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CHRYSTIE STREET

By JACK COOK

"May I never see another one," said Mike Herniak, as he swerved, tall and partially paralyzed in one leg, like some rudderless ship in his battered, grimy, stuffed with rags and newspaper-swollen overcoat, into our kitchen Christmas morning. As always, Mike's declamation was appropriate and pointed. Not only is it true to say of him that he feeds on death, but that death—in cold and pain, in filth and squalor, in loneliness and abandon—feeds on the men of the Bowery. As I write, it is reported to me that in the basement of the old brownstone in which "Mama" used to live, a Bowery man last night in 5-degree weather died from exposure. It is only fitting that at the southern end of this **via dolorosa** one finds the "Tombs" (city jail) and the morgue.

It is about 8:30 Tuesday night, the 9th of January. Dennis Ward and I have just returned from the Office of the Medical Examiner—a euphemism for that morgue on 30th Street and 1st Avenue, where unidentified dead bodies picked up on the streets of Manhatten are taken. "Case No. 294; Male; White; approx. 59 years old; picked up in front of 22 Spring Street, N.Y.C.; 8 Jan. 1968; unidentified."

Irish Pat McGowan is dead.

We were told by a young night-clerk that all the office workers had left. It was an inconvenient time to identify the dead. After 9 and before 5 o'clock was ideal. But we happened to meet the medical director (I suppose) himself, as he was leaving the building, and he intervened for us; hence, as a personal favor, we were told, I would be allowed to see the body for conditional identification, since the clerk, being new there, did not know how to fill out the forms. The clerk had recently returned (wounded) from Vietnam, and he was somewhat nervous, as he chatted and smoked with us in the lobby, before making his first descent to that most modern of morgues, where the walls are lined with lockers much like those in bus stations. He was worried about my reaction, for decomposition had set in. I assured him I was sufficiently acquainted with death. He remarked, "It can't be any worse than the dead Viet Cong." Dennis, being older and far more acquainted with death, was not permitted to descend for fear of a heart attack.

Irish Pat, born and raised in the mountains of Western Ireland, deserted the English Army and joined the Irish Republican Army. He fought in the Battle of the Four Courts in Dublin during Easter Week and then in the Irish Civil War. We are uncertain of his life in America before he came to the CW. Some say a prison guard; others, a trolley car operator. He had been with the CW since Staten Island days. Always somewhat belligerent, though harmless, he mellowed considerably toward Christmas time.

Bayonne Pete, who had been with the CW since before World War II, died the morning of Christmas Eve. On that day, also, one year ago Nick the Waiter died. The metaphysical mysteries that permeate life on the Bowery are all the more real and raw during this time of tinsel and general gaiety.

Chuck Bassinette, a longtime friend of both Irish Pat and Pete, told me that Pete was in pretty bad shape, and, when I went to him, in the apartment he shared with Smokey Joe and Whiskers, and found him swollen in belly and yellow and bloated in the face, it was clear that he was near the end. It was Chuck, too, who was told upon visiting the hospital that one of Pete's brothers had left orders that only immediate family could visit Pete. But people from the house continued, day after day, to try to see him.

George Johnson, that international hiker and CW Man-about-Town, visited us just before Christmas and spent hours trying to find Pete in Bellevue. George possesses the art of being accepted as an equal by everybody—Bowery Man or professional; hence he enlisted the aid of the head man at Bellevue and both wandered the wards in search of Pete. We finally learned on the morning of Christmas Eve (from another brother, who came by later that day with a 20-pound turkey for us) that he had died in a different hospital.

Tom Likely has spent the holidays in the hospital, although he went there much against his will. Only by taking advantage of one of his ever more frequent and violent seizures were we able to get the ambulance here and have him committed. The uicerous sores on his leg were aggravated by an inexplicable burn. His leg is set in a removable cast, he is receiving oxygen directly to the lungs, and his face gives the impression that the mortician had already "set" it.

When Chuck returned from "viewing" Pete for the last time, he was quite disturbed, for he could not recognize his friend.

Earl Ovitt received 3rd degree burns on ten per cent of his body when a valve on a steam pipe, direct from the furnace which he was trying to fix, burst. He, too, is hospitalized. Both Earl and Tom Likely sing the old songs. Earl's "Hello Dolly," in fact, serves as both his entrance and (sometimes by request) his exit lines. He keeps up three buildings on our street, plus doing odd jobs of hauling by carts, which are appropriated in his own fashion. After supper one evening, Earl, Tom, Dennis the Menace, Frances Fur Piece (who is also hospitalized and possibly in danger of losing that leg, whose ulcerous green and golden sores so long remained

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A Meeting with Ignazio Silone

By DOROTHY DAY

In wrestling with the problem of how to present the teachings of nonviolence in an age of mass violence, it seems to me that the writings of Ignazio Silone are of immense importance. When I first read **Bread and Wine** in the forties, I was deeply impressed, not only with the story of the revolutionary returning secretly from his exile in Switzerland, but with the call to a personalist approach which must precede any communitarian effort.

I had heard from Father Jack English, a former CW editor, of Silone's visit to the Trappist monastery of the Holy Spirit at Conyers, Georgia. Silone spent the day at the Abbey within the enclosure, and it was left to Father English to be guest master and converse with his wife, a beautiful Irishwoman whom he met during his exile in Switzerland. They had come to Atlanta to discuss the problems of the South and had been brought to the monastery by the editor of the **Atlanta Constitution** because there was an international meeting of the Trappist order going on there.

On another occasion Silone and his wife had visited New York and New England and had called the office of **The Catholic Worker**, but I did not receive the message until they were well on their way back to Italy.

So I was delighted when I was invited to dine with them in Rome in late October. We went to a restaurant on the Piazza Carlo Goldoni that was usually very quiet, they said. There was a large area outside for dining; but it was a cool night, so we went into one of the small rooms, which, unfortunately, was very crowded and noisy that night. There were two tables full of noisy young Americans, one large party of uproarious Italians and still another family with small babies. So I did not get as complete an interview as I would have liked.

Silone wanted to learn more about Peter Maurin (our founder) and his peasant background. He knew of Marc Sangnier's movement and his journal, **Le Sillon**, which was suppressed in France at the time that Peter Maurin lived there. He also wanted to know whether I was a practicing Catholic, and expressed surprise at the opposition **The Catholic Worker** met with from some of the hierachy. He spoke of Danilo Dolci, whom I was to meet later, and of whom I wrote in the last issue of **The Catholic Worker.** I knew from others that he had provided Dolci with generous financial help and had appeared in court during his many trials. He did not particularly like his campaign against the Mafia, though he said that it showed great courage. Perhaps he felt that the time consumed was time lost from his work of regional alleviation of destitution, through study groups, buliding up of cooperatives and the work toward irrigation and reforestation.

Silone himself was born in Pescina, an ancient town on the slopes of the Mariella mountains, in the Abbruzzi. His father died when he was ten years old. There were three sons, and the oldest was injured when he fell from a roof where he was playing and broke his back. He was terribly crippled, but his mind was keener than ever. He died at fourteen.

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We wish to go on record as fully supporting Dr. Benjamin Spock and all others in their efforts to aid and abet those young men facing conscription and opposing the War in Vietnam.

DOROTHY DAY

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A Response to The Resistance

By JACK COOK

The following address was one of several speeches given by non-cooperators at the Eastern Conference for Non-Cooperators with the Selective Service, held in New York City on October 30, 1966. It was printed originally by my former students at Hobart College, Geneva, New York, in The Review (Fall, 1966). We offer it here, as we did when it was first spoken and first printed, to encourage and advocate noncooperation with Selective Service. Secondly, to offer to those "resisters" (some two thousand young men), who at the present moment are or may soon be non-cooperators, some ground (admittedly "our" ground) to stand on; since, from what we read and hear, the voices we have heard, there appears to be but rage, fear, and energy behind the action of many of them.

We respect those responses (as unreflective as they are) and abhor, as all men of conscience must, the government which compels them. Yet we fear that such responses, apart from principle and a firmly positive position, are not ground enough to withstand years in jail. We are as concerned about non-cooperators as we are about noncooperation. And we know that of all the doors to human experience, the prison door is the least likely to find a man the same when he leaves as when he entered. Prison changes men; it can, and often does, destroy them.

"Sing, O Goddess, of the wrath of Achilles." So begins Homer's immortal epic **The Iliad.** A modern poet, writing of the great man of our age, might say "Sing, O Goddess, of the wisdom of Gandhi." And both poets—ancient and modern—would be celebrating and affirming Man, in the face of man's violence, oppression, deceit, and slavery. For despite the violence and bloodshed in **The Iliad,** despite Simone Weil's interpretation of it, the love and pity which Achilles feels for the mourning Priam, whose many sons are not, that love and pity puts an end to Achilles' terrible wrath. That, in my opinion, is the essential affirmation of that stormy work. Love and pity, too, are at the root of Gandhi's passive resistence, nonviolence, or soul-force. In a world far more violent and bloody than the Greeks ever dreamed of, Gandhi dared to affirm that the way to oppose that violence and end that bloodshed was the way of nonviolence, born out of love and pity for all mankind.

So, too, love and pity are at the root of my act of noncooperation. A love and pity that know no national boundaries. I believe with Auden that "There is no such thing as the state/And no one exists alone." And I affirm with Don Lorenzo Milani* that if boundaries there must be, then let them be drawn between the poor and oppressed on the one hand, and the privileged and oppressors on the other. The former are my motherland; the latter are my foreigners. So I, too, draw the line between those who suffer and those who inflict that suffering. And foremost among the latter is the United States Government. I say "No" to that government. I will not be a party to her crimes, nor will I permit myself to live in tacit agreement with her policies; hence, I have rejected the status of one whose occupation is —according to law—essential to national welfare, i.e. a teacher, in favor of no status at all, save that of one who directly and personally opposes that government's unjust laws, its suicidal—for the human race—foreign policy, its unjust and most diabolical warfare, and finally, its too, too solid existence.

I affirm, then, not only love and pity, but the primacy of conscience and the necessity—for intellectual and moral integrity—of acting on principle. Holding the principles I do—that love, not power fulfills man and quenches his thirst for meaning in his existence; that conscience, not law, is binding on man; that harmonious cooperation among men, not competition, is the most natural way to live—I cannot support this, our government, nor, for that matter, any government; for governments and the politicians who seek to control them, do not to my knowledge act on principle, nor—being in the first instance myths and in the second mythical monsters — can they act in a fully human manner, i.e. out of love and respect for all men.

In saying "No" to Selective Service, then, I do so not because it is unconstitutional. I care not a whit whether it be constitutional or unconstitutional. It certainly is the latter, but it matters not. If I find the present government (as well as all its predecessors) an oppressive and coercive one; if I find disgraceful the grotesque trappings of this Great Society, which nonetheless cannot disguise its militaristic - industrial - scientific muscle and power, leading us relentlessly toward world-wide annihilation; then how can I object on grounds of unconstitutionality? In doing so I must affirm the Constitution—the skeleton of this monster with which we, like Beowulf of old, must now contend.

I object to Selective Service because it is an unjust law. Because it is, in fact, not a law at all. Before a law can be said to be a law, it must be just, reasonable, and for the common good. Conscription fulfills none of these requirements. To my mind, any law that makes men murderers against their will or even with the consent

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* See "A Priest-Teacher on Trial," Catholic Worker, January 1966.

Notes on Permanent Revolution

By JAMES HANINK

(Offered in the hope that the bread, which is indeed rising, may be shared at the banquet table.)

• How much ought we dare? How much ought a man hope? For precisely what sort of a dream would we use up the stuff of our lives? Let us at least admit that hard by the core of the Christian project of existence lies the uncompromising demand for Utopia.

