THE CATHOLIC WORKER

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A Question of Authority

By ROBERT LUDLOW

At the expense of writing another jejune "reply to a letter" I feel I must again answer a letter from the same priest who wrote before and whom I answered in the November issue. Because he has brought out things in the letter which trouble many Catholics and which act as hindrances to their acceptance of pacifism. Here is his letter in full: "In the November issue of your paper in your article, 'Letter to a Priest' you talked about passivism. It seems to me that in all your articles on this subject you have missed one very important point, and that is the standard of the authority of the Church. Point 1: If war is intrinsically evil as you seem to say because it involves the killing of innocent people, then all wars of history have been evil because in the old days while they did not kill 40,000 men in one raid as we did in Hamburg, they did kill innocent people when pillaging a city. The number of those killed makes no difference. It is just as wrong to kill one as 40,000, but if this would vitiate all wars, then the Church has been sadly neglectful in her duty of teaching morals and not condemning all wars. Point II: You seem to say that defensive wars are not justified. In his allocution last Christmas the Pope not only justified defensive wars but said that at times the nations of the world would have a moral obligation to go to war in defense of an attacked country. In other words, the Pope said that nations would be bound under sin to fight under certain circumstances, and this present Pope knows the horrors of war and the killing of the innocent which are accidentally concomitant upon it. He also says that people are sentimentalists with no real sense of moral justice who abhor war because of its horrors.

"I realize that he is not speaking infallibly and, as far as I know, very little or nothing has been uttered infallibly on this subject but we must realize that even though the Pope does not speak infallibly he is speaking as the supreme teacher of the Church, and we are bound to follow his teachings. We may not be bound by the first commandment of faith but we are bound by the fourth commandment of the teaching authority of the Church. I think that in all of your articles you have missed the point that it is the Church who makes decisions as to what is meant by the commandment Thou Shalt Not Kill. Protestantism says that each man can interpret this commandment for himself, but the Catholic knows that the Pope is the one who has to give the final decision on this. If you wish to answer this in print, please

(Continued on page 3)

On Pilgrimage

By DOROTHY DAY

Amarillo, Texas.

The vast sky is above and the vast plain stretches out all around, the sun shines but it is cold. It is quiet too. Here there is no sound of traffic, no roar of trucks from Canal street, no El trains clamoring by. There is silence. Here one could almost be a desert father. It is a good place to stop and write.

But even the desert fathers came forth from the desert in times of need. There was St. Ephraim, one of my favorite saints, who left the desert to start houses of hospitality in the city in time

(Continued from page 8)

Return NMU to Workers

By IRENE NAUGHTON

The National Maritime Union, heretofore the most democratic of all unions, the most progressive, has reached a crisis that is not only its own crisis but a crisis in unionism. When the seamen in the middle thirties were sweating and starving under the corrupt union leadership of the International Seamen's Union, a senile swivel chair rule that had dispensed with elections, and worked with the shipowners, and when the spontaneous strike arose among them that showed the grim temper of men who knew they were men and were going to be treated as such, the Catholic Worker opened a soup kitchen among the gin mills and warehouses of the waterfront. ("The gin mill is the seaman's social centre," a weatherbeaten seaman who had sailed for twenty years told me the other day, and it is true that they dispense the only welcome that is extended to the seamen in strange ports.) And the Communists opposed soup kitchens, too. Dorothy Day had hardly arranged to rent an empty store down there when a Communist girl walked in, wanting to rent it for the Communists. Through '36 and '37, with intermissions, the seamen "withdrew their labor," and the shipowners, who couldn't starve them out and who needed their labor to make money, at length were forced to recognize and bargain with one of the greatest of all unions, the National Maritime Union, the biggest union yet of the men who go down to the sea in ships, the men who sail the Lakes, the bargemen on the canals, and these last have been slow in work lately, because there is so little coal or steel to transport, because of the coal and steel strikes. How it stirred me to look down from the gallery at the convention and see the delegates of all nations and races. One-third of the NMU is colored. The ISU is still segregated, shipping white or colored crews.

JOE CURRAN

In August, 1937, the Catholic Worker carried an article, "Unity for Seamen," subhead, "Capable Leaders and Sound Set-up mark NMU convention." At that time Joe Curran came to the fore in the fight against the old pie-card exploiting ISU. The article concludes: "In general, the tone of the convention was that of rigid determination to get the groundwork done, to guard against cliques, and any possibility in the future of any group of men of whatever 'creed or politics' who might wish to dominate the union." It looks very much as though the NMU, since 1937, has been dominated by groups, at least twice, and that in a more hidden way, it is showing some of the characteristics of the

(Continued on page 2)

Maryfarm

Christmas Eve dawned clear, cold and beautiful here at Maryfarm, as the sun rose and lay like a golden Host on the high blue altar beyond the Hudson Valley. Before it the mist in the hollows disappeared, the rime on the yellow bleached turf of the lawn glittered frostily and the air was wine and perfume to city bred lungs.

John Murray, our cook of the past few months, had been awake since five and in the preparation of the morrow's feast he was scarcely to rest until mid-afternoon of the following day when, surveying the ruins and remnants of the meal he said peacefully, "Well, I can sleep now." Mr. Sanford, the old colored man who has

(Continued on page 4)

Blessed Are The Dead!

On the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle we received a heart rending telegram from a Chicago priest friend, informing us of the death of John Bowers, one of the earliest members of the Chicago Catholic Worker. We knew of John's illness and were aware that the doctors held no hopes of his recovery from the operation. But even the knowledge of John's forthcoming death accomplished very little in absorbing the final shocking news. I don't know why but there are certain people in our lives that we can't conceive of dying; perhaps it is due to our pagan concepts of death, but still, those certain people appear to have such a zest for life that we can't imagine their surrendering that last breath. John belonged to that category.

Chicago Catholic Worker

We were more than impressed when we first met John back in '37 at the Chicago Catholic Worker's initial location on West Taylor street. It was at a Sunday afternoon lecture and John was sitting in the rear of the store. Despite the fact that the lecture was in progress and all eyes were centered on the speaker, when John entered late, heads turned and eyes were focused on John for a good while. He was thoroughly surveyed by everyone present since John's appearance was unique among the rest of us ordinary looking individuals. John was about fifty at the time. He was of medium height, erect shoulders, and carried himself well. A pair of piercing brown eyes plus a short cropped mustache set well on his strong square face which was finely topped off with a massive head of grey hair. That afternoon John wore a black Homburg hat, a dark tie with a diamond stick pin, a cane and a dark blue suit with a white handkerchief in his lapel pocket. John had a well

(Continued on page 6)

Mott Street

We had a fine joyous Christmas here at the house due chiefly to the generous contributions of food, clothing and money by our many friends and co-workers at Maryfarm, Newburgh. Thus we are deeply grateful to all of you dear readers for those gifts and also for your prayers. Mr. Murphy, our cook, with the able assistance of Shorty Smith, Slim, Bill and Fred, along with a couple of others, prepared about four hundred meals for those of us who live in the house and around the Bowery. Thanks be to God for these wonderful men who work so hard in the kitchen. Their contribution to the work seems so much more difficult and effective than that of

(Continued on page 3)

Poverty's Progress

The Room with No Exit

By JOHN McKEON

(Sometime during the night of New Year's Eve, at the St. Joseph's House of Hospitality here at the Catholic Worker in New York, Dick Conors, who had been staying with us for a week, fell from the roof of the building and was discovered the following morning by neighbors, lying sprawled in the courtyard that faces Mulberry Street, dead.)

The morning of the day that Dick Conors arrived at the CW he awoke in a Chatham Square flophouse, broke. When his eyes opened he found himself in a cubicle of boards, six-feet long, three and one-half feet wide and six-feet high, roofed with chicken wire and capable of being truly described not as a room, but as a coffin for cadavers who might be characterized as still alive by reason of the activity of the worms of hope that they contained.

Hotel

He had difficulty focusing his eyes when he awoke. The retinas had a trick lately of partially refusing images, like a photograph taken with a camera jolted at the moment of exposure. He had been on cheap wine and short rations for weeks. But he could still remember his name. And where he was: newyorksomewhereonthebowerydickconors. He didn't have a syndrome yet though he felt pretty sick and shaky and the activity, the getting on his feet brought on the usual retching, the dry heaves that doubled him and brought him to his knees, hanging on desperately to the pallet, purple in the face. When he got back on to the narrow shelf with the paper thin mattress and quietened a bit he must have smiled, looking up at the chicken wire roofing, twin purposed, designed to prevent both theft and suffocation, because he could barely breathe and all he owned in the world was a torn shirt, pants, jacket, shoes and one sock. It was Christmas Day, in

(Continued on page 5)

The Bicycle Thief

A Significant Movie

By JOHN COGLEY

I saw "The Bicycle Thief" for the first time in Paris last August. It was an afternoon showing, and I went alone, leaving the family back in the hotel at the Place de la Republique. We had made a long, tiresome trip from Switzerland the day before, and the children needed rest. We were scheduled to take the boat-train to Le Havre in the morning. It had been decided that my wife and the children should rest all afternoon while I amused myself outside somewhere until it was time for dinner. I decided to spend the afternoon walking around the streets, hoping to store away a final memory of Paris. It seemed the Champs Elysees was Paris at its most Parisian so I took a Metro train and got off at the Franklin D. Roosevelt stop.

I walked upstairs and then the wide, tree-lined boulevard stretched ahead, a rich magazine illustration come alive. Taxis were racing madly up and down the street in typically Parisian helter-skelter. The sidewalk cafes were buzzing with business. People passing by might be speaking any one of a dozen languages but for the moment they were all Parisians, each one aware of the setting, showing by a way of walking, a predisposition to be amused and, if possible amusing, that he was willing to bear the cheerful burden of being part of the scene. Young Arabs, gaudy rugs flung over their shoulders, went from table to table at the sidewalk cafes, trying to sell tourists the souvenir products of North Africa. Young couples in love, frank about their emotional state as only the French can be, walked by arm-in-arm, stopping now and then to brush a sudden kiss across each other's cheeks, as if whatever secret lovers' liturgy they shared demanded this gesture here and now if their words were to have meaning.

Oh, it was Paris, all right. The sun poured down on the Champs

(Continued on page 5)

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Return NMU to Workers

(Continued from page 1)

old pie-card, exploiting ISU. But I am getting ahead of my story.

The Communists had done much of the work organizing the union, Joe Curran accepted their help, and until the 1947 convention they filled the bulk of official jobs, and it was not known whether Curran, who never became a party member, was fronting for them or not. In 1947 the Rank-and-File Caucus, led by Joe Curran, defeated the Communists and took over most of the official jobs.

The Port of New York branch of the NMU is run by a Branch Agent and a number of patrolmen, as is every port, elected Union officers, who visit the incoming ships and settle the beefs of the men with the owners—beefs about overtime, failure to live up to contracts, etc. The union has such power of collective bargaining that it can hold up a ship from leaving the dock on a scheduled run if the company will not settle. The Port of New York membership meetings on Thursday include any seamen who happen to be in New York at the time, whether they have shipped out from N. Y. or regularly ship out from another port.

Recently the N. Y. Port Agent, Drummond, and fourteen patrolmen, all elected men, were fired by Curran, who called them racketeering Communists "who are trying to take over our democratic union." This was very interesting, in view of the fact that these same men had been elected with Curran on an anti-Communist slate, had refused the help of the Communist group in the union, the "Voice of the Membership" group, and been criticized strongly by this Communist group, and that those of the group who had been Communists, had broken with the party before Curran himself did. At the regular membership meeting Curran claims that the men sustained his action in a majority vote, but the opposition maintains that hundreds of men were imported by Curran from outports on the pretext of a Communist plot to seize the national office headquarters, and that hundreds of the N. Y. membership, in fear of having their books pulled, abstained from voting.

Around Drummond and the fourteen patrolmen and one of the Vice-Presidents of the NMU, Lawrenceson—"old silver tongue"—with the NMU from the beginning, has grown up a group called the Independent Caucus, which claims that Curran himself has become a machine as vicious as the Communist was.

The men say that it is impossible to get anything printed in the Pilot, the newspaper of the union. The man who delivers the paper to the ships, an Independent Caucus man, a member of the union as well as an employee of the National Office of the union, said that he was given an article by a seaman from the Gulf. The ship went out and came back. "What's the matter?" they said to this guy. "Can't you be trusted?" But he had delivered the article to the appointed place. However, the article was a beef against an agent in one of the ports—a Curran man. It was as though it had never been. Well, this man who delivered the paper has been fired because "the department was being reorganized" (that one's always good). Maybe they're going to deliver the paper by carrier pigeon, with Noah's dove on the masthead.

CONFESSIONS

Signed confessions are being exacted from those whose names were printed as favorable to the Independent Caucus in the special edition of the N. Y. Pilot, put out by the caucus because of the censorship in the regular Pilot.

