

# **TheTheology of Christian Resistance**

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A Symposium Edited by Gary North



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION  |     |
| By Gary North.....   | vii |
| <b>PART I: THE CONFLICT OF CHRISTIANITY<br/>WITH HUMANISM</b>  |     |
| CHRISTIAN RESISTANCE IN THE FACE OF<br>STATE INTERFERENCE  |     |
| By John W. Whitehead.....  | 1   |
| CONFLICTING WORLD VIEWS: HUMANISM<br>VERSUS CHRISTIANITY   |     |
| By Francis A. Schaeffer.....   | 14  |
| WHAT THE WAR IS REALLY ABOUT   |     |
| By Alan Stang.....   | 24  |
| <b>PART II: PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN RESISTANCE</b>   |     |
| CONFIRMATION, CONFRONTATION, AND CAVES   |     |
| By Gary North.....   | 40  |
| RAHAB'S JUSTIFIABLE LIE  |     |
| By Jim West.....   | 66  |
| PACIFISM AND THE OLD TESTAMENT (an extended<br>review of four recent books)  |     |
| By James B. Jordan.....  | 75  |
| NATURAL LAW AND CHRISTIAN RESISTANCE<br>TO TYRANNY   |     |
| By Archie P. Jones.....  | 94  |
| WHAT'S WRONG WITH HUMAN RIGHTS?  |     |
| By T. Robert Ingram.....   | 133 |
| THE COUNTERPRODUCTIVITY OF NOT LINKING<br>CHRISTIANITY AND POLITICS:<br>A REPLY TO SENATOR MARK HATFIELD               |     |
| By Joseph C. Morecraft III.....  | 148 |
| <b>PART III: THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN RESISTANCE</b>   |     |
| THE EARLY CHURCH AND PACIFISM (an extended review<br>of Jean-Michel Hornus's <i>It is Not Lawful For Me To Fight</i> ) |     |
| By Allen C. Guelzo.....  | 161 |

(Continued on next page)

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| THE LESSER MAGISTRATES from <i>Institutes of the Christian Religion</i> (1559)<br>By <i>John Calvin</i> .....   | 170 |
| JOHN CALVIN'S THEOLOGY OF RESISTANCE<br>By <i>Michael R. Gilstrap</i> .....   | 180 |
| DEFENSIVE WAR IN A JUST CAUSE SINLESS,<br>A Sermon (1775)<br>By <i>David Jones</i> .....  | 218 |
| AND GOD DEFEND THE RIGHT: THE AMERICAN REVOLU-<br>TION AND THE LIMITS OF CHRISTIAN OBEDIENCE<br>By <i>M. E. Bradford</i> .....                            | 233 |
| THE DUTCH-AMERICAN GUERILLAS OF THE<br>AMERICAN REVOLUTION<br>By <i>William Marina and Diane Cuervo</i> .....   | 242 |
| THE DEBATE OVER FEDERAL SOVEREIGNTY, A Selection<br>from the Alien and Sedition Laws of 1798 and the Virginia<br>and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798-99..... | 266 |
| ON RECONSTRUCTION AND THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC<br>By <i>Tom Rose</i> .....   | 285 |
| THE STRUGGLE FOR THE HEART OF THE<br>DUTCH NATION<br>By <i>Pieter Jongeling</i> .....   | 311 |
| <b>PART IV: REVIEWS OF BOOKS</b>  |     |
| NEVERTHELESS: THE VARIETIES AND SHORT-COMINGS<br>OF RELIGIOUS PACIFISM (by John H. Yoder)<br>Reviewed by <i>James B. Jordan</i> .....                     | 333 |
| MYSTICISM AND THE EARLY SOUTH GERMAN-AUSTRIAN<br>ANABAPTIST MOVEMENT 1525-1531 (by Werner O. Packull)<br>Reviewed by <i>James B. Jordan</i> .....         | 336 |
| THE CHRISTIAN AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS<br>(by George Van Alstine)<br>Reviewed by <i>Lonn Oswalt</i> .....   | 338 |
| THE WORLD IN THE GRIP OF AN IDEA<br>(by Clarence B. Carson)<br>Reviewed by <i>Tommy W. Rogers</i> .....   | 343 |
| Contributors .....  | 350 |
| About <i>Christianity and Civilization</i> .....  | 354 |
| Publication Schedule .....  | 358 |

## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Gary North

*Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).*

*Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God (Romans 13:1).*

THE question of resistance to a lawfully constituted authority is a very difficult one today, and it has been from the beginning. The New Testament unquestionably establishes the fact that disobedience to political authority is valid under those conditions where the civil government is attempting to suppress the preaching of the gospel (Acts 5:29). To deny this is to deny the history of the church. On the other hand, obedience to the authorities (plural) is required by Paul. Christians from the beginning have had to answer questions like these:

What constitutes a lawfully constituted authority?

Who are "the powers that be" (plural)?

Must we obey every command of "Caesar"?

May we disobey an authority "unilaterally" (autonomously)?

What constitutes the gospel which must always be preached?

What constitutes unlawful infringement on preaching? Lawful?

What are the lawful modes of disobedience? Unlawful?

What if these authorities are not unanimous?

Is a victorious invading army to be obeyed?

How long does it take for an invader to become legitimate?

Answers to these questions have divided Christians for millennia. Literal wars have been fought over them, such as the wars against the Anabaptist radicals of the 1520's and

30's.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the Reformation itself can be viewed as a massive resistance movement against lawfully constituted authorities, as can the English Puritan Revolution and Cromwell's reign, 1638-58. Yet both the Reformation and the Puritan Revolution were grounded in theology. If the Bible prohibits all forms of resistance against constituted authority, was the Reformation illegitimate?

Was England's "Glorious Revolution" of 1688 lawful? Can we take John Locke's word on this? Classical liberal English political theory was based to a large extent on Locke's natural-law defense of the right of revolution, as was much of the rhetoric of the American Revolution. It was a revolution against a Roman Catholic king, James II, so it had religious underpinnings. Furthermore, there is little doubt today that the American Revolution was to a large extent a religious rebellion, and was known as the "Presbyterian revolt" in British circles (see the essay by Marina and Cuervo).<sup>2</sup> Was this revolution immoral from a biblical point of view? For that matter, what about Magna Carta of 1215? Were the English feudal barons morally and legally justified in demanding various concessions, including economic and prestige conces-

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1. Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Messianism in Medieval and Reformation Europe and Its Bearing on Modern Totalitarian Movements* (2nd ed.; New York: Harper Torchbook [1957] 1961), chap. 12. See also Willem Balke, *Calvin and the Anabaptist Radicals* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1981).

2. Archie Jones, "The Christian Roots of the War for Independence," *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, "Symposium on Christianity and the American Revolution," III (Summer, 1976); Carl Bridenbaugh, *Mitre and Scepter: Transatlantic Faiths, Ideas, Personalities, and Politics, 1689-1775* (New York: Oxford University Press Galaxy Book, [1962] 1967); Nathan O. Hatch, *The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought and the Millennium in Revolutionary New England* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1977); Cushing Strout, *The New Heavens and New Earth: Political Religion in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), chaps. 1-3; Alan Heimert, *Religion and the American Mind: From the Great Awakening to the Revolution* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1966); Alice M. Baldwin, *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution* (New York: Ungar, [1928] 1958); *The Christian History of the American Revolution: Consider and Ponder*, edited by Verna M. Hall (San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1976); Bernard Bailyn, "Religion and Revolution: Three Biographical Studies," *Perspectives in History*, IV (1970), pp. 85-169.

sions, from their lawful sovereign, King John?<sup>3</sup> If it was illegitimate, is the right of trial by a jury of one's peers, Magna Carta's great legacy to English common law, also an invalid principle because it was coercively extracted from an unwilling monarch?

We are the inheritors of traditions of political freedom that are intimately bound up with the successful and unsuccessful revolutions of the past. We are the beneficiaries of a common law tradition that itself is the product of revolutions. *Ultimately, the history of Western civilization is the history of Christians' struggles against unlawful State power and the anti-Christian theologies that have undergirded it.* Some of the West's revolutions have expanded State power, others have resisted it. The history of Western liberty has been the history of the development and applications of the Chalcedonian creed and its opposition creeds. R. J. Rushdoony writes:

The Council of Chalcedon met in 451 [A.D.] to deal with the issue as it came to focus as the critical point, in Christology. If the two natures of Christ were confused, it meant that the door was opened to the divinizing of human nature; man and the state were then potentially divine. If the human nature of Christ were reduced or denied, His role as man's incarnate savior was reduced or denied, and man's savior again became the state. If Christ's deity were reduced, then His saving power was nullified. If His humanity and deity were not in true union, the incarnation was then not real, and

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3. Writes Painter: "Two fairly distinct types of grievances lay behind the revolt of the feudal aristocracy against King John. In a feudal state the political power and prestige and the surplus of goods produced by the labor of farmers, merchants, and artisans were divided between the monarch and the members of the feudal class. The political history of every feudal state of western Europe is essentially an account of the efforts of each of these parties to increase its share at the expense of the other. This process had been going on in England since the Norman Conquest [1066]. . . . When Richard [I, "the Lionhearted," John's older brother] came to the throne, the English feudal class was still smarting from the crushing defeat inflicted on it by his father. This fact combined with Richard's military prestige and personal popularity saved him from having to face a revolt. But the behavior of the barons when they learned of Richard's death showed that they had lost neither their ambitions nor their rebellious spirit. In short, any king who tried to increase the power of the crown or even maintain its position as he found it was liable to be confronted with a baronial rising." Sidney Painter, *The Reign of King John* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, [1949] 1964), pp. 203-4.

the distance between God and man remained as great as ever.<sup>4</sup>

The answer of Chalcedon was this: Jesus Christ is both fully human and fully divine, two natures in union in one person, without intermixture. Therefore, the person of Christ is the sole link between heaven and earth. No human institution can legitimately claim to be the final court of appeals, the final voice of authority, the final *anything*. No human institution is divine.

The most important political implication of the Chalcedon creed, and the biblical truth that underlies that creed, is that God is always over the State, and so are His decree and His law. The universe is not a closed universe; God is above it. Therefore, the concept of authority held by most humanists is incorrect, namely, that there is no higher court of appeal than the civil government, the most powerful human institution.<sup>5</sup> Rushdoony comments:

Humanistic law, moreover, is totalitarian law. Humanism, as a logical development of evolutionary theory, holds fundamentally to a concept of an evolving universe. This is held to be an "open universe," whereas Biblical Christianity, because of its faith in the triune God and His eternal decree, is said to be a faith in a "closed universe." This terminology not only intends to prejudice the case; it reverses reality. The universe of evolution and humanism is a closed universe. There is no law, no appeal, no higher order, beyond and above the universe. Instead of an open window

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4. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Foundations of Social Order: Studies in the Creeds and Councils of the Early Church* (Fairfax, Virginia: Thoburn Press, [1968] 1978), p. 65.

5. Some humanists—libertarians, anarcho-capitalists, and utilitarian classical economists—believe that the State is illegitimate. They hold, however, that there is no higher earthly institution than the free market, whose dictates may not be interfered with by institutions claiming a monopoly power of authority to bring physical punishment or impose fines on evil-doers, with evil being defined by the Bible. See, for example, Ludwig von Mises, *Human Action: A Treatise on Economics* (3rd ed.; Chicago: Regnery, 1966), pp. 146ff. Thus, they divinize "man, the individual decision-maker." Throughout history, anarchists have been useful to statist, totalitarian revolutionaries in the early stages of revolutions against an existing civil government. Because the totalitarians understand power, and seek it, the anarchists are easily and invariably dealt with most severely after the revolutions have transferred power to the totalitarians. The State, after all, *does* have the most power of any human institution in a world which does not respect the law of God.

upwards, there is a closed cosmos. There is thus no ultimate law and decree beyond man and the universe. In practice, this means that the positive law of the state is absolute law. The state is the most powerful and most highly organized expression of humanistic man, and the state is the form and expression of humanistic law. Because there is no higher law of God as judge over the universe, over every human order, the law of the state is a closed system of law. There is no appeal beyond it. Man has no "right," no realm of justice, no source of law beyond the state, to which he can appeal against the state. Humanism therefore imprisons man within the closed world of the state and the closed universe of the evolutionary scheme.<sup>6</sup>

### *Multiple Sovereignties*

Because we are under God, we are also under God's revelation of Himself in His law. Thus, the Bible says, we are *citizens of heaven*. Paul wrote: "Our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20a). Yet we are also citizens of this world, and therefore under lawful authorities (plural) here. This position of dual citizenship becomes even more complicated when we face the fact that we are citizens of nations, counties, and cities. *We are citizens of multiple commonwealths*.

These commonwealths are not always at peace with one another. Consider the feudal aristocrat. Painter writes: "The feudal class of the twelfth century thought of themselves as an international caste. At one time William Marshall held fiefs from three sovereigns—Richard I, king of England, John, lord of Ireland, and Philip, king of France. Moreover, he believed that he owed the same obligations to each when in his territory. In war, nobles changed sides as convenience, limited by feudal custom, dictated."<sup>7</sup> Today, the corporate directors of multibillion-dollar (or mark, pound, or franc) multinational corporations are in a similar position: they face multiple sovereigns, multiple law-orders, multiple currency units, multiple taxes, all of which are humbled by electronic

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6. R. J. Rushdoony, "Humanistic Law," introduction to E. L. Hebden Taylor, *The New Legality* (Nutley, New Jersey: Craig Press, 1967), pp. vi-vii. The typeset passage dropped two lines from Mr. Rushdoony's original manuscript. He revised it for publication in Gary North, *Marx's Religion of Revolution: The Doctrine of Creative Destruction* (Nutley, New Jersey: Craig Press, 1968), pp. 118-19.

7. Sidney Painter, *Feudalism and Liberty*, edited by Fred A. Cazell, Jr. (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1961), p. 14.

funds transfer wires among multinational banks. (But, then again, no one is sure just who controls the computer programs that operate the transmission systems that the banks use. Adam Osborne, one of the most informed writers in the world concerning computer technologies, has written that the great fortunes of the twenty-first century may be held by the heirs of the great computer thieves of the twentieth century.)

When Christians face multiple sovereignties on earth, they find themselves in a perplexing position. Whose sovereignty at any point in time should take precedence? Whose requirements are closest to the ethical demands placed on us by the Bible at any point in history? Furthermore, there are multiple principles of ethical action in the Bible. For example, we are to be truthful, but not at all times (Rahab's example). It is the ethical task which we all face to apply the relevant biblical principle to the decisions we make daily. Thus, there is no simple handbook of Christian action, no computerized program that allows us to punch in the data and that will then print out a God-approved plan of action.

### *Selecting the Battlefield*

What each man needs, unquestionably, is biblical law-disciplined intuition, meaning a thorough familiarity with the whole of biblical law, and a detailed knowledge of the issues of the day. Men should almost instinctively know the proper course of personal and communal action for a specific decision, assuming they have devoted time to a study of the Bible in this particular area. No Christian can afford to be ignorant of his Bible and of daily affairs. He has to pick and choose among the issues on which he will take a stand, depending on such matters as: his knowledge of the specifics; the likelihood of success in opposition; his responsibility under the circumstances; the importance of the issue for the culture at large, the local culture, and the future; the cost of the resistance project; and his own personal talents. No man can take a stand on all issues simultaneously, and devote all of his resources to all of them. There is a *division of labor principle* in all human action. We are not God; we cannot know all things exhaustively, nor can we finance all projects exhaustively. But the church, as the total body of believers, though not necessarily as an ecclesiastical institution, should be able to speak



with confidence to the issues of the day.

Because we are members of multiple sovereignties, we can stand and fight, as individuals, where we have the greatest personal influence and responsibility, not to mention the greatest self-interest. Politically, this means that for *individual* action, *local* politics comes before state politics, and state politics comes before Federal politics. Of course, as far as organized pressure groups are concerned, especially single-issue pressure groups, national politics probably must take precedence. You get the "biggest bang for your political buck" at the national level. But individual political action should concentrate first at the local level. This is the great training ground for political action. It is here that we must train our future troops. *Local politics serves as a "boot camp" for the development of political skills and organization.*

Not all Christians will see all the relevant issues at the same time. Those who are familiar with numerous social, political, economic, and military problems, and who then cry out for resistance, will not agree with each other on the priorities. Different people will decide to get involved at different times. Any resistance movement which fails to recognize this fact is bound to be disappointed. Any resistance movement which fails to deal strategically with this fact is doomed to failure. *Any group whose strategy depends upon "everyone getting involved" is going to lose.*

A good example of this can be seen in the "fundamentalism vs. modernism" battle of the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>8</sup> In the institutional struggles of the conservative Presbyterians against the liberals, good men would go only so far and no farther. They had to decide, step by step: Was the struggle threatening the institutional stability of the denomination? They also had the choice: Was a theological victory worth upsetting the institutional tranquility of the denomination? When it became apparent after 1926 that the key denominational bureaucracies of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., especially in the field of education, had been captured by the liberals, a few conservatives began to plan for a new seminary to rival Princeton. When the new independent seminary, West-

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8. The rallying cry of this battle was sounded by J. Gresham Machen [MAYchin] in his book, *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923), which is still in print from Eerdmans.

minster, was established in 1929, some of J. Gresham Machen's former supporters in the battle left the ranks. By not coming under the administration of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., Westminster's very independence seemed to be an affront to the legitimacy and integrity of the denomination. Next, in 1933-34, when Machen's group started the Independent Board for Foreign Presbyterian Missions, others quit; they argued that an independent missionary organization was challenging the integrity of the church. (The most prominent loss was Oswald T. Allis, the great Old Testament scholar, who resigned from Westminster Seminary.) Then, in 1936, when Machen and others who supported the Independent Board, and who refused to send money to the official missions board of the P.C.U.S.A., were excommunicated by the church, others refused to come along with Machen as he founded the Presbyterian Church of America (which became the Orthodox Presbyterian Church when the P.C.U.S.A. took them to court for infringing on the old denomination's name). Finally, in 1937, a few months after Machen's death, the fledgling one-year-old denomination was split again, when fundamentalists, under the influence of Carl McIntyre, left to protest such things as Christian liberty (no booze and no smoking, said McIntyre) and non-premillennial eschatologies.<sup>9</sup> At each step of the way, the Presbyterian resistance movement against liberal Presbyterianism lost segments of its former supporters.

This example is relevant, since *"getting small" is the initial phase of a comprehensive program of resistance*. Lenin's Bolshevik principle—developing first a hard core of true believers—is necessary to long-term expansion for any ideological or theological movement. He adapted the principle, consciously or not, from the experience of the early church. Of course, getting small is not the whole program; there must also be a dedicated program of long-term conquest. A dominion-minded movement must first lose or remove the wavering members of the organization, just as the early church did during intermittent persecutions by the Roman Empire. *But the*

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9. The split at the 1937 General Assembly meeting came after the fundamentalists' candidate for Moderator of the General Assembly, Milo F. Jamison, was defeated by a representative of the "orthodox" wing. Eschatologically, Rev. Jamison was a dispensationalist.