Anarchist critic Paul Goodman diagnoses as symptomatic of post-modern man the inability to take seriously the promise of social revolution, precisely because we no longer see the apocalyptic-eschatological direction of Christian revelation as credible. We cannot pray "Come, Lord Jesus" because our societal conceptualizations simply cannot tolerate the Messiah's return. In this our treasured calcification—let us say it immediately—**bourgeois** society is classically pagan. Our society does not grow organically; rather it suffers a choking accretion. The only creative, nontechnocratic thrust towards a daring society (with the exception of Christian anarchism) has risen from the flower children and the New Left. Both are in sharp reaction to the paralyzing rule of techno-urbanism, the arms race, and the blasphemy of human beings dying of malnutrition. But neither an overstraining esthetics nor an angry realignment of power blocs can win for us the Utopia we demand. The path leads another way.

To understand the possibilities of our society thoroughly and radically, we must awaken to the Church herself as a permanent, avowedly utopian organism. The paradoxical Kingdom is here and now, without and within, and about this world. Because we do pray "Come, Lord Jesus," because we know that "the world which you see before you," the contemporary, unpossessed world, "is passing away," we claim a mandate for permanent social revolution. In her rationalist period Simone Weil, a post-modern saint, was impelled to work for a fundamental transformation of society in the name of reason. Only that society would be tolerable in which each man was helped to think as fully as possible. Because we pray "Come" to the Lord of love, in a society so tragically flawed by the economic prostitution of work, a bartering of man's own capacity for incarnation, the Christian leavening must search out the viable forms of personalist socialism. Culture and politics, the working-out of a society, mesh in constant, synergic dialectic with liturgy. Because our liturgy projects us into an egalitarian, free community, the Christian yeast must be in the flour itself to deepen the democratization of the structures of society. Because we are what we are, because the Lord loved and chose us as first fruits, we ought to dare all these things.

• We owe to a spindly Asian, perhaps the only political realist of contemporary experience, the data accrued from certain "experiments in truth." It was Mohandas Gandhi who gave us **satyagraha,** the power of truth, as a tool of social change. Today the Christian community is most terribly charged with the advance, from crisis to crisis, of the Mahatma's experiments. Theologically, Christian nonviolence grows out of our participation in the life of the Lord. The cyclical violence of the whole human evolution is in the passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ once and for all reconciled. But this **once and for all** stands precisely in that we Christians complete the nonviolent sufferings of the Lord in our own bodies. This is the very center of the vocation of the peacemaker. The Lord Jesus would acknowledge no barriers between men, no division of **enemy** or **foreigner** or **stranger.** Such an incredible, utopian resolve led him to the nonviolent reconciliation of the cross.

Our nonviolence expresses the root direction of our discipleship. To those who speak of the self-defense of the Law, we begin with the fearfully apparent: **"In this age of ours which prides itself on its atomic power, it is irrational to believe that war is still an apt means of vindicating violated rights."** (John XXIII) But it is because our life is not to be clung to but poured out, because our nonviolent witness is part and parcel of our work in the redemption of all men for the Kingdom, that we come to affirm with Father John L. McKenzie: **"Jesus presented in his words and life not only a good way of doing things, not only an ideal to be executed whenever it is convenient, but the only way of doing what he did."**

• For us Christians sweet Lady Poverty has proved to be the most elusive of mistresses. Or so we say. But it is, of course, the simple truth that we persist the most reluctant of lovers. We need to be poor for the sake of reality. We need to be poor materially because we are poor in courage and spirit. Honesty would have us show our poverty to one another, so that together we may come into one community of need. Poverty and nonviolence are of one cloth. We are not our own to defend, and no one is ours to destroy; we belong to each other. Our goods are not ours to be held onto; rather what we have is first the possession of all others.

Thomas Merton has said that sometimes he wished he had not even a name of his own so that nothing of his might help men to wage war. The Christian of the West knows full well that it is within his power to limit the daily, silent death by starvation of the people of the Third World. How much can we afford to hold back? Our wealth names us Dives. If we begin our experiments in justice in the name of Lazaraus, we will soon enough find that we have no place in our **bourgeois** society. We will find that we are personally responsible for the hunger of the world. And we will not rest, not ever again.

• In a surprisingly real sense, the Christian Church is the **extraordinary** means of salvation. The **ordinary** means of salvation, and here the ideas must be carefully balanced, is the authentic social and individual participation in the historical unfolding of the one human project. The one human concern is ultimately comprehensible only as it is expressed in the Christian vocabulary. Yet what "happens" to the Christian happens equally to the whole of mankind. God is incarnated among us all, to redeem us all. We all experience one history of salvation. For the Christian the event is, by faith, illuminated. Yet the same process occupies us all. We as Christians have nothing "extra," but rather we grow in the "good news" of all that is to be. The Kingdom of God, which the good news is all about, can happen to all men. So, too, each of the sacraments. So, too, the whole event of being made into Christ. And for most men all these things happen in different words. We are richer than they, in that we are awake to the promise. But even here, in the last analysis, the words of our theology are explicable and therefore meaningful only in anthropological terms. Thus we are in some sense humanists before we are Christians. God first chose us, but in choosing us he so constituted us that we must choose him.

This type of analysis, oversimplified though it is, dissolves any dichotomy between the affairs of the Church and the affairs of the World. It may even be said to dissolve any sort of a hierarchy of priorities. The Church is for the World. The Church is the catalyst of the revoluntionary world. If Teilhard is to be called a churchman, so is Marx. If Erich Fromm is to bear the proud title of humanist, so is Pope Paul. Furthermore, if we see the Church as the pilgrim community of believers in the self-transcending human concern, we will include those Marxists who believe in the future of man and in the reality of utopia but question out loud those nominal Christians who reject in a hundred practical ways these elements of the good news.

• With this passion does Daniel Berrigan, breathing the discipleship of an imprisoned war resister, speak of Jesus:

> **It's what they heard his whole life say that counts. That's what we have of him. Something transparent, something running, springs in the desert. . . . Such a man speaks through his pores, he writes on the air, there is nothing, nothing about him but eloquence. . . . And all of it fitting, finally intersecting, making sense, dissolving again, being accepted, violated, cast aside, befouled, confronted, put to death.**

If this be Christ, then what will we dare? If this kenosis won redemption, what wins the revolution? In the beginning we were not able to speak, not even the dozen comical words of the baby. How long a time it has been . . . now no use speaking, unless we speak "springs in the desert." Our lives sound the only words the remaining listeners hear. And with all that there is to be said, said so loudly and clearly, we must speak so as to be understood.

• In case anyone is in the least bit doubtful about what sort of action is entailed in building up the earth, I suggest the program of the Christian nonviolent left: developing nonviolence as a workable alternative to modern war; democratizing and socializing the nation-state, ultimately reshaping it into a now social entity; doing the intellectual work—anthropologically and theologically—that will so liberate man that the beloved community will be realizable. In case anyone is in the least bit doubtful where to start, I suggest that he or she begin with the movement to end the genocidal war in Vietnam.

• Finally, of course, the mightiest revolution that someday we will win shall be seen for a shattered fragment of the Absolute. We simply do not know what the Lord has prepared for us. But here and now, passionately, we go about preparing for the Kingdom. Here and now it is enough that when we use up our lives, men give to us—"yes, good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over." **Maranatha.**

ED. NOTE: James Hanink is an Assumptionist seminarian in San Antonio. He writes:

"If there are some among us who feel that there is a way to peace other than peace itself, that one can, indeed, kill for peace, let them test once more the dead law of the talion. Let the rest clearly follow the living call of Jesus, the call to love all human beings indiscriminately, unto death.

"I have made clear to my draft board that I peacefully and conscientiously resist this war in Vietnam and all other wars. I ask for your support. Together we will be able to go beyond this first, tentative step.

"So it is that I wish to publicly dissociate myself from my own ministerial exemption and my student deferment and very publicly encourage the conscientious civil disobedience that is almost daily offered in opposition to the war in Vietnam and military conscription itself."

Tivoli
A Farm With a View

By DEANE MARY MOWRER

It is January. Two days after Epiphany. Our part of the Hudson River Valley, like all of the Northeast, lies chilled under an arctic air mass. Snow, drifted by the gales that brought the arctic air, masks our rural landscape with its own contours, a wintry map of hills and valleys, a study in whiteness. The ice-breaker proceeds with difficulty up the ice-bound Hudson. Yet the winter sun is warm at my southern window. And a chickadee calls cheerfully, summoning his fellow birds to join him in the feast at the feeder.

Mysteriously the January landscape evokes the mood of Epiphany. Across my mind the Magi move like star-led figures on a golden tapestry. I ponder frankincense and myrrh.

Then the hard beauty, the harsh and awesome truth of Epiphany, in the lines of T. S. Eliot's great poem "The Journey of the Magi," which Father Marion Casey took as the text of one of his beautiful Christmas season sermons, comes to dispel the pageantry. Meditatively I repeat the lines: "A cold coming we had of it. Just the worst time of year for a journey. And such a long journey. The ways deep and the weather sharp. The very dead of winter." The logic of the poem, the memory of Father's sermon, caused me to question with the Magi. Had we been led all that way for birth or death? I knew the answer, knew that only through death of self could I be truly reborn in Christ, share the new life He came to bring that Christmas Day, that first Epiphany. I prayed that, like the Magi in Ellot's poem, I might "be glad of another death."

This whole Christmas season has been, I think, a kind of spiritual gift of the Magi. To begin with, Father Leandre Plante, an old friend of the CW and a nephew of Father Pacifique Roy, about whom Dorothy Day has written in her book **The Long Loneliness,** came to spend a long overdue vacation period with us. Father Plante is a Jesuit of the Canadian province, who is stationed with a mission on an Indian reservation near Montreal. He is cheerful, good humored, a linguist and student of languages, and a priest whose presence in the house has brought warmth and comfort to us all. It was particularly wonderful to have the beautiful Masses of Advent in preparation for the great Feast of the Nativity.

Then on Christmas Eve Father Jude Mili came to say Midnight Mass for us. With Joe and Audrey Monroe and their guitar, and everyone joining in the carol-singing, Mass was joyful and beautiful. The next morning Father Plante said the Mass of Christmas morning. What holy luxury! Two Masses for Christmas in our own chapel.

Two Masses a Day

Mid-Christmas week our first real snowstorm arrived. And on that day, blown in on that snowy gale, came Father Casey, who has given us so many retreats and who gave conferences during our Summer School period last July. With Father Casey's arrival, our spiritual fare became even more luxurious. Except for two concelebrations, we have continued to have two Masses every day in our chapel. On one occasion when Father John Hugo and Father Francis Ott came for an overnight visit, we actually had three Masses. With so many Masses and so many priests, Arthur Lacey, our sacristan and altar boy, has really been kept busy. He could, however, hardly regret the extra work, since he has included, for the past several years, a most insistent petition for a chaplain, in our community rosary. Unfortunately, our priest friends will not be with us much longer, since they must return to their duties. Nevertheless we are deeply grateful; and only hope that other priests may also want to come and spend vacation periods with us.

Although our Christmas season has been a liturgical banquet, it has not been wanting in a more material kind of feasting. Elizabeth Duran outdid herself baking Christmas cookies, Christmas bread, and Christmas pies. Ron Gessner and Kay Lynch made Christmas candy. Hans Tunnesen, Ron and Elizabeth shared the cooking. Joan Welch has continued cooking suppers that are not only nourishing but attractive and palatable. Alice Lawrence was quite ill at Christmas time, but is better now and back in the kitchen, where, as always, she is giving an outstanding culinary performance, which is fortunate, since Ron and Elizabeth had to leave shortly after Christmas.

Aside from the carol singing of Joe and Audrey, the dominant note of our Christmas day was that of children's voices. Johnny Hughes, Dorothy, Maggie, and Sally Corbin, the three Freeman boys and the two Bishop boys, gave every evidence of satisfaction with Christmas goodies and toys.

Bleak December was further enlivened for us by two Sunday afternoon discussions. On December 10th Jacques Travers, who teaches French at Brooklyn College, spoke to us about Simone Weil. Since Jacques is doing his doctoral dissertation on Simone Weil, he had a fund of information to draw upon. He gave a most interesting account of the life of this remarkable woman, and recounted a number of anecdotes which illuminated her work and her remarkable dedication to that work. Simone Weil was an intellectual and a philosopher, with a true dedication to hard work and the working class, with a true love of poverty and the poor, whose work and poverty she insisted on sharing. Although she was Jewish, she came to have a true personal relationship with Christ, which she expressed both in her work and her writing.