Dorothy Day is a member of the Independent Citizens Committee, headed by Norman Thomas, which has appealed to the union to abide by its constitution in this fight. The American Civil Liberties Union has stepped into the picture now to investigate the accusation that Curran's goon squads are pulling the books of militant opponents of Curran.

The whole situation is a complex one, but we definitely feel that the meat of the accusation against Curran of running a machine is true, and that the Independent Caucus needs help now to keep going, and eating, through the elections in April. They are appealing for funds for the fight. **Address NMU Independent Caucus, Box 752, General Post Office, New York 1, New York.**

We feel that this is the action demanded here and now—the defeat of this machine; but we also want to know, for action upon this point also presses upon us soon, how did a machine grow up in a union that seemed a model democratic one? How is it that Joe Curran, who in the 1937 convention refused to represent eight ships who wished him to represent them, came to be the Curran about whom now various sinister rumors of dictatorship are swelling up?

In the words of one of the seamen himself, (a Welshman, who came into the party through the Young Communist League, and left it after two meetings of the Waterfront Section of the Communist party) giving a quotation, "Power corrupts. And absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Strangely enough, in conversations with various of the seamen, separately, and with others on the subject, there ran this same thread of distrust of centralized leadership, expressed in different ways. Certainly there one got the sense of the new intellectual worker. One old seaman, an individualist, even an anarchist, I might say, a member of the Independent Caucus, was quoted to me as saying jocularly to his own caucus, "Ah you're a machine too. Just like the others." He was keeping his eye on his own caucus too.

According to the old Wobbly idea, said another of the seamen, it was two terms for the chairman, and then back to sea.

The Welshman mentioned Silone's new party in Italy, which the Times told about a few weeks back. Silone is a persistent enemy of centralized bureaucracy, and his new party is, he says, to be independent of Communism and Capitalism, Russia, England, and the United States, and to be "without bosses." "Without bosses," or "all bosses," as Bridget says we are in our own little anarcho-communist society at 115 Mott St., I'm all for it. Many of us are anxiously awaiting news of that party, or movement of Silone's. Hearing these able-bodied seamen, some ex-Communists, I am filled with the deepest respect for the intellectual training of the worker schools. They were trained so well that a whole swarm of them, resisting the pressure to regard man as a means rather than an end in himself, thought their way clear to rejecting authoritarian Communism itself.

Then like an echo of all this, my brother said to me on the phone: "How do you know that the Independent Caucus will not itself turn into a machine? "You're always talking of decentralism. Why should it be possible for a thousand men to be brought in by Curran from the outports to vote in a Port of N. Y. membership meeting? Let the breakdown in unionism be rearranged so that the Port of N. Y., all those who ship from N. Y., will vote for its own man, handle its own affairs, and the outports theirs, and the union central offices be a loose federation. Let's have policy working from the ground up instead of from the top down as now." I thought to myself, following up the same trend of thought, let the men have full power in their ship meetings, instead of sending tentative suggestions on to a national convention, and then receiving them back in a strangely mutilated condition. By what top power as opposed to rank-and-file democratic power did Joe Curran negotiate with a company of ships to take a man off each ship? There's a speed-up for you, not coming from the ship-owners but from the union boss!

But again the problem forces us to go deeper. As Dorothy Day writes, these problems are forcing us to dig deep for the meaning of man.

Without Bread

Why is it possible for Curran to have intimidated a large portion of the N. Y. membership as he has? Because these men and their wives and children cannot live without bread. So we come up against the problem of unemployment that the Trades Unions have neglected completely and left to the State. But unemployment is the problem of the Trades Union if anything is its problem.

One of the seamen who came down to see us said he was in favor of an open union, but a closed shop. I looked at him in perplexity. Let everyone who wants to join the industry come in, he said. I know they say that some of the seamen jump ship and lie on the beach in South America, but it wouldn't be so if they felt it was really their union.

Surely I though to myself, the union would be flooded with people who couldn't find work elsewhere. I remembered my cousin's statement against a union without a closed shop that all available jobs would go to the nephews of directors. But mulling it over later, I came to the conclusion that in his simple statement lay the crux of the whole Trades Union problem. The NMU hiring hall, a boon to the shipping industry, hires the men on a rotary system, so that the work is shared. If the NMU and the other Trades Unions were to open their union membership to all who wished to enter their industries, and to share the work, the Trade Unions would then represent the working class in their bargaining with the owners, because they would include all who wished to work and we would of course have a much shorter working day and week. In this way the advantages in shorter working hours which are the result of inventions which shorten work, would accrue to the people, to whom they belong, rather than to the capitalist, who has fired men with impunity whenever a new machine has come in. Right now the ship owners who accumulated fortunes during the war, sit in security, while thousands of seamen are beached without income in N. Y. and other ports.

I know that people are going to say aghast to this that the ship-owner cannot afford to carry that load of people, nor the Mines, nor Steel, etc. But all the facts are against this. Right now in this country, there are billions of bushels of wheat, and of other grains and foodstuffs, pining away in government granaries. A few months ago the N. Y. Times carried an article on this, with a Congressman pleading for the food to be given away free to the needy of the world, because the government is paying fabulous storage charges on it. And there are any number of men more than anxious to produce and manufacture the things that the people need. So that when the A.F. of L. forecasts as it did in the Times last week, that the average number of unemployed for 1950 is going to be a steady five million, one hundred thousand, with many more out of work at the worst seasons, this whole business is a manufactured poverty, a satire on the plenty around us.

Then it is that I realized why we have all become almost suspicious of the Trade Unions, and lost heart in supporting their strikes, no matter how heartily we believe in the necessity to organize, and admire the gains brought by the unions.

Unemployed

We distrust them because they have left out the unemployed, that is to say the poor, the dispossessed. In the eyes of the radical, the class struggle has been taken for granted as the struggle of the worker against the capitalist, the poor against the rich, the employee against the employer, and parallel to that we have always put the Trades Union as synonomous with the worker, the poor, the employee. But in reality, the lineup has changed. The capitalist, with his sixth sense for profit opportunities, has lined up the employed working class with him against the unemployed workers, and furthermore he has subtly lined up his own employees against other employees. Hence we have the Buildings Trades Unions fleecing the working class of houses. As to where the shipowners stand in the eyes of God for their investments in foreign countries, such as the case of the line that owns the rich fertilizer deposits in South America, as to how these shipowners have exploited the poverty of the native producers, as they have exploited the poverty of the American workers, and as to what improvement we can expect when the workers really introduce democratic control into the industry, the future only will tell, but I consider it very hopeful, if action is taken soon enough.

How is it that the solidarity of the working classes that promised so much in the early days of the century has been broken as it has. Even not so long ago, when the English dockers were on strike, the seamen kept the Queen Mary tied to the N. Y. pier (no matter how many passengers said their mothers were dying in Liverpool).

To me the Independent Caucus, as I have sensed its morale from talking to some of the men, gives a promise of the mettle of men who will not accept bread without freedom, men who are "as hungry for justice as for food." Some of them, the ex-Communists, first broke with Capitalism in the name of freedom, then they broke with the Communists in the name of freedom, and now they are breaking with the Curran machine in the name of freedom. They are of the temper of some men I know who broke with the CP during the West Indies strike, when they saw Russia switch the party line and sell out the West Indians in order to keep the friendship of England. For others there were other eye-openers as to the true nature of authoritarian Communism with its thousands in concentration camps. I think that these men had to part company with old fellow workers in the NMU because they came sadly to know that unionism was to these others a means to political control. And I think that what they are after is some union form to realize the fact that man is an end in himself, and that not one single human being must be sacrificed to achieve a false unity.

Man

A friend of mine said to me, "It's not wages. It's not hours. It's the worth of man." It moved me more profoundly because, accomplished speaker as he was, he did not belong to any dogmatic religion, nor use orthodox religious terms, so that he stumbled to find the words. St. Paul said, "a purchased people." The worth of man.

He went on, there are many people who are seeing the need for a new evaluation of the working class movement. Things are not turning out as we expected twenty years ago. The classic Marxist theory, as can be seen from Carl Marx's Communist Manifesto, is that the Trades Unions were to be the revolutionary womb of the new society. But any sort of a realistic sense compels us to see that this prophecy has not been fulfilled. The Trades Unions have become the tool of reaction, and the last ditch supporters of Capitalist society. Note the fact that the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union has taken its own money, made up of the dues of members, and put it into the owners' business. To keep the business going, and the workers employed, so the reasoning goes. But I wonder if the unemployed garment workers and the others workers of the country and world who cannot afford decent clothes are happy about it!

Trade Unionism must free itself from the shackles of connivance with profiteering that is holding it back from forming a new society within the shell of the old.

But to be free to do this, the seamen must take back their union. The flaw in the constitution of the NMU which allows for a machine is that it is a representative democracy, not a democracy, that is to say that the Rank-and-File run their union about just as much as I run New York City. The nineteenth century, writes Kropotkin, witnessed the failure of representative democracy, of parliamentarianism. Why do the United States and England, and France, etc., fail to see this. But Democracy, direct action, "if a man does not work, neither let him eat," these are more needed than ever today.

A Question of Authority

(Continued from page 1)

do not use my name for the reasons stated in the other letter, and secondly, please answer the specific points mentioned."

Answer

I have never written anything on "passivism," I don't like the word. (Nor, incidentally, do I like the word pacificism used by some Catholics who are anxious not to be identified with the general pacifist movement). I have written on pacifism (the word means simply "to make peace") and that I presume is what is referred to. "Passivism" is a loaded word used to discredit pacifists by assuming that they do nothing to resist evil.

As to the general question of "the standard of the authority of the Church" there is this to say: I do not believe that the final test of truth lies in the internal evidence of the individual. Though I do not discard the importance of such internal evidence. One who does not possess truth must start the search for it on an individual basis—as Cardinal Newman points out—but he uses private judgment much as a man uses a flashlight in the night but discards it when daylight comes. And since we "see through a glass in a dark manner" there are some areas even within the framework of Catholicism that are not, as yet, evident and on which the Church allows differences and on which therefore an amount of private judgment will inevitably be used. The Church has final authority in matters of Faith and morals **to the extent granted her by her divine founder.** That means that there is a limit to this infallibility. And it is a general council of the Church (Vatican Council) which, in defining papal infallibility, marks the limit of it. Thus, no authority on earth (including the Church) may set aside a truth accepted as part of Revelation. Nor could the Church do away with the ten commandments, or change the number of the Sacraments. The Pope himself is as much subject to the previous infallible teachings of the Church as is the simplest Catholic —were he to deny them or to teach otherwise he would be guilty of heresy. We believe, of course, that the Holy Spirit would prevent the Pope from ever (officially, by an ex cathedra decision) falling into such error. But, to get at the root of this matter, it is necessary that we have a clear idea of just in what papal infallibility and the infallibility of the Church consists. It does not consist in proclaiming new doctrine or in explaining away accepted doctrine.

Innocent

This brings me to Point I in Father ——'s letter. As you can refer to it in the first part of this article I won't quote it again. It is the universal teaching of theologians so far as I know (if anyone knows of an exception I would be interested for the information) that to kill the innocent (without a direct command from God, who alone, as the author of life, can take it) whether in or out of war is sinful. This stems, according to the theologians, from the divine law and the natural law. Therefore it is not within the province of the Church or the Pope to abrogate it. Therefore if the Church has not condemned wars which involve such killing, the Church, in her leaders, has indeed been remiss. It does not take an extensive reading of history to know that such remissness does indeed exist where you find no effective protest from the bishops of two warring countries, both perpetrating such killings, and find rather that they continue to urge their respective peoples to support the war. This statement will also answer the objection as given in Point II. That the Pope declares it the duty of citizens to fight, under certain circumstances, in war today. This depends on a matter of fact. Does modern war involve of necessity the killing of the innocent? I believe it does and I do not believe it is "sentimental" to be horrified at this. And if it is true that modern war involves such killing (and how classify otherwise the killing of children who have not attained the use of reason?) then not even the Pope himself may sanction such war. And this in no wise conflicts with the dogma of papal infallibility. A careful study of the decrees of the Council of the Vatican will show that it does not even touch the question. It is a question of an act (like adultery) forbidden by divine and natural law and to which the Pope is as much subject as anyone else and to the disregard of which he will be held as accountable as anyone else.