*goal is not to remain small; the goal is to use the dedicated, hard-core membership as a base for total conquest.*

### *Resistance for Christian Reconstruction*

Resistance movements that are strictly negative are at a disadvantage to those that are dominion oriented. The anti-Nazi resistance movements of World War II were filled with ideological opponents who agreed only that the Nazi menace had to be destroyed. The Communists used their power base in the anti-Nazi resistance as part of their continuing, post-War program of world conquest. The non-Communists did not plan systematically for the social and political reconstruction of their nations after the defeat of the Nazis. They did not understand the true goals of their Communist "allies" in the resistance movements, and therefore they did not make plans to counter the post-War tactics of the Communists. This short-run perspective cost them everything. The Communists shot some of them after the war, the most famous being Gen. Mihailovich of Yugoslavia.<sup>10</sup> Another example is Jan Masaryk, Czechoslovakia's Foreign Minister, who supposedly committed suicide in 1948, but who was a murder victim of the Communists.<sup>11</sup> The Communist resistance movement had a program, or at least a long-term motivation; the strictly negative resisters did not. The Communists took Eastern Europe; the patriots and democrats did not.<sup>12</sup> In short, a successful resistance movement needs an optimistic eschatology for reconstruction.

*The problem with strictly negative resisters is that they are usually short-run thinkers. They will recommend projects that do not lead anywhere in particular. They are willing to consume scarce resources, especially time, in order to make a lot of*

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10. David Martin, *Ally Betrayed: The Uncensored Story of Tito and Mihailovich* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1946).

11. Claire Sterling, *The Masaryk Case* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969). On Masaryk's pre-War reputation, see Emil Ludwig, *Defender of Democracy: Masaryk of Czechoslovakia* (New York: Robert M. McBride & Co., 1936).

12. Of course, the United States government helped the process along: George N. Crocker, *Roosevelt's Road to Russia* (Chicago: Regnery, 1959); Jan Ciechanowski, *Defeat in Victory* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1947), the story of Poland's capture; Edward J. Rozek, *Allied Wartime Diplomacy: A Pattern in Poland* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1958).

noise, or get a one-column article in a newspaper (once), or get a 20-second slot on the local T.V. station (once). These stunts are wasteful, unless they are part of an integrated strategy of publicity and recruitment. *The goal is not to become cannon fodder for the humanists' guns.* As Gen. George Patton put it in his famous speech to his troops: "Your job isn't to die for your country. Your job is to get the other poor dumb bastard to die for *his* country." Patton believed in victory, not in becoming a martyr for the sake of making a "heroic gesture."

What Christians should understand is that the recent interest in Christian resistance has come, on the whole, from Christian leaders who have only in the past few years become openly committed to social and political change. Most of them are premillennialists, and they do not believe that Christians can win, in time and on earth, prior to the visible, personal, physical return of Christ in glory. Their idea of a victory is "to go down fighting and take five of the other side with them!" But there are too many people in the ranks of the enemy, even assuming each of us could "take five of them with us." Our goal should be to survive over the long term, developing skills that will enable us to conquer the enemy, society by society, institution by institution. *We need a boot camp experience before we can achieve a dominion experience.* That is the lesson of all the wilderness experiences of the people of God, from Sinai to Gethsemane.

### *Delaying a Frontal Attack*

We must be careful to adopt the long-term strategy of the early church. They did not rise up against the Roman legions. They did not become guerillas. The Jews did, and they were scattered, becoming an identifiable minority to be persecuted throughout the Roman Empire. The Christians adopted a different strategy, although suffering intermittent persecutions — a strategy of avoiding a frontal assault on Rome. By 313 A.D., the Christians triumphed; a non-pagan Emperor came to power. They had become too valuable to ignore or persecute any longer.

The Christians of the first century faced a formidable political enemy. The Roman Empire seemed indestructible. Yet it had feet of clay. It was being subjected to multiple internal pressures, especially intellectual and religious pressures.

The world-and-life view of classical civilization was in the process of disintegration.<sup>13</sup> This was what eventually brought down Rome, not the external military pressures of the barbarians. The church faced a tottering giant. By the fourth century, the will to resist Christianity had gone out of the Empire's leaders. The military was divided, and army factions kept raising up new candidates for Emperor, who then battled against their rivals. The Roman Empire became Christian when classical culture could no longer sustain it.

The insightful political theorist, C. Northcote Parkinson, has thrown light on the question of successful resistance. Parkinson is most famous for *Parkinson's Law*, a book-length discussion of modern bureaucracy. The law states: "Work expands so as to fill the time allotted for its completion." But he is a serious thinker. He summarized an important lesson from successful revolutions:

In studying the history of revolt we find that it seldom occurs, and still more rarely succeeds, under a regime that is sure of itself. Our first mental picture may be of brave men plotting against a crushing tyranny, against a ruthless and cruel despot, against an exclusive group of the heartless and the proud. We soon realize, however, that men are not as brave as that. They do not rebel against strength but against weakness and indecision. Revolutions take place when the regime is wavering and, above all, divided.<sup>14</sup>

We must learn from history. We will be swallowed up if we attempt a frontal attack today, for we have few "troops in reserve." Why do I say that we have few troops in reserve? Aren't there millions of Christians in the United States? Problem: the millions who profess Christianity in the United States are little more than occasional church attendees. They will not get involved in anything more controversial than an Easter sunrise service. They will, if anything, try to destroy the work and reputation of a committed resister, for *the commitment of the "enthusiast" testifies against the complacency of the pew-sitters*. They resent it. The resister tells them that this present world order is evil, and therefore it may soon come under the judgment of God. He tells them that they have a moral

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13. Charles Norris Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, [1944] 1957).

14. C. Northcote Parkinson, *Left Luggage: A Caustic History of British Socialism from Marx to Wilson* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), p. 27.

responsibility to work for specific political changes. This is not what the dedicated pew-sitters want to hear, since their commitment is still to the institutions of this world, in which their capital—emotional, financial, and philosophical—is invested. Their response will be analogous to the response of the Hebrew kings, court prophets, and masses when the prophets preached to them about repentance: to ignore them or to persecute them for bringing news of the righteousness of God and His standards for human society.

### *Mobilizing the Remnant*

At this point, *we should be trying to identify the remnant*, those who will go through the turmoil and persecution without buckling under. Reconstruction is a long-term task, and we have to identify those who are emotionally and financially committed to it. This *process of identification* is preliminary to launching any series of comprehensive resistance strategies. Ad hoc resistance projects may be attempted, as necessity requires (defending this or that Christian school, going into court to protect the integrity of a particular church's records from IRS harassment, etc.), but these are not substitutes for long-term planning.

The next step is to *identify those resistance projects that are still legal and potentially effective*. The common law tradition of the United States and Britain allows citizens considerable latitude in protesting and challenging the social evils of our day. It is foolish to call people to risk everything on high-risk, illegal projects, when there are still lower-risk, effective resistance programs to get involved in. Furthermore, Christians have, for three or four generations, ignored the political and judicial processes by which the humanists have created today's social order. To arrive at long last on the American political scene, near the end of humanism's social experiments, and to recommend self-immolating acts of defiance—"setting ourselves on fire on the steps of the Capitol building"—when we still have less risky and more effective avenues of resistance open to us, is almost as suicidal as the original neglect of politics which has marked twentieth-century fundamentalism.<sup>15</sup>

15. George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). See also the "Symposium on Social Action," *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, VIII (Summer, 1981).

The visible leadership of today's Protestant resistance movements has not yet acquired the political skills, or the common sense produced by years of experience, to identify either the high-priority programs or the most likely means of achieving success in the political struggles. Some of them are aware of their lack of experience, and they have brought in men like Paul Weyrich, a non-Protestant, to give them "nuts and bolts" advice concerning the technical details of winning elections or getting legislation stopped (though seldom passed) in Congress.<sup>16</sup> These Protestant leaders also lack a comprehensive theology of dominion, which should undergird any program of Christian resistance.<sup>17</sup> At best, today's tentative calls for civil disobedience by Christians should be regarded as the beginning of a new political awareness on the part of a handful of Christian leaders and their tiny bands of unskilled followers.<sup>18</sup>

*Lots of people talk tough when the price of commitment is low. Talk is cheap. Action is more costly. But most expensive of all is long-term planning. Those who commit their futures to movements led by short-term thinkers who have vast projects and half-vast ideas are asking for trouble. The biblical pattern of victory is clear: "But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken" (Isa. 28:13). Step by step, we must build alternatives to a collapsing social order, starting with our families and local churches, and expanding outward. Like the church elders and deacons who are first required to rule their households (families and businesses) well before they rule the church (I Tim. 3), so are those who would launch a program of comprehensive Christian resistance. Victory takes practice. First things first.*

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16. Mr. Weyrich is connected with two organizations, the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, and the Free Congress Foundation. He operates seminars in the fundamentals of getting elected to political office. Address: CSFC or FCF, 721 Second St., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.

17. Gary North, "Comprehensive Redemption: A Theology for Social Action," *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, VIII (Summer, 1981).

18. It is indicative of just how ideologically weak the humanist liberals are today that they see in the "New Christian Right" a major, immediate threat to their control of American thought and culture. See, for example, the book, *Holy Terror* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1982). A similar book is *God's Bullies*.

Let us be sensible: leaders of cultural resistance movements—at least those that are not emergency, ad hoc underground resistance movements that are organized against an invading foreign army—should first have displayed skills at reconstructing some other institution: a denomination, a local government, a military command, or something. People who have spent their lives as ecclesiastical independents or near-independents, or who have had no successes in some non-market institutional context, are probably not the best people to lead a life-and-death political struggle against humanistic professionals who control civil governments, non-profit foundations, school districts, the bureaucracies, and the news media.<sup>19</sup> This is why limited resistance in a local context should be a first priority. Here is where Christians must get their training. This is the message of I Timothy 3 concerning leadership. Leaders who have not previously participated in resistance against bureaucracies should be regarded with suspicion when they parade themselves as candidates for a national, not to mention international, Christian resistance movement. Even the native “Field Marshals” of African dictatorships gained experience as corporals in local British colonial armies. Christian leaders should at least have been corporals somewhere, in something, before they ask us to leave everything and to follow them into a war.

The question of Christian resistance is a complicated theological matter. It is also personally demanding, for when the issues become clear, men must commit themselves to a position: Resist or capitulate? Understanding the fundamental issues is preliminary to taking action. Without self-confidence in the legitimacy of the cause of resistance, a resisting group cannot expect to be successful. Men need a *theology of resistance* before they begin to develop a *strategy of resistance*. Before a Lenin there must be a Marx—theory before practice. This issue of **Christianity and Civilization** is devoted to a consideration of the theology of resistance. The

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19. I stress the non-market aspect of organized resistance. Businessmen may have been successful in a profit-and-loss world of non-coercive economic competition, but these skills may not be easily transferred to a very different sort of competition, especially when armed resistance may be involved. On the innate differences between profit management and bureaucratic management, see Ludwig von Mises, *Bureaucracy* (New Rochelle, New York: Arlington House, [1944] 1969).



next issue will deal with the tactics of resistance within an overall strategic framework.

### *The Theology of Resistance*

**Christianity and Civilization** draws on authors from numerous denominational backgrounds, not to mention religious traditions. We have found that many conclusions of people who do not share our opinion of the Puritan and Reformed tradition are often in agreement with the conclusions of that tradition. At the same time, there are some writers who are explicitly Reformed in perspective, yet whose conclusions at various points do not seem to be consistent with their theology. We offer these essays with a disclaimer: they have been published in good faith by all parties, but neither the editors nor the authors agree on all points with each of the essays in this issue.

Section 1 presents evidence that we are facing a real crisis in the United States today. The question of resistance to tyranny is not simply hypothetical. Lawyer **John Whitehead** discusses the rivalry between statist religion and biblical religion. The Bible authorizes resistance against an unlawful, self-deifying state when that state transgresses biblical law. Romans 13 has been misinterpreted by many commentators to mean that we must obey Caesar, whatever he says. He then discusses Samuel Rutherford's classic work, *Lex, Rex* (1644), in which Rutherford outlined levels of resistance that Christians can use against the state. Rutherford denied the legitimacy of the doctrine of the "divine right of kings," which taught that kings are accountable to none but God. This is why he was placed under house arrest. We can use his theology to deny the divine right of all civil governments.

**Francis Schaeffer** argues that the implicit relativism of the religion of humanism makes it a religion of arbitrary power. By denying God, the humanists deny absolute law and therefore the absolute worth of human life. Thus, abortion-on-demand is a "right" on both sides of the Iron Curtain. He is not a pacifist, he says, because he is a responsible man. He has the obligation to resist the bully who is beating up a girl; similarly, he has the right to resist tyrants who are beating up whole populations. The time has come for serious Christians to insist that the government take steps to resist the expansion

of the Soviet Union.

The war is here; on this, our contributors are agreed. **Alan Stang** tells of the war between the Internal Revenue Service and Christian churches—specifically, the Church of Christian Liberty in Brookfield, Wisconsin. Churches are legally independent of the I.R.S., according to the tax code, and automatically tax exempt. The I.R.S. no longer is honoring the law. Stang's article shows the legal grounds on which the Church of Christian Liberty is taking its stand. Stang argues that "We are headed toward a time when the government would license clergymen and churches; when the churches would be tolerated and permitted to function, as in ancient Rome, if the preachers bend their knees and hail Caesar. Such 'churches' would be instruments of government policy." He provides information that churches can use to defend themselves legally against such infringements on their liberty.

Section 2 of the journal presents papers on the biblical theology of resistance. Anyone who doubts the morality of his stand will find it difficult to pursue a long-term program of resistance. This is why we must be certain of the righteousness of our position. In my essay, I present an analysis of the ministry of Elijah, a ministry in three stages: confirmation (invisibility), confrontation, and hiding (invisibility). He needed confirmation of the validity of his call before God; so did his enemy, king Ahab. When he came before the false priests to challenge them, they had already been "softened up" by three years of drought. Then he retreated to a cave, as had 100 other prophets, for God's history to work itself out in Israel. Elijah avoided a premature challenge, and he beat a hasty retreat when his opponents became too strong. Throughout the period, the remnant was being built up by God.

Again and again, Christians return to that classic case of a rebel against state power, Rahab. She covenanted with the Hebrew spies, hid them, and helped them escape. Then she lied to the authorities concerning their whereabouts. Those who caution against rebellion (not to mention lying, which *really* bothers the pietists and legalists in the church) must deal with the case of Rahab. **Jim West** makes their job very difficult. He deals with the problems of lying, the prohibition on bearing false witness, and the historical circumstances of

Rahab's lie. Then he makes some relevant modern applications, such as lying to one's captors in a prisoner of war situation. Conclusion: lying to a tyrant is valid.

What about *pacifism*? Here is an area of real dispute in church history. Must resistance always be of the non-violent kind? If pacifism is the norm for Christians, resistance can only be non-violent. Is pacifism what the Bible teaches? **James Jordan** surveys four pro-pacifist books on the topic, pacifism in the Old Testament. Jordan's conclusion: they have not proved the case that the Bible teaches pacifism, and their arguments deliberately avoid some damaging biblical evidence.

**Archie P. Jones** provides a systematic attack on natural law theory as the foundation of resistance (or anything else). The rise of humanism in the West has led to the creation of civil governments that refuse to honor the law of God. The world-and-life view of the humanists—that all things have their origin in chance—has led to an irrational civil government. Domestic policy and foreign policy are irrational today. Legal thought is in a crisis. He outlines the four stages in the decline of law: 1) biblical law; 2) Christianized natural law; 3) pagan normative law; 4) pagan naturalistic natural law. The so-called “natural law revival” of American conservatism cannot hope to succeed in the battle against the modernist version of natural law; a full-fledged return to biblical law is the only course left to Christians. As he says: “Autonomous ‘Natural Law’ theory is a slippery slope, which leads naturally downward to its own destruction, and the destruction of the cultures and nations which follow its way.” In short, there is no neutrality in legal theory, just as there is no neutrality anywhere else. We dare not base our theory of lawful resistance on the assumption that a “common ground” of legality undergirds Christian and conservative humanistic resistance efforts. Christians who reject the myth of neutrality must also reject any theory of universal, autonomous natural law.

**T. Robert Ingram** goes so far as to deny the concept of universal human rights. What we have is responsibility under God's law, not human rights. As the “human rights” argument was used by the Carter administration, human rights meant two things: the right of Soviet citizens to *speak out* against the

Soviet state (but not to own property), and the right of citizens of non-Communist authoritarian societies to *revolt*. The right of rebellion is basic to all human rights codes, from the American Revolution to the present. But what are the standards of rebellion? The doctrine of human rights cannot say. Thus, it is a doctrine favoring anarchy, and not Christian. It is God's law, not a hypothetical universal human right of rebellion, which is the biblical norm.

**Joseph C. Morecraft III** takes issue with the myth of neutrality in politics. Specifically, he challenges the political liberalism of the neo-anabaptists, as represented by U.S. Sen. Mark Hatfield and Stanley Mooneyham of World Vision, a neo-evangelical parachurch missions organization. These men have resisted the fusion of biblical law and Christian political action, for such a fusion undermines the intellectual foundation of the neo-anabaptists' antinomian flirtation with Federal power [and Federal aid programs—ed.], namely, the myth of neutrality. Morecraft then offers examples of the heritage of biblical law in American politics.

Section 3 takes up the history of resistance in the West. First, the question of the idea of resistance in Western history. One of the most important documents for Protestants is **John Calvin's** final paragraphs in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1559 edition), Book IV, Chapter XX, Sections 23-32. Calvin took the view that the private citizen does not have the right of armed rebellion against a lawfully constituted monarch, but lesser magistrates do have this right. Rebellion against the central civil government must have the assent and co-operation of the intermediate or lower civil government. Calvin was clearly not an anarchist. **Michael Gilstrap** offers a study of Calvin's position on the legitimacy of civil government and the grounds of resistance, legitimate and illegitimate, by and through the lesser magistrates. He analyzes Calvin's *Institutes*, his commentaries on the Bible, and his letters.

The American Revolution was a Christian counter-revolution against an increasingly centralized and bureaucratic British civil government. Parliament claimed absolute sovereignty over the colonies, and the colonists resisted this claim.<sup>20</sup> The colonists also resisted British officials who

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20. See the Symposium, "Christianity and the American Revolution," *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, III (Summer, 1976).

attempted to enforce this claim. On July 20, 1775, a Continental Fast Day was held throughout the colonies, and preachers delivered sermons about the looming crisis. One of them, **Rev. David Jones**, a Baptist, had been pressured to leave a pro-Loyalist congregation that year. He served subsequently as a chaplain in the Continental Army throughout the war, and again in the War of 1812.<sup>21</sup> He delivered a sermon in Philadelphia which summerized the theological case for resistance to unconstitutional tyranny: "Defensive War in a Just Cause [is] Sinless." He pointed out that Abraham fought the kidnappers of Lot. Moses battled the Canaanites. Israel revolted against Rehoboam. The Lord will fight on the side of the colonies, for Britain's cause is unjust.<sup>22</sup>

During the American Revolution, the political leaders did not appeal directly to Calvin's arguments concerning the lesser magistrates, although they followed his guidelines by maintaining the legitimacy of their cause through the action of colonial legislatures, according to **M. E. Bradford**. The American patriots were rebelling against violations of the implicit English Constitution, in order to maintain liberties once possessed by them, but violated by the King and Parliament. What they demanded was "the right of self-preservation, taking the form of a demand for a social and political regime held together by the rule of law." They substituted their colonial legislatures for the older ones that had been under the King's governors, but they did not abolish legislatures. "The popular magistrates, whose offices had the same constitutional sanction as the Crown, were the keys to what could be attempted." They looked to England's Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the Dutch Revolt against Spain in the 1580's. To view the American Revolution as an aspect of the European Enlightenment is totally erroneous. Yet this is the common interpretation by the humanistic historians of our day.