On Sunday afternoon, December 17, Dorothy Day spoke to us about her visits with Danilo Dolci and Ignazio Silone in Italy. Although neither Dolci nor Silone is a practicing Catholic, both have much in common with the Catholic Worker. Silone's novels—**Fontamara, Bread and Wine,** etc. — dramatize the lives and problems of poor Italian peasants or members of the working class. Silone writes, however, with such compassion, such humanity, such respect for the human being, that the final impact of his books is almost religious. Like that of Peter Maurin, in whom Silone is much interested, Silone's radicalism stems in part from Le Sillon. Dolci, too, emphasizes personalism and the small local group. He has, it seems to me, something in common with Saul Alinsky and Cesar Chavez. It is good to know that men of such remarkable vision and dedication hold the Catholic Worker in such high regard.

Such Sunday afternoon discussions, plus our regular inflow of visitors, do much to alleviate Winter doldrums. The afternoon of Dorothy's talk brought out several priests, some of our friends from the Marist Fathers and the Christian Brothers, a nun, some members of an Episcopalian order, and several of our lay friends in this area. Now and then on weekends, we have so many overnight guests that not only all beds are full, but the couches in the living room as well. Among our guests of recent weeks are: Jonas Dumchius, who came for Christmas loaded down with the ingredients for making his famous unbaked fruit cake; Tommy Hughes; Mary Hughes; Ed and Johanna Turner with their son Tommy; Preston Lewis; Carla De Sola and Joy Bergman; Mr. and Mrs. Grant Bishop and children; Mrs. Rachel Willis; Tamar Hennessey; Betty Bennett; Beth Rogers and Frances Bittner, who came bearing gifts of cookies, candles, Jewish pumpernickel bread, etc.

Digging Out

Snow and cold weather often mean more work. After the storm most of the able-bodied men were out shoveling paths through the drifts; and at least one woman, Kay Lynch, who loves snow, went out to take her turn with the shoveling. Since Father Richard Rogers sold his snow plow, there is more work of this kind for everyone. George Burke has constructed a home-made snow plow, which, however, will not work in more deeply drifted areas. Snow and cold weather also mean more work for Mike Sullivan. The other day, when a thaw set in, four leaks developed in our living room. Plumbing and furnace fixtures always seem in need of repair. All this is work for Mike. After Elizabeth left us, Arthur Sullivan, who is with us again, decided to undertake the bread baking. The results have been quite edible, though Arthur has had to share the baking with Father Casey, who is an old hand at baking and a true believer in the nutritional merits of homemade whole wheat bread.

Although Reginald Highhill went to some pains to protect his bees against the cold, all of the bees in one hive perished. Reginald brought the hive in and set it on one of the tables in the dining room. Those who wanted honey went to the hive and helped themselves right out of the comb. Many, including Father Casey and

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Joe Hill House

By AMMON HENNACY

Each of the eight students who sat in at the recruiting station on October 20th received a fifty-dollar fine and a ten-day jail sentence (suspended). One of them, Henry A. Huey, has had his student deferment revoked. The local American Civil Liberties Union lawyer is defending him and making a test case of it.

When I came to Salt Lake City six years ago, a very tall and skinny reformed drunkard who called himself "Brother John" had a house across the tracks, where he tried to encourage drunks to sober up. Later he acquired a house in a more respectable section near Liberty Park, but neighbors complained, so he moved to a condemned building downtown, where he had a small storefront in which he sold religious articles and bread from the Trappists near Huntsville. Last winter he would occasionally bring half a dozen of his worst drunks out to Joe Hill House, and provide us with potatoes and onions. This spring he moved from the condemned building to a former rest home. While he was in the hospital with heart trouble, a young former book salesman from Tulsa took the place over and renamed it Saint Mary's. We visited him recently. No drunks are allowed on the premises and the place is run with an iron hand. This young man (whose name is also John) says that it is self-supporting, since he contracts the men out to work and charges them ten dollars a week to stay there. Catholics must go to Mass. He claims that he feeds more men than the Salvation Army does. The Cathedral and another parish help to support his place, which is much better equipped than Joe Hill House could ever claim to be. John asked me if I allow drunks at my place. I told him that we have a sign, **No Drinking,** but that I am not a very efficient detective in finding liquor and that I have compassion on men trying to sober up again.

When I lived at the CW in New York City in the fifties and had books taken from me by the "intellectuals" and clothing by the regular "ambassadors of Christ," Dorothy used to kid me by calling me "Private Property" Hennacy. Although I would never report these things to the police, the television set here has been stolen three times and men have picked up what they could find loose to peddle for booze. I must admit that I have never really looked upon these thefts with joy and have never given the thieves the cloak after they stole the coat.

The landlord's taxes have been increased; from three hundred to eight hundred and fifty dollars, so I'll have to pay more rent. I hardly make it as it is. Last night, when the electric power was off for a few hours, the men realized how fortunate they were to be able to sit in front of the glowing fireplace. I have recently been working at the lowest-paid job I ever had in my life: cleaning bricks. I get a half a cent a brick, which averages out to about fifty-five cents an hour. Very few people will work at it; as the saying goes, it does not require much brains. I have a sign at the Joe Hill House quoting Debs: "While there is a lower class I am in it." So I feel at home—and it helps to pay the utility bills.

Radical Honor Roll

Someone asked me to name the most important people in American history from the viewpoint of a radical pacifist. Here is my list (others can make their own): John Woolman, pioneer Quaker who walked or rode on horseback to all Quaker meetings in the country before the Revolutionary War and protested their owning or trading in slaves. Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson. Henry David Thoreau. William Lloyd Garrison, the first Christian anarchist of note in the country. Cochise, Apache leader in Arizona. Alexander Berkman, who shot Henry Clay Frick at the time of the Homestead strike in 1892. Albert Parsons, hanged with three others in the celebrated Haymarket case on November 11, 1887. Governor John Peter Altgeld, of Illinois, who pardoned three anarchists imprisoned in the Haymarket case. Eugene V. Debs. Clarence Darrow, Robert LaFollette, Sr. Bartolomeo Vanzetti. Dorothy Day. Jeanette Rankin, the only person in Congress to vote against both World Wars. Peace Pilgrim.

For friends passing through, the address of Joe Hill House is: 3462 S. 4 W, two blocks south of the huge Vitro smokestack. Post Office address is: P. O. Box 655, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84101.

Chicago House

By KARL MEYER

After ten years of one-man revolution from the beginning of St. Stephen's House in 1958, a Catholic Worker group is striving for a new birth as an active, cooperative effort. We are meeting every Sunday at 2:30 at St. Stephen's House, 1339 North Mohawk St., Chicago, to make plans for action and to discuss the basic ideas of the Catholic Worker movement. You can call 664-7877 to get the specific schedule of topics.

Since the initiative comes from us to climb out of the rut that we have been in for ten years, we may well wonder whether we can transcend the innate tendencies implicit in our individualistic past and provide leadership for enlarging the heart of the Catholic Worker in Chicago. Certainly it will be painful for us to change our habits and grow. Likewise, if our readers in Chicago have for all these years allowed our miserable efforts to preempt the field of Catholic Worker activity here, we may also wonder about them: **Are you there?**

If you are out there, we need every kind of persistent moral and material help in forming an active center, but particularly the infusion of some dynamism into our community, people with ideas of their own that can be carried out by the community of concern we are building.

People do not want to come into our neighborhood because it is not safe. I don't think they mean physical safety. I think they mean the safety of old values and old commitments.

In a poem on the fruits of Resurrection, Daniel Berrigan wrote of disciples,

Whether we turned locks on us
in a remote alley
or pushed off into seas and stars:
the dawn
rose to him, evening breathed him.
It was always
Never again to be safe, summed
up our lives.

We see that the trouble with us is that we have been too safe for too long; now we are trying to be not so safe any more. We recently jumped out of the wage system and started working full time in the peace movement, working with priests and seminarians as well as with the Catholic Worker group and other lay-action organizations to make peace a live issue among Catholics in Chicago. We organized meetings for priests and seminarians to talk with Thich Nhat Hanh, the Buddhist activist and scholar, who helped us in Saigon in 1966 when we demonstrated at the United States Embassy. Nhat Hanh told us: "The National Liberation Front is trying to save us from colonialism and from economic inequality and underdevelopment, and the anti-Communists are trying to save us from Communism. But we are not being saved; we are being destroyed. What we need is to be saved from salvation."

In this country, we need to be saved from safety.

I was up at the diocesan seminary preparing the way for Nhat Hanh's talk. Bishop Grady was visiting there and celebrating a Mass for the community. One of the professors asked me to read the epistle for the Mass. At the Prayer of the Faithful, the seminarians offered many prayers for peaceful intentions, and one cried out, "Let us pray for the Catholic Workers, who find the Kingdom of God in jail." With students from another seminary, we are planning for an Easter pilgrimage all over the Chicago diocese in search of the Prince of Peace in the temple of men's hearts.

At the same time that we are agitating for peace in Vietnam, we must share more with more people through the house of hospitality, to build up the idea of equalitarian distribution of wealth throughout society, but we can do all these things only through the full involvement of strong new people.

THE SACR

By THOM

The Valley of Oaxaca is one of the poorest and least productive areas of Mexico today. It was once one of the richest and most fertile. It was also the center not only of a great culture, but of what was probably the first real city in America: Monte Alban. What was this city? What kind of culture flourished there? What kind of people lived there?

Archeological studies* have now brought to light some very rich and detailed material concerning the "early urban" and "pre-classic" Zapotecan culture of the Oaxaca valley and its central city. We are finally in a position to fit Monte Alban into the general picture of Mesoamerican civilization of the "classic" age, before the rise of the Mixtecs, Toltecs and Aztecs, whose culture was essentially decadent.

Before we even begin to speak of Monte Alban and of the ancient Mayan cities which had much in common with it, we must put out of our minds the generalized idea of ancient cities which we have associated with Egypt and Mesopotamia, or with our sketchy knowledge of post-classic Mexican (Toltec and Aztec) culture in the five centuries preceding the Spanish conquest. In these ancient cultures, which are more familiar to us, the city stands out as the stronghold of a monarch or tyrant, a potential empire-builder, with an army and a culture based upon slavery. The City, in other words, comes into being with kingship or at least with militaristic autocracy, and urban culture is a culture not only of commerce but above all of war and conquest. True, the less well known archaic cultures of the Cretans and Etruscans seem to have been less warlike, but they were also more isolated.

The popular estimate of Mexican and Mayan culture, based primarily on the reports of the Spanish conquerors and on their observations at the time of the conquest, gives us an idea of a very colorful but also bloodthirsty and necrophilic city life, in which war, slavery and human sacrifice play a dominant part.* In a word, when we think of the first cities we instinctively think also of "war", "power", "wealth", "autocracy", "empire", and so on. Possible exceptions (such as Jerusalem, the "city of peace") are ambivalent enough to be no exceptions. But the first cities in America were not like Niniveh, Babylon, Ur or Thebes—or Rome. The Western "ideal" city has always of course been Athens the independent, the democratic, the sophisticated. Could Monte Alban or Tikal be compared with Athens? Not really, except in so far as they were highly esthetic cultures and seem to have been in a certain sense "democratic", though perhaps not in a way that fits our own familiar humanist, rationalistic and Western concept of democracy.

The most recent studies of Mesoamerican culture enable us to reconstruct a general picture of man and civilization on our continent, and in order to situate Monte Alban correctly, it might be well to look first at the general picture. This will help correct the foreshortening of perspectives in the popular view of Mexico.

We now know that hunters of mammoth were established in the Valley of Mexico as far back as 12,000 B.C.—when the continental ice sheet came as far south as the Ohio River and Mexico had a cool, rainy climate. With the extinction of the big game a new kind of culture developed. Agriculture seems to have been introduced after 7000 B.C. with the rudimentary cultivation of squash and then eventually of maize. It is, of course, on maize culture that the whole Mesoamerican Indian civilization is built.