Direct Command

I stated earlier in the article that one is not allowed to kill the innocent except by direct command of God. This sometimes happened in Old Testament times but with ourselves, as individuals and as nations, it would be extremely presumptuous to conclude that we had a direct mandate from God to kill anyone or to parade the earth establishing justice by the sword. Especially since, with the New Dispensation, God reveals more of Himself and requires a new mind and a new way of acting from that of the Old Law. The burden of Christ's message in this regard seems to be that we are to suffer injury ourselves rather than inflict it on others and to return good for evil. Unfortunately, due to the evil influence of the State and the prevalence of Aristotelian standards in the Church, these matters have been greatly overlooked and we have tended to grant anything the State demands of us without too much questioning. It is but facing historical fact (and to recognize truth is always a better service to the Church than to try and explain it away) to state that all Catholics, clerical and lay, have been most deficient in this matter. Of the State throughout history and its baleful influence and the mischief it has worked with Christian doctrine there cannot be too much written.

In Point II it is implied that killing of the innocent is accidental to modern war. I do not see how anyone could truthfully face the reality of war today and hold otherwise than that killing of the innocent is an unavoidable part of it and therefore **not** merely accidental. And therefore, in determining the morality of modern war, it must be taken into account that the **normal** thing will be to kill the innocent—it will be accidental if the innocent are not killed.

An Alternative

Another point to make is that there has been exhibited to the world, in the Gandhi movement, an alternative to violence in resisting evils. And that, even under the traditional rules laid down by moralists, war may only be resorted to after all other means have been tried and failed. But no nation, at least no major nation, has any intention of trying the method of satyagraha. Their refusal to do so means that they will have recourse to war before they have exhausted all other means. On that score also modern war is unlawful.

All of this argument should be pretty academic to the Christian. For the Christian should have passed beyond natural ethics which concerns itself with such questions as to the justice or injustice of war. For the Christian a just war is unChristian—it may meet the requirements of strict justice but it does not meet the requirements of Christ. It may be justified at the bar of Aristotelian ethics but no war may be justified at the foot of the Cross. There, on the Cross, is the visible vindication of pacifism for there hangs God who died rather than use the weapons of this world to defend His cause or His Body. The Council of Nicea, in forbidding Catholics to join the army, has given, so far, the most authoritative reiteration of this Christian mentality. Would that the Pope or the Vatican Council would revive these decrees in their full force!

Racism

By JACK ENGLISH

"A Jap is a Jap. It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen or not, he still is Japanese . . . The Japanese race is an enemy race and while many second and third generation Japanese have become 'Americanized' the racial strains are undiluted. We must worry about the Japanese all the time until he is wiped off the map." These were the words Major General De Witt used in characterizing the minority group placed in his care for "protective custody" in California during the war. They express quite vividly the kind of treatment which was meted out to the entire group during the period of the first concentration camps in U.S. history. There was no legal process involved in the wholesale imprisonments. There were no warrants, no indictments or statements of charges. It was quite definitely an invasion of the rights guaranteed by the fourth and sixth admendments to the constitution. "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated . . . and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause supported by oath or affirmation and particularly describing the place to be searched and the persons or things to be seized."

Japanese Our Brothers

The whole question of what happened in California needs careful scrutinizing for several reasons. It should be approached in the light of the violation of civil liberties, which for the Christian means the violation of the virtue of justice. What was owed the Japanese was not owed them in charity, charity should flavor our treatment of **all** of our brothers, but charity and love already presuppose justice, and when justice is missing it is impossible to have charity. From the long range point of view the whole deal has terrible implications. A precedent has been set allowing for a legal basis of discrimination on the basis of race, and there has been a confirmation of the racist theories of European fascism.

More than a hundred thousand human beings, men women and children, were involved in the arbitrary order of Gen. De Witt setting up so called "reallocation" centers. Nearly all of the accounts of the whole process described in the various church and liberal publications make no assessment of the human misery the Japanese suffered; they are treated as a group of numbers or with that impersonal clarity of the professional "do gooder" which while reaching the mind and intelligence have no effect on the will and the heart. I am not suggesting that we should become emotional about the subject, but the Catholic press has been singularly quiet, the New York Public Library cataloging of the subject only two articles in the **Commonweal** are mentioned. Some of the dynamite of social Catholicism implicit in the subject should be touched off. As the

(Continued on page 8)

Mott Street

(Continued from page 1)

those of us who manage the clerical work of the office and the other odd tasks that have to be done.

Again on Christmas Eve a group of people associated with our movement made the rounds of the neighborhood singing Christmas carols much to the delight of all the neighbors who invited the street singers into their homes. On New Year's Eve this same group joined by many other lay apostles met at St. Andrew's Church for a Holy Hour which was followed by Midnight Mass.

At five o'clock on New Year's morning I was lifted out of bed by the sirens and bells of fire engines that had stopped in front of our house. I peered out the window and saw a parked car that was partially in flames. Petrified with fascination I stood at the window watching the fire and the firemen racing to meet each other until it finally dawned on me that there would be a tremendous explosion if the flames enveloped the gas tank of the car afire. With a great deal of terror I suddenly realized that the gas tank should explode any second and that I didn't have sufficient time to dress and leave the house which was dangerously close to the scene of the fire. Having that thought in mind I leaped back in bed, pulled the pillow and blankets over my head and ostrich like awaited the explosion. Praise be to the saints there was no explosion and it was with inexpressible relief that I heard the fire engines drive away from the house. And on the same unforgettable New Year's morning while I was in the midst of shaving I learned that one of the recent members of our family had been killed through a fall from the roof of our five storied rear tenement. (In this issue we are running an article by John McKeon on the death of the same man). During the afternoon of that day we learned that a young man had been mysteriously shot to death two blocks from our house.

Bath House

Within twenty-four hours after we had learned about the two unhappy deaths mentioned above we learned of a third tragedy. A middle aged woman acquaintance of ours is in the Bellevue hospital as a result of severe burns suffered in a public bath house. The story is that she had filled the bath tub with scalding hot water and was unable to extricate herself before her body was dangerously seared with the hot water. At present she is expected to die. This woman Lizzie had lived in the house with us off and on for the past eight years, and when she wasn't living here she managed to arrive for supper each night. Due to her extremely complicated personality her home address changed frequently. One month she would be with us, the next month she would be at the Municipal Lodging house and the following weeks she would live at the Salvation Army's home. Lizzie was a veteran mendicant and could be seen daily begging up on thirty-second street outside of St. Francis Church. Many a soul was given the opportunity to do good by this little woman's begging. Anyone with an eye in his head could immediately see that the only way Lizzie could keep body and soul together was by begging and existing on the charity of others. God knows she could not hold down a job anywhere nor could she conform to the regulations set up by existing charitable organizations. During the evenings while she sat in our offices awaiting our dinner bell she would badger all around her with the constant plea of, "Have you got a penny for me?" Sometimes in a sort of droll humor she would change it to "Have you got a hundred dollars?" Once in a while she would hand us a quarter for the house expenses. Lizzie could never be placed in that category of the uncomplaining poor and she frequently nettled us with her constant complaints. During a dinner one evening, while Lizzie was taking a pinch of her favorite snuff at the table, one of the women chided her saying it was a disgusting habit. Lizzie turned right back on her critic and reminded her that the other woman's cigarette smoking was equally disgusting to her.

One of the chief reasons why we mention these three tragedies in our columns is that we sincerely trust that our readers will keep all three of these poor people fervently in your prayers.

John Chester

For the past few months we have the luxury of a daily visiting barber in the person of John Chester, a friend who had spent the war in a conscientious objectors camp. John not only cuts the hair of the women in the house but also gives hair-cuts to all the men in the house and out on the soup line. Frequently John can be seen questioning the men waiting for their bowl of soup if they would like to have their hair-cut after their small meal.

Failures

As the New Year takes hold we can't help but look back over the past twelve months. I guess like most of us stumbling creatures in this vast universe we dread to look forward to the next twelve months. Of course the deaths of such people in our movement like Peter Maurin, Larry Heaney, John Curran, John Griffin and John Bowers saddens the flashback considerably. May they have your prayers please. As we think of other things besides these dear departed dead we can't help but realize the great number of failures that we have been guilty of in this lay apostle movement. We seem to search in vain for the victories that we must have won. And the talents we buried appear enormous alongside of the talents we bared for all to benefit from. What unprofitable servants we have been. When we think of the time we wasted in idle conversation when we should have been utilizing every moment in furthering the honor and glory of God our final end. We can't help but recall how St. Teresa of Avila had been permitted by God to see the place prepared in Hell for her if she persisted in her then apathetic striving for salvation. How many times have we offered people a stone when they asked for bread? Our excuses seemed plausible at the time, those people were either boring, or they possessed faults that we did not have. And those times when we uttered the snide word or smirked at what we considered the immature enthusiasm or zeal on the part of another lay apostle. Or the number of times that we have evidenced spiritual pride by pointing out directly or indirectly to others how much better we were than they. This list could go on but this writer is beginning to wonder whether he is applying all these faults to others more than to himself and whether he really regrets them or not. So many of us get sucked into the act of really extolling ourselves when we think we are humbling ourselves. But we really intend to do something about these things in 1950. Pray that we do. A Happy Holy Year to all our readers.

TOM SULLIVAN

APPEALS

Fr. William Garcia, of St. Joseph's orphanage Liceo 17, Guadalajara, Mexico, writes and begs for money. Food and clothing are impractical to send, as the duty on incoming things is very high indeed.

Carmelite Convent
Lisieux France
For care packages and soap
Convent of the Little Flower

A Definition of Education

By WILLIAM GAUCHAT

Education, essentially, is religious. Therefore, the term "religious education" is (except in the limited sense of studies for Holy Orders, etc.) redundant. Education is religious of its very nature: that is by the very nature of every human being created by God to know, love, and serve Him. This is the prime purpose of education: to know God.

Just what is "education"? It is certainly one of the most used and abused words in the limited modern vocabulary. Ask any user of the word to define it. "Education? why everyone knows what that is. You can't get anywhere without it, nowadays." Education is admired as good looks, smart clothes, and ostentation of wealth are admired. It is something vaguely sacred like mother-love, and everyone is for it. For the very young it is something to be endured.

It is often confused with "book-larnin," although many wise men can neither read nor write. It is confounded with literacy, with information, with scholarship, with technical skill, technological genius, with research, with the "know-how" to amass wealth. And yet education is none of these things. Some of these may be aids to education as others are the prostitution of it.

A Personal Exodus

Education is not something picked up at school—very often the true educational process is postponed there. It really begins in the home and only ends with the receiving of Viaticum. One might say seriously, that one's real "report card" is given at the Particular Judgment.

Education is like the root of the word itself: a leading out, a personal Exodus. A journey from the darkness of the first, good, and simple animal instincts to a flaming realization and high fulfillment as a Son of God.

It is the knowing of all things (as outlined in the penny catechism) and painfully learning to fit one's self into the infinite scheme of things. This is the opposite of learning more and more things in order to make the world fit our first (no longer good) simple animal instincts dictating from the darkness of the sub-conscious.

The three R's are the symbol of public elementary schooling. Could we say then that four R's are the mark of the parochial school, meaning that Religion is added to "reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic"? The children are given all that the public school pupils get plus a course in religion idea. Not at all. Real education imbues the three R's and every other possible subject with the spirit of religion. It shows their place and value within the schemata of the whole, their position within the totality of being in a Theo-centric universe. They are understood as the simple disciplines, aids, and props that develop the whole man as he approaches to the Oneness of Truth. That is why education, essentially, is religious.

And that, furthermore, is why schooling that deliberately ignores God is religious too, in a noisome manner, but it is not education. The denial of God by silence, as well as by speech, is an act of religion. The void is filled by evolving secularist creeds in a vertiginous ego-centric universe.

Mad little men in sad little groups
Hurriedly rush to and fro
Firmly convinced their looping the loops
Is all that makes the world go.

Historically, education was essentially religious. The religion, it is true, was partly natural and, partly, more or less debased tradition. Anthropological findings bear this out, especially those whose purpose, it seems, is to ridicule religion.

In China, the writings of Confucius, religious in genre, were the text and source of knowledge and imitation. In India the Vedas was the text; in Persia the Avesta. The Orient originated writing, the sciences of mathematics, astronomy, and chronology, the arts of sculpture and architecture. Dr. E. A. Pace sums up early Oriental education in these words (written over 40 years ago about a period 2400 years ago they could be applied to modern educational trends!): "Oriental education has a peculiar significance; it shows quite plainly the consequences of sacrificing the individual to the interests of human institutions, and of reducing education to a machine-like process, the aim of which is to mould all minds upon one unchanging pattern; and it further shows how little can be accomplished for real education by despotic authority, which demands, and is satisfied with, an outward observance of custom and law."

The history of education in Grecian Sparta is quite the original pattern of education in Hitler's Third Reich. (Without an inerrant Teacher, the errors of man, history proves, seem to repeat themselves with a devilish monotony. The tragedy is that human souls (and immortal), and not mechanistic robots, are the victims.) In Sparta, I. the child was the property of the State. II. Education was state-controlled, its object: the development of physical strength, courage, and obedience to law, to produce a good soldier. Girls were subjected to the same severe discipline to train them as sturdy mothers of a warrior race.