On July 4, 1776, the day of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Continental Congress adopted a resolution that established a three-man committee to design a seal for the United States. The committee was manned by

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21. For a biography of Jones, see Truett Rogers, *Bibles and Battle Drums* (Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Judson Press, 1976).

22. Reprinted in Verna Hall (ed.), *The Christian History of the Constitution: Consider and Ponder* (San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1976), pp. 536ff.

Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin, perhaps the most prestigious trio of Americans ever to sit on a committee. Even so, it took six years and two committees to come up with a seal.

What did this trio of Unitarians propose? Some deistic design? Some humanistic slogan? On the contrary, they wanted something which would make use of biblical symbols. Jefferson proposed a picture of the children of Israel in the wilderness led by a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day. As far as we can tell, it was Franklin who proposed that the seal contain a picture of Moses dividing the Red Sea and the waters closing over Pharaoh's chariot. He proposed a motto to accompany the scene: "Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God." Jefferson liked the motto. Almost certainly, it was Jefferson who proposed it for the seal of the state of Virginia a month later, along with another suggestion of his own, indicating his high opinion of it.<sup>23</sup> As it turned out, none of these suggestions was adopted for the great seal of the U.S. But the phrase is important for understanding the attitude of the Founding Fathers toward their resistance against the British King and Parliament. They saw themselves as doing the work of God in resisting an illegitimate expansion of bureaucratic control over their affairs.

The American Revolution provides concrete examples of how Christians conducted a resistance movement within the framework of a theory of constitutional government. Especially remarkable was the case of Bergen County, New Jersey. **William Marina** and **Diane Cuervo** offer a study of a guerilla insurgency movement that was predominantly manned by Dutch Christians. The local militia battled successfully for five years against the British military forces that were headquartered in New York City, defending the local region, participating with the Continental Army on occasion, and making life miserable for the Dutch Loyalist minority. "These prosperous Dutch farmers were hardly radicals, but a few of them were from the beginning quite militant in their defense of American rights. Early in 1775 New Jersey was one of those states that made the transition from Royal to revolutionary government 'without the firing of a gun,' as the Provincial Congress replaced the Provincial Assembly. . . ." The

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23. Monroe E. Deutch, "E Pluribus Unum," *The Classical Journal*, XVIII (April, 1923), pp. 389, 396-98, 403.

revolutionaries were under the rule of law from the beginning, for the New Jersey legislature had declared itself quite early as favoring the revolt; in fact, "it was the election of the new delegation from New Jersey arriving in Philadelphia late in June [1776], that turned the tide for independence." The essay is a case study of a bloody war over the question of political legitimacy, and how the Bergen County Dutch-American militia fought as law-governed revolutionaries against the army of a British Parliament that had overstepped its bounds to suppress covenantal and constitutional rights.

The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 were assertions of Federal sovereignty. The **Sedition Act** restricted freedom of the press. These acts were immediately opposed by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, who wrote the **Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions** of 1798. These were statements of a philosophy which later became known as "state's rights," but which are simply an extension of the principle of balanced power, Federal vs. local, of the U.S. Constitution. Madison wrote in 1800 a ringing defense of the common law right to criticize the State, in response to the critics of the Resolutions.<sup>24</sup> (Jefferson and his Democratic Republican Party, it should also be noted, did not remain faithful to the principles of the Resolutions, once they were voted into power, and the Federalists became the minority critics sniping at the victors.<sup>25</sup>) The defeat of the southern Confederacy in 1865 was equally the defeat of the original covenantalism of the Constitution.<sup>26</sup>

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24. "Madison's Report on the Virginia Resolutions" (1800), in Jonathan Elliot (ed.), *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution* (5 vols.; Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, [1836] 1970), IV: 546-80. An expensive reprint of Elliot's *Debates* is published by Burt Franklin. A less expensive reprint, under the general editorship of M. I. Bradford and James McLellan, is scheduled for publication sometime in 1983 or 1984. For an extended summary and analysis of Madison's report, see Leonard W. Levy, *Freedom of Speech and Press in Early American History: Legacy of Suppression* (New York: Harper Torchbook, [1960] 1963), pp. 273-82.

25. Levy, *Freedom of Speech*, pp. 297ff.

26. Perhaps the most brilliant defense of the state's rights position is Alexander H. Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States: Its Causes, Character, Conduct and Results* (2 vols., 1868, 1870). Stephens served as the Vice President of the Confederacy. See R. J. Rushdoony, *The Nature of the American System* (Fairfax, Virginia: Thoburn Press, [1965] 1978), ch. 3: "Alexander H. Stephens."

Calvin's theology is applied by **Tom Rose** in his discussion of "The Doctrine of Interposition." He takes Calvin's doctrine of the lesser magistrates and shows how the doctrine of interposition has been used by many Christians to resist political tyranny. Again and again in American history, prior to the Civil War (1861-65), men used this doctrine to justify their resistance to constitutionally unwarranted tyranny. It is on this legal foundation, Rose argues, that Americans should take their political stand.

The final essay is by **Pieter Jongeling**, one of Holland's leading Christian intellectuals and statesmen, one reminiscent of the great Abraham Kuyper. He describes the Dutch resistance movement during the Nazi occupation in World War I. He outlines some of the familiar problems in every occupied nation: How far to cooperate with the enemy, how to hide citizens sought by the occupying authorities, how to finance the resistance, how to communicate with each other, how to keep one's children from being successfully indoctrinated, and how to hamper the enemy's efforts to suppress freedom? In addition, he directs our attention to the problem facing Christians: How to follow the injunction of the Bible to obey the legitimate authorities, while trying to undermine the temporary authorities? Again, it is the question of *legitimacy* which is crucial to a successful resistance movement. Especially important is his observation that immediately after the invasion, the pastors and Christian leaders were silent about what should be the proper attitude toward the Nazis—a silence one suspects was born of confusion combined with fear. One man, Klaas Schilder, spoke out and was imprisoned for his courageous stand. (Mr. Jongeling graciously avoids mentioning the unconscionable treatment of Schilder by a synod committee of his church—which he left after the war—which in 1943 called him to a trial for his opinions, knowing that he was a member of the underground and a fugitive from the Nazis, and then condemned him in absentia when he prudently failed to appear to defend himself at a public committee meeting, which the Nazis were watching.) Because Dutch Christians had failed to understand the Nazi menace before Germany invaded, and had failed to develop either a theology of resistance or a strategy of resistance in advance, they were in disarray when the crisis began. Precious time and thousands of lives were lost as a direct result of their lack



of preparation.<sup>27</sup>

Readers should consider the following questions as they read Mr. Jongeling's essay: Why were the Dutch, especially the Christians, unaware of the demonic archaic theology and social theory of Nazism as late as 1940? Was it willful blindness? Was the pacifism of the 1930's in the Netherlands responsible, in part, for their lack of resistance? If pastors had spoken plainly from the pulpit, from 1933 on, and the people had responded, could the Dutch have taken private as well as organizational steps that would have enabled them to resist more effectively when the Germans invaded? Had the pastors spoken out, would their congregations, seeking a "positive thinking" outlook, have pressured them into silence or alternative employment?

What if the United States should face a situation where political and economic power is claimed as a sole monopoly of the central civil government? We already see signs of this development in the "Regional Government" movement, which has established seven Federal regions as alternative to the authority of the 50 states.<sup>28</sup> What if the United States is invaded by a foreign power, such as the Soviet Union? What if the Soviet Union imposes indirect taxes by capturing the international trade "choke points"? What if Latin American revolutionaries cross our border with Mexico, along with millions of Spanish-speaking refugees, in an attempt to destabilize this country? What if a national emergency is declared by the President, and the hundreds of emergency powers already on the books are imposed—orders which transfer virtually total economic control to Washington?<sup>29</sup> Will there be any awareness of any of this on the part of

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27. For further reading on the conflict between Nazism and Christianity, see Peter Matheson (ed.), *The Third Reich and the Christian Churches* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1981), a collection of primary source materials relating to the years 1933-45.

28. The whole topic of regional government is dealt with in depth by the monthly *Bulletin* of the Committee to Restore the Constitution, P. O. Box 986, Fort Collins, CO 80522. The Committee also has published several books on the subject.

29. On "emergency powers" and "executive orders," see Gary North, *Government by Emergency* (1983), chaps. 7 and 8. Distributed by the American Bureau of Economic Research, P. O. Box 7999, Tyler, TX 75711.

American pastors? If a military invasion were to take place tomorrow—let alone today's steady, quiet, almost imperceptible takeover by domestic humanists—would pastors have anything worth preaching that the authorities would not prohibit? In short, *if the sermons on the theology and strategies of resistance are not preached before the crises hit, will they be able to be preached afterwards?*

The symposium concludes with four book reviews. **James Jordan** takes a look at John Yoder's *Nevertheless*, a book surveying various types of pacifism. Is "non-violence" really not violent, or is it simply another kind of violence? Is just war theory abused by many orthodox Christians to justify any current war? These are some of the questions Yoder and Jordan discuss. Secondly, Jordan reviews Werner Packull's study of early Anabaptism in Southern Germany and Austria. Packull finds that the leaders of Anabaptism in these areas were not Christians but mystics. Jordan points out connections between the kind of thinking these men represented, and modern American evangelicalism. Theologies tainted with mysticism have no answer to modern secular humanism.

**Lonn Oswalt** reviews G. Van Alstine's *The Christian and the Public Schools*. Van Alstine manages to twist Christian doctrine so thoroughly that Christianity becomes, for him, a prop for Satanic humanism. Oswalt devastates Van Alstine's lines of argument, which are fairly commonly encountered these days, and points out that the arena of education is one of the primary battlegrounds for Christian resistance today.

Finally, **Tommy W. Rogers** surveys Clarence Carson's *The World in the Grip of an Idea*, a history of secular humanism in the last 150 years. Rogers concludes that this book is an invaluable guide to a knowledge of our enemy, secular humanism, in its many forms and guises.

## CHRISTIAN RESISTANCE IN THE FACE OF STATE INTERFERENCE

John W. Whitehead\*

ONE sure sign of judgment—upon both the church and society—is increasing state interference in the affairs of the church and Christian institutions. We see it everywhere today. It is as if the church is on the eve of being carried off into Babylon. Clearly, in the face of such government entanglement, we need to consider Christian resistance; that is, the proper Christian response to illegal acts of the state.

### *The Church Is At War*

It is definitely time to shed the naive idea that the modern humanistic state exists to perpetuate good government. It is there to *perpetuate itself at all costs*. No bureaucracy works itself out of a job.

It is also time to shed the idea that Christians can simply go about their business looking neither to the left nor to the right, and somehow be freed from the woes to come. *Every true Christian is on an eventual collision course with the modern technological state, and he should be prepared for it.*

It must also be realized that the technological state has no need for an active church. Indeed, it requires a silent church. There is no room for God in such a state. Certainly, Christians are not here on earth to work out a peace pact with Satan. At a time when men are crying “peace, peace” we are assured that there is no peace.

Christianity, it must be remembered, is at war even in a world of peace. Christ said He came to bring not peace but a

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\*Mr. Whitehead is a practicing attorney in Virginia who specializes in constitutional law and is an author. This paper is adapted from Mr. Whitehead's book, *The Second American Revolution* (Elgin, IL: David C. Cook, 1982).

sword (Matt. 10:34). Much too often, the modern church has sought peace and compromise with the world. As a consequence, *the church has compromised and allowed the tide of humanism to roll over society and encompass it.* Nowhere has this been more true than in the Christian community's silence and acquiescence to the ever growing power and unconstitutionality of the federal and state governments and their agencies. The state is abusing its power. It is up to the Christian community, which knows that the state is not absolute, to stop it.

### *A Subtle Caesar*

Conflict between Christ and Caesar is not inevitable; in fact, Jesus specifically commanded His disciples to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (Matt. 22:21). Conflict becomes inevitable when the secular authority—Caesar—demands for himself *honors that belong only to God.* Church and state can never be entirely separated, for each is interested in a wide range of human concerns, and their interests inevitably overlap. As long, however, as the state does not claim absolute authority and autonomy, it can exercise a lawful role in establishing order and civil justice. In this capacity, the state is called the servant of God (Rom. 13:4). The problem arises when the state claims not a relative and derivative authority, but an absolute and autonomous one.

In modern America, the state does not openly claim divine worship, as pagan Rome did; it permits churches to carry on their worship as before. But in effect it is seeking to make itself the center of all human loyalties, the goal of all human aspirations, the source of all human values, and the final arbiter of all human destiny. In so doing, *without using the language of religion, it is claiming to be divine,* and it is creating a potentially devastating conflict with the church.

The state has become the modern divinity. It is now generally recognized that Communism, despite its commitment to atheism, is a religion, and this makes inevitable its bitter conflict with the church. What is equally true, although less clearly perceived in so-called "Christian" America, is that *government in America is also a religion and is already involved in a bitter conflict with the religion of Christ.* A president may declare himself to be born again and take an active role in congregational worship, but that is no guarantee that the state he heads will

not continue and even intensify its struggle against Christianity and the churches. Indeed, it was under a professing evangelical Christian president, Jimmy Carter, that the federal bureaucracy made some of its most threatening inroads into areas of Christian concern.

*Obviously, Christianity and the new state religion of America cannot peacefully co-exist.* Since the church cannot claim and do less than God requires of her, she must call upon the state to back away from its increasingly explicit pretensions to divinity. Of course, if the United States' president were to demand to be hailed as "divine Caesar," and the state created an open religious cult like Roman state paganism, Americans in their vast majority would rebel. But as long as these claims come in quietly, and without fanfare, in the form of *a shift in the basis of law and government*, Christians may remain tranquil. While Christians are dormant, the pagan state continues to enlarge and consolidate its gains. If this continues for much longer, when Christians wake up it will be too late to do anything but suffer.

### *The Bible and Christian Resistance*

The silent church does not speak to the issues. And, when confronted by the state, it either presents a weak protest and, if pushed, wilts. This stance, however, was not the position of early Christianity or the position of the biblical writers. The early Christians went to the lions rather than transgress God's law and compromise with the secular power. In this sense they were rebels. That is how Rome saw them. As Francis Schaeffer in *How Should We Then Live?* (1976) has written: "Let us not forget why the Christians were killed. They were *not* killed because they worshipped Jesus. . . . Nobody cared who worshipped whom as long as the worshipper did not disrupt the unity of the state, centered in the formal worship of Caesar. The reason the Christians were killed was because they were rebels."

*The battle for Christian existence is upon us.* As the state becomes increasingly pagan, it will continue to exert and to expand its claims to total jurisdiction and power over all areas, including the church. Inasmuch as only biblical Christians have a reference point outside the state, *it will take Christian rebels to stem the tide of the humanistic state*—Christian rebels

in the sense that they will resist, challenge, or protest all institutions and thought forms that are at variance with the Bible.

There are strong biblical grounds which serve as a foundation for Christian resistance to state paganism. The basic text for such resistance is found in Romans 13. It is interesting that Romans 13 is often used by those who claim the state has authority to mandate anything which the Christian must blindly follow. This argument can be advanced only if Romans 13 is used improperly.

In Romans 13:4, the Bible instructs that the state (or state official) is a "minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid: for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." The Greek noun for the word minister in Romans 13:4 is *diakonos* which means a servant, attendant, or deacon. *Diakonos* is used by Christ in Mark 10:43 when He states that "whoever will be great among you, shall be your minister" or servant. It is used by Paul in I Timothy 4:6 to refer to "a good minister of Jesus Christ"; in I Thessalonians 3:2 when referring to Timothy as a "minister of God"; and in Ephesians 6:21 when referring to Tychicus as "a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord." In addition, in Romans 13:6 Paul again uses the term minister to describe a state official. The Greek word used in this verse, however, is "leitourgos" (from which we get the word "liturgy") which describes earthly rulers, who though they may not act consciously as servants of God, discharge functions which are the ordinance of God as He so wills.

There is a specific reason these particular Greek words are used in the Bible. It is God's way of telling us that legitimate state officials or civil rulers are to be servants *under* God, not lords or sovereigns. When the civil authorities divorce themselves from God and the Bible, they become self-styled lords and lawless as well. As St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430) pointed out, *godless civil rulers are no more than bands of robbers*. Moreover, being lawless in relation to God, they are lawless and predatory in relation to men.

In Romans 13 the Apostle Paul (10?-64?) describes the authority but also the limits of civil government. God has appointed civil magistrates to perform a two-fold function (which reflects the general purpose of the state). *First*, the

state must not destroy or subvert the good of society but protect and promote it. *Second*, the civil government must deter crime and bring to punishment those who foster evil in society.

The state's function of protecting the good invariably concerns the issue of the source of the state's authority. Paul states very clearly in Romans 13:1 that all government is ordained and established by God. In the Bible, parents, pastors, civil authorities, employers, and others are said to have received their authority to govern from God. This authority, however, is *delegated* authority. It is not to be exercised independent of God's Word. In fact, the Bible recognizes no power independent of God (Rom. 13:1). For any delegated sphere of authority to speak of itself as a power independent from God is rebellion against Him. For the courts, the Internal Revenue Service, and other civil agencies to speak of their authority as being over all areas of life and as being *derived from the state*, is blasphemy.

In general, whenever the state is discussed in the New Testament, the scope and limits of its authority are defined. For example, in I Timothy 2:1-4 Paul writes:

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

Paul makes it clear that as part of its task in protecting the good, the state is to create an atmosphere where men can be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Paul links this idea to our prayers and our attitude toward the state. And if the state limits the church in spreading the gospel, then Christians are not under a biblical duty to observe such restrictions on liberty.

In I Peter 2:13-17 we read:

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

Peter says here that civil authority is to be honored and that God is to be feared. That state, as he defines it, must comply with the criterion that it *punish the wrong* and *praise those who do right*. If this is not so, then the whole structure falls apart, and there is no reason to obey such a government.

If the state is indeed established by God and the state is a "minister of God to thee for good," then the question is this: What about a civil government that acts diametrically opposed to the principles of the Bible? Does God also ordain such a government? If the answer is in the affirmative, then it can logically be argued that God was in support of Hitler's regime and the termination of the Jewish race.