Where was maize first grown? For a long time the highlands of Guatemala were thought to be the place where corn was originally cultivated. Recently, discoveries in a dry area of northern Oaxaca have given us a complete sequence of ancient remains of maize in its evolution from a wild to a domesticated plant. This domestication certainly goes back beyond 4000 B.C. At any rate, for a thousand years or more there flourished a neolithic, maize growing, semi-nomad, pre-ceramic culture in Mexico. Ceramics began to be made around 3000 B.C. and of course the ceramic art became one of the most highly developed and sophisticated of the Indian civilization. Metal tools were known about 1000 B.C. but never entirely supplanted stone implements, which continued in use down to the Spanish conquest. Thus we have some two millennia and more of neolithic village life before the appearance of a city in Mexico.

How does the Mesoamerican city develop? It is not primarily the result of a population explosion. The first city develops as a cult center, and about the year 1000 we find evidence of such centers among the Olmecs in the jungle lowlands of Vera Cruz. Many of the Mayan cities were merely centers for worship, sometimes uninhabited except by a small population of priests and scholars occupied with the important social task of determining the proper dates for clearing, planting, etc. as well as fortunate and unfortunate days for various activities. For the authentic urban center, what is required is a moderate concentration of population and of economic activity, a development of science that includes the knowledge of writing and of chronology—and of course astronomy and mathematics. And one also seeks evidence of planning, as well as of permanent monumental public buildings: evidence in other words of a relatively advanced culture, prosperous and creative, which at the same time stimulates and satisfies the higher esthetic and intellectual needs of the community. This appears for the first time in Monte Alban, several hundred years before the construction of the Maya cities of Guatemala.

The city of Monte Alban was built somewhere between 1000 and 500 B.C. by Zapotecan Indians who knew writing, had a calendar, were astronomers and were probably the first city dwellers in America. Pottery finds at Monte Alban have brought to light an archaic style, examples of which go back to about 800 B.C. But with the paving of the Great Plaza after 300 B.C. we definitely enter upon the great period of urban culture at Monte Alban. There is a certain amount of complexity in the terms used by scholars, due to the fact that the word **Classic** has become ambiguous. Morley used it to designate the Mayan culture of the 4th to 10th centuries A.D. It was until recently assumed that the Mexican and Mayan urban cultures were all roughly contemporaneous and "Classic" was used loosely of any urban culture. Attempts to find a more accurate classification have resulted in complex charts and correlations, with Pre-Classic, Classic and Post-Classic or Epiclassic, broken up into numerous subdivisions, and reaching out to include the widely different cultures of Guatemala, Yucatan, Vera Cruz, Mexico, Oaxaca, etc. These charts may be very illuminating to the experts, but to the general reader they are not much help.

To put it in the simplest terms, we can lump together everything from 1000 B.C. to 900 A.D. as "Classic" or "Early" (though it includes various degrees of Pre-Classic and late Classic). This is a convenient and clear division because about 900 A.D. Monte Alban was abandoned and so were the "Classic" Maya cities like Peten, Uaxactun and other centers in Guatemala. After this time, the Mayan culture spread out in Yucatan in a Post-Classical civilization under Toltec domination, and in the Oaxaca Valley the old Zapotec society yielded to Mixtec conquerors, who occupied fortified towns of the region like Mitla and Yagul. The six-hundred-year period between 900 A.D. and the Spanish conquest can be called "Post-Classical" or "Late". Note that by the time the Spaniards arrived, even the last, post-classic Mayan cities of Yucatan had been abandoned. Mayan urban civilization was at an end. But the Aztecs had a flourishing city of three hundred thousand at Tenochtitlan (on the site of Mexico City).

The great difference between the two cultures and the two periods is this: In the early or Classical cultures there is almost no evidence of militarism, of war, or of human sacrifice until very late. The late, Post-Classical civilization results from the radical change from a peaceful to a warlike and militaristic way of life brought in by conquering and relatively barbarous tribes from the north. The Mixtecs conquered the Zapotecs who had abandoned Monte Alban (though still sporadically worshipping there). The Toltecs overcame the Mayas and produced a hybrid Toltec-Mayan culture in Yucatan, centered especially in Chichen Itza. It is with the "late" period that history really begins. The history of the Oaxaca Valley begins with important Mixtec codices—such as the famous Bodley Codex 14-IV-V which tells the story of the Cacique called "Eight Deer Tiger Claw" who ends up being sacrificed. Alfonso Caso's study in Paddock (**op. cit.**) shows that the value of these Mixtec codices is greatly enhanced by recent discoveries in tombs of the Oaxaca valley.

But in the Classic period there are no chronicles. Even though there are many dated **stelae** in classic Mayan architecture and at Monte Alban, the "dates" are at first non-historical. They refer to cosmic cycles, to the stars, and to events that may be called "divine" rather than historical. In other words, the Classic chronologists were more concerned with cosmic happenings than with the rise and fall of kings and empires, with gods rather than with kings. Not that this concern with the gods excluded care for human existence: for by liturgy and celebration, the lives of men, cultivators of maize, were integrated in the cosmic movements of the stars, the planets, the skies, the winds and weather, the comings and goings of the gods. That this society was not dominated by what Marx called religious alienation is evident from the fact that its art did not represent the gods until very late: the early art represents the people themselves, the celebrants officiating in liturgical rites and feasts, vested in the splendid and symbolic emblems of their totem.

We are only just beginning to realize the extraordinary sophistication of totemic thought (as interpreted by Claude Levi-Strauss). Living records left by such North American Indians as Black Elk and Two Leggings* suggest that the elaborate symbolic association of the human person with cosmic animals represents something much more intimate than an "alienated" subjection to external forces. We know something of the profoundly interior relationship of the North American hunter with his "vision person," and we know that the Central American Indian remained in extremely close relationship with the divinity that ruled the day of his birth and gave him one of his names. What we have here is in fact not a matter of alienation but of **identity.** But it is obviously a conception of identity which is quite different from our subjective and psychological one, centered on the empirical ego regarded as distinct and separate from the rest of reality.

This "objective" identity seems to have been fully integrated into a cosmic system which was at once perfectly sacred and perfectly worldly. There is no question that the Indian in the "sacred city" felt himself completely at home in his world and perfectly understood his right place in it. And this is what we are to understand, apparently, by the splendor and symbolism of an art which signified that the gods were present not in idols or sanctuaries so much as in the worshipper, his community and his world. The individual found himself, by his "objective" identity, at the intersection of culture and nature, crossroads established by the gods, points of communication not only between the visible and the invisible, the obvious and the unexplained, the higher and lower, the strong and the helpless: but above all between **complementary opposites which balanced and fulfilled each other** (fire-water, heat-cold, rain-earth, light-dark, life-death). "Self-realization" in such a context implied not so much the ego-consciousness of the isolated subject in the face of a multitude of objects, but the awareness of a network of relationships in which one had a place in the mesh. One's identity was the intersection of cords where one "belonged." The *intersection* was to be sought in terms of a kind of musical or esthetic and scientific synchrony—one fell in step with the dance of the universe, the liturgy of the stars.

What kind of life was led in the "Classic" cities of Guatemala or Oaxaca? We can say that **for roughly two thousand years** the Zapotecan and Mayan Indians maintained an entirely peaceful, prosperous civilization that was essentially esthetic and religious. This civilization was focussed in urban cult-centers, but it was not what we would call a truly urban culture.

Although it has been maintained that Tikal once had a population of a hundred thousand, the Maya cities were usually quite small—and indeed had few permanent residents apart from the priests and scholars who served the temples and observatories. Most of the population was more or less rural, living outside amid the cornfields (**milpas** or **col**) which were periodically cleared from the jungle and then allowed to run wild again. Since there was no war, at least on any scale larger than perhaps family or tribal feuding, there was no need to concentrate the population within fortified towns—until, of course, the Post-Classical period. It was perfectly safe for families, clans and other small groups to live in jungle villages as they had done from time immemorial. The city was where they came together for special celebration, for the worship which included the games and dances in which they took intense satisfaction and gained a heightened awareness of themselves as individuals and as a society. This worship was also completely integrated in their seasonal round of clearing the milpa, burning brush, planting, cultivating and harvesting the maize. This work did not take up an exorbitant amount of time, and in the great periods of enthusiasm and prosperity the people gave their surplus time and energy to the common construction projects which some of the modern scholars still find hard to understand. The example

*This essay is essentially an appreciation of a new collection of studies— reports on "Discoveries in Mexican Archeology and History" edited by John Paddock under the title **Ancient Oaxaca,** and published by the Stanford University Press (1966). It contains two very important surveys: "Mesoamerica before the Toltecs" by Wigberto Jimenez Moreno and "Oaxaca in Ancient Mesoamerica" by John Paddock. Eight other shorter papers by archeologists like Alfonso Caso, Ignacio Bernal, and other scholars, are mainly concerned with the relations of the Zapotec and Mixtec cultures after the "Classic" period. The two longer studies are essential for a contemporary evaluation of Zapotec culture in its relation to the other civilizations of Middle America.

We also refer to the new edition of the standard work of Sylvanus Morley, **The Ancient Maya,** revised by George W. Brainerd, 3d edition, Stanford, 1956 (reprint 1963).

*This view of American Indian civilization is typically repeated in the **Time-Life Book on Ancient America** by Jonathan Norton Leonard, "Great Ages of Man," New York (1967).

*See my "War and Vision," **Catholic Worker,** December 1967.

An Ideal Society

The Chinese sage, Lao Tzu, writing at the time when the first temples were being built on the hilltops at Monte Alban, described his ideal state in these terms:

A small country with a small population
Where the supply of goods is ten or a hundred times more than they can use.
Let people value their lives and not travel far
Though there be boats and carriages
No one there to ride in them
Though there be arms and weapons
No need to brandish them.
Let them count with a knotted string
Enjoy their food
Wear beautiful clothes
Be satisfied with their houses
Delight in their customs.
You can see from one town to the other
You can hear the dogs barking and cocks crowing
In the other village
And you can live your whole life without going over from one to the other.

Lao Tzu might have been describing the life-tempo and the prevailing attitudes in the Oaxaca valley, among people whose remote ancestors had come, thousands of years before, from Asia.

T.M.

RED CITY

S MERTON

of Egypt and Assyria would suggest slave labor, yet all the evidence seems to indicate that the Mayans and Zapotecans built their classic cities spontaneously, freely, as a communal expression of solidarity, self-awareness, and esthetic and religious creativity. There is no evidence of slavery until the Post-Classical period.

Sacred Vision

The success of these two thousand years of peaceful, creative existence demanded a well-developed sense of coordination, a division of tasks under the direction of specialists, a relatively high proportion of skilled labor, and above all a completely unanimous acceptance of a common vision and attitude toward life. One must of course avoid the temptation to idealize what was still in many respects a Stone Age culture, but one cannot evade the conviction that these must have been very happy people. The Mayan scholar, Morley, quotes an English statesman who said that "the measure of civilization is the extent of man's obedience to the unenforceable" and comments that by this standard the Mayans must have measured high. John Paddock, writing of the Zapotecs of Monte Alban, and remarking that there is no evidence of slavery there, says:

> **No whip-cracking slave driver was needed. The satisfaction of helping to create something simultaneously imposing, reassuring and beautiful is enough to mobilize endless amounts of human effort.**

He goes on to argue from the persistence of pilgrimage and generosity in the Mexican Indian of today:

> **It is common for tens of thousands of men, women and children to walk 50 or more miles to a shrine. They are not slaves: they would revolt if denied the right to make their pilgrimage . . . Mexico's shrines of today are in most cases far less beautiful and the worshipper's participation (with money) is far less satisfyingly direct; but they still come by the thousands voluntarily.**

What Paddock is trying to explain here is not merely the fact that a religious center, a "sacred city" like Monte Alban existed, but that it was in fact built on a mountain ridge, without the use of wheels for transport and without draft animals—as also without slave labor. The fantastically difficult work was carried out with immense patience and love by people whose motives cannot even be guessed if we try to analyze them solely in economic or technological terms.