Athens, in Greece, produced not soldiers primarily, but philosophers and artists. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the culmination of natural intelligence unaided by revelation.

Know Thyself

Socrates said: "Know thyself."

Plato said: "The object of education is to develop knowledge of the good."

Aristotle said: "The goal for the individual as well as for society is happiness." (Defining happiness as "the conscious activity of the highest part of man according to the law of his own excellence, not unaccompanied by adequate, external conditions.") But Aristotle excluded the slave, the artisan, and woman from this felicity. He also believed and taught that the mechanical arts "render the body and soul, or intellect, of free persons unfit for the exercise and practice of virtue!"

But it was a Carpenter, and the reputed son of a carpenter, who established Education as He established a Church. He gave this Church the command: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me; you, therefore, must go out, making disciples of all nations and baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all the commandments which I have given you. And behold I am with you all through the days that are coming, until the consummation of the world."

Education, essentially, is religious. Its prime purpose to help us become saints is self-evident because man was created for heaven. ("All the way to heaven is heaven," said St. Catherine of Siena, because Christ said, "I am the Way." "The goal for the individual is happiness," taught Aristotle. And it is self-evident that life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, is the right of man according to early American thought. We have life because God created us, liberty because Jesus Christ redeemed us, and the pursuit of happiness is definitely education—why did not those early founding Fathers say, "possession of happiness"? — we pursue the Good, the True, the Beautiful until we possess it in eternal Love in eternity. Yet all the way to heaven is heaven . . .) and only a saint can enter heaven. Therefore the prime purpose of education is: to know God. Because if one knows God, as far as humanly possible, one must love Him, and in loving Him one is becoming a saint. (Pursuing happiness!)

Teachers Without Degrees

The history of the Church shows that the command to teach was carried out from the beginning. The catechumenal schools were the first. The fact that the first teachers were fishermen, tentmakers, and sheep-herders, and lacked degrees from the Academies of Greece and Rome bothered their minds not in the least. Christ said: "Going therefore teach all nations whatsoever I have commanded." And they taught it well, these drawers of water and hewers of wood and fishers of men and sewers of tents. The early Church was the Church of saints.

One might object facetiously that it is too late to be educated in the catacombs. One might say that we live in the twentieth century, the century of Columbia's Dewey and Columbia's Manhattan Project: the Atom Bomb. One might answer one's objection by calling one a trivial-minded ass, or one could point out that it may be a little early in the United States, but in Russia and her satellites, Christians now are being educated in 20th century style catacombs. One might point out to one that Christ said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." Among "these things" are the sciences and arts. Education essentially is putting first

things first; not putting "all these things" first, and adding religion (knowledge of the kingdom of God and his justice) as a half-credit elective to one's course.

Because true education is essentially religious (coming from and going to God) is not to understand it as excluding, detracting, or in any way impeding the acquisition of knowledge and culture. It accepts all beings as subjects, it illumines them with right reason, and shows the true ultimate road to man's destiny, God. (I am the Way, the Truth, and the Light.) It orientates the intellect. No doubt, with a true education, many a successful financier might have become a contemplative! Could one say (theoretically) that contemplation is intellectually inferior to reading ticker-tape?

Catholic Graduates

But if education is essentially religious why do not, at least, our Catholic schools produce youth, at the end of twelve or sixteen years of study, that bear the marks of true education? One, holy, Catholic and apostolic in some small degree.

It is fifteen years since I quit formal schooling. (Nor do I regret it, leaving I mean.) I passed eighteen years (18) in Catholic educational institutions (and didn't flunk a year). And one year (1) in a Public University (there I did flop miserably! I admit the atmosphere of the P. U. was too materialistically rank for my comfort, and I felt uncomfortable. There too was a feeling of associating with people who cared not at all about not being in the state of grace, and were too young to suffer the spiritual hunger and unhappiness that one sees in the faces of people on our city streets. But in the eighteen years of schooling I learned nothing of racial injustice either in the study of history, or economics or ethics. In fact, Negroes were not admitted to enrollment in the Catholic institutions I attended, and we students thought it quite right that it should be so.

In economics our texts were the same as those of the P. U., and the morality of money-lending and banking, production and distribution for profit, etc, was not discussed (no moral theology in political economy classes allowed!). We studied the status quo, and the history and laws and growth of the status quo, and accepted it as was. That working conditions and a living family wage should affect prices instead of the law of supply and demand was unheard of. (It takes a long time for a Papal Encyclical to enter a classroom. Perhaps because most pedagogues stop learning when they start teaching.)

The idea that we were being "educated" in order to use our knowledge apostolically for the spread of Christ's kingdom: the concept of a lay apostolate being mandatory, we were never taught. If you mentioned vaguely a thought of that kind you were gravely informed that you definitely must have a vocation — to the priesthood. That sort of thing makes you shut your mouth!

Six years of Latin: all Caesar (Galla est omnia divisa in partes tres et cetera, remember?) Cicero, Virgil, Ovid, et al . . . and not a peek at the wealth in the Divine Office which could have made study a two-fold prayer. Latin is the Catholic language and all we got was pagan historians and poets.

And English literature . . . But why go on? That was between twenty and fifteen years ago. Everything is probably changed now, and for the better, for Christ's sake.

Education, essentially, is religious. In the early Church there was a difference of opinion concerning the value of the pagan heritage of philosophy and literature. One school (represented by such intellectual giants and saints as Basil and Gregory Nasianzen and Gregory of Nyssa) recognizing the good in it as part of God's truth wanted to Christianize it; the opposite school (headed by St. John Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine) aware of the pagan environment was apprehensive of the dangers to Christian faith and morals. St. Jerome was converted to the latter school. One night in his sleep Christ appeared to him.

"Jerome, art thou a Christian?"

"Yea, Lord!"

"Thou liest! thou art a Ciceronian."

We do not need more money, more buildings, more stadiums, more books, more theories, more systems for education. What we do need is more of those rare teachers who can take dead words from the white sepulchre of a page and breathe life into them, commanding them to testify to God's truth and glory.

PIUS XI SAID

Since the unbridled race for armaments is on the one hand the effect of the rivalry among nations, and on the other the cause of the withdrawal of enormous sums from the public wealth and hence not the smallest of contributors to the current extraordinary crisis, we cannot refrain from renewing on this subject the wise admonitions of our predecessors which thus far have not been heard.

"We exhort you all, venerable Brethren, that with all the means at your disposal, both by preaching and the press, you seek to illumine minds and open hearts on this matter, according to solid dictates of right reason and the Christian law.

Apostolic letter 1931
Nova Impendei

Maryfarm

(Continued from page 1)

been silently arriving in, and silently departing from, our midst for the past year was with us over the holidays. He had silently taken unto himself the onerous job of dish washing and appeared quite hurt Christmas Day when Joe Monroe, Eileen McCarthy and Johnny Olsen decided to give him a much deserved rest and did the dishes. Jane O'Donnel, who apportioned the headgear sent up from Mott street at the beginning of the winter, had run out of hats when Mr. Sanford arrived on the latest lap of his personal hegira and gave him Peter's old fur hat. It is a genuine antique, a strange variety of hunting cap made famous by Sherlock Holmes and called a "deerstalker," but known among seamen as a "fore and aft job" because of the flaps that unpin from the crown to protect the eyes and the nape of the neck from snow or rain. Mr. Sanford has conceived a great liking for it and wears it with great dignity, a feat few of us could achieve, on his brief trips outdoors or sitting through the long afternoons by the furnace in the kitchen. Peter, in Heaven, must be happy to know that the few articles of dress, identifiably his, that he left behind, are still being put to good use by men as poor as he once was.

Christmas Eve

Early Christmas Eve morning we walked down from the house along the path that leads to the pond with John Fillinger and Billy McDonough who were on their way to chop down an old dead apple tree in the orchard beyond it. Halfway down there was a small flicker of movement on a bramble strewn rise of ground that overlooks the path where Joe Cotter had fashioned the Stations of the Cross. We paused, watching, but the movement was not repeated and we were about to go on when King, John's buckskin and white mongrel who had followed us, started up the slope with a snarl and a rush.

During the night, probably at dusk, a young male possum, that earnest destroyer of the farmer's husbandry, had caught his right forepaw in an ancient, rusted trap left by some former owner of the property. All night he had whimpered, wrenching and pulling, seeking to free himself from the suddenly narrowed horizon of a treacherous destiny: the two-foot length of the trap's chain. Small predatory animals, fox, otter, mink or wolverine, will sometimes, with bitter stoic courage, amputate their foot if it is caught in a trap, gnawing and slashing until the limb is severed and they are free, but the possum, a burrower and a climber, not a swimmer or stalker, depends for his livelihood as much on his forepaws as his teeth and even in extremis, his instinct to protect them is stronger than his hatred of restraint.

With the coming of dawn he had rested, blinking sleepily in the strong sunlight, his foot numbed by the embrace of the trap. The entrance to his earth, and safety, was a scant three-feet away, but he lay with his back to it, facing the path, the deep rooted instinct of the hunted telling him truly that in that direction the danger would come. At the approach of our party with the dog following behind he had made a last, instinctive try for freedom and the small furtive movement had betrayed him. As King rushed up the slope the possum ran back the brief length of the chain, was pulled up short, reared, faced desperately around, surveying the final small arena of brambles and threshed earth; baring his teeth in a hopeless and instinctive bid for freedom as King came up, feinted, took the possum's bite on his foreleg and then closed his jaws over the backbone, extinguishing the small hunted life forever.

King

John Fillinger freed the possum from the trap, the teeth still bared

(Continued on page 6)

The Bicycle Thief

(Continued from page 1)

Elysees and the taxi-horns tooted in cheerful cacophony, like an orchestra sounding its A's and promising at any moment to blend into swelling harmony. I tried to photograph the scene in my mind; it would, I felt, be a memory to take back with me.

Then I passed the little theatre announcing this new Italian film, "Le Voleur de Bicyclette." From the pictures outside I could see that it was set in Rome. There would then be shots of the Italian streets I had only recently come to know. Paris is wonderful, of course, and so are the French, with their wit and their charm, their chic and their unfailing sense of style. But Italy and the Italians were the real enthusiasm I was bringing home. For this last view of Italy and Italian life, even on celluloid, I was quite willing to withdraw from the present, very real charm of the Champs Elysees. Tomorrow, after a very happy year in Europe, we were going to start the long trip home. Nostalgia was already dictating decisions.

I bought a ticket and entered the little theatre. And that was the first time I saw **"The Bicycle Thief."** Two hours later, I came out again to the Champs Elysees. The boulevard, the real world was almost incredible now. Like everyone else leaving the theatre, I walked out to the street in a kind of fog, like a man getting used to the darkness. The street was still bright and full of life, and the theatre had been dark, but the picture—a simple movie using amateur actors and actual Roman settings—had left those who saw it completely wrapped in the feelings and introspection it aroused.

I had, I felt, just seen a genuine work of art. In this simple movie, it seemed to me then, the films reached a height, a perfection I had thought beyond them.

With the passing of time I began to think that during that afternoon in Paris I had been a victim of the setting and of my own mood at the time. Such enthusiasm for a movie was not right.

I carried these doubts about the experience until the other day, when I saw the picture again, this time in New York. But the same thing happened. I think it is safe now to say that "The Bicycle Thief" is a work of art, in the classic sense, and to recommend it as such.

The film has a simple story. A poor man in Rome who needs a bicycle to keep a bill-poster's job gets one out of hock at the price of selling a family treasure, the linen sheets that were part of his wife's dowry. The next day the bicycle is stolen. The man and his seven-year-old son spend a rainy Sunday trying to find it. Their search leads them to a thieves' market, a church, a brothel, a fortune teller's home and the slum flat of the thief himself. They fail everywhere, and the bicycle is never recovered. In the end the two of them, the man and the boy, melt into a crowd returning home after a big football game. A simple, simple story. This is not the whole of it. There is one dramatic scene that leads to the final bursting tragedy, but just in case you have not read of that, let it be a surprise.

The most profound themes can sometimes be built around a very simple story, and "The Bicycle Thief" does just that. There are several themes in the film, but in the end they add up to only one theme: the loneliness of man caught up in the complexity of modern life.

Poverty

Throughout, there is the recurrent theme of poverty. "The Bicycle Thief" is the story of a poor man. Never, as far as I know, has a film dealt so knowingly with what it means to be poor. There is, first of all, the absolute dependence of the man and his family on the bicycle itself. Earning a living, providing for himself, his wife and children: having that bi-

(Continued on page 6)

The Room with No Exit

(Continued from page 1)

the Year of Our Lord nineteen hundred and forty-nine.

