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Behold, He Comes: The Prince of Peace

Revolutionists and the Cross

By JOHN L. McKENZIE

(The books under review are *Jesus and the Politics of Violence*, by George R. Edwards (Harper and Row, \$6.95), and *The Radical Bible*, edited by J. Eagleson and P. Scharper (Orbis, \$1.95). We wish to thank the editors of *Commonweal* for allowing us to reprint this review from their September 22, 1972 issue. Eds. Note).

I approach this review with feelings not unlike those, I imagine, with which the late General George Custer formed his Seventh Cavalry into a defensive square at the Little Big Horn. We are going to lose the battle, but we will win the war. The battle is the question whether Jesus was and is a revolutionary. The war concerns the basic identity of Jesus, and confidence in victory is based on the assurance that not even the church, much less a large number of its members, can ever destroy this true identity. It can be effectively concealed for a long time.

Recently I wrote somewhere in another connection that those who wish to burn witches are compelled to prove that God is a witch-burner. The statement, of course, has unlimited applications. The same principle is valid for those who wish to be Crusaders, who wish to be wealthy, who wish to have power over others, or who wish to indulge with a good conscience in any of the seven capital vices. Christians have to get right with Jesus as the American politician has to get right with Abraham Lincoln. I have been aware for some time that an increasing number of people cannot be happy revolutionaries unless they can convince themselves that Jesus is a revolutionary. If it is true that Spanish revolutionaries in the 1930's turned their machine guns on images of the Sacred Heart, they had a better understanding of the attitude of Jesus towards revolutions than our contemporaries. What makes me feel like Custer is that our contemporaries are going to make their point, and that they will distort the image of Jesus as much as the Crusades did. They will, as I said, lose the war, but let us not take excessive comfort in this. The church has not yet purged itself of the Crusader mentality, and the 90th anniversary of the First Crusade will occur before the end of this century. It could be a sign of some progress that I have heard of no plans to celebrate it. It could be a sign of regress that Christian revolutionaries want to re-enact it.

Non-resistance to Evil

The editors of *The Radical Bible* have collected a number of texts which express the sympathy of the Bible with the poor and oppressed and its hostility towards the oppressors. The texts are joined with contemporary statements on the same theme from various sources. This is an easy task. The

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Thus saith the Lord God: Behold the days come, when the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that sows seeds, and the mountains shall drop sweetness and every hill shall be tilled. And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the abandoned cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine of them, and shall make gardens, and eat the fruits of them: and I will plant them upon their own land: and I will no more pluck them out of their land, which I have given them; saith the Lord thy God.

AMOS 9: 13-15

Bishop Calls for Action

By DOM HELDER CAMARA

If we look at the map of the world with eyes to see with, we will easily perceive a dramatic situation born of errors that some have interest in nourishing. The mistake is that we think we are watching a collision between Socialism and Capitalism; the first, Socialism, wanting to dominate the world, crushing faith and liberty; the second, Capitalism, consecrating itself as the defender of the Free World. The fact is that, on both sides, what is really going on is imperial expansion.

Russia and China allege that Capitalism enslaves people. Even when Capitalism is obliged, as it is today, to grant political independence, it keeps the new nations under economic domination. They don't become anything more than suppliers of raw materials: today they usually are industrialized, with factories that carry a national label but that in reality are merely playthings of the great multi-national corporations. This is a more intelligent way to exploit, but prices continue to be wretchedly low and are fixed in the commercial capitals of the world. Russia and China further allege that they want to help the victims of capitalist exploitation free themselves from misery, from hunger, from illiteracy, from a sub-human situation.

From their side, the capitalist powers see in Communism the evil of all evils, the total crushing of freedom, especially of free enterprise, freedom of expression, freedom of religion and of all the traditions related to faith. The USA presents itself as the champion, the hero and martyr of the defense of the Free World. It alleges that there was no other reason for its fighting in Korea, and for sacrificing itself, so terribly, today, in Vietnam. If it is maintaining direct control over Latin America; if it is extending throughout the whole world tremendously expensive systems of air bases and stockpiles of nuclear weapons; if it continues to mortgage itself so heavily in the arms race and in the space race, it wants everyone to believe that above all it does this in defense of Christian civilization.

Christians would offer a great service to the cause of truth—and only the truth can free us—if, calmly and firmly with all the moral force at their disposal, they could put an end to this double exploitation conducted in the name of liberty.

Serving the Truth

The Church would offer a great service to the truth if, without passion and with serenity, it would clarify that, although Marx thought that religion was a synonym for alienation, and that Socialism could not have a scientific base without embracing a dialectical materialism, Marxist practice is in fact leading neo-marxists to recognize Marx's double error, namely: (1) every day it is being shown that not only is religion not necessarily a synonym of

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ON PILGRIMAGE

By DOROTHY DAY

Dear Father Dan Berrigan:

I woke up thinking of you this morning with love and regret at not having been at the First Street Friday meeting—nor on the picket line with you Saturday at Mother Cabrini's hospital on 19th Street. With love, and gratitude too, for all you are doing—for the way you are spending yourself. Thank God, how the young love you. You must be utterly exhausted too, yet you keep going. I feel this keenly because I've been really down and out since August, what the doctor calls a chronic cough and a mild "heart failure," and I chafe at my enforced absence because of a nervous exhaustion which I realize you must often feel, though you are a generation or more younger than I.

But thank God, you are truly bearing the Cross, giving your life for others, as Fr. Phil is in cramped cell and enforced idleness, away from all he must crave day and night to do, surrounded by suffering, enduring the clamor of hell itself—he too is giving his life for others.

I cannot tell you how I love you both, and see more clearly how God is using you, reaching the prisoners and reaching the young. Now that I have five great grandchildren and another on the way, I stress the young. They all call you "Dan" and "Phil," but I call you Fr. Dan and Fr. Phil because always you are to me priests and prophets. Remember how you said once to me that you and Phil would never leave the priesthood or your Orders, as you had told your mother that Christmas?

Non-Resistance

Humanly speaking, your "violence" appeals to me — naturally speaking — since we are creatures of body and soul, flesh and blood. (I just heard a tape of your talk at the Catholic Worker house and it was gentle!) But I feel Fr. McKenzie in his emphasis on non-resistance is more right, naturally and supernaturally, than anyone in the peace movement today. Yet he too is an angry man, a violent man and knows it. I read his commentaries, *The Two Edged Sword* and *The Power and The Wisdom* constantly. And now we have his recent tape recording to listen to which is put out by the Thomas More Mediatapes, 180 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Ill., 60601. I believe that later it will be included in a volume of essays.

I feel that, as in the time of the Desert Fathers, the young are fleeing the cities—wandering over the face of the land, living after a fashion in

voluntary poverty and manual labor, seeming to be inactive in the "peace movement." I know they are still a part of it—just as Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers' Movement is also part of it, committed to non-violence, even while they resist, fighting for their lives and their families' lives. (They, together with the blacks, feel and have stated this, that birth control and abortion are genocide.)



Rita Corbin

I agree with them and say—make room for children, don't do away with them. Up and down and on both sides of the Hudson River religious orders own thousands of acres of land, cultivated, landscaped, but not growing food for the hungry or founding villages for the families or schools for the children.

How well I understand that Biblical phrase "In peace is my bitterness most bitter." How to reconcile this with Jesus' new commandment of non-resistance, of loving others, forgiving others seventy times seven—forgiving and loving the enemies of our own household?

Once a monsignor, a generous donor to the CW, on hearing of one of our dear and poverty stricken friends about to have her sixth child said, "Not much self-control there!"

Another time I went with one of our CW mothers of eight children to the large rectory of the parish to ask that the parish St. Vincent de Paul Society help out with the rent and prevent the eviction of this family of ten. The young mother weeping said, "There is

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Tivoli: a Farm With a View

By DEANE MARY MOWRER

Early this morning the wind blew and moaned about the northeast corner of the house (where my room is located) with a wild cold song and a blast of December's trumpets, though we are yet two days from Thanksgiving. Now and again I heard a chickadee taking advantage of a lull to voice its frustration and proclaim its identity. But the morning's song was the wind's song, and the wind blew like a prophet of Winter. Yet when I walked outside in early afternoon, the song of the wind had mellowed into an Autumnal elegy. And through it all came the sound of the little brook flowing with the rain and melted snow the past week has brought us (of which our well and reservoir were much in need, John Filligar tells me), making its own sweet music to join the pre-Christmas cantata of the Hudson and ultimately the mighty sonority of the ocean.

Those who love Autumn—and I count myself among these—have traditionally experienced many of the delights of Autumn through walks across fields and through woods. This past Sunday many of us in our community enjoyed such an excursion. For Mike Kreyche and Bill Ragette were holding a housewarming in the house which they have built with their own hands.