Here was a major religious capital, an urban complex which at the height of its prosperity "occupied not only the top of a large mountain but the tops and sides of a whole range of high hills adjoining, a total of some fifteen square miles of urban construction" (Paddock). The maintenance of the city "would necessarily require the services of thousands of specialists: priests, artists, architects; the apprentices of all these and many kinds of workmen, including servants for the dignitaries and their families." The peaceful and continuous growth of this city and its culture—with continued renewal of buildings and art work century after century—can only be explained by the fact that the people like it that way. They wanted to build new temples and to dance in the Great Plaza dressed in their fantastically beautiful costumes. Nor were they particularly anxious to find quicker and more efficient methods of doing their work. They were in no hurry. An artist was content to grind for months on a jade pebble to carve out a glyph. And he was not even paid for it!

> **In purely economic terms, in fact, the whole accomplishment seems fantastic. But if we attempt to comprehend it in economic terms alone we are neglecting the crucial factors. For over a century we have been living in a world where technology has been the great hope, solving one problem after another. Perhaps we may be forgiven if we have come to demand material-mechanical explanations for everything, overlooking the possibility that they may often be insufficient . . . To ask these questions only in economic, technological or political terms will produce only some of the needed answers. Questions about religion and art must be included, and they may be in this case the most basic ones. (Paddock)**

The chief economic factor in the success of the Zapotec civilization was that in the fertile, isolated Oaxaca valley, a relatively small population, which remained stable, had a highly effective system for exploiting the natural advantages of their region. They could produce the food they needed — plenty of corn, squash, tomatoes, peppers, avocados, red and black beans, cacao, along with tobacco and cotton. They engaged in some commerce with the so-called "Olmec" civilization in the jungle lowlands of what is now the state of Vera Cruz, and later with the people in the Valley of Mexico to the north. But their surplus time and energy went into art, architecture and worship. The result was a city and a culture of great majesty and refinement, integrated into a natural setting of extraordinary beauty, dominating the fertile valley surrounded by high mountains. The people who collaborated in the work and worship of the sacred city must have enjoyed a most unusual sense of communal identity and achievement. Wherever they looked, they found nothing to equal their creative success, which antedated that of the Classic Mayan culture by more than five hundred years, and was not outshone by the latter when it finally dawned.

The archeology of the Oaxaca Valley is still only in its first stages and further discoveries will bring to light much more that has been barely guessed at so far. But we know enough to accurately surmise what it was all about. Paddock says:

> **Monte Alban was a place electric with the presence of the gods. These gods were the very forces of nature with which peasants are respectfully intimate . . .**
>
> **Every temple stood over a half a dozen temples of centuries before. Buried in the great temples were ancient high priests of legendary powers, now semi-deified; centuries of accumulated wealth in offerings, centuries of mana in ceremonies, centuries of power and success, lay deep inside that masonry. But with their own humble hands, or those of their remembered ancestors, the common people had made the buildings . . . They were participating in the life of the metropolis; they could see that they were making it possible. They could stand dazzled before those mighty temples, stroll half an hour to circle the immense open plaza, watch the stunning pageantry of the ceremonies, stare as fascinated as we at the valley spread out mile after mile below. They knew that no other such center existed for hundreds of miles—and even then their city had only rivals, not superiors . . .**

Three things above all distinguish this "sacred city" from our own culture today: the indifference to technological progress; the lack of history, and the almost total neglect of the arts of war. The three things go together, and are rooted in an entirely different conception of man and of life. That conception, of which we have already spoken as a network of living interrelationships, can be called synthetic and synchronic, instead of analytic and diachronic.

In plain and colloquial terms it is a difference between a peaceful, timeless life lived in the stability of a continually renewed present, and a dynamic, aggressive life aimed at the future. We are more and more acutely conscious of travelling, of going somewhere, of heading for some ultimate goal. They were conscious of having arrived, of being at the heart of things. Mircea Eliade speaks of the archaic concept of the sanctuary or the sacred place as the axis mundi, the center or navel of the earth, for those whose lives revolve in the cycles of its liturgy.

Peaceable Kingdom

Perhaps the inhabitants of these first American cities, who remained content in large measure with

Stone Age technics, who had no sense of history (and certainly no foresight into what was to come after their time!) simply accepted themselves as having more or less unconsciously achieved the kind of successful balance that humanity had been striving for, slowly and organically, over ten thousand and more years. Their material needs were satisfied and their life could expand in creative self-expression. This was the final perfection of the long, relatively peaceful agrarian society that had grown out of the neolithic age.

According to our way of thinking, the Zapotecs were crazy not to make use of the wheel when they knew of its existence. The curious thing is that they had wheels, but only for toys. And they did use rollers to move heavy blocks of stone. They were, in a word, perfectly capable of "inventing the wheel" but for some reason (which must remain to us profoundly mysterious) they never bothered with it. They were not interested in going places.

The Indian cultures of Mesoamerica are typical archaic societies in which the creative energy of the people found expression in artistic and religious forms rather than in applied science. This is, to us, one of the most baffling of problems. Greco-Roman civilization—which was much more pragmatic and pratical than that of the Indians—also presents this problem. The science of the Alexandrian scholars in the Roman empire was sufficiently advanced to permit the development of steam engines. The industrial revolution might have taken place in 200 A.D. But it didn't. So might the discovery of America, for that matter, as the Alexandrian geographers were aware that the earth was round!

What is most perplexing to us is that, as a matter of fact, economic conditions called for this kind of development. To our way of thinking, the Zapotecs needed wheels and machinery, and the economy of the late Roman empire demanded a technological revolution. Just as the Mesoamerican Indians used wheels only for toys, so the Romans also used hydraulic power, but only for shifting heavy scenery in the Circus!

A few modern scholars have tried to grapple with this enigma, and Hanns Sachs, a psychoanalyst, contends that the urge for technological progress was suppressed in the ancient world because of the radically different disposition of narcissism and libido in ancient man. Tools and machines replace the body and absorb or alienate libido energy, which is frankly cathected by sensuous man.

Once again we come upon the curious question of archaic man's sense of identity. His sense of his own reality and actuality was much more frankly bound up with sensual experience and body narcissism, whereas we have been split up and tend to project our libido outward into works, possessions, implements, money, etc. In the lovely sculptured "danzantes" (dancers) of Monte Alban with their frank and sensuously flowering male nakedness we apprehend a bodily awareness that substantiates what Sachs says: "To these men of antiquity the body, which they could cathect with a libido still undeviated, was their real being . . . Animistic man vitalized the inanimate world with such narcissism as he could find no other use for."

The "reality" and "identity" of archaic man was then centered in sensuous self-awareness and identification with a close, ever-present and keenly sensed world of nature: for us, our "self" tends to be "realized" in a much more shadowy, abstract, mental world, or indeed in a very abstract and spiritualized world of "soul." We are disembodied minds seeking to bridge the gap between mind and body and return to ourselves through the mediation of things, commodities, products and implements. We reinforce our sense of reality by acting on the external world to get ever new results. More sensuous, primitive man does not understand this and recoils from it, striving to influence external reality by magic and sensuous self-identification.

The primitive, like the child, remains in direct sensuous contact with what is outside him, and is most happy when this contact is celebrated in an esthetic and ritual joy. He relates to things and persons around him with narcissistic play. Our narcissism has been increasingly invested, through intellectual operations, in the money, the machines, the weaponry, which are the extensions of ourselves and which we venerate in our rituals of work, war, production, domination and brute power.

Obviously the Zapotecs of Monte Alban knew what violence was. They knew what it meant to fight and kill: they were not a "pacifist society" (which would imply a conscious and programmatic refusal of war). They just had no use for war, as a community. It was pointless. They were not threatened, and it evidently did not enter their heads to threaten others—until the far end of the Classic period when a growing population had exhausted the reserves of land, when the deforested mountains were eroded and the hungry, restless community began to look for places to plant corn in the territory of others—or to fight others who came looking for more room in Oaxaca.

By this time, of course, the long centuries of high classic civilization were coming to an end everywhere in Mexico and Yucatan. Already in the seventh century A.D. the metropolis of the Valley of Mexico, Teotihuacan, had been sacked or burned. In the tenth century, Monte Alban was deserted. But it was never conquered, never even attacked. There were never any fortifications—and indeed there was never a need for any. There is no evidence of violent, revolutionary destruction—the city was not harmed. It just came to an end. the enterprise of sacred culture closed down. Its creativity was exhausted.

There is no satisfactory explanation as yet of why the classic sacred cities of the Mayans and Zapotecs were simply abandoned. Presumably the ancient civilization finally grew too rigid and died of sclerosis. Its creative and self-renewing power finally gave out. Sometimes it is assumed that the people became disillusioned with the ruling caste of priests and revolted against them. But we also hear of a migration of priests and scholars into the south, under pressure of invasion from the north. In any case, the cities were abandoned.

The Zapotecs were conquered by their neighbors the Mixtecs after Monte Alban was abandoned, but they continued to live under their conquerors, maintaining, it is said, a "government in exile" somewhere else. Today, the Zapotecs persist. Their language is still spoken, and in their ancestral territory they have outlasted the Mixtecs, who remain in a minority.

The Spanish conquered Mesoamerica in the sixteenth century. The blood-thirsty Aztec empire, built on military power, ruled Mexico. But it was hated and decadent. It was willingly betrayed by the other Indians and collapsed before the guns of Christian Spain. Much of the ancient Indian culture was destroyed, above all, anything that had to do with religion. But we must remember that the finest Mesoamerican civilizations had already disappeared seven or eight hundred years before the arrival of the Europeans.

Indirect Genocide

After the conquest, the Oaxaca valley, once rich and fertile, gradually became a near-desert as the ancient agricultural practices were forgotten and the soil of the deforested mountains washed out. Contact with the Europeans was in many ways a human disaster for the Mexicans. The Indian population of Mesoamerica was probably twenty million in 1519. In 1532 it was already under seventeen million, in 1550 it was down to six million and in 1600 there were **only a million Indians left.** The population dropped nineteen million in eighty years! This was not due to systematic genocide but to diseases which the Indians could not resist. The impact of Spain on Mexico was in effect genocidal. Fortunately, a slow recovery began in the mid-seventeenth century.

To summarize: the extraordinary thing about the Zapotec civilization of the Oaxaca Valley is that, like the Classic urban civilization of the Mayas and the so called "Olmec" or Tenocelome culture, it maintained itself without war and without military power for many centuries. We can say that Monte Alban, in its pre-urban as well as in its urban development, represents a peaceful and prosperous culture extending over two millennia without a full-scale war and without any need of fortifications or of a defense establishment.

In the present state of our knowledge of Zapotec culture, we can say that for two thousand years

(Continued on page 6)

A Meeting with Ignazio Silone

(Continued from page 1)

The other brother was tortured to death by the Fascists. His mother lost her life in a terrible earthquake when he was fifteen. He went to school first in the village and then later in a seminary, where he received a classical education. Don Orlione was a priest who had the greatest infuence on his life and I imagine the wonderful priest portrayed in **Bread and Wine** was like him. He continued his education under the Jesuits in Rome. On one occasion he left school and wandered around Rome for three days; that and his Socialist leanings led to his expulsion. Later on, in the Mussolini era, he became a Communist and had to flee Italy and take refuge in Switzerland.

Fontamara was written in 1930 when Silone was in exile, and he said that writing was his only defense against despair. He was ill with tuberculosis, "Since it did not appear that I had long to live," he writes in the introduction, "I wrote with unspeakable affliction and anxiety, to set up as best I could that village into which I put the quintessence of myself and my native heath, so that I could at least die among my own people."

But he recovered his health and writing became the "secret dwelling place for the rest of a long exile." He writes that there is no definite break between the stories of Solitary Strangr in **Fontamara**, Pietro Spina in **Bread and Wine**, **Rocco in A Handful of Blackberries**, and Andrea in **The Secret of Luca**. The hero in **The Seed Beneath the Snow** is still Pietro Spina.

"If it were in my power to change the mercantile laws of literary society," he writes, "I could easily spin out my existence writing and rewriting the same story in the hope that I might end up understanding it and making it clear to others, just as in the middle ages there were monks whose entire lives were devoted to painting the face of Christ over and over again."