DOA

He might have dozed for awhile, there was nothing special to get up to, but at ten o'clock at the latest, he was roused by the kicks on the cubicle doors that the strong arm assistant to the clerk renders impartially in his passage around the corridors. There could have been no appeal from the final decision. Five minutes after his first passage the assistant returns to fling open the doors to haul the still unconscious, the too weak or ill onto their feet and hustle them out of the building. The dead, if there are any, and there often are, he leaves lay until the arrival of the ambulance, the bored interne and policeman, the usual brief notes: DOA, dead on arrival, cause acute alcoholism, funds none.

Air Condition

When Dick got to his feet finally and out the door of the cubicle he could hear the muffled groans, snores and retchings of the last, late, living tenants. He must have made his way slowly down the corridor; he was in bad shape and all the corridors of flop houses are dark; the narrow passageways between the cubicle rows are lit by scattered twenty-five watt bulbs that flicker dully, embedded in the ceiling like tarnished jewels in the forehead of an age blackened idol. His lungs were laboring. One hundred years ago the windows of those lofts on the Bowery that became flophouses in the fulness of time, were hermetically sealed and the oxygen filters upward fitfully from the street level entrance far below.

Chatham Square

When he got out onto Chatham Square, he turned up his jacket collar against the cold and started to walk. The walking was instinctive, first against the cold and then because he was still living and was in need. The needy, the truly destitute, are driven to movement, the ancient buried instinct whispering fiercely that life is movement, if you can still move you have a chance, seek, seek, seek. It is only later when the flame has become a flicker and starvation is far advanced that they become passive, quiet, apathetic, hoarding their energy.

All the streets that lead off westward from Chatham Square toward the Hudson, jinking to the right and left like a hunted hare through the maze of Chinatown, will, if you are lucky in your wanderings, lead you past the Catholic Worker. One of them he found and it was the Line that attracked him. A Line on the Bowery means food, conceivably clothes, and perhaps, just perhaps, by incredible luck, a bed, a chance to pull out of it. Things go with it in most places on the Bowery, religion chiefly, or signed pledges, passionate promises of reform as fragile as the paper they are written on.

Beaten

It wouldn't have mattered to Dick Conors. When a man is beat to the knees there are few things he will not do to survive. We are a wise generation in our way, and concentration camp history has given us that little accretion of knowledge for meditation. A man on the Bowery, starving, will spin a Buddhist prayer wheel and chant the accompanying prayers with just as much gusto as he would sing a Salve Regina in different circumstances if he knows that by so doing he will eat. And Dick Conors wanted to eat. He knew it as an intellectual proposition, an abstract bit of knowledge: you have to eat to live. He didn't feel like it but he knew he should. But he had been off solids too long and after his turn came in the long Line he forced down the pork, potatoes, vegetables and gravy only to have the familiar bitter acid bile boil up in his throat and he rushed out of the dining room to lose it in the gutter. He came into the adjoining store that serves as the CW office and sat down; was noticed later in the afternoon, volunteered his brief story: he was thirty-five, a vet, combat service in New Guinea, separated from his wife, recurrent malarial attacks, had been in New York on the Bowery for six months. There was a bed free and it was given him.

Drink Needed

He lay on it all that day and the next. He tried to eat but solids wouldn't stay down and then the withdrawal symptoms started: You begin to get terribly uneasy; everyone is noticing you, secretly despising you; they know that you're ill, bad sick, mentally upset. They don't care for you. They hate you, as a matter of fact. You should have noticed it before. You would have noticed it before if only your nerves were calmer. If you had a drink. A decent drink. Any kind of drink. Anything with alcohol will do, shaving lotion, rubbing alcohol, vanilla extract, whisky, wine, anything. But of course there isn't anything. That's because they want to drive you crazy. They're sick of you and they want to put you in an insane asylum. Bury you alive. But you'll fool them. You'll get out. You'll play it cagy. You'll get out. But you can't get out. You can't

button your clothes. They've done something to your hands. They won't work. They're all thumbs. You can't feel them. And they won't let you out. They keep telling you to stay in bed, holding you down. They keep telling you to eat something, trying to make you, but they don't fool you. You know better than that. It's simple. They're trying to poison you. If you could only get out. If you could only get a drink. Just one drink. But you can't and you're helpless. And then you begin to cry.

If you're lucky when it happens you're in a hospital and the notes on your chart are simple and read: Pr. DT's. Vit. Def. Sup M. Meaning pre-delirium tremens, exhaustion, vitamin deficiency and supportive, remedial measures to be employed, probably massive vitamin injections and paraldehyde irrigations. But Dick Conors wasn't in a hospital and we know from first hand experience of the bitter wrath visited on us by police and ambulance attendants when we try to get pre-ODT and exhaustion cases hospitalized at the CW. "Take every crum bum on the Bowery who has a belly ache when there's a shortage of hospital beds? What the hell's the matter with you people? Are you soft in the head?" And so we didn't try, and besides, Dick didn't want it. It was our mistake. We should have fought, staged a sitdown strike in the hospital lobby, refused to move, gone to jail, anything to get him attended properly. He was one of ours. We were responsible before God for his safekeeping.

With proper supportive measures he could have been saved: whole blood transfusions, massive vitamin injections, paraldehyde irrigations, none of which we are equipped to give or allowed to give. Barring the whole blood transfusions—blood that the medical supply houses like Sharpe and Dohme's and the city hospital blood banks cynically drain out of the veins of the men on the Bowery who are in crying need of every drop they have; paying five dollars a pint to the destitute and charging the solvent patient thirty—glucose could have been used, barring that, steak juice, milk and eggs, cheese, anything to enrich the impoverished blood stream, support the laboring heart, the heaving lungs, the raveled nerve ends. But we didn't have it. We couldn't afford it. It isn't an excuse. It is an explanation. Dick Conors was our responsibility and he came to us for aid, as a last resort and we failed him for want of equipment, for money, the medium of exchange that could have been used to literally buy Dick Conors's life, pound by pound. He was a human life, a soul, a person in bad trouble.

But then again, we are fogged with trouble at the Worker. We eat with it, live with it, work with it and sometimes, no matter how much we fight the defensive rejection mechanism, guard against it, discipline ourselves, we become casual about it. The people who come to us are driven, compelled along the bitter path and we are the last way station on the road to nowhere: The last step down or the first step up. We get the failures of institutions dedicated to the salvage of failures. Alcoholics Anonymous send us people they cannot handle and Traveler's Aid give us their surplus to house. Those whom the City Relief cannot, will not, or refuse to handle are sent to us. The new ones in town come to us, the scared, the ashamed, those too shy or helpless to learn the ropes, the angles for survival that professional unfortunates know, come to us. We take all we can handle and more than we can handle. But it isn't enough to suffer with them. In the end, sometimes, you become casual. Man is an adaptable animal, it has been said, and you can not only learn to live with anything but you can make it acceptable, usual, commonplace and unnoticed.

Questions

So we treated him casually. We had been through cases like his many, many times before. On the fourth day, after we had gotten some soup into him, Don Klein, a CW member, took him to Gouverneur Hospital. Dick was a good tryer, shaky, but making the effort, joking about his trembling hands, not in a servile manner, but humorously, wryly self deprecating. The trip and the net result was very much like one we took last winter with a friend of ours, English George, to Bellevue. George was also a pre-DT case, shaking bad, fighting hard for control. All the way up in the bus he sat with clenched hands, smiling nervously, fighting to hang on. We got off at 30th street, the dreaded entrance to the Psycho Division and when we entered and explained our wants an interne interviewed us. The questions and responses are a set formula. The interne, a slim, small, darkhaired Irishman, let his eyes flicker briefly over George's face and asked him the three formula questions: What year is it? Who is President? What month is it? The questions are deliberately kept at a primitively simple level. Even the best of us might fall if we were asked quickly who is Vice-President? Who is the Speaker of the House of Representatives? is the moon waxing or waning at the present moment?

Vitamins

George answered them quickly and nervously in his clipped British accent, proud that he could still think, still recall, that he wasn't lost yet. We watched him with pity and understanding, knowing that what he most desired was hospitalization, but that he feared and dreaded the Psycho Division with its aura of electric shock treatment and pre-frontal lobotomies. The interne smiled up at him in sardonic amusement and then addressed us. "He has no syndrome. Just a bit shaky. Sleep, rest and food. If he stays on Sneaky Pete and doesn't eat he'll probably contract pneumonia or pleurisy. We can handle him then. Right now he's not our baby." He was smiling as he said the words, looking at us and paying no more attention to George than if he were an ashtray. George flushed and looked straight ahead. We looked at the interne. It would have solved nothing to hit him. Either life would teach him or it would not. As we turned to go he called us back and scribbled a prescription on the clinic for vitamins and phenobarbital. Don Klein had less luck. All he got for Dick was four, eighth grain morphia tablets. Vitamins cost too much. We should know. Much as we would like to give the one a day kind to each member of the Line with his bowl of soup we can't afford them. They are doled out only to staff and house members whose need is immediate and apparent.

Background

The morphia calmed Dick down that night but the following day his nerves were gone. He talked quickly and nervously, about war, the Army, death. Death fascinated him and he was afraid of it. He spoke briefly of his wife, their separation, chewing his underlip until it bled. We gave him aspirin, hoarding the morphia against the long night. We tried to get him to eat solids. That night Don Klein couldn't find him to give him the morphia. Don is young, eighteen and conscientious. He hunted thoroughly but it didn't enter his head to search the rear courtyard where Dick was lying dead. Don was searching in the places a living man might be found.

Death

When he was found on New Year's Day many people were interested in Dick Conors, a big man even as he lay crumpled in death: over six-feet tall, well made, with a full head of prematurely gray hair. A Franciscan father from our parish church, Precious Blood, administered last rites, kneeling in his sandals and brown cord tied habit beside the body. And the Homicide Squad came. And the reporters. And the photographers. And three squad cars. The computed cost to the city in time and labor expended was eighty-five dollars. More than enough to have hospitalized Dick Conors and treated him properly while there was still time. He was a man in bad trouble who had gotten into a cul de sac that he couldn't fight out of. He was still young, life still had hope. The fate that overtook him is a common one today and there are none of us who can guarantee not ending the same way, God's grace refused. We live in an age that cannot guarantee security from one year to the next and walk a tightrope over the twin chasms of chaos and disaster.

Household

For many of us the household of our time is a room with no exit —smooth walled, circular, without recognizable angles — that we wander in forlornly, from wall to wall through the space of our existence, seeking the door that will lead us outward to the light, to the living and the life that we will, in the words of St. Vincent de Paul, be conscious of. It is a door that we all seek, no matter where we are born, from our first breath to our last with the crying intensity of strayed sheep, the flock gone, the range deserted, the fold far off and night approaching. And some of us are fortunate and find it. But the door that Dick Conors rose up from his bed of delirium at night to find, led not to the light, but to the cold, dark, windswept roof of a decaying tenement, the flush edge without the guard rail, the long fall through the darkness to the stone courtyard—and death. We beg your prayers for him.

The Bicycle Thief

(Continued from page 5)

cycle means everything to him. There are some rumors about that the film was inspired by a Marxist creed (the New York *Daily News'* Kate Cameron gave it only two and a half stars for that reason) and that this part of the picture was intended as an attack on private property. Also, the fact that the bicycle is stolen by another poor man. See, De Sica, the director is supposed to be saying, see, under the private-property system the poor are reduced to stealing from one another. He may be saying that, but I think the film is a moving dramatization of the basic insecurity of the propertyless big-city poor and a bitter comment on the indifference and impersonality of those who employ them. There was no one to whom the man who lost his bicycle could turn with explanation, no employer to whom he could turn for understanding and help. There was only the irresponsible machine-like organization which hired him. If he had no bicycle then there were others who did. He was out. What would happen to him and his family was strictly his own business.

Whether it was inspired by Communism or not, this key factor in the story made a telling point. One that can be understood by any man—and there are millions—who in his work feels that he is not engaged in a human partnership but rather serves a giant, cold, unthinking machine which will have no part of him when he fails, for whatever reason, to fulfill the requirements demanded, whether they be good health, the vigor of youth or the possession of a cheap bicycle.

Then there were the agencies to which the man turned, or stumbled upon, in his heartbreaking search for the bicycle. Each of them in its own way was established to comfort a poor man caught up in life's problems. Each one failed him because his problem was personal and for the moment unique.

Soup

At the soup kitchen run by a church, he, with his problem, was only a disturbing element. There charity was dispensed, but in an orderly, efficient way, on a breadline basis. The pious people in charge, brimming with appreciation for their own good works, were so busy serving mankind that they had no time for a lonely man's problems. Bringing his problem there meant bringing a distraction to the routine business at hand. This, I suppose, is unavoidable when charity is dispensed like infirmary pills to lines of men at certain hours, in certain places, by people whose regular business it is to dispense charity.