Claire Danielsson and I encountered mud as we set out, but we soon took the short-cut up the hill past Peter Maurin House and enjoyed the pleasure of crunching through snow. Most of the leaves had fallen from the deciduous trees, and the air was crisp and pungent with mysterious aroma of Fall. Soon Freddie overtook us, and perhaps because he is three-quarters Cherokee Indian, he made an ideal guide for the rest of the journey. Dave Tully went clopping by on Goldie, the mare. Occasionally a blue jay shrieked, or a chickadee called its name.

The Housewarming

When Clare and I entered the new house, it seemed a housewarming indeed. A little woodburning stove was sending out a cozy warmth, and Bill and Mike were full of warm welcome. Since we had arrived early, I was able—with the help of Clare and our gracious hosts—to go about the room and examine by touch the structure and arrangement. I even climbed the ladder to the little loft, and used my cane as an extension of touch to ascertain the dimension. The loft was warm and certainly would make a comfortable little bedroom. I was reminded of some of the pioneer structures built during the colonial period in America, with one large room below and a ladder leading to the loft above. I was also impressed throughout with the solidity and good workmanship of the building. Mike and Bill procured most of the material from old barns on neighboring farms. They and some others from our farm were given free lumber as payment for tearing down the old barns. Great heavy beams, solid barn siding that ought to last for many years, were functional and suited to this rustic setting and gave a sense of raw, honest reality as no clever prefabricated could ever do.

All this gave me an understanding too of the hard work Mike and Bill have put in. Tearing down the old barn was back-breaking labor, as well as hazardous. Building the house must have been equally arduous. In addition, Mike and Bill have been two of our best farmers and have made many contributions to the community. They are musical. Bill plays the piano well; both play recorders and are teaching others to do so. They read good books, the kind of books Peter Maurin would have approved. Thank God for scholars who are also workers.

Mike and Bill's house soon filled with friends and fellow workers. The small-

er children were there — Coretta and Marty John, Johan and Sammy, Carston and Cullen. There were various adults, including some friends from First Street—Walter, Micki, and Mark. Hot cider and cold cider to drink; cheese, homemade cookies, peanuts, etc. to nibble on. Good talk, laughter, children playing. A good house; a good housewarming. May God bless this new house and all who dwell therein, and all the work they do.

Another Adventure

When Clare and I were ready to leave, Fr. Andy Chrusciel, who wanted to show us his own little cabin, asked me if I felt adventurous. After such a wonderful housewarming, I did indeed. And so instead of taking the beaten path, we set out on what I like to call a miniature wilderness trail. We had to go single file, with Andy and Clare preceding me, but we went through thickets and briars, over brush and logs. There was more snow in this protected area, and the snow-covered leaves, weeds, twigs, broken branches, etc. crunched delightfully under our feet. Briars clutched at me; thickets brushed against me, claiming my regard. We had to clamber over logs, many of them quite large. What fun it was. And the air that entered our lungs was more of a tonic than any beverage quaffed in a city tavern. Surely, some of the ills of our ghetto dwellers and city-damaged children and adults could be healed with an opportunity to live in and experience these great gifts which God has given us, which are a part of His Creation and are truly a part of us; and far, far more important to our spiritual, mental, and physical well-being than all the expensive gadgetries and chemical concoctions produced by factories and their money-greedy owners.

Andy's little house is built in hexagonal shape and overlooks a cliff. It, too, contains a loft, and there are windows — though still without glass — looking out in every direction. There is still much work to be done, but I think it will be a wonderful little house for study, meditation, prayers. Partly I think this because when I entered the door which is small (even I had to stoop and step very high to reach the doorsill), my mind leapt back to St. John of the Cross and the narrow door of that confined dwelling where he experienced the infinite Glory of God.

Near Andy's cabin there is what he calls a sit-down tree. This tree is bent in such a way, with another tree just at the back, that one can sit with as much comfort as in any chair. It is roomy, too. There one could sit and read, or play the guitar, or meditate, or just be with all the flow of Nature in and about one.

On the way home we also stopped to take a look at the Marshall's little hut. This, too, is not completed, and since there was no one home we did not enter. According to Clare there was something almost monastic about this structure, a little like that a Carthusian hermit might construct. The Marshalls are back from their apple-picking in New Hampshire and Pennsylvania. It is good to have them with us again.

We did not go by the beautiful little house which Jim McMurray designed and built shortly after we moved to Tivoli, but we knew it was there in its Thoreau-like setting of woods and river-view, that Jim and Erica and their little son live there, and when they are away, share it with many others. Nor did we stop by the charming little house which Eric Marx built during our first Summer here. It always seemed to me like a house in a fairy tale. Eric moved to Canada long ago, but I am glad that Mary Todd is now living in his house. I hope that all good fairies attend upon her.

We did not stop at John Filligar's

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ON FIRST STREET

By SISTER CHARITY

So Christ comes to First Street!

It is early morning and the great city is still asleep! The streets are quite forsaken, except for those homeless who could find no better shelter. They lie huddled in hallways or propped against doorsteps, clutching their few belongings.

It was a noisy night, like every night! Rumbling cars! Screaming sirens! Children crying! Children laughing! Voices beat, beat of rock music, the steady beat, beat, beat of the sorrowful heart of the city! Despair and hope are out there in the street side by side all day, all night in the scorching heat of summer and the biting cold of winter! The soup in the big kettles is just getting hot when a face looks in through the open windows. After a night out in the hostile street, he looks bedraggled and dirty and bleary-eyed. "Too early," Ed calls. "Come back later!"

It is nine-thirty and the doors are opened. The soup line begins. They come straggling in, these forgotten men and women in their dirty, ragged, ill-fitting clothes, carrying their bundles and paper bags. Silently they sit down at the long tables set with steaming bowls of soup and cups of tea. Someone points to an empty chair and says, "Sir, you can sit here!"

Sometimes they eat in silence. Sometimes their rough voices rise in anger! Does anyone ever laugh?

All of them are lonely and yet each one is unique in his loneliness. One old man, who still believes in his own dignity as a human being, proudly proclaims, "I have nothing! I have nothing! But my heart and my soul! These no one can take from me!"

One by one the dirty bowls drop in the sink. It's my turn at the dishes now. As I stand here with my hands buried in the sudsy water something brushes against my legs. It's Paul's big white cat. Paul loves cats. And birds. He gathers together all the leftovers and takes them to the park. I saw it once. The birds gathered quickly and then suddenly, with one sweep, they all flew up into the sky... with a mighty rush of wings. It was beautiful!

At last the broken dishes are put away in the cupboard. The room is swept.

After supper, it is time for Vespers. We go down to the basement and sit on the benches, gazing at the uneven walls. On one, someone has partly painted the beatitudes.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when men reproach you...

O Christ on First Street shall I ever forget You?

(Sister Charity, from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, spent a week with us this summer.)

NEED CLOTHES

With cold weather here the men of the Bowery will again be coming to us for winter clothing. We will not be able to begin to meet the need without many contributions. Especially welcome are men's coats and jackets, pants, socks, shoes and underwear.

CAMARA CALLS FOR ACTION

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alienation, but that there are, among all religions, ever-growing groups that are demanding in the name of faith that the sub-human situation created by misery, and the de-humanising situation created by an excess of comfort and selfishness be conquered; (ii) every day it is being shown that even in Russia and China dialectical materialism has not saved Socialism from serious distortion and there are, in the world, socialisms that reject dialectical materialism.

On the other hand, it is indispensable that it be shown that, although Capitalism has been clever enough never to proclaim itself materialist, in reality it has a materialist core. Choosing between capital and man, Capitalism does not hesitate to embrace capital or to dedicate itself to profit, even if in order to do this it means crushing tens, thousands or millions of human creatures.

In all countries, among all races, among all languages and among all religions, there are small minorities thirsting to aid in the construction of a more just and human world. Here we offer [them] some suggestions:

—try to unmask the machinery of the multi-national corporations, the ultimate expression of capitalist egotism. Information gathered about these corporations in the industrialised nations should be supplemented by data collected in the nations that are the suppliers of raw materials;

—operating on the principle that in all countries the official agencies of propaganda and statistics select at their convenience the data to be presented, as a service to truth and to justice [let us] try to obtain, analyze and divulge the other side of reality, even though unable to use the main channels of communication;

—make clear that even more serious than the practice of torture is the institutionalized violence caused by the maintenance of millions of the sons of God in sub-human situations. There is the source of all violence.

Freedom from Capitalism

During the Ecumenical Council, Vatican II, the council members, especially the bishops of the Third World, felt the weight of the injustices which are increasing each day. They envisaged the Church of Christ as having most sensitive antennae that could register all of the injustices of the whole world.

Paul VI responded to the appeal of the Council by creating the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace...

Now it is indispensable that the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace should present concrete suggestions to the Christian denominations, beginning with our own, on how they can immediately free themselves from the cogwheels of capitalism.