When he returned after his exile and reread the text of those first two books for Italian publication, he began rewriting them both, because of the continued development in himself "during all those years in which I had continued to live in them."

For one thing, the emphasis was no longer on urging peasant uprising—he had long since lost his faith in Communism or in any other revolution directed by a bunch of bureaucrats. The emphasis is now on the individual, who conveys the message, one man to another, of man's dignity and capacity for greatness. And greatness means the overcoming of temptation and the laying down of one's life for one's fellows, in other words, the victory of love over hatred and mistrust.

Fontamara is the name of a south Italian village where the villagers are constantly being deceived by the Trader, who came like an ordinary travelling salesman and began by buying up the apples on the trees when the peasants needed cash, and went on to buy up everything: onions, beans, lentils, pigs, hens, rabbits, bees, animal skins, road construction, land, and so on. The story begins with his diverting a small stream which takes all the water from the peasants' small fields. He gains control of the old-time landowners and works with a bank, which gives him all the money he needs. He finally becomes mayor of the nearby town. With the priest on the side of the Trader, the peasant in despair, each one looks to his own welfare at the expense of the others, each tries to get the best of what little water is left. The bits of land the peasants had are tied up in mortgages and debts, so they have to hire themselves out as day laborers. Each day they have to walk ten miles to their work and, in the evening when they return home they feel as "exhausted and degraded as beasts."

Berardo Viola has lost his land because of the treachery of the local lawyer and at the end goes away to Rome to search for work in order to marry Elvira, who has accepted him, penniless and landless though he is. So far he has been the one in the village to preach revolt, but now he thinks only of himself, and refuses to join the other peasants in any of their plans, which they had begun to make under his inspiration. He has converted them all and now he himself had changed. He has to take care of his own affairs, he says, and will not stay with the others or work with them any longer. Elvira pledges herself to go on a pilgrimage to save his soul. She has fallen in love with him as he was before, a landless peasant and a leader of the others who had kept some spark of hope and faith in themselves alive.

It is in Rome that after hunger and thirst in his attempt to cut through the bureaucracy and find work, he meets the Solitary Stranger. When they are arrested for vagrancy and share a cell together, he is brought back to his former way of thinking. He has gone through what can only be called a conversion. Elvira has on her pilgrimage begged the Virgin for his salavation, offering God her own life for him, and her offering had been accepted. During his absence she returns home to die of fever. Inspired by the Solitary Stranger, Berardo himself offers his life for the others and is killed by the Fascists.

The entire story, told by one or another of the peasants themselves, is not primarily a story of incipient violent revolution, though the peasants do plan to burn up the Trader's holdings. It is rather the story of failure, the story of redemption, the folly of the Cross which leads to the Resurrection. The same theme runs through Silone's work. **The Seed Beneath the Snow.** "Unless the grain of wheat fall into the ground and dies, itself remaineth alone. But if it dies it brings forth much fruit." . . . "Anyone who would save his life must lose it."

In one of his critical essays in **Politics and the Novel,** Irving Howe says that in the novels of Malraux and Silone, the true hero is the author himself. I felt privileged indeed in meeting Silone, a moral hero of our time, committed to the poor and the landless, the agricultural worker whom we have encountered in our own country in the novels of Steinbeck, **Grapes of Wrath** and **In Dubious Battle.** Certainly the poorest people in our own country are not the industrial workers, who have won their battle for the eight-hour day and the five-day week, and for some share in the prosperity of our urban civilization, only through bloody defeats during half a century and more of struggle. The struggle on the land goes on for the right to organize agricultural work, to bargain collectively, to build up community by way of cooperatives and social-service centers, where Masses are offered up for the workers, and **campesino** players can put on their acts and their songs.

I am grateful indeed for the writings of Ignazio Silone. In a meeting in Switzerland not long after the second World War, he said that those writers who sold their words to governments in the prosecution of a war were as guilty of profiting by war as the men who remained at home to work on the instruments of death —the bombers and the Bomb, the

napalm and the anti-personnel bombs (and the personel in these cases are mostly women and children, the old and the feeble).

When I first mentioned the book **Bread and Wine** in my column years ago, one of our Bishops, a good friend, wrote to me that he was sorry to see me praising a writer who spoke of the Holy Father (Pius XI) as Pope Pontius Pilate. **Bread and Wine** is the story of the return of an exile, who hides out in the mountains of the Abruzzi, distinguished as a priest. When war is declared against Ethiopa he goes out in the night and chalks up his opposition on the public buildings of the village in which he is staying in the form of a large and repeated "NO!" When he is asked what good such a puny dissent does, and why he is risking his life, which is so precious to others, by such a futile gesture, he replies that as long as one man says "NO!" the unanimity of consent is broken. At that time it certainly seemed that the hierarchy and the clergy (all but Don Luigi Sturzo, that great Christian sociologist) were blessing that war.

As far as I know, Silone is not what is generally called a practicing Catholic. I certainly did not presume to question him on the subject. But I do know that his writings bring to us the Christian message and my heart is warm with gratitude. I know

too that he is interested in and follows all that is happening in the Church, not only in the ancient order of the Trappists, the monks of the desert, but also in "The Seeds of the Desert," (not the book of Father Rene Voillaume by that name, though it is a great one), but the seed scattered by the solitary, Charles de Foucauld, which bloomed in a new order, the Little Brothers of Jesus, who go out into all the poverty-stricken places in the world and work for their daily bread and live the life of the contemplative in the world. Let us all pray for each other, that we may learn this profound truth, the way of the Cross which leads to joy and fulfillment and eventually to victory.

On Pilgrimage

A touch of the flu has resulted in the postponement until next month of my On Pilgrimage column, with its continued story of Archbishop Roberts' picketing in London, the meeting with the Taena community, and further incidents of my recent trip to Rome, Sicily and England. D.D.

The Sacred City

(Continued from page 5)

Monte Alban had no history but that of its arts and its creative achievement. Indeed, the only chronology we have is determined by different styles in ceramics, architecture and sculpture. We may hope that further archeological finds and a better understanding of hieroglyphic writing may give us an idea of the development of scientific, philosophical and religious thought in Monte Alban. But we have here an almost unique example of a city-state whose history is entirely creative, totally centered in artistic work, in thought, in majestic ritual celebration. We may add that it is intensely and warmly human and often marked with a very special charm, humor, and taste. Even in its baroque stage, Zapotec Classic art is less bizarre than Mayan, and of course it never approaches the necrophilic bad taste of the Aztecs.

A more detailed knowledge of the religious thought and development of the people at Monte Alban may perhaps show us a gradual change, with an archaic, totemistic, ancestor-plus-fertility religion and a few "high gods," giving place eventually to a more and more hierarchical religious establishment, an increasingly complex theogony and a whole elaborate pantheon of deified nature forces and culture heroes to be bought off by sacrifice.

In other words, it may be that at Monte Alban and in the ancient Maya cities we may witness the gradual transition from neolithic village-agrarian culture to the war-like imperial metropolis, through the theocratic establishment of urban power in the hands of priest-kings. But it appears from the recent studies that life in the Classic era for Monte Alban was still "democratic," not in the sophisticated sense of the Greek polis but in the archaic sense of the neolithic village. It was a life of creative common participation in the general enterprise of running the sacred city as a permanent celebration.

This was made possible by special circumstances: a fertile and productive region, not too thickly populated, which allowed all the material needs of the people to be satisfied with a small amount of field work, and liberated the surplus energies for common urban projects in art, and architecture, as well as for religious celebration. The energy and wealth that other cultures put into wars of conquest, the Zapotecs simply put into beautifying and ennobling their common agrarian and city life. But of course they did this entirely without self-consciousness, and their art, unlike ours, was spontaneously and completely integrated in their everyday lives. They did not take courses in art appreciation or go dutifully to the opera, or seek out good paintings in a museum.

Since this kind of life was impossible except in a small and isolated population, it flourished under conditions which have become practically unthinkable in our present day world. We have to look for some other formula. Nevertheless, it will not hurt us to remember that this kind of thing was once possible, indeed normal, and not a mere matter of idealistic fantasy.

Looking Backward

By way of summary and conclusion: the purpose of this study is not merely to draw an unfavorable contrast between the peaceful, stable, aesthetic existence of the "sacred city," and the turbulent, unstable and vulgar affluence of the warfare state—the "secular city." To say that Monte Alban was nice and that New York is ghastly would be an irrelevant exercise, especially since the writer likes New York well enough and does not think of it as ghastly—only as a place where he is well-content to be no longer a resident. It is all too easy for people who live, as we do, in crisis, to sigh with nostalgia for a society that was once so obviously tranquil and secure. Yet there is some advantage in remembering that after all peace, tranquillity and security were once not only possible but real. It is above all salutary for us to realize that they were possible only on terms quite other than those which we take for granted as normal.

In other words, it is important that we fit the two thousand warless years of Monte Alban into our world-view. It may help to tone down a little of our aggressive, self-complacent superiority, and puncture some of our more disastrous myths. The greatest of these is doubtless that we are the first civilization that has appeared on the face of the earth (Greece was all right in so far as it foreshadowed the U.S.A.). And the corollary to this: that all other civilizations, and particularly those of "colored" races, were always quaintly inferior, mere curious forms of barbarism. We are far too convinced of many other myths about peace and war, about time and history, about the inherent purpose of civilization, of science, of technology and of social life itself, and these illusions do us no good. They might be partly corrected by a sober view of the undoubted success achieved by the Zapotec Indians.

The "sacred cities" of Monte Alban and of Guatemala, as we see them, looked back rather than forward. They were the fulfillment of a long development of a certain type of culture which was agrarian and which flourished in small populations. With the growth of populous societies, the accumulation of wealth, the development of complex political and religious establishments and above all with the expansion of invention and resources for war, human life on earth was revolutionized. That revolution began with what we call "history" and has reached its climax now in another and far greater revolution which may, in one way or other, bring us to the end of history. Will we reach that end in cataclysmic destruction or—as others affably promise—in a "new tribalism," a submersion of history in the vast unified complex of mass-mediated relationships which will make the entire world one homogeneous city? Will this be the purely secular, technological city, in which all relationships will be cultural and nature wil have been absorbed in technics? Will this usher in the millennium? Or will it be nothing more than the laborious institution of a new kind of jungle, the electronic labyrinth, in which tribes will hunt heads among the aerials and fire escapes until somehow an eschatological culture of peace emerges somewhere in the turbulent structure of artifice, abstraction and violence which has become man's second nature?

Inevitably, such a culture will have to recover at least something of the values and attitudes that were characteristic of Monte Alban.

ED. NOTE: New Directions has just published a new paperback edition of Thomas Merton's Selected Poems.

In our heterogenous world the Christian must at all costs maintain the desire to dialogue with all persons of good faith in treating contemporary problems. Let us never forget it: dialogue is one of the forms of our culture. Western civilization is a civilization of dialogue. For centuries it has consisted of a constant confrontation of ideas and a constant effort at mutual comprehension. Who cannot or will not dialogue risks becoming the unwitting prey of fanaticism. To destroy dialogue is not only to destroy others; it is to destroy oneself.

PAUL-EMILE CARDINAL LEGER

+ + + BOOK REVIEWS + + +

DOSTOEVSKY: His Life and Work By Konstantin Mochulsky; Translated by Michael A. Minihan; Princeton University Press; $12.50; Reviewed by HELENE ISWOLSKY.

This is an exhaustive critical investigation and a most needed key to Dostoevsky studies. It is a companion to the great novelist's "Summa," provided it is read slowly, in a spirit of contemplation, as Konstantin Mochulsky wrote it. For the book covers a broad horizon, both in the fields of scholarship and of religious thought.

In most works devoted to the author of the **Brothers Karamazov** only one aspect at a time is emphasized and even overemphasized. This aspect can be literary, psychological, biographical, philosophical or religious, leaving Dostoevsky's complex world mostly in the shadows. What remained to be done was to put all these separate pieces together in order to achieve a synthesis.