On a side street in midtown New York any morning you can see a Franciscan friar handing out sandwiches to men lined up along the street. The frair's movements are necessarily as mechanical as those of an assembly-line worker. The poor men take their sandwiches silently; usually no word is spoken between them and the frair. The bread is handed out, and then each man goes his separate way, disappearing into the New York crowds.

The man who lost his bicycle goes in desperation to a fortune teller. Again there is a line ahead of him, each one there really alone, bearing his own uncertainty, his own sorrow. The seer sits at the front of the room, as cold and unmoved and impersonal as some distant goddess. When the man reaches her, she gives him what she has to offer—a confusing sentence in the mystic language of her profession—but she gives it without warmth or sympathy. When he goes he is expected to leave a payment behind. The comforts she offers are at a price, and cold comforts they are.

Brothel

He is led then to a public brothel. The place is not open for business. Then the madam, furious about this intrusion off-hours, makes him realize that he is not wanted there, that he is in the way. She will have nothing but to be rid of him. Comfort and spurious effection are the business of this place, too. But at the regular hours, on a business-like basis, and again for a price.

The institutions, respectable and non-respectable, which were set up to bring solace to the poor are shown as basically wanting. Even the working man's union, which got him the job, is purely an instrument of justice. The man who lost his bicycle needs a charitable helping hand and there is none to offer it.

Throughout the picture there are the human relations, and they give unusual emotional depth to what might have been the naked artistry of the significant search. There are the good friends who start off to help the poor man but as the day wears on grow weary of the business and one by one drop out of sight. But the main relationship, of course, is that between the man and his son, the little boy who goes everywhere with him.

The boy idolizes his father. As the day's events move on, the child gets his first knowledge of what it is to be a man like his father in the great world beyond the home. He sees his father foiled, frustrated, humiliated at every turn. He sees his father, in a moment of utter discouragement, turn on him, his own child in blind anger. The child is confused and deeply hurt by this injustice from the parent he loves so much. Finally the boy sees his father, in the final tragic climax to the day's events, looked upon by strangers as an object of disdain and pity. He sees his father in his weakest, most beaten state—the man he looked up to as wise and strong and protective drained dry.

The idea the child had of his father as the idol is killed by the harsh experiences of the bicycle search. But something better takes its place. When the boy slips his hand into the father's after the final crushing blow, he is offering his love to one no longer an idol but a man. The boy understands something of the world now. He knows something of what it is to be a poor man like his father. And then he turns to his father, full of human compassion and love, which is a far better thing than the former childish illusion and hero worship.

Tender

In this tender relationship between father and son the film reaches its greatest height. The amateur actors who play the man and the boy succeed in synchronizing a double artistry that is to my knowledge unequalled in the history of the modern films. It has been compared by those who remember to the classic performance of Charlie Chaplin and Jackie Coogan in "The Kid." But that would seem to be its only parallel.

There is so much that could be said about **"The Bicycle Thief."** Looking back, it seems there is some significance in every scene. For instance there is the subtlety and bitterness of having the father and son, standing out of the rain, being joined by a group of German seminarians and the soaken child unable to understand their language. This, indeed, is bitter medicine for the Catholic to swallow, but it should give us pause.

Everything is said, I suppose, when you say the picture is flawless. There isn't one false note throughout. There is bitterness and caustic satire that naturally won't sit well with its victims (and in a sense everyone can recognize himself among the pitiless and indifferent) but there is nothing that is not heartfelt and genuine. **"The Bicycle Thief"** has fulfilled, in my opinion, the promise of a thousand good pictures and climaxes the amazing accomplishments of the whole Italian neo-realistic movement.

Pictures like **"Paisan," "Open City,"** and **"Shoeshine"** drew some of their strength from the events they recorded. **"The Bicycle Thief"** goes beyond specific events, time and place. It is concerned, fundamentally, with man himself—with the universal, eternal theme of human loneliness and of human dependence. And though De Sica may not have intended it, it is really a moving lesson on the need for Christian charity.

Maryfarm

(Continued from page 4)

in the small grey mask, as we stood with Billy McDonough petting King, our breaths smoking in the cold air. Billy, a sparse, hammered down little man with the raffish look of an ex-jockey or dog handler, crooned "Good dog. Good baby." King stood solemnly, waving his tail slowly and eyeing the possum. Though he is a mongrel he knows his worth and has the quiet dignity of a dog who has spent all his life in the open fields and woods, hunting down the small vermin that inhabit this part of the country: mole, badger, woodchuck, chipmunk, fox, squirrel, raccoon, possum and barn rats. His record for the first season we were at Maryfarm was phonomenal for a dog scarcely more than a puppy: forty-five woodchucks. The week before he had killed a brace of raccoon that we had subsequently eaten, worrying them out of a dead tree stump.

On a farm the facts of life and death are always so much more apparent, lacking the veneer of sentimentality that city dwellers use in the attempt to soften them. The farmer lives with life and death on an almost day-to-day basis: things being born, things being killed, the necessity for both giving the whole of existence a meaning and a form denied those who dwell in cities. The week before we had performed a small massacre on our pig population in order to provide a Christmas dinner for the Line. Christmas Day is one day everyone should eat well and John Fillinger winnowed out all our young boars ruthlessly, hauling them forth from the pen, squealing and grunting and then, as we held the struggling legs with Joe Cotter assisting, he spoke to them with rough tenderness, feeling for the jugular vein with the bright cutting knife. "Easy does it now," he said. "Easy does it."

The boars, unmindful of this

(Continued on page 7)

Announcing a new booklet on **The Christian Observance of Candlemas** in the parish, the family, the apostolic group; also literature and songs for the feast of Candlemas published by Grailville, Loveland, Ohio. Copies may be ordered from Monica House, 131 Sixth Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y. at $1.00 a copy, (discount on bulk orders).

Blessed are the Dead!

(Continued from page 1)

tailored overcoat draped over his shoulders with the sleeves hanging limply at the sides. I can never remember John placing his arms through the sleeves of his overcoat.

Our speaker at the Catholic Worker that afternoon had introduced himself as a Catholic and a Communist which combination was unheard of at the time and such a description provoked the audience to scream that it was impossible to be both. However, he was quite firm about the matter and stated strongly that he intended to retain both titles. After the speaker had concluded his talk on "Dialectic Materialism" with the note urging the turning over of everything to the masses immediately, there was a dead silence while everyone tried to think of questions. Finally the awful silence was broken by the deep, strong precise voice of John Bowers who stated, "the masses usually make asses of themselves when they lack a theory of revolution, witness the French Revolution." Every eyebrow lifted and every jaw sagged as these words ricocheted off the four walls. The speaker was quite disconcerted for a minute and although he was quite articulate he sounded in comparison like a mumbling school boy as he attempted to answer John's charge.

Storyteller

At the conclusion of the afternoon's meeting several of us became involved in discussing the possibilities of instigating a house of hospitality where we could have the corporal works of mercy put into practice besides the Sunday afternoon sessions of clarification of thought. Due to the added expense this venture would entail the majority of the group thought that the time was not ripe for our proposed plans. John Bowers supported our minority viewpoint that afternoon and we were very grateful since his voice and backing had the strength of ten. As darkness was swallowing the city and street lamps were lighting up the squalid neighborhood, a couple of us left the lecture hall in the company of John. The three of us decided to make our way to Chicago's Loop where we would all have a cup of coffee and turn our steps towards home. It was about six o'clock when we entered a Thompson restaurant and it was midnight before we left and it was two a.m. when we finally parted with John for the evening. John was in rare form that evening and we sat fascinated listening to him. We two raw youths had little contact with the persons, places, books and things John spoke of that evening. The words of John fairly scintillated with numerous quotations from Charles Peguy, Leon Bloy, Georges Bernanos, Chesterton, Bernard Shaw, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Paul Claudel and a host of others. It was on that occasion that we first heard of Mr. Blue by Myles Connelly. John spoke very warmly of France his adopted country since he had spent some time there. He also glowed over Saint Joan of Arc and seethed over Bishop Cauchon, Saint Joan's Waterloo. He had such devotion to Saint Joan that he purchased a missal in French since that was the only missal that contained her Mass.

Holy Child House

Shortly after we started the Chicago Catholic Worker House of Hospitality on Blue Island avenue, John moved into the first Catholic Worker location on West Taylor Street. John changed the name of the center to Holy Child House since he had decided to devote his time to the needy children in that surrounding neighborhood. John immediately plunged into the task of providing clothes and food for those in need in the nearby slum dwellings. Besides that work he dug deep into his own little reservoir of funds and got others to do the same in order to pay the tuition of several colored children to the nearby Catholic school. They were the first colored children to enter that school. During the summers John held a handicraft school for the neighborhood children in which he was aided by seminarians and high school students that were interested in the work. While the regular school year was in action John was helping the children that he knew with their school home work and also many other problems. After a year or two on Taylor Street John procured a summer cottage and a piece of land fifty miles from Chicago's slums where he brought families for short vacations. These people prayed together, went in for all sorts of outdoor recreations and also learned to garden under the skillful direction of the much talented John Bowers.

Someone started a credit union at the Holy Child house and soon John became the director and devoted a great deal of his time to that project. He spent a lot of time and effort in attempting to persuade the neighbors, who were in dire need of such an organization, to become members. And during one period of John's stay on Taylor Street he conducted Monday night dinners which he prepared himself for a group who met to listen to someone read from the works of Jacques Maritain. The meals were extremely good and quite inexpensive, more of John's talents. All were invited to participate in the dinners where some of these people came in contact with the finest in Catholic thought for the first time in their lives.

Progressive Poverty

John was a person of keen perception and was very quick to detect phoniness, especially in projects that were ostensibily carried on in the name of God but had every other end in view but that. He would become quickly annoyed at anyone who would come down to his place and preach to him particularly at those who saturate their own ego by preaching to others. One good sincere soul admonished John for wearing his diamond stick pin in his tie because this person rightly thought it would alienate the people he was supposed to be helping. John snapped at that piece of advice by yelling, "them that has 'em wears 'em." But as the years rolled by John's elegant apparel was replaced with clothing that was as ragged as any of his poor neighbors. And in his latter years he was in frequent need of a haircut. Thus the elegantly dressed John Bowers of our first acquaintance was replaced by a man who dressed and lived as the poor did around him. Despite this come-down or come-up, whatever you may call it, John did not become morbid or depressed but continued to derive much joy from life. If there was a bit of humor in any situation John was sure to drain it off. The following is a letter I received from him about ten days before his death:

"I have been here for a couple of weeks being fattened up for a session in surgery next Thursday morning. This is what happens if one doesn't live right. They assure me that the element of danger is slight, but where major surgery is concerned one just takes no chances, nobody's word. So I am in on the beg for some prayers from you, and I shall be grateful for them. Regards to all, and a share in what suffering I have gone through and may have to endure yet."

Tom Sullivan.

ST. THOMAS

Christ came to destroy the works of the devil not by powerful deeds but rather by suffering from Him and His members so as to conquer the devil by righteousness, not by power.

Maryfarm

(Continued from page 6)

sound admonition to comport themselves with dignity in the face of the inevitable, struggled fiercely and when released staggered to their feet, staining the snow crimson for yards around, weaving drunkenly as the life poured out of them, the breath whistling in their throats and then collapsing suddenly to be rushed to the shed, scalded free of bristles, dressed, butchered and hung ready for the trip to the city. They made a satisfactory sight, hung in the shed, knowing that on Christmas the Line would be fed with meat we had ourselves raised.

Fields

Late Christmas Eve afternoon we went for a walk across the back fields, and as we came to the hill overlooking the duck pond we stopped for a breather, looking around at the mountains on the horizon, etched with sharp clarity in the winter sunlight. Nearby Stewart Field, the largest military airport in the east, was alive with activity, planes landing and taking off in a steady droning procession. As we watched the afternoon sky overhead was torn with sound. Directly above us a twin engine medium bomber wheeled slowly above the farm turning toward the air field. High above the bomber the glittering, metallic form of a jet pursuit plane tipped, curved, and fell like a shark through the clear blue depths past the bomber and disappeared with a shattering roar across the Hudson. There was no dry, yammering rattle of .50 calibers; the bomber did not falter, fall away streaking flame in a screaming death agony of failing motors, but proceeded daintily on its way, circling for a landing, looking slender and virginal in the bright sun, not as yet pregnant and heavy with the seeds of death. We were at peace on a Day of Peace. The time was not yet. Foolish to be reminded, looking at it swoop gracefully to a landing, that function is implicit in form, that its creation was purposive: by hatred, out of despair and dedicated to annihilation. To the thoughtful there are already too many random signposts pointing the way to the dead end of our culture for the need to be reminded further.