It would have an enormous moral impact if the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace would encourage the Church hierarchy in the entire world



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to free the Church, in concrete terms, from giving support to structures of slavery under the pretext of helping maintain social order and authority! It would have an enormous moral impact if the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace would encourage the hierarchy to face incomprehension, misunderstanding and even false accusations as the price of stimulating in effective ways a liberating education and human development! It would have an enormous moral impact if the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace would engender in the various countries the creation not of Commissions of Justice and Peace, which tend to stay in the area of principles, but nuclei of Action for Justice and Peace committed to try to make real the social teachings of the Church.

(The preceding is drawn from Dom Helder Camara's talks to the Justice & Peace Commission and to the Catholic Institute for International Relations in England this June. We reprint it from the Pax Christi Bulletin, August, 1972. Eds. Note).

Decry Cuba Blockade

On June 7, 1972, the Division for Latin America of the U.S. Catholic Conference issued the following statement on the United States embargo of Cuba.

For ten years our government has observed a total economic embargo against Cuba. Whatever reasons argued for such a policy in 1962, no compelling justification has been offered for its continuance in recent years. On the contrary, one overwhelming argument against it has sounded with increasing force and urgency—it is simply wrong to impose needless hardships and suffering on those most directly affected by this policy: the poor, the sick, the aged and the very young.

Insofar as the embargo has had discernible political effects, they seem quite different from those intended.

The real effects of the embargo, however, are to be measured not in political but in human terms. It causes, in the words of the bishops of Cuba, unnecessary suffering and should therefore be ended.

April 10 marked the third anniversary of a major statement from the Church in Cuba, the collective pastoral letter signed by all the bishops of Cuba, which said in part:

"Who among us does not know of all kinds of difficulties that are blocking the way that leads to development... external difficulties arising from complications that govern the current direction and fabric of international relations among peoples. These causes have unjustly led to adverse conditions for the weak, small and underdeveloped countries.

"Is this not the case with the economic blockade to which our country has been subjected...?

"In seeking the common good of our people and our faithful, in serving the poor among them, according to the command of Jesus... we denounce the unjust conditions of the blockade, which is contributing to unnecessary suffering, and to making all efforts at development more difficult. Therefore, we are appealing to the conscience of all those in the position to solve this problem to initiate decided and efficient action aimed at the lifting of the blockade."

We join with the bishops and people of Cuba in calling for an end to this embargo... we appeal to the conscience of all who are in a position to solve this problem to do so quickly as possible.

HOSPITAL PICKETED

By JAN ADAMS

On Saturday, November 11, about 200 people picketed Columbus Hospital in New York, protesting its efforts to evict tenants of 210-214 East 19th Street and replace the buildings with a parking garage and luxury housing. Carrying a sign reading "Stop U.S. Imperialism in Indochina—Stop Columbus Imperialism on 19th Street," Fr. Dan Berrigan led the picketers and spoke to a rally afterward in Stuyvesant Park. Columbus Hospital is run by the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, founded by Mother Cabrini, patron of homeless immigrants. The demonstration was planned to coincide with her feast day.

In correspondence with hospital officials before the event, Fr. Dan wrote: "It boggles the mind to think that a hospital conducted by the daughters of such a mother can think to heal some of the poor, while they evict others from their (the hospital's) 'tenement.'... For a hospital to own a tenement seems to me a little like a hospital experimenting with germ warfare.... Conditions in those famous 'tenements' of yours are such as to ensure that you are indeed experimenting in germ warfare, and that by your fervent efforts (to paraphrase Jesus), the sick we shall always have with us. It may be quite daring to assert that a hospital is for healing; but what is a tenement for?... Please join me in the streets on November 11. ... Together we can renounce our sins of injustice against the poor, which sins, Jesus tells us, 'cry to heaven for vengeance'."

Tenant organizations, health-care groups, and the Catholic Worker sponsored the demonstration. Local elected officials gave support, with Councilman Clingan and State Senator Ohrenstein attending. Despite the drizzle, picketers were enthusiastic, though somewhat "star-struck" by Fr. Dan. Some preferred to stand around looking at the famous face rather than walk on the line.

Columbus, which had succeeded in harassing-out half the tenants, signed an agreement in August, 1971, promising to end further efforts to force or persuade tenants to move, and to repair the deteriorating buildings. In June, 1972, it violated that agreement by ordering tenants to accept relocation money within 48 hours. (It would graciously allow tenants their pick of the new housing to be built over the garage, with rents at "whatever the market will bear.") Tenants have filed suit demanding that the hospital adhere to its signed contract. The hospital has filed a counter claim. Meanwhile the city is taking Columbus to criminal court for failure to repair the 23 pages of violations of the building code (such as falling ceilings), discovered by building inspectors.

Several days after the demonstration, tenants were again, as in June, summoned by hand-delivered notes to a meeting with Mother Josephine Migliore, coordinator of hospitals worldwide for the order, again on twenty-four hours notice. However, since the buildings have been plagued with sewage backups and nothing but hot water from both faucets for two weeks, the tenants have refused to meet until these conditions are repaired.

LET US KNOW

We are trying to compile a complete list of Houses of Hospitality and Catholic-Worker-type groups and activities. Often we receive offers of assistance or inquiries which could better be referred to local groups. If you have a House of Hospitality, or know of such a group, please send us its name, the name of a person to contact, and the address. Thanks. —The Editors

Bernanos' "Diary of a Country Priest"

By ROBERT COLES

No book has meant more to me than Georges Bernanos' "The Diary of a Country Priest." I have read it and reread it, and I keep it in front of me on my desk. At times I do Bernanos a sacrilegious injustice; something particularly provocative or troubling has taken place, in my own life or in the larger world that we all share, and I am drawn to "The Diary," drawn to a number of well-marked passages, which, I suppose, have a scriptural significance for me.

I first read the book while in college, but at a friend's suggestion rather than any professor's. At the time, I was hungry for answers, the more clear-cut the better, and to my frustration I found precious few in "The Diary." Years later, though, while taking my training in psychiatry, I went back to the novel—after hearing Paul Tillich refer to it in a lecture sharply critical of secular America's almost religious interest in the human mind. Anyway, the second reading marked a turning point in my life. Tillich's message came across all the more strongly—so that thereafter I could manage a smile when I heard yet another bit of psychiatric theory proclaimed as the way to the New Jerusalem.

Spanish Revolution

Bernanos was a French novelist and essayist who died in 1948. He told powerful, haunting stories in a lean, self-possessed style that carries over very well in translation. He is unfortunately not well known here, probably because his struggles as a passionate Christian pilgrim simply do not interest most Americans, even those who nominally call themselves "believers." Perhaps that is why several of his eight novels and almost all of his forceful, brilliantly argued religious or political essays are not even available in English. But "The Diary of a Country Priest" is very much available and the film of it, done by Robert Bresson, is occasionally shown in a film series—though each year I find that most of the students I teach have not heard of, let alone come across, either the book or the movie.

"The Diary" was written in the mid-thirties while Bernanos lived in Majorca, an island he loved. There, as well as on the Spanish mainland, a civil war was already under way, and the sensitive novelist felt personally and philosophically challenged by the terrible injustices he witnessed. He also felt driven to words, to an effort that would give a life to his doubts and anguish, and make them subject to the scrutiny of others.

His essays burned with indignation that men could make other men suffer so; that politicians and generals could be as wretchedly cynical and corrupt as they were in Spain and in his native France; and, worst of all, that the Church, the Roman Catholic Church he loved with all his heart, could betray Christ and stand beside a collection of decadent, greedy nobles and landlords. In his novel, "The Diary of a Country Priest," the same sense of disgust and shame appears again and again, but far more unforgettably—because the priest and others are carefully developed characters in an almost unbearably delicate and touching story.

The Diary

Bernanos made a crucial and inspired decision when he chose to put the novel in the form of a diary. The priest can say what he pleases, openly and honestly and directly and unashamedly. In a sense he is given complete freedom—from the presence of the author. As a gentle, troubled inward man, the priest has a right to think about all sorts of things: the value of prayer; the nature of childhood; the effects of poverty on the mind and spirit; the only too apparent flaws in the Church, and, indeed, in every single institution

—whether social, political or religious. But he can also act, abruptly and spontaneously; and, above all, he can act unselfconsciously. We as readers can judge him, and later he can judge himself.

Almost miraculously, though, Bernanos has removed himself from the novelist's great temptation, to cheat on his characters by not taking care that their speech, their ideas and ideals have been earned—that is to say, emerge as naturally the property of the person portrayed. Not once does Bernanos call attention to himself as the author. When "The Diary" is over, and its author dead, we feel we have met him: an ordinary priest whose parish is "like all the rest"; a tempted priest, who inevitably succumbs, repeatedly to the sin of pride; a sad and confused priest, who drinks and almost stumbles his way through a short and apparently unremarkable life; and finally, a man of God, perhaps a saint whose faith we can appreciate, even as he doubts it until the very end.