Christians through the centuries have fallen into two fundamental errors with regard to the state. The first is to claim that the civil government represents the "god of this world" and is totally illegitimate. Christians are to have nothing to do with it. The second holds that the state is divinely ordained in all respects and that Christians owe it absolute obedience. Romans 13 refutes both errors: *the state is a legitimate institution*, ordained in principle by God, and intended to act as His servant to promote justice in the civil and social realm. But *its legitimacy is conditioned on its promotion of justice*. If the state becomes totally hostile to the ends for which God has ordained it, then it becomes lawless. In a pre-Christian society, Paul found it possible to praise even the corrupt Roman state as a "minister of God." Indeed, historians will acknowledge that in spite of its excesses, imperial Rome was generally committed to the promotion of justice and civic peace. It could do so without explicit knowledge of biblical revelation because, as Paul says earlier in Romans, even Gentiles have the work of the law "written in their hearts" (Rom. 2:15). Today the situation is rather different. Once a society has been established and developed with the Bible as its reference point, deliberately to turn away from that reference point will ultimately make the state even less legitimate than pagan Rome.

We must not forget that the issue in Paul's day concerned Lordship. The question was: "Who is Lord—Christ or Caesar?" The early Christians went one step further and queried: "Do we obey a false lord, that is, Caesar?" Paul's answer in Romans 13 is "yes"—if that false lord is performing the biblical function of protecting the good. Again, the government Christians are to obey is defined.



In Acts 17 the Christians were accused of criminal acts. In Acts 17:6 we read that they had “turned the world upside down.” In other words, they challenged the basic assumptions of the pagan culture. But what was their crime? Acts 17:7 tells us: “These all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.” This was an act of political treason.

A popular myth invoked by Christians and non-Christians alike to justify their refusal to stand against immoral state acts has been the assertion that Jesus and the apostles were pacifists. This is not true. The question of pacifism did not arise, but Jesus was certainly no quietist. Jesus Himself felt free to criticize not only the Jewish civil leaders (Jo. 18:23), but also the Roman-appointed ruler Herod Antipas in referring to him as a “fox” (Lk. 13:32). Jesus whipped the money changers and chased them out of the temple (Jo. 2:13-17). Following that, Christ would not allow any person to carry “any vessel through the temple” (Mk. 11:16). Christ’s act of whipping the money changers and blocking the entrance to the temple were crimes. (Ultimately Christ is portrayed in the Book of Revelation as exercising righteous vengeance on the secular humanistic state.)

Paul likewise accused one of the members of a grand jury, who commanded him to be hit on the mouth, of being a “whitewashed wall,” although he apologized when he learned that the man who issued the order was the high priest (Acts 23:1-5). And it was Paul who, when confronted with what he considered to be illegitimate state acts, said, “I appeal unto Caesar” (Acts 25:11). Moreover, we must not forget that many of Paul’s epistles in the New Testament were written from jail cells. Certainly he wasn’t in prison for being a model citizen. He was in jail because he was considered a perpetrator of civil disobedience. It was for doing what was considered illegal in the eyes of state officials.

Peter’s resistance in Acts 5 is a classic example of standing for the faith against the illegitimate acts of the state. Peter and others were thrown in jail for preaching. God himself defied the local authorities, and an angel opened the doors of the prison, freeing them. This was highly illegal. *God, however, identified with the men who defied the state.* God himself took Peter out of the prison. He then instructed the apostles to go and stand in the temple and preach. Again, this was in contradiction to

the mandates of the state. For doing this, the apostles were brought before the Sadducees (or religious leaders) to answer for their "crime." In response to the charge of preaching in Jesus' name, Peter replied: "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29, NASB). The apostles were then beaten and commanded not to preach Jesus. In Acts 5:42, however, we learn that "daily in the temple, and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus." Nothing could stop them. They were too intent on turning the world upside down for Christ (Acts 17:7).

The Bible is also replete with examples of men and women in the Old Testament who were faced with the choice of obeying God or obeying the state. In every instance, the choice was made *to follow the Word of God over an illegitimate act or law of the state*. The following examples are but a few of the many found in Scripture.

When Pharaoh ordered the death of every Hebrew male child, "The midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them" (Exod. 1:17). Jochebed, the mother of Moses, hid her child in a basket among reeds in the river, contrary to the law.

King Darius ordained that "whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days . . . he shall be cast into the den of lions" (Dan. 6:7). Fully aware of this law, Daniel disobeyed and "went into his house . . . and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (Dan. 6:10).

In Hebrews 11:31 we read: "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not when she had received the spies with peace." Rahab's action in protecting the Israelite spies in Joshua 2 was illegal because her government was an enemy of Israel, and the spies were there in preparation for war against her country. Therefore, Rahab's duty was to her own king, her government, her own people; or was it? No, she chose in her heart to follow the God of Israel. She lied. She hid spies and helped them escape. She broke the fundamental laws of her own legal government because behind it she saw another kingdom. Rahab risked everything in order to follow the laws of God, including telling lies. As James 2:25 instructs, "was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she received the messengers, and had them sent out another way?" Francis Schaeffer notes in *Joshua and the Flow of History* (1975) that in the book of James, "Rahab is the only person

paralleled to Abraham" (Jas. 2:21). Great was her faith.

Therefore, it is not foreign to Christianity to protest the illegitimate acts of civil government. The Christian must then say both yes and no to the state. Total silence by the church is received by the state as an endorsement of all that it does, but it is viewed as an act of treason by God. In fact, the Bible proclaims: "A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring" (Pro. 25:26).

### **Lex, Rex and Resistance**

Today most Christians naively accept a kind of *Caesaropapism*. The consensus is that civil government belongs in the realm of God's providential rule. While we may enjoy the right to representation and protest, it remains that when the highest state authority in the land has spoken—be it the Supreme Court or some other state agency—Christians are obliged to obey. This mentality, however, was not that of Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661). Rutherford, a Scot, was greatly influenced by John Knox. In his classic work, *Lex, Rex: or The Law and the Prince* (1644), Rutherford clearly set forth the proper Christian response to non-biblical acts by the state. *Lex, Rex*, through John Witherspoon and others, had a far-reaching impact in colonial America and formed a basis for the American Revolution.

Rutherford, a Presbyterian, was one of the Scottish commissioners at the Westminster Assembly in London and later became rector at St. Andrews University in Scotland. The book, in a society of landed classes and monarchy, created an immediate controversy. It was banned in Scotland and was publicly burned in England. Rutherford himself was placed under house arrest and was summoned to appear before the Parliament at Edinburgh where a probable execution awaited him. He died, however, shortly before he could be made to comply with the order.

The governing authorities' concern over *Lex, Rex* was due to its attack on the undergirding foundation of seventeenth century political government in Europe—"the divine right of kings." This doctrine held that the king or state ruled as God's appointed regent and, this being so, the king's word was law. Counterbalanced against this position was Rutherford's assertion that the basic premise of civil government and therefore

law, must be the Bible. As such, Rutherford argued, all men, even the king, are *under* the law and not above it. This concept, of course, was considered political heresy and punishable as treason.

Rutherford argued that Romans 13 indicates that all power is from God and that government is ordained and instituted by God. The state, however, is to be administered according to the principles of the Bible. Acts of the state that do not have a clear reference point in the Bible were considered to be illegitimate and acts of tyranny. Tyranny was defined as ruling without the sanction of God.

Rutherford held that a tyrannical government is always immoral. He considered it a work of Satan and that "a power ethical, politic, or moral, to oppress, is not from God, and is not a power, but a licentious deviation of a power; and is no more from God, but from sinful nature and the old serpent, than a license to sin." The implications of Rutherford's thesis are important for *it makes the vast majority of civil governments in the world today illegitimate.*

The discussion of Christian resistance is a very serious matter—especially with the number of mentally disturbed people living in the world today. Any concept or proposed action can, and most likely will, be taken to its illogical consequences by someone. Martin Luther and the other Reformers faced this problem. In a fallen world, this is to be expected. Such a fact, however, should not deter us from looking at the appropriate levels of resistance as outlined by Samuel Rutherford in *Lex, Rex*. To the contrary, the fact that we may very well be facing a totalitarian state compels consideration of these principles.

Rutherford was not an anarchist. In *Lex, Rex* he does not propose armed revolution as a solution. Instead, he sets forth the appropriate response to interference by the state in the liberties of the citizenry. Specifically, if the state is *deliberately* committed to destroying its ethical commitment to God, then resistance is appropriate. Rutherford suggested that there are *levels of resistance* in which a *private* person may engage. *First*, he must defend himself by protest (in contemporary society this would usually be by legal action); *second*, he must flee if at all possible; and, *third*, he may use force, if absolutely necessary, to defend himself. One should not employ force if he may save himself by flight; so one should not employ flight if he can

save himself and defend himself by protest and the employment of constitutional means of redress. Rutherford illustrated this pattern of resistance from the life of David.

By Christian resistance is not meant that Christians should take to the streets and mount an armed revolution. In the modern state, such an action would be ill-advised. The state's technology affords it the power to crush armed revolt at virtually any time. Moreover, there is no example in the Bible of any man of God who set out with the design to overthrow his government by violence. The emphasis in Scripture, as illustrated by Peter and Paul, is that by fulfilling the law of God, without regard for the consequences, a true cultural revolution will occur.

Just as armed revolution would be a strategic error by the church, so flight may be also. First of all, due to the immense power of the modern state, there may be no place to flee. The Pilgrims could escape tyranny by fleeing to America. But where do we go to escape? The so-called safety zones, such as Switzerland, are fading. We live in a shrinking world. Second, I would not advocate flight at this time because the church has been taking flight spiritually for the last one hundred years. As I stated earlier, the church must get its head out of the sand and stop retreating and take a stand and fight the slide toward totalitarianism.

At this time in history, protest is our most viable alternative. This is because the freedom yet exists that will allow us to utilize protest to the maximum. We must, however, realize that protest is often a form of force. For instance, Peter in Acts 5 was ordered not to preach Jesus in the temple. He ignored such illegitimate commands and re-entered the temple to preach salvation to the Jews. This is force or compelling others to listen to something they do not want to hear.

There does come a time when force, even physical force, is appropriate. The Christian is not to take the law into his own hands and become a law unto himself. But when all avenues to flight and protest have closed, force in the *defensive posture* is appropriate. This was the situation of the American Revolution. The colonists used force in defending themselves. Great Britain, because of its tyranny, was a foreign power invading America. Note that the colonists did not cross the Atlantic Ocean and mount a physical attack against Great Britain itself. They defended their homeland. As such, *the American*

*Revolution was a conservative counter-revolution.* The colonists saw the British as the revolutionaries trying to overthrow the colonial governments. If not seen in this light, the American Revolution does not make sense.

### *Acting on the Word*

Modern Christians face a more powerful foe than ever faced before by the church. And we must act accordingly. We must always, no matter the circumstances, protect and defend God's people. For instance, a true Christian in Hitler's Germany should have defied the state and hidden his Jewish neighbors from the SS troops. Christians in the Soviet Union should do everything in their power to undermine the atheistic Communist regime. This should be true of all Communist regimes. Christ has proclaimed that all the earth is His and that His disciples are to preach to all nations. No government has any authority in restricting the free flow of God's Word. When they do, they should be resisted.

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## CONFLICTING WORLD VIEWS: HUMANISM VERSUS CHRISTIANITY\*

Francis A. Schaeffer

THE theme I've been asked to speak on tonight is rather a double one, but actually these two halves are not in conflict. As we shall see, they really make one unity:

*The Secular Humanistic World View  
versus The Christian World View  
and  
The Biblical Perspectives on  
Military Preparedness.*

First of all, we must be very careful to define what we mean by humanism. By humanism we are not talking about humanitarianism. Humanitarianism means being kind to people, and as Christians we should be humanitarian even more than anyone else. We must be equally careful not to bring into confusion the difference between humanism and the Humanities. A study of the Humanities is the study of human creativity—often related to classical learning, but also to the whole of human creativeness. And as such Christians above everyone should be interested in the Humanities.

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Many of my books, films, etc. deal with a Christian consideration of the Humanities—being thankful for the creativity which is a natural part of Man because people are made in the image of God.

Then we must ask what humanism is, which we must contrast with great clarity to the Christian world view. We must realize that the contrast goes back to two different views of final reality. What is final reality? In the Judeo-Christian world view, the final reality is the infinite-personal God who truly is there objectively whether we think He is there or not. He is not there just because we think He is there. He is there objectively. And He is the Creator. He is the Creator of everything else. And we must never forget that one of the distinguishing marks of the Judeo-Christian God is that not everything is the same to Him. He has a character, and some things agree to His character and some things conflict with that character. To this God (in contrast to Buddhism and Hinduism for example) not everything is the same, and, therefore, there are absolutes, right and wrong, in the world.

As we come on the humanist side—to the final reality which is being taught in our schools and which is much of the framework of the thinking and writing of our day—the final reality is thought of as material or energy which has existed in some form forever and which has its present configuration by pure chance.

*The real issue is the question of final reality.* The difference lies in what the final reality is: Either the infinite-personal God to whom not everything is the same, or merely material or energy which is impersonal, totally neutral to any value system or any interest in man as man. In this view, the final reality gives no value system, no basis for law, and no basis for man as unique and important.

Beginning about eighty years ago, we began to move from a Judeo-Christian consensus in this country to a humanist consensus, and it has come to a special climax in the last forty years. For anyone here who is fifty years of age or more, the whole dramatic shift in this country has come in your adult lifetime. And today we must say with tears that largely the consensus in our country, and in the western world, is no longer Judeo-Christian, but the general consensus is humanist, with its idea that the final reality is only material or energy which has existed forever, shaped into its present form by

pure chance. There is no value system at all from that final reality. No one has said it better than Jacques Monod, the Nobel prize-winner in biology, a Frenchman, who wrote a book some years ago, which was very popular at the time, called *Chance and Necessity*. His view is that this is the final reality. He laid down very firmly that with this view there is no way to determine the "ought" from the "is"—none at all. *On this basis, therefore, Man makes himself the measure of all things.*

All the things that have come into our country which have troubled us are only the inevitable results of this world view. If you hold this world view, you must realize there is no source of knowledge except what man can find for himself; all revelation is ruled out. Knowledge never can be certain; and there can be no value system except that which is totally arbitrary. This view leaves us with no final value system, and, therefore, with only *personal, arbitrary, relative values*. It isn't only Fletcher who teaches situational ethics today; it is the general concept that we find on the basis of this view of the final reality.

And more serious than the personal arbitrary value systems is the fact that it leaves us only with *arbitrary law*. There is no basis for law. Law becomes only the decision of a small group of people, and what they decide at a given moment is for the good of society. And that is all because the final reality gives no clue as to what law should be, and it is left up to a group of people, the Supreme Court, or whoever they are, to make their own decision as to what is good for society at the moment. So you have relative personal values and arbitrary law, and you will also have the loss of any intrinsic value of the individual person. This is the reason that today in this country we accept what would have been an abomination just ten years ago, and that is abortion growing on into infanticide, the killing of babies after they are born if they do not come up to someone's standard of value, and on into the drift toward euthanasia of the aged. This is all a natural result of the acceptance of this other view concerning final reality and the lowering, therefore, of any view of human life. In their view, the final reality has nothing to say about any real value, any unique value to human life. In our country, this shows itself in many ways, but it most clearly shows itself in the syndrome of abortion leading to infanticide, leading to the euthanasia of the aged.

When Dr. C. Everett Koop, my son Franky, and I worked on *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* and we began to talk about infanticide, people really thought we were way out in left field somewhere, but now it has been declared legal in the case in Indiana where a baby, this Down's syndrome child, was allowed to die upon the basis of the parents' wishes.

And the *enthanasia of the aged* will also come with speed. If you think this is extreme, think back on the change from abortion to infanticide and with what speed that came. What is involved is not only a loss of the baby that is killed, but it is a loss increasingly of a whole view of the unique value of human life; and *it is the loss of compassion*. The compassion this country never has had enough of, but for which it has been somewhat known, will not stand if we continue to go down this humanistic road, because there is no real value for people intrinsically and as such it is not only the babies that can be killed with abortion and infanticide, but there is no real reason for compassion toward other people.

I would plead with those of you who are in government not to allow other things to sidetrack you in the need to stand against this downplaying of the value of human life. Many things might distract you, but you must realize, for those of you who are Christians especially, that *there is an absolutely unbreakable link between the existence of the infinite-personal God of the Bible and the unique value of human life*. And if you allow the unique value of human life to be played down legally, as it is at the present time in this country, not only does it lead on to other things such as the euthanasia of the aged, but the whole basis of compassion is lost. For those of you in government who think this is a small issue that should be swept under the rug, I plead with you to think again of the fact of how crucial and central this issue is. This is a vital issue, which the Judeo-Christian final reality gives us, and we are losing it with great speed. It is where humanism in medicine and in law have come together at the point of human life, and it naturally favors abortion, and equally it has no way to put any emphasis on the value of human life when we consider it politically in other countries.

The First Amendment, of course, has been stood on its head. The First Amendment was that there should be no national state church for the thirteen colonies, and that the federal government should never interfere with the free expres-

sion of religion. Today it has been turned over by the humanistic society, the American Civil Liberties Union, and so on, and the First Amendment is made to say the very opposite: that Christian values are not allowed to be brought into contact with the governmental process.

The terror is, that in the last forty years, civil government and especially the courts, has increasingly been the vehicle to force this other world view on the total population. It is government that has done it by its laws and court rulings.

We find as we look at this country that we have now a largely humanistic consensus, a humanistic culture, a humanistic society, but happily we do not have yet a *totally* humanistic culture or consensus. It isn't total; we still have the Christian memory, although it is moving with titanic speed. Now, this being so, our calling is clear. It is that we who hold the Christian world view, we who love human life, we who love humanity, should stand first for the honor of God, but we should also stand so that humanness will not be lost in all areas.

And then, we must say with sobriety that the United States does not have an autonomous "manifest destiny." Consequently, if we continue to insist in walking down this road, at some point, as God is God and not all things are the same to God, we who have trampled so completely on all those amazing things that God has given us in this country, can we expect that God does not care? So we must not feel that we are only playing intellectual and political games. If this God exists and not all things are the same to Him, we must realize as we read through the Scriptures that those who trample upon the great gifts of God one day will know His judgment.

The first part of our topic was the secular humanistic world view versus the Christian world view, and I have dealt largely with our own country. The second half is "The Biblical Perspectives on Military Preparedness." This is related to what I have just been speaking about; they are really not two divergent subjects at all. You must realize that the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc and all of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Communism—all of it also has as its base that the final reality is only material or energy shaped by pure chance. This is the central thing. The economics of Marxianism really is not that which is central. It is a dialectical *materialism*—you have heard the term all your life, I am sure. "Dialectical," and then comes

the word—"materialism." In other words, the final reality is only material, or energy shaped by chance, exactly the same idea that is a plague in our own country under the term of humanism. Now where does it end? It leads in the Marxist bloc, therefore, inevitably to a devaluation of human life. As in our country, humanism leads to abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, and a loss of compassion; this view of final reality does so more totally in the Communist bloc because it is *totally* committed to this view. There is a total emphasis that there are no fixed values. Therefore, there is a total emphasis that there is only arbitrary law.