At the supper table Johnny Olsen, the junior member of our community who has been working at St. Paul's Abbey in Newton, New Jersey, for the past few months, boasted loudly of his hunting ability that afternoon. He had borrowed John Fillinger's shotgun on the pretense of wanting to shoot at an unstipulated target and returned at dusk, muddy happy and empty handed. "I shot a pheasant," he said, "but he fell in the bushes and King couldn't find him." As he tells this bald fib he peeps out slyly from under lowered eyebrows, anticipating the forthcoming questions: How did he know it was a pheasant? How did he manage to get King (who is notoriously gun shy) to go hunting with him? Johnny laughs brazenly, trying to bluff it out. "I did so shoot a pheasant. I did. I did." Father Faley, our chaplain, who loves Johnny dearly, shakes his head in mock sadness. "Ah, that boy. I don't know what to make of him. He lies like the Second Noctourne."

Johnny has brought a fat, squirming German shepherd puppy back to the farm as a gift from a neighbor. We intend to bring it to the city with us as a present to Slim, who runs the Coffee Line in the mornings. As so often happens among us at the CW, what appears at first to be a minor issue rapidly becomes an arena in which the loftiest principles engage in a life and death struggle. Jane O'Donnel does not think that the Men's House in Mott Street is the place for a dog. John Fillinger thinks the dog will be too big for the city and soon the discussion becomes heated. In that the CW is a Christian anarchist society we could win our point by merely staying silent and putting our scheme into practice but that would be a hollow victory. Modern man is so constituted that unless he has the agreement of his brothers in every action, no matter how outrageous, he either sulks or becomes furtive and despising both we are forced to employ casuistry. We ask Jane sardonically does she think the men's house unfit for dogs and fit for the men who live in it? She answers with infuriating feminine logic that the men have chosen to live there in hardship on a voluntary basis but in that the dog is dependent on us we should not expose it to those conditions. We answer that the dog's nature is to love and be loved and in that Slim, whom all the Italian neighbor's dogs adore, will love the dog, its function will be fulfilled. Jane answers that it would be much better off in the country, running around free. Which raises the question: which is better, to be loved or to be free? Both of course, conceiving of them as separate things, but the deeper truth is, that to be loved, by someone you admire and respect, is to be free. On this the argument rests. The puppy, unaware that his destiny is being settled, yawns hugely, and staggering backward collapses in a ludicrous posture of fatigue.

Apple Tree

Later that night, after the Vigil, Billy McDonough builds a fire in the conference room fireplace with a log from the apple tree and the faint aromatic scent of burning apple wood fills the room. Jane, Stanley and Joe Munroe sing Christmas carols. Their favorites and ours are "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" and "Good King Wenceslaus."

When the party breaks up at last we stop outside the carriage house where we sleep for a last cigarette. The night is freezing, the sky blue-black and spangled with countless stars. High overhead Orion, the Mighty Hunter, presents his eternal challenge to the onrushing Bull, and far to the west Auriga the Charioteer, fabled son of Vulcan, lashes his four horse chariot across the enormous plain of the winter sky. At our feet the puppy whimpers dismally, remembering perhaps the warm press of the litter, the comfort and protection of his earliest days, a bare eight weeks ago. We pick him up and stuff him into the front of our skiing parka, soothing him, and he soon quiets. Overhead his namesake and patron glitters frostily in the jaw of Canis Major: Sirius the Dog Star, the Superb, the greatest in brilliance of the far stars, thirty times as luminous as our own sun. The contemplation of the majesty of his march across the heavens is a quicksand in which the imagination founders and sinks. Six hundred centuries ago Sirius was to the east of the Milky Way, an ocean of far worlds too distant to be comprehended with the naked eye. In a century's time his journey across the celestial sphere equals but a fraction of the apparent diameter of the moon, and yet, what a staggering immensity of space! "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?" The answer is known: So precious is man that on this night, two thousand years ago, in a stable halfway across the world, among the poorest of the poor, God's only begotten Son was born for the redemption of the world, our world, which is why Earth and Man are to be held sacred: in all the desert of the far stars, to our certain knowledge, this is the only planet that God ever trod in human form.

Around us the buildings of Maryfarm and the surrounding countryside are darkened. Far off in the woods a dead bough cracks, falls with a dry rattle to the ground and all is quiet. It is after midnight. On earth peace, goodwill toward men.

John McKeon.

The Words of A Rebel

By DAVID MASON

We cannot grasp the need for the radical economic and social changes which are the goal of the Christian Revolution unless we have a clear understanding of the real problems and the hardships faced by working men and women in their daily lives. That understanding can only be acquired by first-hand experience; no school or course of study can give it to us. There are no hypotheses, theories, series of equations or philosophical tomes that will enable us to know what goes on in fields, factories, workshops and slums, or what goes on in the minds and hearts of the workers who inhabit them. To know these things we must be a part of them.

The writings of gifted persons, or, if we are more fortunate, their conversations, afford the enlightment of interpretation for the indispensable personal experience. Peter Maurin was a great and inspiring interpreter for the many persons who were privileged to meet him at the countless round-table discussions which he carried on during his very active life.

Recommended Reading

Another Peter who holds a high place among those who have shown great love for humanity and

labored and sacrificed prodigiously for its enlightenment was Prince Peter Kropotkin. His books, especially his "Fields, Factories and Workshops," were among the works most frequently recommended to us by Peter Maurin.

Peter Kropotkin was born in Moscow in 1842. His father was a wealthy nobleman who owned nearly 1,200 serfs. Peter entered the Corps of Pages, in St. Petersburg, at the age of 15. The Corps of Pages combined the character of a military school endowed with special rights and of a court institution attached to the imperial household. After a stay of four or five years in the Corps of Pages, those who passed the final examinations were received in any regiment of the guard or the army they chose.

Kropotkin, when he had completed the course in the Corps in 1862, chose to join the mounted Cossacks of the Amur, in Siberia, to the great consternation of all his comrades and his family. He made this choice because he had an intense interest in geography and exploration, and also because he believed that Siberia would be an immense field for the application of the great reforms which seemed to be imminent in the Russian Empire.

This is not intended to be a biographical article, although, as I have just finished reading Kropotkin's "Memoirs of a Revolutionist," the temptation to quote at length from that fascinating book is well-nigh irresistible. I can give here only a few details of his life which may help to explain what manner of man he was.

A Century Ago

It is now one hundred years since the insurrections of the Russian serfs began to take alarming proportions. The revolution of 1848 had influenced the Russian peasants, and when, at the outbreak of the Crimean war, militia was conscripted throughout Russia, the revolts spread with great violence. Agitation for the emancipation of the serfs was widespread at the very time that the anti-slavery campaigns shook this country. Peter Kropotkin grew up in the midst of this turmoil, and, like many members of his generation, his sympathies were with the serfs. He rejoiced when the liberation manifesto was issued by Alexander II in 1861.

His years of service in Siberia brought him into intimate contact with many prisoners and other workers, and he showed a strong sympathy with them and a remarkably acute understanding of their problems. These years were marked by exploratory work of the first importance. He had a wide range of scientific interest and knowledge.

Kropotkin had long cherished a desire to occupy the position of secretary to the Geographical Society, and in the Autumn of 1871, while he was on a most difficult journey through Finland, he received a telegram offering him that position.

"I saw," he writes in his memoirs, "what an immense amount of labor the Finnish peasant spends in clearing the land and in breaking up the hard boulder-clay, and I said to myself: 'I will write the physical geography of this part of Russia, and tell the peasant the best means of cultivating this soil. Here an American stump-extractor would be invaluable; there certain methods of manuring would be indicated by science . . . But what is the use of talking to this peasant about American machines, when he has barely enough bread to live upon from one crop to the next; when the rent which he has to pay for that boulder-clay grows heavier and heavier in proportion to his success in improving the soil? He gnaws at his hard-as-stone rye-flour cake which he bakes twice a year; he has with it a morsel of fearfully salted cod and a drink of skimmed milk. How dare I talk to him of American machines, when all that he can raise must be sold to pay rent and taxes? He needs me to live with him, to help him to become the owner or the free occupier of that land. Then he will read books with profit, but not now.'"

Momentous Decision

He dwells at some length on the joys of the scientific work he might do if he could accept the proffered position, only to conclude with: "But what right had I to these highest joys, when all around me was nothing but misery and struggle for a mouldy bit of bread; when whatsoever I should spend to enable me to live in that world of higher emotions must needs be taken from the very mouths of those who grew the wheat and had not bread enough for their children? From somebody's mouth it must be taken, because the aggregate production of mankind remains still so low."

"So," he concludes the chapter, "I sent my negative reply to the Geographical Society."

We have recently received from England several copies of a fine book, published in England, entitled "Selections From the Writings of Peter Kropotkin," edited with an introduction by Herbert Read. This book was published in 1942, but it is new to us. In his introduction Herbert Read says:

"This volume of selections which I have made will, I hope, serve as an introduction to the works of this great man, but only as an introduction, for Kropotkin deserves to be read *in extenso*. Anarchism is a rebarbative word, terrifying to those who have no first-hand knowledge of its real meaning. But Kropotkin, gentle and gracious, infinitely kind and nobly wise, was not a terrifying man; he was a seer, a prophet, but above all a scholar. Others had given anarchism the fervor of a revolutionary faith, the imaginative force of a social vision. Kropotkin did not despise these qualities, but when in his eightieth year his pen fell from his failing hand, he had given that faith and that vision the dignity of a science and the scope of a philosophy of life."

Forceful Introduction

For me this volume did serve as an introduction to the works of Kropotkin, and an introduction of stunning force it has been. I admit now with shame that I have neglected to read those works until this fifty-first year of my life, except for a few scattered excerpts in pamphlets away back in the I.W.W. days of my youth. But this volume sent me running to the library, and as a result I have read "The Conquest of Bread," "Fields, Factories and Workshops," "Memoirs of a Revolutionist" and part of "Mutual Aid," in addition to the volume of selections, all during this holiday week. (The book is published, by the way, by the Freedom Press, 27 Belsize Road, London, and the price printed in it is 5/, but I don't know whether that is still the price.)

After all that reading I could easily write enough to fill two pages of this paper; such an embarrassment of riches! After reading Kropotkin, you have a strong impulse to go around quoting him to everyone you meet.

Answer in Advance

One objection that is sure to be raised is that Kroptkin rejected the Church, so why am I quoting him and praising him in an article which is primarily concerned with the Christian Revolution of our times? My reply is that while he did reject the Church that he knew, he was actually a deeply religious man, and the Church that he knew was certainly not one that merited either respect or loyalty. Who could respect a Church whose priests officiated without question or protest at marriages of serfs which were performed at the command of their owners, against the will of one or both of the so-called contracting parties? That Church was corrupt and contented, standing with the worst forces of reaction and oppression. Small wonder that the people turned against it. But you do not have to read far in Kropotkin's work to be assured that he was a truly religious man, a man motivated by the highest principles. Without actually knowing the fact, he must have experienced the reality of the Mystical Body of Christ, seeing Christ in every man. It is demonstrated again and again in his writings.

He served two long prison terms, one in Russia and one in France, for his beliefs, yet you will search in vain for any expression of hatred toward his jailers or those responsible for his imprisonment.

"The wealth of the wealthy," he said, "springs from the poverty of the poor."

BOOKS

Gandhi, "Hind Swaraj," 25c. Gandhi's masterpiece.

Richard Gregg, "The Economics of Khaddar," 75c. The standard Gandhian text on decentralism.

Rene, Guenon, "The Crisis of the Modern World," $1.75. "One of the few writers of our time whose work is really of importance."—Walter Shewring.

Cardinal Suhard, "Growth or Decline?" $1.25. The late Archbishop of Paris on today's crisis.

Augustine Baker, O.S.B., "Holy Wisdom." $4.75. A thorough treatise on contemplation.

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On Pilgrimage

(Continued from page 1)

of famine and pestilence. Fr. Lux, whose guest I am, does not need to go to the city, because it comes to him. It is here already because of the richness of the soil, the plenitude of water, which is just sixty feet below the surface and cheap land. They raise wheat here, and the land goes for a dollar an acre. It is an easy crop, and the owners, the speculators, sit in the cities and let the sun and earth and God's bounty do their work for them. Fortunes are piled up in wheat and oil, but there is still poverty all around. A man can work six days a week for eight to ten hours a day, and still only earn thirty-five a week and that is not enough to support a family on. Milk is 25 cents a quart. Land is cheap but building materials are high, so the people live in tiny shacks and whole families exist in one room. It is not as though they could live in the warmth of out of door, either. It is cold and will be cold for months. Occasionally there are snow flurries. And the wind blows, and even when the sun is hot, there is a bite to the wind, that whines around these little houses on the plains, a lonely wind, that never ceases for months on end.