Obviously "The Diary" has no formal or coherent plot—any more than a real-life diary would. But lives have their particular trends, and in the long run what seems aimless, haphazard or accidental can figure as all of a piece. In this case the Cure from the beginning is old beyond his years, in almost constant physical pain, and alive in a town that itself seems stagnant if not damned outright. The rain beats the land incessantly. Constant fog makes it hard to see beyond one's feet. The village seems like a hasty afterthought, something that was never meant to be. And the parishioners, they are tired and lonely and bored. Yes, they go through the motions, even work up appetites, preferences, hates; but their priest hears something else: the fears, the misgivings, the self-lacerations, and worst of all, the pride that masks itself in fake piety and in a slyly boastful resignation to "things as they are."

Poignant Wisdom

The Cure knows how awful it is for everyone, and he himself has little to offer—to them or himself. He can only find himself wanting, lacking, doomed perhaps to the exquisitely poignant but inert wisdom he writes down in his diary. In one crucial episode he confronts the town's leading citizen, a countess, with her pride. Her son died as a child, and she still wears a medalion that contains a lock of his hair. Her husband seeks the company of other women, and she is desperately unhappy, but no matter: what seems like a stubborn inner strength enables her to appeal always correct, always dignified, always able to endure her fate. All of which the Cure slowly exposes for the pride it is. A kind of stern, moralistic stoicism is not quite what Christ had in mind as redemp-

tive; and certainly He did not die so that others would continue to nail themselves to a succession of private (hence idolatrous) crosses.

Not that the Cure is some cool, carefully trained technician who knows how to pace himself, make his "interpretation" (always authoritative and correct, of course) at just the right moment. One moment he can be rude, tactless, himself insufferably priggish. Then he turns, catches himself, and speaks in an honest, strong and clear way that can only be called revelatory—and particularly so because the diary, which tells us what happens, is full of exactly the mixture of self-doubt, genuine humility and blindness that even inspired saints necessarily demonstrate. In fact, it can be argued that the Cure is meant to be a saint, meant to be a man whose holiness is unknown to himself but instructive beyond all words for us who read the diary.

Right and Burden

A writer, Bernanos profoundly distrusted words, which he knew to be the money that intellectual confidence-men put to a million corrupt and murderous purposes. In "The Diary of a Country Priest" the words are plain and strong, the talk almost unbelievably pure, down-to-earth, unadorned. Quietly, but relentlessly the Cure goes about his struggles, and eventually—so Bernanos must have believed—all who read "The Diary" must choose, must find that struggle either compelling or trivial, since from the very beginning Christ insisted upon making choice man's inescapable right and burden.

But beyond esthetics, beyond any

choice, the self-serving ones of everyday life, or the literary ones, or the exalted and agonized religious ones, a kind of peace can come after the choice has been made: "True grace is to forget oneself. Yet if pride could die in us the supreme grace would be to love oneself in all simplicity—as one would love any of those who have loved and suffered in Christ."

A saint and the grace he or she somehow receives are presumably everywhere to be found, though in "The Diary" one does get the impression that some places and some roads are better than others. More than anything else, Bernanos fought the temptation to ignore life's uncertainties and ambiguities, its built-in mysteries, its set-backs that can mean so much and its victories that are nothing, nothing really. For years he succumbed to sin and raged against those he believed to be his enemies—the clever self-serving intellectuals who have a name, a label for everyone and anything, and who kill one another every day with words sharper than any knife could ever be.

But, the author of "The Diary of a Country Priest," like the Cure in it, may have at last and unwittingly achieved his particular moment of grace, of sanctity. "Does it matter?" the priest asked as he neared the end. One can almost hear Georges Bernanos asking the same thing: Do they matter, all the shrill and confident ideologues around? No, the Cure would say, and wryly smile; and no, Bernanos at last could say to himself.

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Poll Watching

By JAN ADAMS

I spent the better part of election day running around between Lower East Side polling places, poll watching for Esther Rand. Esther Rand, known to many of us in this neighborhood as a persistent, clear-sighted, and extremely energetic tenant organizer, was running for the State Assembly against one of those invisible party hacks who appear in the district only for the biennial election flurry. He had been so oblivious to his constituents as to vote for the end of rent control, a law which is meaning something akin to "poor people removal" throughout New York. (For the record, I should say that Rand, running on the unknown "New Party" line, was snowed under in the returns.)

My interest was as much in seeing first hand how the election process works in our poor, heavily Spanish-speaking neighborhood, as in safeguarding Rand's interests. I do tend to think of the election game as the American functional equivalent of Roman circuses, serving largely to distract people from reality, dilute actual concerns, and defuse discontent. I struggle (not always successfully) to keep it from polluting my brain, much as I struggle to avoid the mush on television and the crisis-to-crisis orientation of daily newspapers. But nonetheless, I do feel that if people wish to vote, they ought to be able to do so unobstructed.

Fortunately, I was lucky enough to draw a really model polling place to help open in the morning. The inspectors were conscientious, patient and experienced. They knew that missing registration cards were to be sought alphabetized under first or middle names. A Spanish interpreter canvassed the line for new voters, explaining the mysteries of the voting machines. All the officials acted as if it were their pride to insure that all legally registered persons could vote.

However, many people had been re-

stricted for this election, and had to be sent to a polling place in a nearby school. There things did not run nearly so smoothly: the inspectors, self-important in their momentary power, took offense at people's confusion, and roughly told people they could not vote when there were difficulties finding cards or the right polling place.

From other poll watchers I heard of many more serious irregularities such as a machine on which Rand's lever would not pull at all, and a machine where the main handle swung back when a Democratic lever was pulled, voiding the vote.

When I went to my own voting place, I saw some of the day's gross irregularities. Poll watchers there reported that the inspectors were making no effort to find registration cards which might have been misplaced, especially those of the Spanish-surnamed; twenty-five were turned away between 6 and 8 AM. For those who passed this hurdle came the difficulty of dealing with the election clerk who sat beside the machines. She delighted in harassing voters, banging on the side of the machine demanding that they hurry the complicated process, and cackling gleefully when, in confusion, they pulled the main handle prematurely and lost their vote.

New York City newspapers reported that perhaps 150,000 registered voters were turned away in the process of trying to vote. The Board of Election blames inept volunteer registrars who lost records of those they signed up in the summer and in October. While this might have made for some of the trouble, I saw much which pointed another way. Where inspectors treated voters with concern and respect, nearly all proved able to vote. But too often, inspectors took their one-day patronage job as a license to lord it over their fellows, a license to let out their contempt for the vulnerable, especially new voters, blacks and the Spanish-speaking.

Revolutionists and the Cross

(Continued from page 1)

teaching of Jesus is so clear and uncompromising about poverty and wealth as compared, for instance with his teaching about birth control and abortion, that one is constantly amazed at the dexterity of the official teachers of the church in finding other emphases than Jesus himself. What I do not find in *The Radical Bible* are texts concerning non-resistance to evil—which is broader than non-violence. This teaching is as radical, surely, as anything else; nothing is more conventional and conservative than violence, the oldest and often the most successful means of settling personal and social differences. I pick these words carefully in preference to phrases such as the establishment of peace, justice and order. The Spanish government, through a generous use of legal violence, preserved peace and order in Latin America for three hundred years better than it has been preserved since Bolivar. It does not enjoy an awfully good reputation as an agent of justice; neither do its successor states, all children of revolution—that is, of violence. Now, it seems, there is no hope of escaping the successors except more violence. Apart from Christian teaching, may I remark that this is where I came in? I say to my fellow Christian revolutionaries that I trust no one with violence, not even you.

We have heard that non-violence does not work; and one is tempted to remark that it has not been tried since the Roman Empire, in which possibly it did work. Violence, of course, does work; that is why I am against it. I am not sure that Jesus ever promised that non-violence would "work", whatever that may mean. Possibly he meant that a community of love cannot be produced by the works of hatred. He spoke to the wealthy as well as to the poor, he showed them the way of salvation. They have not as a class followed it, and their pastors have not led them to a headlong rush towards renunciation. The poor have not rushed that way either. Jesus wished to save all men, rich and poor, not to kill them. As George Edwards says in *Jesus and the Politics of Violence*, the image of Jesus with the machine gun does not come off well. I am worried that the revolutionaries show no concern for the salvation of the rich and the oppressors; they are the Moslems of the new crusade. I see deep concern

for their impoverishment or liquidation. I see more concern for the enrichment of the poor than for their growth in charity. Love, apparently, can arise only from a basis of economic security, and morality is a bourgeois luxury. I believe it was Mr. Alfred Doolittle who said it was beyond his means.