Franky has just made a new film called *The Second American Revolution* which we plan to show here in the fall in Washington. It is a powerful thing, and one of the people in the film is Stalin, and he says exactly what his position was: law is only what he arbitrarily sets forth. That's all. You will notice that we have a parallel here to what is happening in our own country, but the difference is that in our country, this ideology and its effects are not total. In Communist countries it has become total. This idea of the final reality has come to its total conclusion, so there is no fixed value; there is totally arbitrary law, and there is the total loss of the value of the individual person, and only the State has come to matter. There is an elite which sets the laws, which says arbitrarily what the laws are, and which sets forth these things as arbitrary absolutes. So we find in the Soviet bloc a natural direction toward an elite that has more total power in an arbitrary fashion than any of the old kings.

There is no final value system, and, therefore, we should not be surprised that they sign the Helsinki Accords and then go ahead and continue to persecute their people without ever a wink. Why should they not? There is no absolute standard. Only the State matters, and the good of the State, as they see it. We are totally naive if we are surprised that when it is convenient the Helsinki Accords or anything like them can be broken overnight, for "the good of the State."

It is an interesting thing in regard to their abortion laws that when the Soviets first came into power, they made easy abortion laws. Later they found that these laws were not helpful for the State, so overnight they changed them, and in the Soviet Union abortion became illegal. Later they changed them back again, a flip-flop with no problem. Why not? They

were making arbitrary laws.

We find that on the basis of their world view, they have a low view of human life concerning the individual person. This takes two forms: First, *domestic oppression*, from Lenin onward. Lenin wrote before he ever came to power that the reason that one of the early attempts at revolution in France was not successful was that the revolutionaries had not killed enough people. With their low view of human life, we cannot expect anything else. You must understand that oppression is not an incidental thing in their system. From Lenin onward, oppression was logical—on their own population, as an integral part of their system.

The second result is external and that is *international expansion and oppression*. But I beg you to understand that this is not a fluke of one moment of their history. It is also a part of the integral system which they hold. As naturally as humanism in our country leads to abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia, in the more total expression in the Soviet system humanism leads to internal oppression and external expansion and oppression.

I must say that I have one admiration for them; that is, from Lenin on they have been, I think, the only country in the world that has had a consistent foreign policy. They have been *totally* consistent, unhappily so.

We can think of Latvia. Poor Latvia, they did not want to be overrun, but they were overrun. If you go into Finland where people have contacts into Latvia and Estonia, there is sorrow because of this expansion and oppression in these countries. More close in time, we have the immediate history of Afghanistan and Poland. This is as natural to the materialistic world view as is abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia on this side of the iron curtain. Those of you who understand what is happening in our own country with regard to the lowering of standards in these areas ought to be able to understand what it means in Communist countries, where these concepts are total, and there is total power to bring forth their natural results.

In the light of this natural expansion and oppression wherever they go, what should be our Biblical perspectives on military preparedness? That is the second half of our talk for tonight. I would say that from my study of the Scripture, not to do what can be done for those in the power of those who

automatically and logically oppress is nothing less than lack of Christian love. This is why I am not a pacifist. *I am not a pacifist, because pacifism in this poor world in which we live, this lost world, means that we desert the people who need our greatest help.* As an illustration: I am walking down the street. I see a great big burly man that is beating a little tiny tot to death—beating this little girl, beating her, beating her. I come up and I plead with him to stop. If he won't stop, what does love mean? Love means I stop him in any way I can including, quite frankly, hitting him, and to me this is necessary Christian love in a fallen world. What about the little girl? If I desert the little girl to the bully, I have deserted the true meaning of Christian love, and responsibility to my neighbor. And we have in the last war the clearest illustration you could have with Hitler's terrorism. That is, there was no possible way to stop that awful terror that was occurring in Hitler's Germany except by the use of force. There was no way. As far as I'm concerned, this is the necessary outworking of Christian love. The world is an abnormal world, because of the Fall it is not the way God meant it to be. There are lots of things in this world which grieve us, and yet we must face them.

Now I want to read tonight a portion from a letter that I wrote to a certain person that I like very much but who was in danger of being confused at this very point:

"We all grieve at any war and especially atomic war, but in a fallen world there are many things we grieve at, yet nevertheless we must face. From the time of the last World War onward, it is the Europeans more than the Americans who have wanted the protection of atomic weapons and have demanded it. They understood the reality of what Winston Churchill said immediately after the last war—that is that with the overwhelming forces of the Soviets they could easily dominate Western Europe to the Atlantic Ocean if it were not for the fact of being deterred by the United States having the atomic weapons. We have come to a crazy place undoubtedly, with far too many of the atomic weapons on both sides, and where there must be open discussion and reduction concerning this. But the initial factor is not changed. Europe would even more today than in Winston Churchill's day be subject to either military or political domination of the Soviets if it were not for the addition of the factor of the existence of the atomic weapon.

"Further than this, Europe's economic wealth, to the level that some European nations now have a higher standard of living

than the United States, rests upon the fact that they are spending less for defense than they normally would have because of dependency on the atomic weapons the United States holds. As the Soviets, with their lack of care for the individual, have used a larger portion of their national income for building up their great military machine, so Western Europeans used less money for defense and built up their economy.

"If the balance is now destroyed, there is no doubt in my mind that either militarily or politically the greatly superior Soviet Forces in Europe would soon overshadow Western Europe. The leaders like Schmidt of Western Germany understand this, even if the left wing of his party and the peace movement do not understand it.

"Unilateral disarmament in this fallen world, and with the Soviets' materialistic, anti-God base, would be totally utopian and romantic and lead, as utopianisms always do in a fallen world, to disaster. Further, it may sound reasonable to talk of a freeze at the present level or 'we won't ever use atomic weapons first,' but thinking it through, either of these equals practical unilateral disarmament. The atomic deterrent is removed and Europe stands at the absolute mercy of the overwhelmingly superior Soviet forces.

"The world quite properly looks back to the church in Germany during the early days of Hitler's rise and curses it for not doing something when something could have been done. Churchill said in the House of Commons after Chamberlain signed the Munich pact:

[The people] should know that we have sustained a defeat without war. . . . They should know that we have passed an awful milestone in our history . . . and that the terrible words have for the time being been pronounced against the Western democracies: "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting." And do not suppose this is the end; this is only the beginning of the reckoning. This is only the first sip, the first foretaste of a bitter cup which will be proffered to us year after year unless, by a supreme recovery of moral health and martial vigor, we arise again and take our stand for freedom as in olden time.

"I do not always agree with the French theologian-philosopher, Jacques Ellul, but he certainly is correct when he writes in his book, *False Presence of the Kingdom*:

It was in 1930 that Christians should have alerted the world to decolonization, to Algeria and to Indochina. That is when the churches should have mobilized without let-up. By 1956, those matters no longer held a shadow of interest. The socio-political process was already in operation, and it could not have made an iota of difference whether Christians got into



the act or not. It would not have lessened a single atrocity nor resulted in a single act of justice. Likewise it was in 1934 (the occupation of the Ruhr) or in 1935 (the war in Abyssinia), that Christians should have foretold the inevitable war against Nazism. That was when clarity of vision was essential. After 1937 it was too late. The fate of the world was already sealed for thirty years or more. But in those ears the Christians, full of good intentions, were thinking only of peace and were loudly proclaiming pacifism. In matters of that kind, Christians' good intentions are often disastrous.

"I am convinced that if the Bible-believing people now go along with the concept of 'peace in our time' under the plausible concern and fear of atomic warfare (which we all certainly feel), *our children and grandchildren will curse us quite properly for not doing something at this moment to restrain the drift toward the loss of Western Europe and other places to the Soviet expansion.* It is not a bare theoretical concept. It means more of the world being not only under tyranny (which the Christian always should resist) but also means more of the world living in the horrible conditions of our brothers and sisters under the Soviet Union, with their not only lack of general freedom, but lack of freedom to teach their own children about truth and about Christ. I do not want that for my children and my grandchildren.

"The issue at this moment, I believe, is nothing less than Churchill versus Chamberlain. We stand with one or the other."

In conclusion then (I am no longer reading from the letter): The question comes down to who really is for peace and who really is for war. And the conclusion on the base of the Bible's realism and in the light of even recent history, is that those who say they are not for unilateral disarmament, but whose position equals unilateral disarmament, are those who, like Chamberlain, will bring war.

## WHAT THE WAR IS REALLY ABOUT

Alan Stang

THE most important war now being fought has yet to be mentioned by network news, as your reporter sets this down. We are familiar with the war between Britain and Argentina, from the legal issues involved down to the personal stories of the troops. We have been told on a daily basis about the disaster in Lebanon. Those conflicts *are* supremely important, and by no means are we trying to denigrate them here. At the same time, their bluster and violence notwithstanding, they are dissipating skirmishes beside the war the moguls of the media studiously won't tell you anything about.

The war your reporter speaks of is being fought in the United States. It is a religious war as profound as any recorded in Scripture or history. It is a war that one side appears ready to fight to the death; but which the other isn't yet fully aware it is in. It is a war in which preachers already have been thrown into jail, as was Paul; in which preachers have quite literally been dragged from the pulpit. It is a war in which God's people are systematically being brutalized by the Satanic instrumentality called the Internal Revenue Service. At issue is the first and most important issue: who should sit upon the Highest Throne?

You may well find it difficult to believe that all of this is a non-story to the people who decide what you are allowed to see on television, but you will have to, Pilgrim. It is.

### *Church on Trial*

In 1978, the Internal Revenue Service sent a letter to the Church of Christian Liberty, in Brookfield, Wisconsin, a suburb of Milwaukee, saying that it wanted to examine the books. Dated July twelfth, signed by District Director C. D. Switzer, the letter began: "The Service has the responsibility

for determining whether or not churches and their integrated organizations are exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. . . ." That was the first sentence and it was wrong. Section 508 qualifies 501(c)(3), so that a church, unlike a mere charitable organization, doesn't have to apply for anything. A church is exempt the instant it is created. It doesn't have to notify I.R.S. The Internal Revenue Service says so itself in more than one place. Some churches may have been operating legally, and fully tax-exempt, for the almost seventy years since the income tax became law, without the Internal Revenue Service ever knowing of their existence.

In effect, the Internal Revenue Service wanted proof that the Church of Christian Liberty is a church. The I.R.S. letter also asked a plethora of questions about Christian Liberty Academy, which the Church runs. From the curriculum, to the faculty, to the building and tuition, I.R.S. wanted to know. For instance: "A numerical schedule showing the projected racial composition for the subsequent academic year of student body, faculty and administrative staff." Indeed, the District Director's mailing explained that an I.R.S. regulation "sets forth the publicity requirements needed to make known to the public your non-discriminatory racial policy. Note the caption and size requirements. Please submit the entire page of the newspaper containing the publication."

That's right; I.R.S. expected the Church to spend scarce money on newspaper ads to prove it isn't biased. This is just a symptom of the madness to which the present federal racist frenzy has brought us. It would make just as much nonsense to require doctors, lawyers, used car salesmen, and Richard Nixon, among others, to advertise the assertion, "I am not a crook!"

So, the Church of Christian Liberty ignored the I.R.S. mailing. After a while, I.R.S. called for an appointment, and Church officials made one for nine a.m., during chapel, which the agent sat through. They saw classes in session, books, the curriculum, and so on. They met the members of the board.

It wasn't enough. They wanted everything, every scrap of paper related to the Church. Pastor Dale Dykema recalls the agents saying this: "How do we know this isn't a front, drawing out \$100,000 a year? How do we know you aren't carrying on unrelated business activities?"

The Internal Revenue Service bases most of its case in this matter on Section 7605(c) of the Code, which allows limited examination of the church records only if the District Director "believes" such activities are present. Section 7605(c) thereby pays reluctant deference to the Fourth Amendment doctrine of "probable cause," but at no point in all this has the District Director ever claimed that he "believed" any such thing. In short, I.R.S. wanted to do what our liberal friends say is so outrageous when the government tries to do it to a liberal, or even revolutionary, group: I.R.S. wanted to conduct a "fishing expedition." The Internal Revenue Service wanted to look through the records in search of something "wrong."

The Church refused. Pastor Dykema recalls that the agents were surprised, taken aback, even "flabbergasted." It is interesting to note that a member of the board asked the agents for proof of identification and their *home* addresses — *which they gave*. Presumably this means that taxpayers are entitled to receive such information.

The agents left. There were other meetings, in which the Church, eager to cooperate, did present some limited financial information, such as a year's list of contributions, without the contributors' names; and eighteen months of cash flow, including payroll. The Internal Revenue Service still wasn't satisfied.

On the last day of August, 1979, I.R.S. agent Henry Graner issued a Summons, ordering Pastor Dykema to appear before him with fourteen different categories of documents, including: the names of *all* contributors during the previous four years; *all* correspondence during that period; the names and addresses of *all* officers, directors, trustees, and ministers; *all* minutes; and, "All documents reflecting the principles, creeds, precepts, doctrines, practices, and disciplines espoused by the above-named organization."

Graner also used the phrase, "but not limited to." This meant that if the Church had some document he hadn't thought of listing, Pastor Dykema was supposed to bring that along, too. One is reminded of the United States Constitution. There, the Founding Fathers set forth a long list of the things the federal government is *not* allowed to do; ending, in the Bill of Rights, with the warning that if there is something the Fathers specifically forget to prohibit, it, too, is forbidden

to the government. Now, our God-ordained system has been so perverted that the I.R.S. sets forth a list of what it allows itself to do; then adds the warning that whatever it has forgotten is also allowed. This is government by blank check.

The Pastor showed up, but refused to show the records. According to the federal courts and the Internal Revenue Service, he has the perfect right to do that. The reason is that an Internal Revenue Service audit is based upon voluntary compliance. The government cannot use forcibly extracted testimony against you, so if it requires you to turn your books and records over to the I.R.S., it can't use any of the information to levy fines or throw you in jail. And this restriction would destroy the very purpose of the audit; which is precisely to collect information the government can use against you, if it likes. So, if you don't volunteer, you can't be audited.

For instance, in the 1969 case of *United States versus Dickerson* (413 F2nd 1111), the U.S. Court of Appeals said as follows: "Only the rare taxpayer would be likely to know that he could refuse to produce his records to I.R.S. agents." In *Boyd versus the United States* (116 U.S. 616), the Supreme Court put it this way: "It does not require actual entry upon premises and search for and seizure of papers to constitute an unreasonable search and seizure within the meaning of the Fourth Amendment; a compulsory production of a party's private books and papers, to be used against himself or his property in a criminal or penal proceeding, or for a forfeiture, is within the spirit or meaning of the Amendment."

Along these lines, at one time in the course of this particular I.R.S. foray, the agents considered bringing *criminal* charges against Pastor Dykema.

The reader may now be thinking that I.R.S. disagrees with the courts. On the contrary, it says the same thing: "An individual may refuse to exhibit his books and records for examination on the ground that compelling him to do so might violate his right against self-incrimination under the Fifth Amendment and constitute an illegal search and seizure under the Fourth Amendment." Does this emanate from the headquarters of the "tax rebellion?" Hardly. You will find it in Section 342.12 of *Handbook for Special Agents*, published by the Internal Revenue Service.

Indeed, that same Section of the *Handbook* instructs I.R.S. agents as follows in regard to the summons: "The privilege

against self-incrimination does not permit a taxpayer to refuse to obey a summons issued under Internal Revenue Code 7602 or a court order directing his appearance. He is required to appear and cannot use the Fifth Amendment as an excuse for failure to do so, although he may exercise it in connection with specific questions. He cannot refuse to bring his records, but may decline to submit them for inspection on Constitutional grounds."

That's right, Pilgrim. That's what I.R.S. tells its own agents. In short, the recipient of an I.R.S. summons must show up, but doesn't have to show his records. That's what Pastor Dykema did.

To see all this in proper perspective, you need to know that in 1976, the Communist Party refused to file the information on contributions that is required of *all* political parties in the United States. The Federal Election Commission took the Communists to court, and federal judge Lee Gagliardi ruled for the Reds. The Commission appealed, and the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in New York *upheld* the ruling. The Court explained that if the Reds were made to obey the law, many people would not contribute to the Party, because of fear of "governmental or private harassment and rebuke."

So, the Communist Party is exempt from government inspection of its records. But the Church of Christian Liberty is not.

The case went to court. On April first, 1980, I.R.S. agent Henry Graner testified before U.S. Magistrate Aaron Goodstein. Graner explained that he visited the Church. Remember, he was going there to determine whether the institution is in fact a church. In a version of the Inquisition, I.R.S. presumes to rule upon theology. Here's what he found: "Items, documents reflecting that Pastor Dykema performed marriages, and he also performed baptisms. . . . I did receive some pamphlets, namely a document indicating the type of worship. . . . I received a document where it says they're going to have an open house. I received a contract that extended to teachers which the church considers ministers. . . ."

Mr. Graner was shocked by this practice. Elsewhere in his testimony, he explains: "Although, in all fairness, I did see one thing that's of question. That is their treating instructors and teachers as ministers—or just based on the fact of discus-

sions with Dale Dykema and reading the brochures.

"Q. Can you tell me, Mr. Graner, did you see that on the financial statements, about the fact that the church considers teachers to be ministers?"

"A. Yes, it's on the profit and loss statement. The contract is for pastors and ministers. I even asked, I said, 'The ministers are what?' And I was informed, I believe, by Mr. Whitehead, that they were the teachers that receive a 'call' and they are issued a contract, that's mentioned earlier, which I received in blank."

There is a mountain of evidence that the treatment of teachers as ministers is scripturally sound. Scripture admonishes us to teach our own. There is, for instance, the doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers. It is hard to come up with something that should be less controversial.

But notice that Mr. Graner was shocked. Remember that one of the reasons he went to the Church was to find out whether it really is a church; his testimony makes clear that this perfectly routine Church practice left him dubious. His own testimony makes clear the fact that I. R. S. has usurped the power to rule on theology.

Indeed, even with the best of will, the potential for abuse in such a system is great. Mr. Graner was shocked because he is a Roman Catholic, who was inspecting an independent, fundamental church. Even less surprising than the church's treatment of teachers as ministers, is the fact that Mr. Graner was shocked. No doubt the same potential for abuse would exist, were the government to send your obedient servant or Pastor Dykema to inspect the Roman Catholic Church.

In spite of which, toward the end of Mr. Graner's testimony, the attorney for the Church elicited this: "Q. During your tour of the facility, did you see anything in the facility which would lead you to believe that this was, in fact, not a church operation?"

"A. From the tour of the facilities, no.

"Q. Did you see anything that might have had anything to do with outside business activities, which would produce income?"

"A. No."

Magistrate Goodstein found for the Church, and his recommendation was adopted by U.S. District Judge Myron Gordon, who ordered the government's petition for enforcement of the

summons dismissed. The Internal Revenue Service appealed, and the case went to the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago. That Court decided in favor of the government, in one of the most amazing rulings your reporter has ever read.

So you claim you have withstood the temptations of the flesh! Pilgrim, that may be, but your obedient servant will not be convinced until you prove you can resist the temptation to concoct any number of clever takeoffs on the name of Edward Dumbauld, the judge who wrote the ruling. When you read it, you will certainly conclude that no jurist could be as dumb as his honor appears—a statement that, while true, is also *prima facie* proof that your obedient servant has faced the temptation and failed.