Mochulsky was a man well fitted to perform this task. Born in Russia in 1892, he studied at the University of Petersburg at a time when his country was in a state of intense political, social and spiritual ferment. When, after the revolution, he came to Paris, Mochulsky joined the group of Russian scholars in exile, led by the religious thinker Nicholas Berdyaev and the great Russian Orthodox theologian Father Sergius Bulgakov. These men and their friends had stimulated a religious revival both at home and abroad. They preserved the heritage of the Russian Christian intelligentsia; the search for a renewed faith, the defense of the human person and of social justice. As Mochulsky writes in his preface, they were the "new souls," who, together with the great Russian symbolist poets Alexander Blok and Vyacheslav Ivanov, had a "new tragic world sense," a "prophetic anxiety, which led them to the rediscovery of Dostoevsky, sorely misunderstood and misjudged by his contemporaries, and they turned to him as their "spiritual mentor."

Mochulsky's book reflects this new approach. He was himself filled with this "tragic world-sense." It remained with him as an afterglow of the revolution. "Prophetic anxiety" gave a certain vibrant, even poignant tone to his book. He was strongly influenced by Ivanov's great work on Dostoevsky **Freedom and the Tragic Life.** But he had his independent, very personal devotion to the author of the **Brothers Karamazov.** He is more sensitive, more literary, more concerned with human and artistic values than with purely metaphysical interpretation.

However, his is not an emotional approach. Throughout his long investigation, Mochulsky remained strictly a scholar, with all the discipline such a work required. His book is based on a series of remarkable lectures he gave at the Sorbonne; he observed the highest standards of erudition. He analyzed every detail of Dostoevsky's life, every line of his writings. In order to devote full time to this work and to others that followed, he gave up a comfortable life, a successful career. Having suffered great privations during the Nazi occupation of Paris, and severely rationed, he died of malnutrition soon after the liberation of France.

The twenty-four chapters of his monumental work discuss each period of Dostoevsky's dramatic life and link them chronologically to his writings, from his earliest works to the major novels. He believed that the first stories, now rarely read, must be studied as his first "laboratories" revealing his techniques and ideology.

Mochulsky takes considerable time to describe the background, circumstances and preparation which determined each separate work. He quotes abundantly from letters, notebooks, memoirs which throw light upon Dostoevsky's intentions and conceptions. A great amount of new source material was discovered in Russia after the revolution in various archives previously closed to the public. Most interesting among them was Stavrogin's "confession" which had been previously omitted from **The Possessed;** the sketch of a novel **The Life of a Great Sinner** (which Dostoevsky never wrote), and the notebooks which he kept in preparation for his major novels. These too are "laboratories," showing dozens of different variants, discarded projects and blueprints which finally led to the birth of the masterpieces. Some of this material has already been translated, other documents appear in Michael Minihan's version for the first time. But even when all of them are available in English, they will still require the help of Mochulsky's minute and crystal-clear analysis.

Mochulsky points out that Dostoevsky's novels are all "in a profound sense autobiographical." This does not mean, of course, that the characters and events featured in his novels are exact replicas of existing people and of incidents that really happened. But they are the reflections of real people and events; they have acquired a new life in Dostoevsky's inner world, in which they struggle, as he himself struggled throughout his tragic life.

Even more clearly projected, of course, is Dostoevsky's experience in prison and hard labor. In the **House of the Dead** we have not only distinct biographical evidence, but also the prisoner's profound insights into human suffering. It was at that time that he discovered man's dignity and spiritual value even in the great sinners.

Dostoevsky's closest friend, Vrangel, who first met him during these years of trial, wrote: "He [Dostoevsky] used to find an excuse for the worst traits in a man's character, explaining everything as a want of education, the influence of surroundings, and even nature and temperament. Everything that was afflicted and poor found in him special concern." This personal testimony makes us understand more clearly the words of the old monk Father Zossima in **The Brothers Karamazov,** composed by Dostoevsky many years later: "Love a man even in his sin." Vrangel also tells us that though Dostoevsky did not go often to church during the Siberian period of his life, "he used to speak of Christ with rapture." Later, as we know, he practised the Russian Orthodox religion very fervently. But the awakening started long before.

And this reminds us once more that Dostoevsky rediscovered Christ and the gospels precisely during his years as a convict sentenced to hard labor. After his liberation from prison he wrote to Mrs. Vonvizin, the woman who had given him the book of the gospels when he was on his way to the prison of Omsk, and which he kept till the day of his death:

> **"I will tell you regarding myself that I am a child of the age, a child of unbelief and doubt up till now and even (I know it) until my coffin closes. What terrible torment does this thirst to believe cost me . . . And yet sometimes God sends me moments in which I am utterly at peace."**

And Dostoevsky goes on to say that he has constructed for himself a "very simple symbol": this symbol is "to believe that there is nothing more beautiful, more sympathetic, more reasonable, more courageous and more perfect than Christ." The letter to Mrs. Vonvizin is an introduction to Dostoevsky's entire religious philosophy as expressed in the major novels, in which belief and unbelief are engaged in a continuous struggle. The arena of this struggle is man's innermost heart, where faith is lost, and lost again, and finally regained through "terrible torment" or not at all.

Mochulsky tells us that long before Dostoevsky's own change of heart, he was made aware of things unseen, of things entirely beyond what we call "reality." One day in winter, he stood as a very young man, on the banks of the frozen river Neva in Petersburg; he had the vision of the city vanishing in the mist, while, as he later wrote, he saw "clearly as it were into something new, a completely new world." His heart was flooded "with a hot jet of blood, which suddenly boiled up from a mighty sensation." And he concluded his account by saying: "I think in these precise minutes my real existence began."

The "vision on the Neva" is described in one of Dostoevsky's almost unknown and half-forgotten articles. Here again we see something like the faint projection of some future great religious experience, that of Alyosha Karamazov on the night of crisis. Reality (his family's hideous tragedy, his beloved teacher's death and his own doubts) suddenly fades and is replaced by rapture, Dostoevsky's own rapture in

Christ. This is an entirely new dimension.

But the new dimension does not exclude the Christian's immediate task in this our world: to love, to be responsible for all, to recognize and share a common guilt. Shortly before his death Zossima tells Alyosha to leave the monastery, to go out into the world, "blessing life and causing others to bless it." In this image, writes Mochulsky, "a new type of Christian is projected."

Thus all the separate pieces of Dostoevsky's complex world fall into one pattern, the five major novels are actually "one tragedy in five acts." **Notes from Underground,** which Mr. Minihan calls in his introduction "a philosophical preface to the cycle of great novels," uncovers "the consciousness of modern man in its tragic isolation and dichotomy." It is a search for freedom at all costs and a passionate denial of all utopian formulas which would lead to slavery.

This crucial examination of conscience in relation to freedom is one of Dostoevsky's main themes. It goes through all the five acts and culminates in the "Legend of the Grand Inquisitor" and in Alyosha's faith in true freedom, which is in Christ. But this theme cannot be understood without diving into Dostoevsky's "laboratory." This means accompanying him not only through his notebooks, where the gestation of his work took place; it means going along with him through his entire life, his suffering, his tragic sickness, his poverty, as well as his temptations, doubts and weaknesses. We see him as he was: the tormented lover, the jealous husband, the gambler, bringing ruin to his family, the penitent at the gates of monastery, the man so long ignored by his contemporaries, then suddenly loved and admired by Russian youth because of his Pushkin speech. Now a rebel, then fearful of socialism, as he understood it (as a false utopian formula), then again rebelling with Ivan Karamazov and calling on men to be responsible for all human misery. Building through all these various phases, stone by stone, the immortal edifice of the "five-act tragedy"; marked by strenuous labor, nerve-racking search, poverty and exhaustion.

Konstantin Mochulsky has drawn this vast panorama of a man and his work, because he himself accompanied Dostoevsky in spirit through his hell and his heaven. This is why his contribution to Dostoevsky studies is not merely that of a scholar. It comes from the heart.

Let us conclude by paying tribute to a young American scholar who teaches Russian culture and has fulfilled his difficult task with great precision and understanding but also with great love. He too is captured by a "new dimension."

A NEW CATHECHISM: CATHOLIC FAITH FOR ADULTS, translated from the Dutch by Kevin Smyth; Herder & Herder; $6.00 Reviewed by F. H. DRINKWATER.

This is the now famous "Dutch Catechism," edited by the Jesuits of the Canisius Catechetical Institute of Nijmegen and sponsored by the bishops of Holland. Although it sold nearly half a million copies in that country, some Dutch Catholics complained to Rome about its venturesome theology, and there have been discussions between its authors and a commission of six cardinals. Cardinal Bernard Alfrink, of Utrecht, has announced this and has added that there will be some "clarifications" in a future edition. (The latest rumor is that these will number a dozen or so.) Meanwhile foreign translations have been held up, but the English translation, being already on the point of publication, has been put on sale. Because of the complications Bishop Robert F. Joyce, of Burlington, Vermont, withdrew his **imprimatur** a few days before the American edition went to press.

Actually, the book is not a catechism at all in any hitherto accepted sense. A catechism confines itself to being a summary of Christian faith and practice; its content is for all Catholics, though its immediate readership may be some section such as clergy (Trent), school-text ((new German and Australian) or family compendium (Luther, Challoner etc.). But this Dutch book does not keep to the "doctrine;" it covers much "pre-evangelizing" about the human predicament, the other world-religions, the scriptural background to everything, liturgical happenings in detail, much apologetics and sociology, and it is addressed quite definitely not to the ordinary faithful but to the academic intellectual minority. It avoids the technical terms of scholastic theology (an exception, oddly enough, is the word **reprobation,** p. 480) but its on vocabulary is highly literary. On any page phrases occur like **disaspora situation, iconography, salvific event, distinct proprieties** (in the Trinity), **anthropological** (of the real presence after communion! p. 345). You can call it one of those **What Is Catholicism?** books, aimed at college students at lowest, and at non-Catholics as much as Catholics. As such it is quite an achievement, but it is not a national catechism, and it is likely that the Catholics of Holland will still feel the need of one.

Then what about these "heresies?" Sorry to disappoint anybody, but there aren't any. There is, however, a great deal of "leaning over backwards" to conciliate the more critical readership. To take an extreme instance, there are three pages of excellent considerations (pp. 74-76) about Christ's virginal conception, without any plain assertion of the fact, and certainly also without any denial of it. The idea evidently is that the reader should feel he is not being bulldozed into the faith but is drawn to commit himself to it. Anyhow, if the cardinals suggest a clarification, three or four words, like **no father on earth,** would be all that is needed.

Most of this ultra-scholarly bending-over-backwards it not so much for the benefit of humanists or scientists and suchlike, but to conciliate the Lutheran mentality, and this comes out especially in the references to popular beliefs and devotions in the Church. "Until quite recently it was the custom . . ." or "in former times . . ." the reader learns to recognize such phrases as the beginning of some rather patronizing sentence about some practice which might seem unhelpful for ecumenical relations.

A brief review cannot possibly evaluate every topic in this book and it would be an impertinence to do so. (On birth control, by the way, I would think its remarks are the merest common sense, and it is firm on divorce, though compassionate towards "tragic marginal cases"). Its verbal formulations about such points as purgatory, or the Blessed Sacrament, may sometimes be over-influenced by the above-mentioned ecumenical feeling, at times needlessly so, e.g., p. 347, line 17; and sometimes not, because a book written by a committee, and by various hands, may not always be consistent. On the Blessed Sacrament (reserved) the real practical pastoral point is whether we are to give divine adoration to it. This is not in dispute, the Church has long ago decided in the affirmative and neither the bishops nor the faithful are going to change. Consequently theological language has to adapt itself to our devotional practice, as long ago at Ephesus, and not the other way round. The word **transubstantiation** could fall into disuse and no harm done, but the **latria,** public and private, is true development and is there to stay.

Another semantic reflection: this book has plenty to say about our idea of God, and says it effectively. Nevertheless, seeing that its target is us eggheads, I wonder if it wouldn't have been well to meet the objections which are often raised today against all "God-talk" as being meaningless, or illegitimate? There is a hint or two on pp. 310 and 488, but what seems needed is the full Catholic teaching (so little known amongst Catholics!) about **analogical** knowledge.