Theology of the Cross

Edwards' book is a response to the works of S. G. F. Brandon, who has maintained with all the apparatus of scholarship that Jesus was a Zealot. The Zealots, for those who are not professional students of ancient history, were in Palestine of the first century something of what the Stern Gang and the Irgun Zvai Leumi were in Palestine of 1948—terrorists. I reviewed two of Brandon's books myself, and I was forced to conclude that in spite of the apparatus of scholarship his work is basically fictional, and hardly to be taken more seriously than the fakery of *The Passover Plot* or the phallic mushroom. Fiction outsells non-fiction; I remember reading the *The Passover Plot* sold 250,000 copies, an enormous sale for anything which is not hardcore pornography. Brandon might have raved this if he had left out the footnotes. Jesus sells as well as sex, as long as it is not the real Jesus. Edwards demolishes Brandon with cool competence; how many people will he reach?

The demolition of Brandon, worthwhile as the project is, does not answer all the questions the revolutionaries raise. One needs a positive treatment of the teaching of Jesus in relation to contemporary problems. Edwards begins this; I do not say "begins" to be patronizing, but in recognition of the fact that what he does is a part of what ought to be the major effort of the Christian ministry and is not. He recalls the theology of the cross as the true key to the person and the mission of Jesus and to the interpretation of the Gospels. His confrontation of the theology of the cross with the ethics of the just war (and now the just revolution) is brief but searing, and embarrassing to some well known theological personages. He is too polite—but I am not—to say that if one wishes to leave room for the just war and the just revolution one can do nothing with the theology of the cross except



throw it away. We say to you rich, go to, it is your wealth we want to share, not your love. And if we cannot use the theology of the cross, what do we need Jesus for? If he is a revolutionary, it is hard to think of a revolutionary who did not have superior technique.

It is necessary to insist that a plea for non-violence—or worse, for non-resistance to evil—is not a plea for the maintenance of the establishment, nor even a preference for the devil we know to the devil we do not know. I think we know both devils. It is easy

to be angry with a church which seems to be the chaplain of oppression; it is easy to forget those churchmen who proclaim neither the establishment nor the revolution, but the Gospel. There are a few such in Chicago, where I live. I am sure there are others elsewhere. There ought to be more, and there will be more if enough people want them; but they are not encouraged by those ardent lovers of the poor who tell them they are wasting their time, they ought to get out there with Jesus and the baseball bats.

With Krishna and Christ

JOURNEY TO GORAKHPUR: An encounter with Christ beyond Christianity, by John Moffitt. 279 pgs. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972. Reviewed by Noel MacCarry.

John Moffitt introduces his book with the statement, "I am a Christian, but can no longer say I am not a Hindu or a Buddhist. In *Journey to Gorakhpur*, he explores Eastern religion, especially Hinduism, in search of the presence or working of Christ. Moffitt does an excellent job of capturing the spirit of Hinduism: the book is a fine introduction to the wisdom, scriptures, practices, and saints of the East.

He spends most of the book discussing the "four voices" or types of Indian spirituality which he personally encountered during his journey. The first chapter, "The Voice of Intuitive Wisdom" covers those Hindu scriptures and philosophical systems which convey the idea that God or the kingdom of heaven can be found within. The chapter includes an account of Ramanama Maharshi's enlightenment experience and teaching.

Next, Moffitt describes the path of self-surrender or devotion to God called *bhakti yoga*. "The Voice of Service and Community" deals with *karma yoga*, described in the *Bhagavad Gita* as the dedication of the fruits of activity to the Lord. Emphasis is

placed on Mahatma Gandhi's life, and mention is made of the Swami Vivekananda's work and Mao Tse Tung's service to the people.

"The Voice of the Conscious Discipline" concerns the different disciplines of yoga: yoga defined as union with God or the Absolute. Here, as well as in each other chapter, Moffitt interprets the Eastern ideas and practice by showing its parallels in the Christian traditions. He also gives a moving account of the Indian saint Ramakrishna, who was called the living laboratory of spiritual experimentation. Ramakrishna attains realization or enlightenment through nearly all the existing paths, and his experience includes visions of Christ and Mohammed. For most of his life, however, Ramakrishna experienced God as Mother. Later in the book, Moffitt compares the life and teaching of Ramakrishna and Christ.

The final chapter of the book is called "Toward the Source of the Voices." Moffitt investigates the idea that the messages of the East and the teachings of Christ are not only harmonious but are merely different and equally genuine paths toward reaching unity with God. Moffitt quotes Bishop Kodhr, a Greek Orthodox, who like Ramakrishna says, "God is one, but his names are many." Many Christians

(Continued on page 6)

The Discipline of Nonviolence

By LANZA DEL VASTO

If, in spite of the ravages wrought by him, we find the warrior honoured amongst men, the reason is that he is obliged by his profession to practice certain virtues such as loyalty, devotion, discipline and, above all, courage.

But of all these heroic virtues the simple soldier of non-violence is obliged, through the mere fact of being such a soldier, to display at least a double measure.

The warrior's loyalty consists in never betraying or deserting his leaders, in never raising his hand against them, and in showing them the respect which is their due, even if they ill-treat him, punish him, and lead him to death. But the non-violent man owes the same loyalty to the enemy also.

The warrior's devotion consists in offering his life, on special and critical occasions, without any attempt to save himself and without any hope of being saved, in order to cover the retreat of his comrades-at-arms or open up the way for their advance, or simply to save his honour. But these noble deeds which are the exception for the warrior and which bring him glory, are the non-violent man's only way of fighting; the offering he makes of his life is his rule of life.

The warrior's discipline consists in mastering fear so that he may give

free rein to anger; but that of the non-violent man consists in mastering both fear and anger.

The warrior's courage consists in risking his life while defending it; the non-violent man's consists in offering it up without any defense.

The warrior must be prepared for a certain amount of suffering, the non-violent man for double that amount, to be endured, not just in emergency, but regularly. Jesus proclaims this rule clearly and emphatically:

Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

And if any man will take away thy coat let him have thy cloak also.

And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with his twain.

What, then, is this rule? It is the Law of Sacrifice, laid down in the Beginning for the redemption of the world.

(These excerpts are from the book *From Gandhi to Vinoba*. Eds. note).

NOTICE TO LIBRARIANS

A facsimile edition of *The Catholic Worker* (Vols. 1-27, 1933-1961) is now available through the Greenwood Reprint Corporation of Westport, Conn. The four-volume set includes an introduction by Dwight MacDonald, and a preface by Dorothy Day.

Tear Down the Walls, Abolish the Jails

By DAN DELANY

The L.A. County Jail usually has two men sleeping on the floor in each six-man cell due to overcrowding. Why should our jails be so full? Or even better, why in the first place should we have these places of torment we call jails and prisons?

To me the best answer is that they are one of the clearest, if not the clearest, expressions of each man and woman's detestation and murderous hatred of that part of him or herself that is weak: that tells lies, that cheats, that steals, that is unkind and oppressive, that is unfaithful to friends, and worse.

In other words each of us, yes each single one of us, has facets of him or herself that he or she cannot stand. And we are, each of us, terribly unforgiving of these facets, these faults, these "sins." And so we punish or reduce and belittle ourselves in various ways for not being as good as we think or have been told that we should be.

Christ and Krishna

(Continued from page 5)

might reject this on the basis of the scripture where Christ states, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Light and no man comes unto the Father except through Me." In relation to this, Moffitt discusses Christ, the historical person, and Christ, the timeless entity.

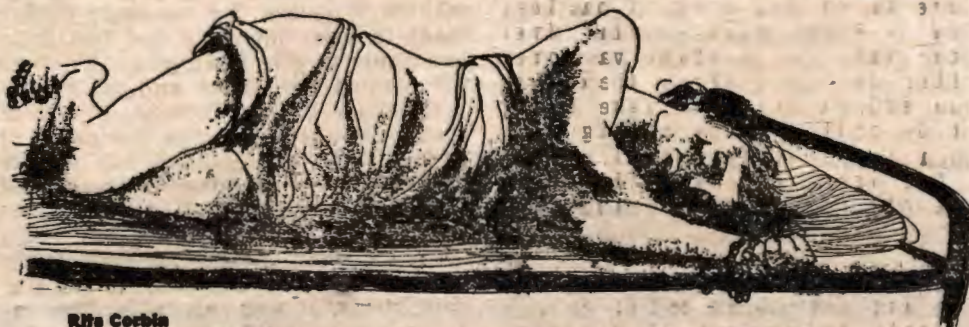
Moffitt writes that when Jesus declared, "Truly, truly, I say unto you, before Abraham I was," and "Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age," the "I" referred to is not the human personality but something beyond time; something I feel is beyond conceptual thought and verbal descriptions. Moffitt asks whether or not the timeless presence of Christ (which is the Way and the Light) shines in the Eastern as well as the Christian religious experience. He then wonders whether Christians need relate to those of other faiths with conversion in mind; whether the Christ that Jesus actually intended the disciples to bring to Eastern nations is the God who manifests himself each moment as wisdom, love and service. Is the mere acceptance of the historical Christ and a pattern of worship as important as the actual experience of union with God or enlightenment that transforms a person, as Christ taught? Easterners have been able to experience the spiritual rebirth Christ mentions through their own religious paths.