So has Pastor Dykema. Why shouldn't he? He's a sinner, too. He tells your reporter that, during the appeal hearing, Dumbauld wasted substantial time "asking dumb questions." For instance, he asked the jurist, "How do we know it isn't a macaroni factory?" This is the kind of question judges often dismiss as "frivolous," and it certainly *is* more frivolous than it would be to ask how we know the Court of Appeals isn't a loony bin run by the inmates.

### *Court On Trial*

In a footnote on page two, the Dumbauld ruling says this: "The church is said to be Calvinist in doctrine, but unconnected with any presbytery, synod, or general assembly. It is said to be composed of approximately only fifteen members, though a throng of spectators occupied the back rows of the courtroom during argument of the case."

The first sentence alone should be enough to throw the ruling out. Whether it is just plain dumb or wilfully malevolent, your reporter doesn't know. Whatever Dumbauld's motive, it is wrong. A church that is Calvinist in doctrine doesn't have to belong to anything. The Church in question is Calvinist and independent. Brother Dykema points out that the Reformed Baptists, for instance, are also Calvinists, but belong to no synod. Dumbauld seems to be saying that church *independence* is "evidence" that an institution may be a "macaroni factory," not a church. Where is the *law* that forbids church independence? Dumbauld proves here that his ruling is based not on law, but on religious discrimination, on



some invisible doctrine of his own.

Now let's look at the first clause of the second sentence of his footnote, in which he speaks disparagingly of the "fact" that the Church has "only fifteen members." In the first place, Church counsel Whitehead told the Court that the Church is composed of fifteen *families*, not individuals. Pastor Dykema explains, "We are a covenantal Church, which thinks in terms of families, like The Bible." A membership of fifteen *families* means that we are talking about fifty people or more. But suppose the Church of Christian Liberty *were* in fact composed of only fifteen individuals. Would it cease to be a church? How many members must a church have? Jesus said that where as few as two people—yes, two—gather in His name, He will be there. Presumably this means that a membership of two can constitute a church. If you are a Christian, you believe this. What Dumbauld is, your obedient servant doesn't know, but he obviously doesn't.

Indeed, many churches are founded in somebody's living room or basement, with considerably *fewer* than fifteen members. Dumbauld insinuates that they are somehow illegitimate; and that government should and will determine how many members there must be.

Finally, in the footnote, Dumbauld complains that "a throng of spectators occupied the back rows of the courtroom during argument of the case." In other words, first he's worried because the Church has "too few" members; now he's worried because there are "too many" spectators in court. What does the number of spectators have to do with the issues of the case? Does the Court belong to the people? Should the spectators not have been there? If not, why does the Court provide those rows so that the spectators can sit?

This concludes our tour of page two. On page four, Dumbauld quotes 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3), in which the Internal Revenue Code describes those organizations that are tax-exempt. It begins: "Corporations . . . organized and operated exclusively for religious . . . purposes. . . ." Dumbauld adds the following thoughts: "Is the organization properly *organized*, with a corporate structure suitable for carrying out religious purposes?"

"In this connection the church's certificate of incorporation would be relevant and material. Apparently the I.R.S. has already been furnished this document. Although perhaps

issued at an earlier date than the tax years under investigation, the I.R.S. should be able to determine without difficulty whether the charter had been revoked for any reason or was still in force during the pertinent period."

Here, Dumbauld as much as says that a church must incorporate to be genuine. Is this true? No, it is false; it is absurd! A church *may* incorporate if it likes; the Church of Christian Liberty is incorporated. But there is no law that says it must. For the present purposes, the best proof of this comes from the Internal Revenue Service! Remember the July, 1978 letters with which I.R.S. began this absurdity? In those mailings, the Internal Revenue Service told the Church this: "If you are incorporated, please furnish a copy of your Articles of Incorporation and any amendments." So, I.R.S. knows perfectly well that the Church may *not* be incorporated. But, Dumbauld expects us to believe that he doesn't.

On this page, too, there is a footnote. It says in part: "It must be remembered that tax exemption is a privileged status and that the taxpayer claiming it has the burden of demonstrating entitlement thereto. . . ." But, as we have seen, this does *not* apply to churches, incorporated or not. A church does *not* have to apply for exemption. Its tax-exemption is automatic. It is not a privilege, but a right. The Internal Revenue Service says so itself, in Section 508 of the Code and elsewhere. Section 508 is just a short distance from 501(c)(3). Dumbauld expects us to believe that he is aware of one but not the other. Again he is telling us that the government will certify the church.

A word should be said about *why* a church is automatically tax-exempt. Why does a church have this unique status in our country? The answer lies in a word the legal system uses every day: *jurisdiction*. If entity A can tax entity B, entity A has jurisdiction over it, is superior to it. Where the government can tax the church, there is a government-ruled church. Where there is a government-ruled church, there is a government-*approved* church, as in Communist-occupied Russia; "an establishment of religion," in the words of the U.S. Constitution.

On the next page, Dumbauld drops a blockbuster: "Typical activities of an organization operated for religious purposes would include (a) corporate worship services, including due administration of sacraments and observance of

liturgical rituals, as well as preaching ministry and evangelical outreach to the unchurched and missionary activity *in partibus infidelium*; (b) pastoral counseling and comfort to members facing grief, illness, adversity, or spiritual problems; (c) performance by the clergy of customary church ceremonies affecting the lives of individuals, such as baptism, marriage, burial and the like; (d) a system of nurture of the young and education in the doctrine and discipline of the church, as well as (in the case of mature and well developed churches) theological seminaries for the advanced study and the training of ministers."

Remember that, according to Dumbauld, the list of approved and maybe mandatory church activities "would include" these. Presumably there are others he doesn't mention.

First, we have "corporate worship," which apparently is worship conducted by a corporation. Dumbauld disqualifies unincorporated worship. Then we have a "preaching ministry." Does this disqualify a community of cloistered ascetics? Then we have "evangelical outreach to the unchurched and missionary activity *in partibus infidelium*." This qualification is blatantly anti-Semitic, since Jews conduct no such activities. We hope the Jewish community rightly and righteously will want to protest. In the Christian community, the Primitive Baptists consider themselves the original Baptists, from whom the others broke away. As a matter of basic doctrine, they have no missionaries, and do not evangelize, things which they regard as presumptuous. According to Dumbauld, they are disqualified. *In partibus infidelium* is of course a Latin phrase. Lawyers and judges like Dumbauld use such phrases to conceal meaning, to confuse and frighten laymen; to justify continuation of the legal monopoly, including payment of those luscious fees.

According to *The New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language* (Chicago, Consolidated Book Publishers, 1971), *in partibus infidelium* means; "In parts belonging to infidels or countries not adhering to the Roman Catholic faith." Does this mean that Dumbauld disqualifies evangelical outreach and missionary activity to countries that *do* adhere to the Roman Catholic faith? Does it mean that to satisfy him a church must be Catholic? These are amazing questions, but they are perfectly serious. Dumbauld is using the power of the federal government to dictate doctrine.

And he's still not through. He says an "approved" institution should have "a system of nurture of the young and education in the doctrine and discipline of the church." But suppose that very doctrine rejects such a system. The Primitive Baptists, for instance, are opposed to Sunday School. Dumbauld also stipulates "theological seminaries for the advanced study and training of ministers." But suppose a church does not believe in *that*? Many don't. Could Dumbauld supply the names and addresses of the seminaries attended by Moses, Aaron, Jeremiah, Paul, Peter, and so on?

After all this, believe it or not, Dumbauld says on page six: ". . . Indeed, it should be emphasized that no real questions regarding 'religion' as referred to in the First Amendment are involved in the case at bar at all . . ." He directs us to a footnote which reduces the present, monumental case to absurdity. In it, he mentions another federal court, which "will doubtless soon be confronted with the question whether the First Amendment authorizes perpetration of bank robberies by members of a sect in order to raise money for the support of their religion. Seventeen members of the New World of Islam were recently convicted in Newark for such offenses. . . ." This scurrilous attempt to link the Church of Christian Liberty with bank robberies is reeking with prejudice.

The Internal Revenue Service's favorite Bible verse is this: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." Dumbauld dutifully quotes it, but he doesn't say which is which. He doesn't get into the question of which things *are* Caesar's. Indeed, remember that until Jesus said this, *everything* was Caesar's! The assertion that something *wasn't* was a remarkable departure from totalitarianism. Today, Dumbauld and other I.R.S. toadies cite this verse to "prove" just the opposite.

By now, you probably figure you've heard it all. No, Pilgrim, you haven't. Did you know that Dumbauld even tries to set the pastor's salary? He does: ". . . As previously indicated, if the pastor, for example, received an unreasonable or excessive salary out of the net earnings from the operation of the church, the organization is not entitled to exempt status."

Notice again in passing Dumbauld's calculated and complete lack of understanding. He speaks of "net earnings," as if

the church were just another profit-making business. So how much should a pastor be paid? "The test of unreasonable compensation here would be similar to that for determining deductibility of salaries paid by a business corporation. . . ." Dumbauld says that "10% of church's gross income" would be unreasonable. The average preacher in the United States is paid \$10,000. If a church paid its pastor only half of that—\$5,000—it could lose its tax-exemption, according to Dumbauld, if its "net earnings" were \$50,000. The wishes of the members don't count.

He also speaks of scrutiny of the activities of the organization *in toto*, including correspondence and publications, to determine whether the Church is attempting to influence legislation to a substantial extent. This is a not so veiled threat to the Church to shut up about such issues as abortion.

All of this is difficult to believe, even if you read it for yourself, which your obedient servant recommends you do. If Dumbauld did a comparable job in any other line of work, he would now be in court himself, as a defendant, or in jail; but federal judges, about whom the Founding Fathers warned us, now have more power than the President. They are absolute monarchs.

### *Day Of Judgment*

The Church appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. In his brief, Church counsel Joseph Weigel told the Supreme Court this: ". . . To allow the Seventh Circuit decision to stand would be to provide that the I.R.S. is free anytime and anywhere to demand of any church the production of every written document relating to any aspect of church belief or activity, including membership and contributor lists. This is a monstrous and unprecedented invitation to tyranny which invites blatant and wholly baseless fishing expeditions of the most comprehensive kind violating every notion of religious liberty as well as the most fundamental rights of privacy and association. It lays out a red carpet for the I.R.S. for systematic and mendacious harassment that King George III at his most villainous could only have viewed with envy, and that Adolph Hitler did not achieve until his dictatorship was totally secure. It grants Big Brother an unrestricted license to pry into and profane what are, by very definition, the most

sacred of men's beliefs and practices without probable cause or without even an allegation that the government has any lawful interest therein. We feel that such a decision is without precedent in the annals of American Jurisprudence and must be reversed."

But the Supreme Court denied *certiorari* and let the Dumbauld decision stand. The Court thereby ruled that the Communist Party has more rights than the Church of Christian Liberty. The government's brief told the Court this: "At all events, even if enforcement of the summons could be deemed to impose some marginal burden on the First Amendment rights of the Church's members, that small burden is fully justified by the government's compelling need to conduct an effective investigation in aid of enforcement of the revenue laws. . . ."

And the Court bought it. Notice that what it bought is the admission that these I.R.S. activities *do* violate the Church's First Amendment rights. It bought the idea that these rights are conditional, not absolute. It bought the idea that the government is more important than the people who created it.

As your reporter sets this down, the government presumably is getting ready to go back to the Church for the records. The Pastor tells your reporter he will not turn them over. If the Court holds the Pastor in contempt, the Church's plan is to start the legal process all over. The Pastor is ready to go to jail. "We even looked into what jail it would be." Mrs. Dykema would get a job. The family has three children, one of whom is grown. The Pastor isn't worried. "We look to the people of God to regard this as their own battle."

### *Where We Are Headed*

Your obedient servant tried to ask Henry Graner this. Now retired, he is still living off the income tax, as a "consultant." He seemed willing to talk, but took the precaution of consulting with his former colleagues, who apparently told him to keep his mouth shut.

We can easily answer the question without him. We are

headed toward a time when the government would license clergymen and churches; when the churches would be tolerated and permitted to function, as in ancient Rome, if the preachers bend their knees and hail Caesar. Such "churches" would be instruments of government policy. In Communist-occupied Rumania, for instance, there are "churches." In them, worshippers pray to Ceausescu, not to God. Who is Ceausescu? Didn't you know, Pilgrim? Nicolae Ceausescu is the Communist dictator of Rumania. Rumania is where the real preachers are being tortured in jail. It now becomes as realistic as it is incredible to speculate about the same thing happening here.

In Louisville, Nebraska, near Omaha, the Reverend Everett Sileven recently *was* in jail. Reverend Sileven is the Pastor of Faith Baptist Church, which runs the Faith Christian School, and the Nebraska government doesn't like it. In the fall of 1981, a judge ordered the Reverend Sileven to close the school down. Nebraska wants to certify the teachers. Pastor Sileven tells your obedient servant that his teachers *are* certified—by God. Judge Raymond Case ordered the sheriff to padlock the church building where the classes were taking place. Remember, this happened not in Rumania, but in Nebraska. When your reporter talked with him, the Pastor was planning to lead a miniature Exodus of the children across the Missouri River every day to the relatively free state of Iowa, were they would go to school. Whether any of the pursuing Nebraska forces were drowned, we don't know. Later, the Pastor reopened Faith Christian, the government threw him into jail, and threatened to throw his *wife* into jail! Even the Mob wouldn't touch a man's wife. This is reminiscent of the Nazis and Communists.

And it is just another example. There are others. Do you still think your reporter's fears are far fetched?

Why is this happening? At the beginning of this treatise, we spoke of a religious war. One good proof of that war is the exclusivity of the government schools. Along with Mao Tse-tung, the liberals who run them say, "Let a hundred flowers bloom, Let a thousand schools of thought contend," but, in practice, they won't let the children who want to do so pray. If the advocates of Do Your Own Thing were not motivated by another religion, they wouldn't care. Their absurd attempt to exclude the Lord is an expression of the hostility one religion

has for another. In this case, the religion is Satanic and calls itself Humanism. We know that Humanism is a religion, not just because the United States Supreme Court says so, but because the Humanists say so themselves, in their own publications.

What kind of religion is it? Karl Marx—in one of the few places we can be sure he knew what he was talking about—said that his system and Humanism are the same thing.

So, what should we do? We should be willing to flood the jails. We should fight to get in. We should get on line. We should overload the circuits. In short, we should keep the faith, and *stay the course*. If we don't, believers and others will rightly believe our words are a farce. The Pharisees among us say this is scandalous advice. It is not socially acceptable, "not nice." We must "subject ourselves to the higher powers." It is "unbiblical."

Why, then, was Rahab so honored for defying the king? Why weren't Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego burned? Why was Daniel spared? Why did Paul write those letters from jail? Our liberal friends tell us government is a two-way street. For a change, they are right. Blind submission to government leads to Hitler, Mussolini, and Castro. The Lord mandates submission to government when it is *just*. Government must also obey the Lord's rules.

One of the reasons we are in such trouble today is the fact that many strong believers have been subverted by one of the basic doctrines of the Satanists, who teach that there is no evil. What *else would* Satanists teach? "There's nobody here but us chickens," said the thief. "There's no such thing as evil," say the Humanists. "There is just disagreement. We mean well. *Everybody* means well. That's why we all must be nice, nice, nice!"

One is reminded of the two men ordered to wait on the line that led into the gas chamber at the concentration camp. One of them began to wonder aloud where the line led. The other shushed him nervously. "Do you want to get us into trouble?"

Many fine people today have bought this concentration camp psychology. That is where many fine people already live, spiritually, because they won't recognize evil. Yes, there are well meaning people who "don't understand" there is sin. There is also evil. Someone who doesn't recognize that will



lose before he ever finds out he was at war. As the present cliché puts it, "No more Mr. Nice Guy."

It is important to note that we are all in this thing together, Protestant, Fundamentalist, Catholic, and Jew. As Pastor Dykema points out, this is everyone's battle. We must do whatever we can to develop allies. Victims of Humanism *can* be redeemed, *can* be brought to realize that the reason for the approaching disaster at the Church of Christian Liberty is that the Humanists want the children. The children are the prize. The Humanists want to use them as the building-blocks of their dictatorship. There is also the fact that the Founding Fathers put the news and the Good News in the same Amendment, the First. That is because freedom of the press and of worship are so close. If the latter falls, so will the former. Look around the world! Where is this not the case? Even liberals in the media can be brought to understand this.

Finally, there is the question of what to do about "cults," and "phony churches." As we have seen, Dumbauld's extraordinary performance indicates that he believes the Church of Christian Liberty is one of them. The answer, of course, is that one man's cult is the next man's religion. In the beginning, Rome thought Christianity was a "cult." The federal government was not constituted to tell us which churches to trust. Only the Lord can do that. "In God We Trust."

## CONFIRMATION, CONFRONTATION, AND CAVES

Gary North

CHRISTIANS who live in a Western, industrial society that has become officially pluralistic and religiously neutral—the better to mystify the Christians temporarily—do not feel a great degree of direct pressure against them. They may see racks of soft-core pornography at the local “After 7” so-called “convenience grocery store.” Perhaps they read advertisements in the local newspaper for a “discount abortion clinic” that offers ten percent off if the reader clips the coupon and brings it to the clinic. They may become angry when the American Civil Liberties Union successfully pressures the local town council to remove the scene of Jesus in the manger during the Christmas season—or “winter holiday” season, as it is officially designated by the local public school system. But for the most part, they have not felt direct threats to their lives and property, as they do in Iron Curtain nations or in Muslim societies.

There are changes coming. Christian day schools are being pressured by state boards of education to adopt board-approved curricula, or subject their students to board-approved examination, or hire officially certified teachers. The churches are being threatened by the Internal Revenue Service, which wants them to apply for tax exemption (which Federal law in the United States does not require), or to open their records apart from criminal charges being brought against the church (which Federal law specifically prohibits). Serious, dedicated Christian ministries are facing bureaucratic pressures that did not exist a decade and a half ago, because the threat posed to humanist society by a few of these ministries, especially television ministries, did not exist in the 1960s.

Francis Schaeffer's book, *A Christian Manifesto*, replaced one of James Dobson's books as the best-selling Christian book in America in July of 1982.<sup>1</sup> Schaeffer has appeared

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1. Published by Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois.

on "The 700 Club" in a week-long series of interviews, and he has brought his message of Christian resistance to millions as a guest preacher on Jerry Falwell's "Old Time Gospel Hour." The Christian community is being challenged by a message that has not been heard in the American South since the days of the War Between the States, or Civil War, as it is known in the textbooks written by the victors. The North has not heard anything like it since the era of the American Revolution. Franky Schaeffer's movie and John Whitehead's book are aptly titled, *The Second American Revolution* (1981).<sup>2</sup>

Is this message really relevant? Are Christians facing circumstances comparable to those faced by the Founding Fathers, when the extension of Parliament's centralized political power motivated the thirteen American colonial legislatures to resist? Or is the rhetoric of revolution misplaced? Is there really a valid set of reasons today for Christians to take a stand, public or conspiratorial, against the "powers that be"? And if there are valid reasons, what kind of a stand should be taken?

