in the air. An early thaw has made a quagmire of our lane and it has often been necessary to walk the half mile to the road to avoid getting the car bogged down. The seed catalogues are carefully pursued and garden plans are underway. Have prospects of better weather for gardening this year if one can rely on long-range weather forecasts. The children are involved in spring programs at school and are choosing their 4-H projects and looking forward to County Fair time already.

Earlier this year the beginning of our 6th year on the land and we have indeed been blessed. The farm now supplies us with all of our milk, meat and eggs and a considerable quantity of vegetables, both canned and frozen. We have developed a real love for the land these past few years, a love that we really didn't anticipate when we made the move from the city to the farm.

It is, I suppose, the isolation that is the most painful for us; especially the wife and mother who for weeks on end sees no one but the immediate family. There is a need to communicate, to love and be loved that goes beyond family. There are, I suppose, certain advantages to this type of isolation when child rearing is considered but in the society today our children would probably seem rather naive and unsophisticated.

We have attempted community twice now in the past few years with other families without success, but we feel that we have learned a great deal from these experiences and would gladly attempt it again. Possibly there is someone young or old, married or single who would care to come and share this hill farm with us.

Have explored the idea of bringing groups of children from the city to the farm for a vacation in the summer. We have made attempts at this on weekends. This summer with the help of our own teenagers and with a little assistance we could do much more.

The terrible grinding poverty of Appalachia so well described in the documentaries on TV and current periodicals is all about us. The need is here and we feel that a little community here in the hills of southern Ohio could alleviate a little of the suffering and misery. Our door is always open if you care to visit at any time.

Yours in Christ,  
The Murrays

The citizens of Selma continue to fight for their civil rights. If you wish to help them checks may be sent to the:

Dallas County Voters League  
P.O.B. 774

Selma, Alabama

They also need food, clothing, medicine and books.