Moffitt suggests that Christians look at themselves. He writes that all Christians will, as Peter had, one day have their Master ask them, "But who do you say that I am?" He even suggests that through some of the Eastern spiritual exercises a Christian may come to know the miracle of life or the "here and now" experience that is the timeless Christ.

John Moffitt's background is of significance to me because it reminds me of my own experience as well as that of others I know. Moffitt had a Christian background, then embraced Hinduism and spent twenty-five years as a monk in a Ramakrishna order. He is now a Roman Catholic. I grew up with Catholicism, yet never felt any spiritual kinship to Christ through it, and by the time I reached high school had completely dismissed God and religion from my mind. But now after having practiced different Eastern spiritual disciplines and becoming very close to Hinduism and Buddhism, I have been able to feel the truths and beauty of my spiritual roots and appreciate the Mass and the Bible as never before.

John Moffitt's "Encounter with Christ beyond Christianity" is first of all a wonderful introduction to the East's Ways; it may even provide Christians with insights that will awaken or deepen their own faith.

The most common result of such a harsh judgment of our faults is the inferiority complex. This means our own putting of ourselves in a lower place than we really belong. (The Latin word inferior means "lower.") In present-day terms, it is "putting ourselves down."



RNs Corbin

I believe each man's most real weakness, and it is usually unrecognized, is his harsh, merciless, pitiless judgment of himself. And that to me is the clearest way of understanding this "Devil" whom man has blamed so much on since the beginning. This "Devil" is supposed to appeal to the "bad" part of us, which must be opposed by the "good" part of us. As if we came in parts! As if there were a bad part of us to be punished and abused, part of us to be our own whipping boy. The "Devil" to me is not some other creature, but each man's terrible inhuman-

ity toward the flaws in his own marvelous self.

We don't have to go visit the wasted wino or go to the addict forced into prostitution to find degradation; we only have to look in the mirror. There is the saddest victim of our brutal judgments. (Try it.) And of course to

label as "evil" that part of me that acts so harshly toward the imperfect side of me is to continue to play the whole sick game. Also, to try to beat up and throw out that side of me that acts harshly is to be even more hateful toward myself, toward my whole self. Consideration, tolerance and love are the only remedies—in large doses.

Displacement

What I am getting to is that the sick and punitive way that we torment people in our jails and prisons is just a more organized way of playing the old game: each of us beating up on the

weak side of him or herself, of "putting down" ourselves mercilessly. We have not been satisfied with abusing ourselves individually for our imperfections. Since we are organized into a larger reality called society, we are able collectively to select out those who are easily recognized as the most imperfect, the weakest in self-discipline, those who steal the most obviously or act out the most violently, etc., and to lock them up and torment their spirits for "crimes." It is not by chance that our jails and prisons are reserved almost exclusively for the undisciplined, the poor, the friendless, the weak, the freaks, those from family backgrounds that have all but destroyed them emotionally.

And it is not by chance that in our society, which places the highest priority on making (or at least having) a buck, the majority of people locked up are there for crimes against property. Even though most of them are addicts and steal only to buy their drugs.

So I am saying that our jails and prisons (as with the hateful war in Vietnam) are nothing more than extended ways of brutally forcing ourselves to submit to the mistaken belief that man is not allowed by God to be imperfect (even highly imperfect), to have faults, to disobey, to be a sinner, and to be such over and over again. And all this according to our idea of perfection.

We see so-called "badness" in our own selves and hate it with a hate of self. And when we can see it so obviously in others, like those with "long records" of being "in trouble," we cage them up. We take away from them normal people, we take away the sunshine, we tattoo their souls with an eternal "P" for prisoner; and then we have the hypocrisy to turn them out feeling like scum, claiming we have "rehabilitated" them.

Their torment, their pain, their unfathomable despair, their suffering is generative, it is life-giving, like the blood of Jesus. It must stir us, it must make us extend pity and understanding—first of all to ourselves for our harshness upon ourselves and upon them. Only then are we ready to act toward eliminating the sick vengeance that jails and prisons really are.

Close These Ratholes

And in the meantime more and more is being said about correcting jails and prisons and even eliminating them. And in the same meantime almost everyone, including many an "expert" on penology, wants the buck more, and more people steal, and so our jails are jammed full. To me it's almost all talk, cheap talk at that, lots of it.

I hear lots of people decrying our jails and prisons, what a waste they are, even our President and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and that's all I "hear" because I certainly "see" little or nothing being done.

I'm trying like hell to get a non-violent campaign going to begin to close these ratholes down in L.A., but haven't got it off the ground yet. And I'm trying like hell to forgive myself for my weaknesses and my harshness and for the pain I cause others, especially my most loved ones. And I'm also trying like hell to handle the fear of failure in this venture that I daily face within myself. That's where I have to begin.

So what, that I've done a lot of dumb things and oppressed and hurt people at times, and often repeat these faults. So what! I am a nice person. (I believe that.) So are all the people in jail and prison. (I believe that.)

Open the gates. Let's turn the buildings into indoor miniature golf courses or skating rinks. They must be good for something. The barred doors would probably make sturdy trellises too.

(This article originally appeared in The Catholic Agitator, 605 N. Cummings, Los Angeles, Cal. 90033.)

The Cell: A Prison Novel

THE CELL: A Novel by Horst Bienek. With an Introduction by Daniel Berrigan, S.J. Unicorn Press, \$5.95. Reviewed by Pat Jordan.

Horst Bienek's novel *The Cell* is remarkable. It is clearly autobiographical, the fruit of the German author's own four-year internment. (How revealing that our era has produced a genre of prison literature.) It pictures life at its limits, and draws the reader into a rendezvous with his own. It is not easy reading, but you will not easily forget it.

The novel invents its own form. Halfway through the narrator-prisoner tells the reader: "If I ever get out of here . . . then I shall write it down, just as it was, without literary pretension, simply describe what is around me, the walls, the pallet . . ." And so he does, delineating not merely the dimension of his cell, but the inner recesses of the mind, the illusion of logic, the unbearable tension of life in enforced space, and the reality of the "unreal." The work is taut with the multiplicity of these tensions. It is replete with symbolic images, permeated with cosmological questions, questions of time and memory, change, light and darkness. Certain portions of *The Cell* bring to mind Paul Klee picturing his images from the vantage of a person five-years dead. *The Cell's* phantasies are as suggestive as those of *Albion Moonlight*, but its realism is as true as certain characters of *The First Circle*.

The Cell makes it clear: the prison experience is horrendous. I have never read anything which tells it quite the way Bienek does. From Dan Berrigan's introduction one surmises that Bienek tells it with singular and unique precision. The prisoner faces judges who "still believe that the world can be divided into the guilty and the innocent, and that they, as judges, are called upon to separate the one from the other."

Of his guards he says, "One day we could exchange roles; then I would be the guard and he my prisoner; not much would change." Both are caught in the bonds of jail. We see the prisoner becoming "strange and unknown to himself." Nausea takes on the sense of a "noble feeling," while inertia re-

places change, and everything vital is methodically stamped out. (His eye glasses are taken from him. Even his scribbled notations on the wall are whitewashed by the trustees.) He is tormented with the false hope of parole, a torture with which prisoners in this country are so familiar. And nature—it is systematically ground out. Even light and the cycle of the hours are disarranged and stifled. At one point the prisoner is ready to confess, confess anything if only he will be released.

These are our prisons. Kropotkin wrote, in his *Essay on Prisons*: "The prison kills all the qualities in a man which make him best adapted to community life." And to prisoners' demands that all prisons be torn down, Kropotkin's only reply was: "What can we answer the prisoner except that he is right?"

But there is a further facet, the real gold of Bienek's prisoner, the hero of *The Cell*. For while experiencing all this negation and all that Kropotkin knew so well, Bienek's prisoner (and here we have another aspect of Bienek's realism), endures his entrapment with a distinct integrity. The marvel of this brief book is that we come to know a man. A priceless gift. Not only know him, but become endeared to him. The prisoner maintains a remarkable sanity in the worst possible of places and times. He does not sink beneath his state, but more clearly defines it. And in so doing, he helps us define our own.

Finally, while the novel portrays death in a hundred guises, life abounds. The prisoner resists unto life. "I must wait and see if they are going to take me there [execution]," he says. "Yet I am not afraid. I have experience; not much, but after all: it is experience." "But I shall not give up, especially not in this situation." In a century of fear, this is hope in what Bienek calls "the shining darkness." How remarkable that light should come from smoke.

Such is the art of *The Cell*. It challenges each one of our perspectives, tests and contests our faiths, summons up our wildest doubts, yet gives us strength and hope to live as free men, believing men, loving men, suffering men.