May I mention one further point of phraseology which this book brings out into the open for settlement one way or the other? Most of the new theologians seem to avoid using the word **soul** and its implications. I suppose they are in reaction against too much saving-my-own-soul talk, or else doing a spot of de-hellenizing in favor of the supposedly Jewish and scriptural mentality; or maybe they want to leave room for a completely evolutionary origin of man. It is probably for the first and second reasons, rather than the third, that this book follows the prevailing fashion so meekly, so that there seems no mention of soul in the index or anywhere else, except on p. 473, to discourage the old phraseology. Cries of heresy would be out of place, the existence of a spirit-soul in man is primarily a philosophical question; but it does have theological resonances in such matters as Christ's "descent into hell" (p. 177) and purgatory (p. 477). Yet see also p. 500, where "the spirit of man and his consciousness," "his personal consciousness," are

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BOOK REVIEWS

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described as never lost, but developed through death into life, presumably of the final resurrection. Of course, we must never think of the soul as if temporarily imprisoned in the body. But I venture to think that the new theologians are mistaken in jettisoning the old clear distinction between body and soul, which makes man, and the God-man, a junction-point (a convergent omega-point if you like!) between two worlds of creation, spirit and matter. The new fashion of speaking, or not speaking, about the immortal soul of man strikes me as intellectually defeatist and philosophically retrograde, but that does not mean it is necessarily heretical.

One great asset of this book is the grand historical sweep of God's redemptive action—the people of God—from Moses until now. (Our poor Father Abraham is dismissed as "this semi-barbarian nomad," which seems rather a slur on the ancient city of Ur of the Chaldeans). Of these 200 pages of history, 130 are occupied with Our Lord's life and teaching, done in a way which should please everybody, though as usual in such surveys no sufficient explanation emerges of why He got crucified. The resurrection is in no way demythologized; due place is given to the empty tomb and the appearances are treated as objective, including those in the fourth gospel; an argument is built for instance more than once on the fact that Christ breathed on his apostles. Moreover, "Peter and the apostles passed on their office as rulers to the bishops, in its fullness, and to priests and deacons in part" (p. 211). All through the gospel story, and also later about the sacraments, etc., there is an admirable marshalling of illuminating passages from the Old Testament scriptures. In fact, it is this unfailing scriptural illumination which makes the permanent value of this book. I imagine it has never been done better. Liturgical and artistic commentary is always on hand too at the right moments.

So to sum up our impressions, let us say that this Dutch "catechism" is primarily an exercise in communication, a gallant attempt, at a time of unprecedented theological confusion, to present the Faith to the modern mind, both Catholic and Protestant, at university level. The "leaning over backward" is part of the treatment. Once the academic mind is coming to Mass, community osmosis will presumably complete the instruction. No doubt the clergy in every country do the same in their own more private and fact-to-face fashion. But the Church is for mankind, who are mostly not academics, any more than Our Lord was. I would like to think that in England we could evolve a less cerebrational, less bookish, even less "ultra-scriptural" style of religion teaching, more simple and workaday and unpretentious, more immediately person-to-person, than anything the continental renewalists seem to have though up so far.

ED. NOTE: Canon Drinkwater's review appeared, in slightly different form in the November 1967 issue of Search, the serious and highly readable monthly newsletter published by Michael de la Bedoyere, which ought to be much more widely circulated among American Catholics. A year's subscription is five dollars, post free, from P.O. Box 102, Garden City, Michigan.

Friday Night Meetings

In accordance with Peter Maurin's desire for clarification of thought, THE CATHOLIC WORKER holds meetings every Friday night at 8:30 p.m. at St. Joseph's House, 175 Chrystie St., between Houston and Delancey Streets.

After the discussions, we continue the talk over hot sassafras tea. Everyone is welcome.

The Youthsmiths

3712 Ripley St.
Sacramento, Calif.
95838

Dear Friend:

We are a loosely knit community organized to work with socially disenfranchised, rejected, neglected and despised kids, especially those in the sixteen- to nineteen-year-old range. Presently we operate one hostel for our parent group, Artisans for Youth, Inc., which was organized to provide residential socio-educational centers for youthful offenders.

We are interested in letting dynamic, lean and hungry young men know of what we try to do here. Some may be interested enough to correspond with us—or even join with us eventually. Others of your readers may be moved to help us financially with the hostel.

In the near future we hope to have a separate community house for our group, where this interfaith effort can have a distinct identity. It is a pioneer affair—truly in poverty—where most of our members will have to work where they can in order to support the work of the group.

Please help us reach guys who have the guts we seek and the people who may be able to help us.

Sincerely,
Gary Allen

Resistance

(Continued from page 2)

of their will, and further, makes others the moral accomplices of military actions—those murders—by their silent acceptance of such a law, I say that that law is unjust; it deserves not the name of law. "Unjust laws exist," as Thoreau said, but centuries before, St. Thomas said, "Unjust laws are acts of violence." They are not laws at all. Let conscription then be called by its proper name: an act of terror, an act of violence.

I find such a law repugnant to my conscience. I therefore choose to oppose it, as I believe Gandhi would have, by non-violent resistance. To do otherwise—to respond in any other fashion not consistent with principle and conscience—would acknowledge the right of governments and lawmakers to do likewise. As Camus taught us about rebellion and violence, if the slave-rebel kills his Master, he depopulates the earth; for, in killing even a Hitler, one negates the principles upon which the rebellion was founded.

I conclude, then, that my "No"—and I hope your "No"—is a joyful one, for it affirms and celebrates Man at a time when man is most in need of being affirmed; at a time when the majority of our counterparts stand, like some modern Achilles, armed and ready to kill. May every modern Achilles meet, not his Agamemnon, who, like Johnson, lures him to battle with gifts and flattery; nor his Hektor, who challenges his power and might; but his Priam, who challenges his humanity: his capacity for love and pity, for conscience and principle.

"As one reads history, one is absolutely sickened, not by the crimes the wicked have committed, but by the punishment that the good have inflicted; and a community is infinitely more brutalized by the habitual employment of punishment than it is by the occasional occurrence of crime."

OSCAR WILDE

Chrystie Street

(Continued from page 1)

untended and open for the world to view), Missouri Marie, and an unidentifiable woman (who slept most of the early winter on benches at South Ferry)—entertained us all with a barber shop session that was sheer delight. First the girls and then the men would sing; then all together under the direction of Dennis.

On Christmas Eve we had our traditional Christmas party with gifts and fruit, pie, jellies, and singing. Some seldom seen faces appeared (the lovely Kathy Nackowski from Salt Lake City among them) and some regular ones were missing, for other forms of cheer were being offered elsewhere on the Bowery. A sad time was had by all. Then a group of us left for the Women's House of Detention, where we traditionally sing carols to the women behind the darkened, barred windows. The cop on the beat silently nodded his approval, but the captain in charge of the prison sent out a guard to ask us to leave. We refused, for the girls were singing and shouting from the windows; some waved handkerchiefs, others began songs and we joined them. After we had circled the building, singing to each side, the captain herself emerged, assured us she was a good Catholic and went to Mass every Sunday and told us again to leave, for all the girls were crying hysterically and it was all our fault. By this time, we had attracted not only those who sympathize with us, but assorted eccentrics, a few holiday drunks, and, as always, natural born leaders, who, seeing two or three gathered together, feel called upon to assert themselves. At this point, the "personalist" in me, to use the Worker's expression, rebels and I think (to put it poorly but alliteratively) that any group more than me is a mob.

We received a long Christmas letter from Bob Gilliam that was so full of good things it was unprintable. Both he and Jim Wilson, as well as the many others in jail, were much on everyone's mind during Christmas time. Mike Herniak speaks for all of us: "How is Bob Gilliam? and Jimmy Wilson?" he asked me. "I would rather be dead. That is a living death. But they'll adjust to it. And those who put them there, their time will come. The mill of the gods grinds slowly, but to a fine point." And his face could not contain his emotion.

On Christmas Day the Puerto Rican kids from around the corner put on a skit for us on our second floor. Based on the Charlie Brown comic strip, it was actually a play within a play within a larger play—the last being a beautiful hustle. Their skit, so the author and director (a vivacious and talented girl named Lily) told us, would need access to the women's clothing room as a point of exit for Charlie Brown. We innocently assented. Once the skit was over, to the delight of all there gathered, Lily commandeered the clothing room and proceeded to give out children's clothes to all her cast, one by one. One can only applaud that performance.

Ed Forand helped put up the Christmas Day meal for the house, so that Mary Kae Josh and Paul, who share the evening chores, might have a day of rest. (Paul's cats are now of the size and temperament of adolescent cheetahs). California Fred and Charlie the Hot Dog Man wait on the soup line frequently, although we've been helped also by two students from Colgate, Owen Rogar and Russ Wilkinson, who are with us for the month of January. Whiskers functions as both nightwatchman and caretaker of the men's clothing room. Dan Kelly, George Amreihn and myself share the making of soup and lunch. Perhaps, as Mike Herniak says, if we learn how to serve (here Mike would interrupt himself with a self-deprecating "Please excuse"), we might someday learn how to save.

Under the direction of Polish Walter and Tom Hoey, the second-floor crew of Italian Mike, Mary Gallagan, Barbara, Brother John, Jim Douglas, and many others, got the December issue out before Christmas so that our readers might get it during the holidays. Before their work could begin, that of Preston and Gordon on the third floor had to be completed. Smokey Joe has lost his glasses again, but still struggles on, until they can be replaced, with an old pair of Dorothy's.

Walter Kerell is enthused about the possibility of offering classes at the CW in French (by himself), Spanish (by Tom Hoey and Tony), Russian (by Tony), and whatever I can come up with, to whomever is interested. Much of our projected school depends on who is in or out of jail. Prospects, it would appear from recent F.B.I. visitations, are quite uncertain.

Mike Herniak's first remark blasted the morning mood of Christmas. We were not at all prepared for his next one: as Darwin Pritchett, our epileptic file clerk and Ranger fan, approached with proffered hand to innocently extend the season's greetings to him, Mike swerved again and in his raucous base voice bellowed, "Don't shake hands with me! I remember Hiroshima!"

A Farm With A View

(Continued from Page 3)

Father Plante considered this honey from the hive a great delicacy.

Helene Iswolsky not only continues to play a leading role in entertaining our many guests, but also continues to stimulate interest in all things Russian. She persuaded Joe and Audrey to learn a Russian Christmas carol. Then one night in Christmas week, Joe and Audrey, Helene, and a few others sang the Russian song as the recessional to the Mass. It was really beautiful. Helene also continues her writing, both on her book and her articles.

As always, there are many who cope with the necessary work of office, kitchen, dining room, shopping, errand-running, correspondence. Among others we thank: Marty and Rita Corbin, John Filligar, Hans Tunnesen, George Burke, Mike Sullivan, Arthur Sullivan, Fred Lindsey, Jim Canavan, Alice Lawrence, Kay Lynch, Joan Welch, Stanley Vishnewski, Arthur J. Lacey, Bob Stewart, Marge Hughes, and Placid Decker.

Partly because of the wintry weather, several of our community have been ailing: Alice Lawrence, Mrs. Carmen Ham, Hans Tunnesen, Bob Stewart, with several others suffering from bouts of cold or 'flu: Fortunately, no one seems to stay down too long, and there is always someone to keep the work going and care for the sick.

One day during Christmas week, the day before the storm came, snow fell, softly, gently. There was no wind; it was not really cold. Kay and I, Father Plante and Mary O'Neil went for a walk The snow was soft and yielding under my feet, like deep-piled carpeting. Snow flakes touched my cheek gently, moistly. Wesley, our part Husky dog, rolled in the snow, bounded with joy.

The snow fell softly, gently, like a benediction of peace. But I thought of the defoliated jungles of Vietnam, the napalm-burned children, the slaughter-strewn villages of peasants, the noisome streets of our own ghettos.

I thought again of Epiphany, of Eliot's poem. "A cold coming we had of it." We move toward Septuagesima. Shall I be glad of another death?