Fr. Lux came down from Chicago where he was chaplain of the Blessed Martin Center for some years, and now he is in the Blessed Martin Mission, among the Negroes of Amarillo, and his parish extends for miles around and there are fifty Catholics in it. There is a school which can take care of a hundred and fifty, and there are Dominican Sisters here, and a few lay people who are interested in people. And all day long Father's telephone rings and people are wanting him, to calm a drunken son who is threatening his mother and breaking up furniture or to visit the sick, or to feed the hungry. There is plenty of work to do, so Father Lux, O.P. cannot miss the great city of Chicago nor the work that he was doing there. Here it is a good place for lay apostles to stop and visit. When I am far in the southwest I realize how good it is to have a few wandering apostles who will come now and again and help out and bring news of the activities in other centers.

Rochester, N. Y.

I started on my trip on December 18th and spoke at Rochester, New York that night. Tommie Scahill and Bea and their five children, four boys and a girl under four and a half, are living in the House of Hospitality there, at 402 South Avenue, and are doing a tremendous job, a job that I am afraid will cost Tommie his health if he does not give it up. He is driving a truck practically every day when he is not working a few days a week for a bit of cash for his family. The truck picks up papers and magazines, heavy bundles and these in turn are sold to support the house. When I saw how much work there was involved in this picking up, how much driving in a heavy truck which has resulted in an occupational arthritis such as tractor drivers suffer from — I realize how Tommie is supporting the house, not only with plain ordinary hard work but with his life's blood. He is indeed laying down his life for his fellows. the house is in debt, because daily there are about a hundred coming in to eat, and there are a dozen men living in the house. The work of serving table is continuous. Tom and Bea's last child is named Stephen and Tom says that St. Stephen should be the patron of Catholic Workers, because they lay so much stress on feeding the hungry. There are also meetings held at the house, and there is a Saturday morning Mass at which the group who have been helping the house for many years participate. The spiritual and corporal works of mercy cannot be separated. While in Rochester I had lunch with Lawrence and Teresa Weider, and visited the shrine to the Holy Family which they have placed in their garden on the outskirts of the city, in honor of their son Joe who was killed in the war. Mrs. Weider's great work now is visiting young mothers in the hospitals helping them with layettes and other needs, and getting them to dedicate their unborn children to the blessed Mother. Their home has always had a Christ's room in it, for the sick and needy.

Cleveland

My next visit was to Our Lady of the Wayside Farm at Avon, Ohio, where I had a very lovely day with Dorothy and Bill and the five children, in this case four girls and a boy, all under seven. Dorothy taught me to make a rosary in the long evening before the bus left, and I have purchased a pair of plyers, and have some materials and am delighted at this new skill. I have always wanted to learn. The Gauchats need very much to build up this home work to supplement his earnings from driving the school bus and working in the feed mill. They are a few years behind on taxes now. So anyone wishing to buy rosaries, beautiful strong ones on silver chains which will not break or tarnish, get in touch with them at the above address. It is a good present for ordination, graduation, confirmation, as well as birthdays and baptismal days.

My bus left at midnight and I got into Chicago in time for eight o'clock Mass at the Paulist Church which is a block from the bus station. It was the feast of St. Thomas, and John Bowers had died early that morning. He had been living and working among the poor for the past fourteen years on West Taylor street, living there in a little store which first housed the Catholic Worker in Chicago. A print of Roualt's St. Veronica which he gave Tom Sullivan hangs in New York and I have a remembrance of him in a work of mercy he did for me years ago when I was taken ill in Chicago and he paid not only for my hospital bill at the Little Company of Mary Hospital where he died, but for the operation on my throat performed there. It probably meant he lived on short rations for some time to come.

He was a man of taste and culture, and he knew good things and the comfortable things of life and he kept just what he needed and put aside the rest to be with the poor. And his idea of his needs was not a worldly one. May God grant him a place of refreshment, light and peace. It makes me happy to think that all you who read this will be saying this prayer for him too.

Speaking

While in Chicago I spoke at Madonna High School in Aurora and at the Sheil School. I had a happy meeting there with Dr. William O'Meara who is teaching at the University of Chicago. Bill is such an old friend that he knew the Fifteenth street office of the Catholic Worker, our starting place, as well as Charles street and Mott street. When we first knew him we was going to the Institute of Medaeival studies in Toronto.

The day of the funeral was a crowded one, beginning with the solemn Requiem Mass where many of John's friends met together, followed by a lunch at Fr. Carrabine's office where John Cogley, Tom Sullivan, Gerry Griffin, John Mella all met unexpectedly, though the first two were at the funeral. We had a further get-together that evening at John Cogley's home, and I met all the children for the first time, Terry, Anne, Christopher and Joan. John and Teddy (Theodora) are moving to New York in a few months, since he is working now on the **Commonweal**.

One of my regrets on this trip is that I cannot hear the series of talks John is giving at **The Catholic Worker** Monday nights on Russian philosophy. I was present at the first two and realize how much I am missing. Some of the material I got from him, I am using in turn in my own talks. More and more I realize the necessity of study groups, which was always the first plank in Peter Maurin's platform; — Round table discussions for the clarification of thought. John is sharing with us what he got at Freibourg last year.

Later the same evening the O'Meara's took me to the home of Milton Mayer where among other people I met Sol Alinsky, who has done so much to coordinate all the groups "back of the yards." We talked about Kropotkin and his ideas of anarcho-syndicalism which are much like the guilds of the middle ages.

St. Louis

Early the next morning, after going to sleep at four, I was on my way to St. Louis in the most rattle trap of busses, the kind put on only on holidays when the traffic is heavy. The doors and windows would not close properly, the heating system would not work, we crawled along, and were hours late. I became so cold, in spite of being wrapped in a heavy coat, I wish I had been prepared with hot bricks, lap robes, and a few other such appurtenances that went with stage coaching in Dickens' day. It was a good vigil, a bit of penance to prepare one for the feast, so it was quite in keeping with the Christmas spirit. I groaned within myself, but I didn't notice anyone else complaining except in the mildest terms. It always amazes me, the patience of the general mass of people. What they put up with, without complaining how far they must be pushed before they can be induced to take any action. The patience of the poor. But smouldering beneath it all is a keen sense of injustice, a scholar-worker, rich-poor antagonism. The race war, the class war goes on. It is here. But one of the things which retards the revolution in America is the dream of wealth, carefully fostered by all advertising, in print, on the air, before ones eyes. The press, the radio, television, all concentrate on increasing man's desires for luxury, for money and for the things money can buy such as the respect of others, place, position and power. Until we begin to want real things, the things of body, mind and soul, we cannot get anywhere. And deep down, buried perhaps beneath the clutter of our days, the desire for God is there in every man. I have faith in this as I have faith in my own life. Every man is hungry for Good, for love, for happiness, but they are looking for Him in strange places.

St. Louis

And who has given him the strong meat of the gospel? Well, there is Monsignor Hellriegel for one, who in his parish, dispenses the sacraments in ways befitting their power and glory. It always thrilled me to think that Father Damien of Molokai felt always the importance of the church services, vestments, rituals, to clothe and present in the most beautiful and majestic way possible, the glory of the faith to those poor and hideously ugly parishioners of his, eaten by disease, no beauty in them. The truths of the faith can reach men most easily presented in this way. They must have had a wealth and a health which we lack in many a prosperous city parish. I arrived in St. Louis in time for midnight Mass and probably because of my vigil on the bus, it was a glorious experience. We all sang the Mass together, there were carols, there was a beautiful sermon and at two I went in the dark clear night to Florence Vollmuth's home and feasted on sausage and rolls and hot coffee before falling into bed for a most welcome sleep. There were other high Masses at seven-thirty and then at eleven and at the end of the eleven o'clock mass there were the acclamations, Christus vincent, Christus regnat, Christus imperat! sung by the entire congregation, a tremendous ovation.

Tulsa

I left St. Louis after vespers and supper with Bob Isaacson and Herbert Baden, on the nine-forty-five bus and arrived in Tulsa at noon the next day. I stayed over only long enough to visit Monsignor Hillenbrand at St. John's hospital where he has been lying in bed, suffering for the lay apostolate, since last February. On Jan. 6th, feast of the Epiphany a year ago he started out with a group of Young Christian Workers for a tour of the seminaries on the west coast, and on the way back, in Oklahoma, there was a head-on collision with another car whose driver had drawn a blank, and the result was the serious injury of Monsignor Hillenbrand. The day I was there he was suffering intensely, and the nurse asked me to stay only five minutes. We made it half-an-hour, and I tell about the visit to beg prayers from our readers.

We will always remember a magnificent conference that Monsignor gave us a few years ago in New York on the Mass. He came right after supper, and our meeting was held in the back yard. It was an unscheduled meeting. He started talking, standing on the step of the rear house looking into the courtyard which was sunk like a well between tenements five and six stories high all around, lighted by the brightness of the kitchens where radios were blaring, and children talking and mothers screaming, and husbands washing up at the kitchen sink, and gradually all this hubbub died down, and the radios were turned off, and people leaned out of their windows to listen, and he talked on, and could be heard clearly in that curious little amphitheater. It was unutterably beautiful, hearing about our Lord Jesus Christ, about whom we should never tire of hearing, and His presence with us, now and today and forever. It brought about in us a great increase of love, and I began to understand how St. Bernard could preach the crusades (an obstacle to me as a pacifist) but it was because his love for the man Jesus Christ was so flaming that he wanted all to walk the land his feet had trod, and breathe the same air he breathed, and see the same sights, so that never again could they think of him as someone afar off, but one near to them, a man like to them in all things, save sin.

He gave us much that night, and he is giving us much now, lying there enduring. God must have thought him strong enough to take it, and the rest of us are spared the suffering which we are not ready to bear. He tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.

Monsignor Hillenbrand must be strong enough, I say, but still in our gratitude to him we must pray that this ordeal be shortened. A year is a long time.

D. Day

Racism

(Continued from page 3)

Holy Father said this is not the time to weep, but to act.

Concentration Camps

Two-thirds of the Japanese imprisoned during the war were American citizens. It was stated by the federal government that there was a great difference between the whites and the Japanese. No one of either Italian or German extraction were restrained, but according to the viewpoint of the government the orientals were in a special category, it was the fact of being Japanese and not for any ideas, political or otherwise, that they were deprived of their freedom. Romanians and Bulgarians were enemies during the war, but even aliens of these groups were allowed to live in comparative freedom.

The excuse was made that the reason this group was to be placed under guard, Army guard, and no state of martial law existed, was because of possible sabotage. Five months after the war started the first camp was opened and up to that time not one case of sabotage by Japanese, or persons of Japanese extraction was reported. When this was pointed out to the authorities a ridiculous interpretation of the facts was made. It was stated that this being the case then there was all the more reason to take preventative measures!

After the horrors of sudden evacuation, mob violence and months in the concentration camps the Japanese were given loyalty tests. By this time many of them rightly mistrusted the government's action. Those who were born in the country, and who by birth had been duped by the fiction of equality of citizenship discovered they were considered as second rate citizens. Under the pressure of circumstances some of them resigned their American citizenship. In some other cases they were deprived of it by the government. They had joined the other groups of depressed rights. The poor whites in the south who are unable to pay the poll tax, the Negro in the south who cannot serve on juries and who is not allowed to vote, the Indians who must live on reservations and subsist on government bounty as wards and subjects of the government and not as citizens.

During our Civil War there was the famed Miligan case. Here was a case of a man who clearly attempted to form a fifth column, an actual army behind the Union lines. The facts were proved and he was tried and sentenced in court martial. The supreme court threw out and reversed the decision, ruling that it was unconstitutional to judge him before military courts and not the civil ones. The whole setup in California was directed by the army, Gen. De Witt acting in his capacity of military commander. It was clearly a violation of the previous American tradition of the distinction between the civilian and military. The supreme court backed up the decision which was made only in the light of expediency. It has now entered into the law of the land, and no longer does the civilian nave his clear-cut independent rights. The circle is now complete, and in effect a real dictatorship can be established. We will be permitted the myth of citizenship as long as it suits the pleasure and the aims of the military authorities.

Restore Citizenship

What can we do to correct this condition? First of all we can urge and persuade the government to restore the right of citizenship to those Japanese who have been deprived of it. We can urge that compensation in justice be made to those imprisoned who suffered either property or financial loss. As Catholics we can insist that our leaders identify themselves with the cause of justice, and that the doctrine of the Mystical Body become an actuality and not a myth. A good deal of study of the whole problem of segregation and of the types of citizenship must be studied. The whole Christian concept of the rights of citizenship must once again be considered and discussed. Those of us who live in areas where there are numbers of Japanese can interest ourselves in their problems, offer our friendship to them, and generally try to clear the atmosphere which is the first step necessary in rectifying one fo the most glaring miscarriages of justice in the country's history. Much of the prejudice in the country is confirmed in law, and when it goes into the books the evil is doubled. The record on the Japanese is but one example of the American failure, a failure which can be repaired only by the practice of Christian personalism on a heroic scale.