+ + + LETTERS + + +

Voting

November 8, 1972

Dear Editor,

I was stung a bit by Thoreau's "Game Time" quote on the front of your last issue (Sept. 1972), even more than I was by yesterday's "Big Game" results.

I recently ran across a similar observation made by de Toqueville, and I thought you might be interested.

"It is vain to summon a people, which has been rendered so dependent on a central power, to choose from time to time the representatives of that power; this rare and brief exercise of their free choice, however important it may be, will not prevent them from gradually losing their faculties of thinking, feeling, and acting for themselves, and thus gradually falling below the level of humanity." Alexis de Toqueville, "Democracy in America."

Phil Gliffee.

Viva House

26 So. Mount St.
Baltimore, Md. 21223
September, 1972.

Dear People,

Viva House has closed. For four years, from the time of the Catonsville

9 Trial in 1968 until August, 1972, we attempted some small things here in Southwest Baltimore. We have experienced a great deal; hundreds of people with diverse personalities, outlooks, philosophies, goals, achievements, joys and despairs have visited with us, have shared Viva House. It has been like a Fellini movie—running time: four years. The storefront was something else again. Always there were and still are (we didn't make a dent in the problem) people carrying inhuman bundles on their backs.

Our reasons for closing Viva House are quite simple really. Primarily, those of us who have kept it going were coming down with the depression disease. We had become automatons, ladling soup and pouring coffee; we were becoming joyless people. Make no mistake about it. Food, clothing and shelter are still most basic rights of people. People still must be fed, clothed and housed with no questions asked, and we demand that those who can in the neighborhood be forced to provide these services with no red tape. We demand this particularly of institutions like the Churches. Our second reason for closing (and it is secondary) is financial. Most of the resources required to keep Viva House open came from outside the Baltimore area and this is not healthy (Baltimoreans

should take care of Baltimoreans). Our third and final reason for closing was one of direction. Among ourselves there were vast differences with regard to the direction Viva House should take.

The closing of the storefront was something to behold. It took over six months to gather the necessary equipment to open the store and less than two hours to give it all away. We simply opened the doors and let people take whatever they needed. It was a scene—beautiful. Imagine the needs of people when a half-filled salt shaker or a few drops of left-over bleach are considered valuable, or when broken chairs and beat-up shelves are treasured, or when spoons and forks (even the rusted ones) are scooped up like gold pieces. It was incredible. The refrigerator bounced once on the sidewalk and then hustled down the street; the stove was disconnected instantaneously and carried out with ceremony. Nothing was left in the entire storefront. Just emptiness. The needs of people are so fantastic that if paint scrapings could be canned and reused, that would have been done too. In the final analysis, Viva House might have been meeting the needs of about 25% of the people in the neighborhood. Conditions are that bad.

To the people who live in the neighborhood and to the merchants who take money out of the neighborhood—if you think Viva House brought alcoholics and so-called undesirables into the neighborhood, check it out. Really check it out. The conditions are real and the people are not imported.

Many thanks to all of you who have contributed emotionally, physically, psychologically, and financially to the running of Viva House. We are extremely grateful. To the people who visited the storefront each day—please do not feel we are walking away from you. If we continued what we were doing any longer, it would have been a destructive venture for you and us. We'll continue to do what we can against a system that considers those without great properties as lower forms of humanity, if that.

Justice first,

Joe Lynch,

Willa and Brendan Walsh

Harbor House

Harbor House
3214 Guthrie Street
East Chicago, Ind. 46312

Dear Friends,

Harbor House is a hospitality house for the poor located in the Indiana Harbor section of East Chicago. It is an emergency over-night shelter for those in need of a bed and a bite to eat.

Very simply, it is a house for the down-and-out, for the men who would otherwise sleep on the street or in jail. The only requirement for a man to have a bed and some food at Harbor House is that he has nowhere else to go. We ask no questions and keep no records or files.

Opened at the close of 1969, Harbor

House has housed thousands of men in its store-front quarters across the street from the steel mills. Not a rehabilitation center or a half-way house, Harbor House has many guests who come to the Calumet Region looking for work. Even if they find a job, chances are they will not get a pay check for three weeks. Where do they sleep and what do they eat?

Alcoholics, drug addicts, and ex-convicts find refuge at Harbor House and many have received professional help because of their visit with us. Harbor House has twenty beds, several couches (we have had as many as thirty-five guests on a single night), a kitchen, sinks and showers, etc. Everything has been begged since Harbor House accepts no "official" funding from governmental, church or private agencies.

We are in constant need of supplies and food and sometimes of equipment. Food, especially coffee and soup, is our biggest need, though money is needed to pay the utilities. The only clothes we need are work clothes and socks and underwear.

Will you help?

Sincerely,

Father Don Ranly

Australia

Glen Road
Ourimbah
NSW 2258
Australia

Dear Dorothy and Eileen:

You may be surprised at the note-paper I am using. It is free publicity for our farm and the causes it represents. (My parish priest printed it for us on his own printing press.) I hope you are both well.

Our Whole Earth and Dorothy Day Centre for Nonviolence is 39 acres on the side of a hill, with 8 acres cleared, and the rest natural virgin bush and rain forest. We should call it a reserve rather than a farm for we don't intend any great farming production. We see it as a conference-holiday centre which will promote our ideals and beliefs.

The black aborigines of Australia are beginning to revolt against their depressed condition and fight (non-violently, we hope) for their rights. I have asked the Archbishop for a disused R.C. parish in the slums where I could help the Aborigines to make a centre of education for themselves. He's thinking about it. There is much we can do, even from the white suburbs, and God will help us find a way.

John Butchor and Fergus Breslin are very busy in their parish running their Presbytery as a House of Hospitality. They provide meals twice a day for up to 25 men and beds for about 12. Everyone loves to go there and soak up the atmosphere and spirit. They have attracted a large number of helpers. I am sure it must be Sydney's St. Joseph's House.

With love in Christ,
(Rev.) Tony Newman

Apple Picking

By PAT RUSK

This fall, for a short time, I became a migrant farm worker. I harvested apples for three different growers, two in New Hampshire and one in south-central Pennsylvania. In New Hampshire, Arthur Harvey's Greenleaf Harvesters had a crew of 44 young men and women. When the New Hampshire season ended on October 25, several of us went



Rita Corbin

south to pick the last of the apple crop with Don Hoffman and Steve Graff, both former Greenleaf Harvesters.

Of all the work I've ever done, in hospitals, factories, houses and offices, harvesting apples for a commercial grower was the hardest. It pays poorly, thirty cents a bushel. A single beginner could barely survive on these wages. But for all its difficulties, apple picking is the most healthy and fulfilling work I have ever done.

Southern New Hampshire is hilly country. One day, high on a ladder I glimpsed a view: deep blue hills, an ocean of trees in full color of reds, orange, and yellows, and a lake in the foreground. No super highways, no trucks, no suburban sprawl—just trees! There was a shabby red barn in view, too. But filling boxes was the matter at hand, and the paltry sum of thirty cents pushes one.

Teamwork

The beginning picker is trained to pick carefully, which means slowly. Color and size are prime considerations. Often the ripest and largest apples hang highest. The picker climbs as near to the top of an 18 foot ladder as possible, filling the metal bucket harnessed around his waist and shoulder. A filled bucket weighs twenty-five pounds, a ladder forty pounds. Sometimes we had to carry the ladder a quarter of a mile.

But the hard work was done in a spirit of fellowship. One night my

eighteen-bushel bin still needed filling, and my tree had no more apples. Fellow worker Mark Putnam, tall and limber, climbed a tree still holding its fruit and, doubling himself over the limbs to reach the apples, got my bin filled.

Handling a ladder requires dexterity as well as strength. One section of an orchard we worked in was dubbed "the jungle"; the trees were monstrosities that had not been pruned in years. We had to crash the ladder into the tree and sometimes tear away the branches. Ladders can become difficult to move; they get caught in tufts of grass at the bottom and topple, or become entangled in overhanging branches at the top and unbalance. Getting a good ladder position may require lifting the 18 foot length to a horizontal position and then inserting it among the branches. Often the discards left over from pruning stay under the tree and the grass grows up around them, hiding the fallen branches, so that one stumbles while placing the ladder.

Way of Life

One day a member of the crew knocked over a full box of apples and they rolled under the tree. She picked up every apple, crawling in the poison ivy to do so. Later in the season, when the apples were dead ripe, many had fallen from the trees before we could pick them, making it treacherous to walk under the tree to pick the remaining ones. Some growers have a policy of picking up the "drops" as well as picking off the tree.

Fellowship, humor and song were strong among us. Whatever disgruntled feeling there might have been about the rules, such as "lights out" at 10 PM, were dissolved in daily good feeling. On hot afternoons I would think of the Vietnamese, struggling to maintain life under a rain of bombs and fire. I would fantasize about this happy crew showering America with juicy red apples as a protest against our government's bombing. I found hope for Americans in returning to a simpler life on the land, working hard, outside that spiral of material accumulation and callous unconcern for the fate of the world's poor, an unconcern which has become the national way of life.