### *Confirmation*

We need to examine the careers of the Old Testament prophets in order to get a better understanding of what it means to take a stand against the accepted practices of the day. The prophets came before kings and commoners to tell them that the nation had departed from righteousness, and that the promised judgments of God on the whole nation would soon follow if they did not turn back. These messages were specific in content, which is why the prophets were continually in trouble. The prophets did not preach against sin "in general," which would have enabled them to avoid the wrath of those who were practicing specific sins that were about to bring God's specific judgments.

The reign of Ahab, king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, was marked by apostasy from the beginning. He followed in the evil footsteps of his father, Omri. He was a Baal worshipper. He angered God more than any other king in

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2. Whitehead's book was published by David C. Cook Publishing Co., Elgin, Illinois. Franky Schaeffer's movie is available on a videocassette tape from Word Books, Waco, Texas.

Israel (I Ki. 16:33).

God called Elijah to warn Ahab of a coming drought. For three years, there would be no rain or dew in Israel (I Ki. 17:1). The king had been warned of a specific judgment. The disaster could not be interpreted retroactively as a "freak of nature," an abnormality of the weather that could be explained by scientific means. A drought can never be ignored; a prophesied drought makes it impossible to ignore the messenger who had brought the prophecy.

Immediately following Elijah's delivery of the warning to Ahab, God told him, "Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan" (17:3). Elijah was fed there by the ravens (v. 6). The geography was obviously inhospitable for men. It was a long way, "as the crow (or raven) flies," from a source of food. This would be a place where Ahab's officers would not think to search for the prophet.

The brook dried up (v. 7). This was proof that the effects of the drought were being felt by Israel. Elijah knew at this point that the prophecy was being fulfilled. This would give him confidence in the reliability of God's word. It would be almost three years before the drought would end. God then directed him to leave Israel for Zarephath, a city of Sidon (v. 9). There a widow woman will sustain you, God told him.

This prophecy was also fulfilled. A widow and her son who were almost out of food took him in. Their food was replenished daily by means of a continuing miracle. It was like the manna in the wilderness, which not only sustained the people of Israel for 40 years, but also built up the confidence in God of the younger generation. Elijah knew that he could trust God.

The son of the woman died. The woman at first criticized Elijah, but when God revived the boy through Elijah, she proclaimed her faith in the prophet (v. 24). The incident pointed to the possibility of life from the dead for the son—symbolic of Israel, God's son (Ex. 4:23), and the resurrection of Christ, God's son. It was also a testimony of the coming resurrection of the Gentiles. It was an affirmation of Elijah's ministry to Israel.

The drought was designed to "soften up" Ahab and the people of Israel by drying up the land. The effects of the drought were economically disastrous. The king's own

mules and horses were about to die (18:5), which meant that the animals of the Israelites probably were dead already. Facing a total disaster, Ahab would be less ready to kill the prophet who had warned him three years earlier. God's own intervention into weather patterns testified to His existence as a sovereign ruler, one who could overcome the sovereignty of Ahab and Ahab's god. The God of Elijah is a God of history. Elijah's faith received confirmation in the home of the widow when the food supply was replenished daily. Ahab also had received confirmation of the reliability of God's word in history. This confirmation was preliminary to a confrontation between the prophet and the king of Israel.

There are times when the resisters should be in hiding. In our day, we do not need to escape to a foreign land while we "wait on the Lord." Because of the vast increase in modern communications, newsletters, newspapers, books, and cassette tapes, the remnant can hide in a crowd, just as they did in Israel. But not only can the remnant blend in with the crowd, it is possible for the leaders to do so, at least at this preliminary stage of resistance. A man like Rev. Jerry Falwell is visible, but most potential leaders are not. The government today cannot easily suppress "electronic church" leaders who can launch a letter-writing campaign. Democracy still provides pressure groups the ability to resist outright tyranny. Some small churches can get caught in the bureaucratic vice, but this is the price of being relatively inconspicuous: it is easier to get quietly smashed by the State, should some bureaucrat decide to destroy the organization. But the "noise" of so many conflicting ideological groups drowns out the signals of any one group. The State cannot monitor everything and everyone. This gives Christians some breathing room.

The time to begin preparing for the future is now, when the preliminary skirmishes of the coming confrontation have already taken place. We know what is coming. The general public hasn't seen the shape of things to come, but Francis Schaeffer's call in *A Christian Manifesto* has sounded the alarm. Nevertheless, the civil authorities for the most part have not understood the threat posed to the modern bureaucratic State by orthodox Christianity. A few have seen it, most notably administrators and board members of the government school systems, but not most of the State's officials. We have time to organize. We are so insignificant as an organized political

force that the State will be unable to locate, let alone stamp out, a decentralized corps of resisters, if they begin to organize a communications network now.

### *Confrontation*

When he returned to Israel, Elijah first met Obadiah, a high official under Ahab. This man was a secret worshipper of Jehovah, who had hidden a hundred prophets in two caves (v. 4). His very secrecy had therefore enabled him to stay in close contact to the king, even to the point of executing the king's orders (v. 5). Like Joseph in Egypt, Obadiah (not the author of the book of Obadiah) was the governor of the king's house (v. 3). Power flows to those who exercise responsibility and display competence; Obadiah was clearly a competent man. He was, unquestionably, part of the resistance movement.

Obadiah fell on his face before Elijah, demonstrating his subordination to Elijah's God (v. 7). Elijah instructed him to go to Ahab and tell him that the prophet had returned. Obadiah hesitated; the king would kill the messenger, if Elijah was gone when Ahab came (v. 12). Obadiah knew how diligently the king had searched for him, inside and outside of Israel (v. 10). Elijah's invisibility in the house of a poverty-stricken widow had made it impossible for the king to locate him. After all, who would have suspected a prophet of God to be living with a widow—a most suspicious relationship, morally speaking? Who would have expected a Hebrew prophet to be eating at the table of a Gentile, in violation of the dietary laws? *Elijah's seeming immorality had helped to preserve his life.* He had kept quiet, avoiding a confrontation, until the time was ripe. Obadiah did not tell Elijah that the king was ready to kill the prophet; but the king did want to find him more than anyone else on earth.

Elijah promised to remain where he was, so Obadiah delivered the message. Ahab came immediately. This demonstrated that the king knew who was in command of the situation: the prophet. The king had to come running. Immediately, the king accused Elijah of ruining Israel. The ethical rebel generally views God's messenger of bad tidings as the originator of the trouble. Elijah reminded him that it was Ahab's forsaking of the law of God that had brought the crisis (v. 18).

Elijah gave Ahab a command: to send for 850 of the prophets, plus "all Israel," probably meaning representatives of the tribes, since he later told them to draw near to him, and they did (v. 30), indicating a representative assembly, not the entire population. Gather them at Mt. Carmel, he told Ahab (v. 19). Ahab did as he was told. The 450 priests of Baal, plus the 400 prophets of the goddess Asherah, the Canaanite Venus ("of the grove," the King James mistranslates), who ate at Jezebel's table (meaning court prophets), came to Mt. Carmel. The effects of the drought had made the king compliant. Elijah could now demand a response from him.

Then Elijah spoke to the people: "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." Their response? "And the people answered him not a word" (v. 21). The nation of Israel wanted to see who was the more powerful, the prophet Elijah and his God, or the establishment, with its god. Until there was a visible manifestation of sovereignty, one way or the other, the people were leaving their options open. They saw no reason to speak up prematurely in public; identifying themselves one way or the other.

So Elijah began his demonstration. He set up a contest. Whose god would consume a sacrifice by fire? The king's prophets went first. They had no success. The fire did not fall, and Elijah mocked them and their god in front of the assembly (v. 27). They slashed themselves and called out the whole day, without success.

Then it was Elijah's turn. He repaired a broken-down altar of the Lord (v. 30). He selected twelve stones, representing all the sons of Jacob (v. 31). This meant that the Northern Kingdom's twelve tribes were still in covenant with Judah and Benjamin, despite the split politically, and God was still holding all of them responsible for the terms of the covenant. It was not geographical and political separation which were paramount in God's eyes, but the original covenant.

He dug a trench around the altar. He poured water over the bullock and the wood. Then he had them pour water twice more. The trench filled up with water. In the evening, he prayed to God to consume the sacrifice in front of their eyes, to let them know that He was the God of Israel and that Elijah was His servant (v. 36). Then the fire came down and consumed

the bullock, the wood, and the water in the trench. Nothing remained. "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God" (v. 39). The pragmatists had at last made up their minds. For the time being.

The time allotted by God for public debate was over. The people knew which side to take. Elijah commanded them to reaffirm their faith in the covenant by capturing the 850 prophets. The people brought them to him, and he killed all 850. They had led the nation into bondage to another god, a capital offense under the terms of God's law (Deut. 13:1-5). There was no neutral ground between God and Baal. They paid the price of rebellion. The law of the land still was God's, not Baal's. Men were ethically and covenantally bound by God's law, not Baal's. Baal was the usurper, not God. The court prophets were the revolutionaries, not Elijah.

Consider the nature of the confrontation on Mt. Carmel. Four possible events could have taken place, and three of them would have meant the death of Elijah. First, the fire might have come down on Baal's altar and not God's. Second, there might have been no fire on either. But this would have kept the people neutral, and the court priests, who possessed visible sovereignty, could have slain Elijah without fear of the nation. Third, fire might have consumed both sacrifices, again leading to the continued neutrality of the people and the death of Elijah. Fourth, the fire of God could fall on the altar built by Elijah, leaving Baal's altar untouched. This led to the death of the court prophets.

Elijah had to be absolutely sure of God. Equally important, he had to be certain of God's timing. *A premature confrontation could have been suicidal.* It took three years of drought to break down the resistance of the king. To have come to the king before his will to resist had been broken would probably have led to the destruction of the prophet. The king would have felt no need to provide him with an audience for his confrontation. The king would have had everything to lose, and little to gain, from such a public confrontation. But after three years of drought, he had a lot to lose by refusing to bring the confrontation to a conclusion. He became compliant.

The prophet allowed the king to return home. The people had spoken. They would worship God. The king, as the representative of the people before God, had been given a stay



of execution. He had been given an opportunity to reinstate the law of God as the civil law of Israel. Elijah promised him that the rain at last would come (v. 41).

Once again, Israel was offered a new beginning, as she had been offered by Moses at Mt. Sinai. Elijah ran before the king, as he returned to Jezreel (v. 46). The king and the people had come down from Mt. Carmel, the "fruitful place." Carmel was a re-creation of the Garden of Eden, which had also been a garden on a hill (for a river flowed from Eden into the garden, and from there four rivers flowed out, indicating a drop in elevation: Gen. 2:10). Once again, Israel would abandon its new beginning. Once again, there had to be a confrontation.

### *Caves*

The king was a weak man. Like Adam, he was under the domination of his wife. But this woman, unlike Eve, did not sin in ignorance. She was like Babylon, the great whore, a representation of the "strange woman" of Proverbs 5, self-consciously evil. When he told her what Elijah had done to the prophets, she sent a message to Elijah telling him that he would die the very next day, just as the court prophets had died (19:2).

Here was another confrontation. But this time, it was not a confrontation with a weak-willed king. It was with his determined wife, who did not fear God or God's people. She had the political power at her command to execute him. He could continue the confrontation, or he could run for cover. He ran (v. 3).

Why? He had demonstrated the power of God in front of the assembly. They had co-operated with him in the slaying of the court prophets. The king had returned to Jezreel, a broken man. They had all seen that Elijah's word was reliable concerning the advent and the ending of the drought. Why should the word of this woman bother him? What did she represent that the others did not?

What she represented was *Satan's self-confident determination to smash the society of God*. Like Pharaoh, she did not learn from experience. The others in Israel were pragmatists. They would follow those who seemed to possess power. Jezebel was not a pragmatist. She was a consistent, disciplined enemy of

God. Others might follow; she would lead or die. Furthermore, she understood the Israelites well. She knew that despite their verbal commitment to God at Mt. Carmel, they would not take steps to defend His name or His social order. *The history of civilizations is the history of determined leaders who either follow God or who battle Him, not the history of pragmatic masses who follow these leaders.* She knew that the people were unprincipled, and would follow her, the bearer of temporal power.

Elijah also recognized this, and he ran. He would not be able to muster the people against this woman, who still possessed the reins of power. He saw himself as a lonely figure. Even the confrontation between the two priesthoods at Mt. Carmel had not mobilized the will of the Israelites to resist. He, and he alone, still worshipped the God of Israel, he thought (19:10, 14).

At first, he journeyed a day and rested under a juniper tree. God's angel fed him twice (vv. 5-7). Then he ran to the safety of the cave, a journey of 40 days and 40 nights (19:8). Israel was a small nation; it would not have taken him this long "as the crow flies." It was symbolic of a new wilderness journey, a preparation for yet another deliverance of Israel. But this time, it was to be a deliverance into the hands of new rulers—foreign conquerors.

Moses had a similar experience. He fled Egypt after he had confronted (killed) the Egyptian (Ex. 2). He hid from the eyes of the king for many years, serving as a shepherd for his father-in-law, Jethro (Ex. 3). In this period, he received *confirmation* from God that he was called to confront the king, a role which he resisted (Ex. 4). Then he returned to *confront* the king, Pharaoh, challenging the king's court magicians to a duel: staffs into snakes, and snakes vs. snakes. Then, after the numerous confrontations with Pharaoh and his magicians ended, he and the Israelites left Egypt for the wilderness, away from the Pharaoh, who had to pursue them in order to re-establish contact. While the Israelites did not live in a cave, they survived outside the cities of Canaan, wandering for 40 years (Deut. 2:7), even as Elijah wandered 40 days. Moses went from isolation to confrontation, and back into isolation.

We see it again when Moses went up on Mt. Sinai to receive the law from God. He was there for 40 days and 40 nights (Ex. 24:18). His role as law-giver was confirmed. Then

he returned to the people of Israel, who had rebelled by worshipping the golden calf. He confronted them, slaying 3,000 of them (Ex. 32:28). As Elijah had called the people to worship God or Baal, so Moses called out, "Who is on the Lord's side?" (Ex. 32:26). Moses went up the mountain again for another 40 days and 40 nights, to engrave God's law on new stone tablets (Ex. 34:28). From isolation to confrontation to isolation: the pattern is a familiar one.

### *Anointing*

God instructed him to anoint Hazael as king of Syria (19:15). This was a unique instance in the Old Testament of God's manifold sovereignty over the nations. He was the source of the earthly sovereignty of foreign kings. Then he told Elijah to anoint Jehu as king of Israel, and Elisha as the next prophet. "And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapeth the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay" (v. 17). As anointed representatives of God, all three would possess the lawful sovereignty of the sword.<sup>3</sup> The revolution against Ahab would be complete. But it would not be a revolution from below; it was a revolution from above. God would bring defeat to Israel at the hand of Hazael, the Syrian. It would be the final judgment on the Northern Kingdom. They would be judged by God because they would not stand up against Jezebel and Ahab. The pragmatists would perish because of their caution. There can be no neutrality.

Saul had been anointed by Samuel. As a prophet, Samuel became the visible source of visible sovereignty in Israel. He anointed David later, before Saul's death. Then Saul lost a

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3. We are not told when Elijah anointed Hazael. We do not know for sure if he actually anointed him physically. Elisha met Hazael later and told him that God had revealed to him that Hazael would replace Benhadad as the king of Syria, and that Hazael would defeat Israel (II Ki. 8:12). This was news to Hazael, given his protest (v. 13). It was only after he heard these words from Elisha that he smothered Benhadad (v. 13), and replaced him on the throne. The anointing was probably only verbal, and through the word of Elisha, not through Elijah personally. The anointing was probably covenantal, by means of Elijah's successor as prophet, rather than physical during Elijah's lifetime. Hazael clearly took this anointing seriously. He took action immediately in terms of it.

battle to the Philistines. Ahab was to lose a final battle to the Tyrians (I Ki. 22). The revolution did not come from below; it came from above, and from an invader. But it was the prophet who became the earthly witness-bearer to the transfer of sovereignty from one king to another.

In the era of the New Testament, every converted man bears the office of New Testament prophet, one who proclaims the truth of the gospel, the coming of Christ's kingdom. The church is the institutional means of maintaining and defending the continuity of this message over time—a message revealed in the Bible, the completed revelation of God to man. Therefore, the church serves institutionally as the anointing agency. In the United States, High Federal officials take their oath of office by placing their hands on a Bible. In England the monarch is anointed with oil by the Archbishop. This need not be a visible anointing. Elisha did not publicly ordain Hazael. He simply announced his prophecy of Hazael's coming kingship. The civil government is always dependent on God, and on the continuing support of the church as a prophetic ministry.

Court prophets were necessary to Israel to lend a sense of deep spirituality to the State. The king knew it was a fraud. When he wanted counsel concerning an alliance between Judah and Israel against Syria, Ahab knew who a true prophet was, Micaiah, and he knew the man would prophesy evil against the venture. When the prophet said, "Go, and prosper, for the Lord shall deliver into the hand of the king" (22:15b), the king knew it was a lie, and demanded that the prophet tell him the truth, which the prophet did. Sure enough, it was bad news. Israel would be scattered like sheep without a shepherd. "And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?" (v. 18).

The civil government is never independent of the ecclesiastical government. *Every society appeals to some sort of priesthood for support.* In modern times, the priesthood is made up of humanistic intellectuals. They are highly favored by the State, as court prophets always are.<sup>4</sup> *The civil government needs an anointing.* In times of revolution, meaning civil confrontation,

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4. Murray N. Rothbard, *For a New Liberty: The Libertarian Manifesto* (rev. ed.; New York: Collier, 1978), p. 54f.

the church withdraws its support for the existing civil government in favor of a new civil government. It anoints new leaders. It supports the "lesser magistrates" in their challenge to the central government which has broken the covenant with God and the people.

The question then arises: Which churches constitute the legitimate anointing agent? All tax-exempt religious organizations? All denominations? Bible-believing churches? And how is the resisting civil magistrate or resisting individual Christian to know whether a new civil government has been anointed by the lawful church? The Israelites did not know that Samuel had anointed David while Saul was alive, or that in principle (though probably not in time), Elijah had anointed Hazael to replace the line of Ahab. And because they did not know, they were not called to revolt. How will Christians know if they are being called to resist by a legitimate anointing agent?

Perfect confidence is like all perfection: beyond attainment this side of the final judgment. But Christians who believe in the authority and infallibility of the Bible, and recognize their theological peers, will have more confidence in the lawfulness and wisdom of resistance at a given point in history when they see a majority of church officers of Bible-believing congregations step out and proclaim the right of resistance to unlawful State power. Then they must wait to see if those same church elders will quietly begin to organize a resistance effort, or at least co-operate with those who do.

This is beginning to happen today. The success of Francis Schaeffer's *Christian Manifesto* points to preliminary stirrings of concern on the part of Christian leaders and laymen. But the resistance movement is in its infancy. A premature call to violence or direct confrontation with the existing religious-political establishment would inevitably be counter-productive. There are better ways, more bureaucratic ways, to achieve a measure of success—ways that will also provide the necessary training for the politically unskilled Christians of today. (The next issue of **Christianity and Civilization** will explore the tactics of Christian resistance.)