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On Pilgrimage

(Continued from page 2)

not much food in the house, either." The old pastor grunted, "You don't look as tho you've been going hungry!" She had lost her figure with much child bearing, and from finishing up the scraps the children left, as poor mothers do. But no steaks, salads, fruits and cheese — not to speak of wines and liqueurs—on the tables of the poor.

Yes, "in peace is my bitterness most bitter." Yet the bitterness subsides and the peace in my heart grows, and even a love and some understanding grows of these "enemies of our own household."

Parables

I must tell little stories, as Jesus taught us to do in trying to teach. They call it "reminiscing," when you are old. I do not undervalue my wisdom, which my age (I begin my 76th year) and experience have taught me.

The story is this. We had a mean pastor once long ago who was always blasting women in his sermons for sitting around gossiping, not cleaning their houses, and spending their husband-soldiers' pay on beer and movies. It was during the Second World War. And there was a man in our house of hospitality arrested for indecent exposure. The parish neighbor who told me this called it "insulting a child," and I had thought she said "assaulting" and nearly fainted with fear and trembling. With no one else to turn to, I went to the pastor, the rigid and cranky one, and asked him to go to the jail, visiting the prisoner being one of the seven corporal works of mercy. With no comment at all but with the utmost kindness and the delicacy of few words, he did as I requested and interceded for this man off the road and got him a lighter sentence of sixty days. When this happened once again some years later, another priest, a saintly well-spoken one, was appealed to. He is reported to have responded, "Too bad they don't give him a life sentence!"

You never can tell! But there are still, thank God, plenty of priests. One can shop around, though it was not encouraged by those once known as our "spiritual advisers." Perhaps they were right. Priests and laymen educate one another over the years. Besides, in the country one is stuck with one or two.

Besides—I believe. I believe in reading Scripture, studying it. And in this case, taking to heart the story of the importunate widow and the unjust judge, and the friend who made a tumult at the home of his friend, demanding help. Keep asking for help.

I later learned from a famous psychiatrist, that these men (and what child has not seen them) who expose themselves, seldom are dangerous, and are often cured; and this man was, and died later in "a state of grace"—as our comforting Catholic phrase puts it.

I hope we do not lose many subscribers because of my writing so frankly about usually unreflected portions of our anatomy. But nowadays when there are no longer lines at the confessionals in our churches except at the business district's noonday Masses, there surely is an overflowing of public confessions. In our newspapers, reviews, advertisements and novels "nothing is hidden it seems, that has not been revealed." It is as tho the fear of death, and judgment day has made people rush to tell all, to confess to each other, before the Dread Judge shall tell all to the universe. Poor, fearful creatures that we are, is it that in this strange perverse way of confessing we are seeking Christ, even those who deny Him? Jesus Christ is our truth. By telling the truth, or one aspect of the truth, perhaps we are clinging to the hem of His garment, seeking to touch it like the woman with the "issue of blood," so that we may be healed.

Christ Is Truth

I am not wandering, in writing this way. I am meditating. I am thinking of what I have come to think of as fundamental to our search for peace, for non-violence. A flood of water (and Christ is living water) washes out sins—all manner of filth, degradation, fear, horror. He is also the Word. And studying the New Testament, and its commentators, I have come in this my 76th year, to think of a few holy words of Jesus as the greatest comfort of my life.

"Judge not."

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

"Forgive seventy times seven times."

All words of our Lord and Saviour. I "have knowledge of salvation thru forgiveness of my sins," Zacharias sang in his canticle.

And so, when it comes to divorce, birth control, abortion, I must write in this way. The teaching of Christ, the Word, must be upheld. Held up though one would think that it is completely beyond us—out of our reach, impossible to follow. I believe Christ is our Truth and is with us always. We may stretch towards it, falling short, falling seventy times seven, but forgiveness is always there. He is a kind and loving judge. And so are 99% of the priests in the confessional. The verdict there is always "not guilty" even though our "firm resolve with the help of His grace to confess our sins, do penance and amend our lives" may seem a hopeless proposition. It always contains, that act of contrition, the phrase "to confess our sins," even though we have just finished confessing them, which indicates that the priest knows, and we know, and we want to be honest about it, that we will be back in that confessional, again and again.

I believe in the Sacraments. I believe grace is conferred thru the Sacraments. I believe the priest is empowered to forgive sins. Grace is defined as

"participation in the divine life," so little by little we are putting off the old man and putting on the new.

Actually, "putting on Christ." P.S.—(To our readers). The day after I finished this letter I received a letter from Father Phil—a good and loving letter. He is not discouraged, but strong in courage. He will be released on

parole on December 20, so let us all pray daily, and every time we hear and see a reference to "The Berrigans" let us pray even if it is only the briefest "God, be with them"—those words so familiar in our liturgy, to which the answer is, "And with you" and us too.

And dear Dan, Fr. Dan, please excuse my wandering like this.



Rita Corbin

A Farm With a View

(Continued from page 2)

well-kept cottage, nor at the old trailer where Chris hopes to make his home. Nor did we call on the squirrels and wood peckers dwelling in our hollow trees, nor on the woodchucks, chipmunks, raccoons, skunks which have their homes in our woods. But we knew they were there. And to them all, we said: Good day and God keep you warm through the Winter.

Thanksgiving and Advent

On this, the Eve of Thanksgiving, I thank God for so many fine young people with a true interest in conservation, organic farming, and—whatever their formal or informal religious beliefs—that understanding which St. Francis and the Buddha lived and taught of man's relationship with (his in-being with) nature. *Deo Gratias*

I thank God, too, for the older persons in our community who have been around a long time and keep us in touch with our roots, our tradition. Both Stanley Vishnewski and Marge Hughes came to the Catholic Worker when they were so young, and have lived through so many crises and experiences that they are walking histories of the Catholic Worker. Marge, who is in charge here, profits much, I think, from these years of experiential Catholic Worker action and living. As for Stanley, he is putting his rich experience into a book which I hope we will all be able to read some day. John Filligar and Hans Tunnesen are also links with the past and have made — and are making — more contributions than can be enumerated. As for Helene Iswolsky, though she has not lived at the Catholic Worker for so many years, she has been associated for many and truly represented, I think, that climate of ideas of which Peter Maurin spoke so often in his early essays in the Catholic Worker.

There are, of course, many who have come later and have done much. I have spoken of them often and will do so again. Meanwhile, I am very sorry that Mike Sullivan, who has helped so much through many years, is very ill in the hospital. We pray for him and ask our readers to pray, too.

We are thankful that Dorothy Day is able to spend much of her Sabbatical with us. She has needed rest for so long. She tries to keep up with a very

heavy correspondence, and has had to be interviewed by several journalists who were doing stories on her seventy-fifth birthday. In commemoration of this birthday, Curtis Publishing Company has brought out paper-back editions of Dorothy Day's books *The Long Loneliness*, *Loaves and Fishes*, and *On Pilgrimage: The Sixties*. In my opinion these books are interesting, stimulating, and spiritually nourishing, and ought to be read by everyone who really wants to understand the Catholic Worker.

Another visitor who came to see Dorothy recently was Rosemary Houghton, the English writer, whose book *Why Be a Christian* Dorothy read to us last year in chapel.

As for other visitors we have had and continue to have many, and expect more for Thanksgiving. The lasagna dinner Dominic is planning for the occasion will be enjoyed by all, I am sure.

We have so much to be thankful for. Yet as Fr. Andy pointed out in his Thanksgiving sermon this morning, verbal thanksgiving is not enough. We live in a world of much tragedy, of almost unbelievable horror. We must do what we can to bring Christ's peace to the world. Perhaps the best way to give thanks to God is to keep Advent as a true preparation for the coming of the Christ Child, that Child who must be born in each of us if we and the world shall ever know peace. Drop down dew, ye Heavens. GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO.

THE FATAL FASCINATION

"In attempting to make his ends and his means compatible with each other, the pacifist is both a revolutionary and a political realist. Only radical social reconstruction can provide a framework which will encourage respect for human personality. But peace cannot be attained by war, and reverence for human beings will not be advanced by methods deliberately meant to kill and maim them . . . Only when radicals emancipate themselves from the fatal fascination which violence still apparently has for them can they become leaders in the cause of equalitarian revolution."

MULFORD SIBLEY

Boycott Lettuce

Dear Cesar Chavez:

☐ I pledge not to eat or buy iceberg lettuce, to tell my friends about the lettuce boycott and to raise the issue wherever I see lettuce (stores, conventions, dinners, airplanes, restaurants, hospitals) until the farm workers' boycott is won.

☐ I enclose a donation to support the non-violent efforts of the United Farm Workers.

Name Phone

Address

City and State Zip



UNITED FARM WORKERS, P.O. Box 62, Keene, Calif. 93531