### *Re-entering the Garden*

Ahab desired to buy the vineyard owned by Naboth. It

was close to the king's property (21:1-2). Naboth refused, saying that he would not leave the inheritance of his fathers to the king (v. 3). Ahab was displeased by Naboth's words. Naboth had told the king that the king's authority was limited, and that the integrity of the land was greater than the power of the king. The family's heritage is more important than the State. Naboth understood the law of the Jubilee (Lev. 25). There are restraints on the accumulation of State power.

These words were displeasing to Ahab. He pouted for days, lying on his bed. His wife inquired about his feelings. He told her of Naboth's refusal to sell. She immediately reminded him of his power as king: "Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry. I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite" (v. 7).

Her plan was simple: hire false accusers to charge him with blasphemy against God and the king. In short, the Baal-worshipping king appealed to the religious leaders in the name of God's law, while violating that law by bringing false charges against the victim. They were using God's word to violate God's word. It was exactly the approach of Satan to Eve. He cited Scripture partially to get her to violate God's law.

The incident provided the opportunity for Elijah to confront the king once again. The king had been offered a new beginning for Israel at Mt. Carmel, the garden (fruitful place) on the hill, a representation of the garden. Now he had turned against God again, expanding his holdings at the expense of a man who honored the Jubilee principle. He wanted to capture the garden on his own terms—terms in opposition to those set forth by God. It was another instance of the impulse to autonomy in rebellious man.

God sets forth the hope of a return to the garden at the end of time (Rev. 21, 22). But prior to that eschatological event, men can only approach the garden ethically. God placed the cherubim and the flaming sword to guard any attempted reconquest of the garden by autonomous man (Gen. 3:24). Man cannot possess it through his own strength.

Ahab, as a symbolic Adam, under the advice of his wife, attempted to possess this symbolic garden. Elijah confronted him and prophesied the destruction of Ahab's kingdom. Ahab, a weak-willed man of mixed emotions, tore his clothes

and publicly repented, humbling himself before God (v. 27). God pointed this out to Elijah, and told him that the great evil would fall upon Ahab's house in the days of his son (v. 29). The confrontation again had led to the triumph of Elijah's word at the expense of the kingdom of Ahab. His wife did not see her enemy's death. Elijah did not perish in this act of rebellion against a Godless king and his rebellious household.

### *The Remnant*

God told Elijah that there were 7,000 others in Israel who had not bowed to Baal (19:18). This was a remnant of the faithful in a land of Baal worshippers who thought they were only being realistic in adhering to the outward manifestations of Baal worship. They had not been willing to announce their adherence to Baal before the ritual confrontation on Mt. Carmel. They had declared their adherence to God once they had seen his power. *They were worshippers of power.* This made them enemies of God. Only 7,000 were still faithful.

But what about Obadiah? He may have been a Baal worshipper outwardly. If this seems strange, we must remember that Elisha gave Naaman the Syrian permission to continue to bow before Rimmon, provided his inward intention was to worship the Lord God of Israel (II Kings 5:18f.). This is very hard to understand, but whatever it means (and commentators have wrestled with it for millennia), it happened in the same historical context as the problem confronting Obadiah. Neither Naaman nor Obadiah was a prophet; they were civil servants, and this may play a part in understanding how they might give token outward temporary service to a false god, while actually serving the true one. This is not absolutely clear. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were also civil servants, and not prophets, yet they refused such token worship (Daniel 3). On the other hand, they were not spies.

Obadiah may have been known as a worshipper of the God of Israel, but regarded as a foolish old conservative, and no threat. Jezebel recognized that the prophets were threats, but Obadiah was a loyal civil servant. She did not think that his faith counted for much, if he were willing to serve in her kingdom. Of course, she didn't know about the 100 prophets Obadiah was feeding! Obadiah was such a good servant that he had made himself indispensable to the crown. Ahab needed

him, and thus was willing to tolerate his eccentricity (worshipping the outmoded God of Israel). The fact that Jezebel had not tried to wipe out all worship of the Lord is seen in I Kings 21, where she used God's law perversely to kill Naboth. Thus, worship of the Lord seems to have been tolerated by Jezebel, provided it was innocuous and pietistic in character. An active, aggressive, prophetic faith which claimed all areas of life, however, Jezebel was determined to stamp out.

*Obadiah was a spy.* He was an agent of God. Whether he was going through the motions of worshipping Baal, or merely let on that he was a simple pietist, his life was a daily deception of the crown. Politically he appeared to accept Baalism. God did not count this outward conformity to Baal as actual worship. Obadiah was taking enormous risks by hiding the prophets in the caves. His covenant was earthly—the caves—but hidden. In other words, *Obadiah's faith was a secret faith.* It was known to God, Elijah, and perhaps all of the hundred prophets.

The prophets were hiding in caves. So was Elijah. Their faith was no less for its invisibility to Ahab. Several thousand other people were taking a stand, not bowing to Baal, but they were not leaders. The leaders were not bowing to Baal because they were being shielded from the external consequences of their ritual adherence to God. And it was Obadiah, the official Baal worshipper or compromiser, who provided them their safe environment which allowed the true worship of God. Had Obadiah not been a hypocrite to Baal, by appearing to be a follower, politically at least, of Baal while secretly worshipping God, the prophets would have lost their safe environment.

It must be recognized that Obadiah was not conforming to Baalism merely to preserve his life. He was ritually covenanting with God through the financial cost of supporting the hidden prophets, and by bearing the risk of being discovered. He was not conforming to Baalism at zero price. This is always the position of the spy. He was no pragmatist, waiting to see whose sacrifice would be consumed. The people who helped Elijah to slay the false prophets were not covenanted to God, nor were they representatives of a nation that was covenanted to God. Only 7,000 were actually the remnant of faithful people. God knew the nature of their pragmatic faith; their willingness to assist Elijah in his victory did not count as an act of true faith in God's eyes. Obadiah's unwillingness to affirm publicly his faith in God was not counted by God as an act of true rebellion.



*Patience and Resistance*

Elijah fled into the wilderness, to be fed by ravens, waiting for further instructions from God. Then he was required to be patient and wait for three years in the household of a widow. To the extent that he might have been noticed at all, he would not have been seen as a Hebrew prophet. An aura of sin covered him. It did not matter. After his great confrontation, he had to flee into the wilderness and live in a cave, alone, until God revealed to him the next steps in his ministry.

Obadiah was patient to dwell in the presence of the king and the court prophets, eating at the table of Baal worshippers. He hid the prophets in the caves, biding his time until God would bring either judgment or restoration. He did not seek out any of the 7,000 who had not bowed to Baal.

The hundred prophets were patient to remain in their caves. To have come out to take a public stand against the king might have ended their lives. They were silent prophets. We think of prophets as unafraid, speaking out against evil in high places. Yet these prophets were wise prophets. They recognized that it is not the automatic responsibility of the prophet to speak out at all times, irrespective of historical circumstances.

The 7,000 worshippers of God were patient to remain faceless in the crowd of Baal worshippers, appearing to be no threat to the system. A few here and there might not bow to Baal. What did this matter to Baal? These people were totally unorganized. Even the chief prophet of the era, Elijah, did not know of their existence. They survived because of the patience of the authorities in ignoring a handful of theological rebels. The priests of Baal did not bother to make martyrs of them, to expend resources in seeking them out to make them public examples. Instead of hiding in caves, they hid in the crowd.

Similarly, the people of Israel were content to worship Baal until the signs of God's judgment were visible. They would take a stand when the time came, for God or Baal, but until then, they preferred to play it safe and worship the gods of the establishment. They, too, were waiting patiently. But theirs was a low-cost patience, or at least seemed to be. They would co-operate with "the powers that be" until they became "the powers that were," at which time, the people would switch their allegiance.

Patience, in short, is the prevailing atmosphere of society

for most periods of time. People prefer to avoid confrontations. There are times, however, when confrontations cannot be avoided, when men must visibly choose between Baal and God. But the Israelites' faith was a faith in patience as such, to serve the one who possessed outward power for the moment. It was a faith in *continuity as such*—the prevailing faith of most pagans throughout history. It was a faith in civil power.

The patience of God's people should be different. They are to have faith in the *continuity of God's decree*, not the continuity of pagan time and pagan civic power. They know that there are times for remaining invisible, quietly working out their salvation. This is why Paul tells us to pray for authorities in power, so that the church might experience peace (I Tim. 2:1-2). *The framework of peace allows the church to develop the implications of biblical faith, to gain experience in the tasks of dominion.* Then, when the time is ripe, the church is ready for the period of confrontation, a discontinuous break with pagan culture. The breakthrough eventually takes place, as it did in the early fourth century in what remained of the Roman Empire, as it did in the sixteenth century at the time of the Protestant Reformation, and as it did in colonial America in the 1765-89 period.

Endless patience is suicidal. *A theology of perpetual patience is a theology which denies the necessity of an eventual confrontation.* As far as the Bible indicates, the Israelites in Moses' day held just such a theology. They had to be driven out of Egypt by the Egyptians. It is a theology which has abandoned an eschatology of dominion. It is a theology which believes that men can live forever on a hypothetical spiritual mountaintop while dwelling in Egypt. It leads eventually to a confrontation, one which the victims of persecution are unable to win because they failed to plan for the confrontation successfully.

#### *Armenia's Lesson*

The most tragic example of a culture which failed to come to grips with the inescapability of an eventual confrontation is Armenia. The first nation to adopt Christianity as the official religion (in 301, a decade before Constantine became Emperor in Rome), the Armenians suffered repeated attacks and repeated tyrants. They fought the Persians in the mid-fifth century, the Arabs from the seventh century on, the Greeks (who demanded that Armenians change their theology to Greek

Orthodoxy) in the eleventh century, the Seljuk Turks from the eleventh century on, and the Mongols in the thirteenth. They went into bondage under the Ottoman Turks in the fifteenth century, and (for part of the population) under the Soviet Union in this century. The Armenians can legitimately claim to be the most literate and cultured civilization in Asia Minor, yet Armenia suffered the first modern genocide in 1915-16.

In 1895, the first of the horrendous liquidations began. Serious persecutions had been going on for two decades, since the ascension to the Sultinate of Abdul Hamid II in 1876. The British Consul at Ezerum wrote in 1890: "I believe that the idea of revolution is not entertained by any class of the Armenian people in these provinces, whatever may be the aims of those outside them. An armed revolution is, besides, impossible."<sup>5</sup> The secret police was one of the few efficient government organizations in Turkey.

Despite their obedience, Hamid launched a massive campaign of outright murder against the Armenians which lasted for a year, 1895-96. Turkey received worldwide criticism, but no Western nation intervened. England still regarded Turkey as a linchpin in its international balance of power politics, since it served as a check on Russia. In 1909, a second wave of mass murders took place, under the auspices of the new revolutionary Turkish government of the so-called Young Turks. Estimates by foreign observers revealed that up to 30,000 Armenians were slaughtered in Cilicia and northern Syria. Incredibly, as Dr. Herbert Adams Gibbons remarked (who was an eye-witness), the Armenians had previously displayed an "enthusiastic loyalty" to the new regime. This was their reward.<sup>6</sup> They still had not learned. They still relied on hope rather than realistic assessments of the Turks, after 400 years of bloody experience. They still remained patient in the face of an implacable enemy.

The warnings were there. Nevertheless, the Armenians did not organize resistance movements, nor did those who could afford to leave the country do so in significant numbers. Their ties to the land, to their neighbors, and to a dying way of life were too strong.<sup>7</sup> In 1915-16, they paid the awful price for their

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5. Clifford Lloyd, cited in Dickran H. Boyajian, *Armenia: The Case for a Forgotten Genocide* (Westwood, New Jersey: Educational Book Crafters, 1972), p. 36.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

7. One of the most powerful films ever made was *America, America*, Elia

unwillingness to see the incomparable confrontation coming. Boyajian's comment concerning the Armenians in 1890 applies even more forcefully to the period immediately preceding the genocide of 1915-16: "One wonders in fact why the Armenians exhibited so few signs of disaffection in the light of the harassment they suffered and from which they were never free."<sup>8</sup>

The Turks began to round up the leaders of Armenia in April of 1915. This cut off any verbal protests. Hundreds of thousands of them were deported from three regions, and left to starve in concentration camps.<sup>9</sup> No one knows for certain just how many Armenians died, but it was at least 800,000, and may have been as many as two million.<sup>10</sup> An American eye-witness, cited in Johannes Lepsius' book, *Deutschland und Armenien* (1919), and reprinted by Boyajian (pp. 118-20), reported on what he had seen. Here was Armenia's price of perpetual patience:

It is impossible to render an image of the horrible impressions I received on my journey through the dispersed camps along the Euphrates river. I travelled on the right-hand bank of the stream. To speak of 'camps' is actually not possible.

The major portion of these miserable people brutally driven from home and land, separated from their families, robbed of everything they owned and stripped of all they carried underway, have been herded like cattle under the open skies without the least protection against heat and cold, almost without clothing, and were fed very irregularly, and always insufficiently. Exposed to every change in weather, the glowing sun in the desert, the wind and rain in spring and fall, and the bitter cold in winter, weakened through extreme want and their strength sapped by endless marches, deplorable treatment, cruel torture and the constant fear for their lives, those that had some shreds of their strength left dug holes at the banks of the river to crawl into them.

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Kazan's 1963 account of a Greek youth in the late 1890's who sees what the Turks do to his Armenian friend's church and community, and who decides to flee to America, no matter what the costs. He refuses to live under Turkish rule any longer, knowing that he can never be a free man. His family and friends cannot understand his motivation. He leaves behind the opportunity to marry into a successful family. The film ends with the youth in New York, working as a shoeshine boy, happy to be right where he is. I have never seen the film on television, although I have watched for it for almost two decades. It is perhaps the finest Hollywood-produced account of what it meant for immigrants of the last century to escape to the United States.

8. *Idem*.

9. For an account of the horrors, from one who went through them from 1895 on, see Abraham H. Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep* (Boston: Beacon, 1968).

10. Boyajian, *Armenia*, p. 1.

The extreme few who managed to salvage some clothes and some money and who are in a position to purchase some flour are considered fortunate and rich people. Fortunate are those, too, who could obtain a few watermelons or a sick and skinny goat from the nomads in exchange for the same weight in gold. Everywhere one only sees pale faces and emaciated bodies, wandering skeletons conquered by disease and surely soon victims of starvation.

When the measures to transport the entire population into the desert were adopted, no appropriations were made for any kind of nourishment. On the contrary, it is obvious that the government pursued a plan to let the people die of starvation. Even an organized mass-killing such as during the times when liberty, equality and fraternity had not yet been proclaimed in Constantinople, would have been a much more humane measure, since it would have saved these miserable people from the horrors of hunger and the slow death and the excruciating pains of tortures so fiendish that the most cruel of the Mongols could not have imagined them. But a massacre is less constitutional than death by starvation. Civilization is saved!

What remains of the Armenian nation, scattered along the banks of the Euphrates, consists of old men, women and children. Men of middle age and younger people, as far as they have not been slain, are scattered over the roads of the country where they smash stones or do other labors for the Army in the name of the state.

The young girls, many still children, have become the booty of the Mohammedans. During the long marches to the destination of the deportation they were abducted, raped if the opportunity arose, or sold if they hadn't been killed by the gendarmes who accompanied these gloomy caravans. Many have been carried by their robbers into the slavery of a harem.

The entrances to these concentration camps could well bear the legend imprinted on the gates of Dante's hell 'Ye who enter here, abandon all hope.'

Gendarmes on horseback made the rounds to punish all those that tried to escape, to seize and punish them with their whips. The roads are well guarded. And what roads they are! They lead into the desert where death awaits the refugee as surely as under the whips of their Ottoman guards.

In various locations in the desert I came upon six such refugees lying in the throes of death. They had managed to escape their guards. And now they were surrounded by half-starved dogs; the crazed animals waiting for their last convulsions so that they could leap upon them and feed on them.

Everywhere along the way one can find remainders of such unhappy Armenians, who had simply dropped to the ground. There are hundreds of these mounds of earth under which they rest, the victims of unqualified barbarism, sleeping without a name.

On the one hand they are prevented from leaving the concentration camps in search of food, and on the other it is made impossible for them to utilize those capabilities characteristic to their race, namely to adapt themselves to their terrible fate and to improve their sad lot in their ingenious ways.

One could build some sort of shelter such as stone or earth huts. If, at least, they would have such shelters they could perhaps apply themselves agriculturally. But this hope has been taken from them as well; under threat of death they are continually dragged from one place to another, to bring variety to their suffering. They are scared into endless forced marches, without bread, without water, exposed to fresh sufferings and new maltreatment under the whips of their overseers, miseries that would not even occur to a slave dealer from the Sudan; the entire stretch of the way of a fearsome row of suffering, marked by the victims of these transports.

Those who still carry some money are constantly robbed by their wardens, who threaten them with even further deportations, and when their small means are exhausted, they execute these threats. To speak here of 'one thousand and one nights of horror' means to say nothing. I literally believed to cross hell. The few impressions I would like to report are occasional and hastily assembled. You can only form a weak impression of the terrible and gruesome picture that was before my eyes. Everywhere I travelled I saw the same images; everywhere the terror-regime of barbarism, which has as its goal the systematic annihilation of the Armenian race, rampages. Everywhere one finds the inhuman bestiality of these henchmen, and the self-same tortures with which these unhappy victims are tormented. From Meskene to Der-es-Zol—everywhere the banks of the Euphrates are witness to the same atrocities.

No one came to their defense. No one could. A world war was in progress. Britain's balance of power politics had finally brought the end of nineteenth-century optimism in the worst war men had ever seen. But even without a war, no one would have come to their defense. They knew this; no one had come in 1895 or 1909. Yet they went like lambs to the slaughter. They did not battle to overpower their guards in one last attempt to escape, or at least one final attempt to inflict losses on their Turkish enemies. Some fled at last to Russia, but this escape route was open to very few. The Armenians had for too long suffered in silence, learning to suffer adversity with humility. They died as they had lived: brutalized by a perverse enemy that did not honor their long-term humility. They never learned the lesson: there must eventually be a confrontation, culture by culture, between the enemies of

God and the people of God. The Christian's task is to prepare himself and his spiritual allies for this confrontation. Godly decent people can lose this confrontation when they do not prepare, or, if preparation really is impossible (a doubtful proposition over four centuries), if they do not leave to build for the future in a different nation. This is the lesson the Armenians did not learn in time. They had adopted a theology of patience without adopting its mandatory corollary: the inevitability of confrontation.

### *The Permanent Remnant Psychology*

The kulaks in the Soviet Union in the late 1920s and early 1930s also failed to learn this lesson. The Russians still have not learned, which is the heart of Solzhenitsyn's lament.<sup>11</sup> The Jews in Germany in the early 1930s did not learn, when the Nazis permitted them to leave, so long as they took no money and few belongings with them. Men hope for better times, and bear the oppression of the moment stoically. But there comes a time when continued patience is an inappropriate response. Christianity is not Stoicism, after all. The *period of patience* must be a *period of training*, as it was for Israel in the wilderness. This training must be for dominion. *If there is no training for confrontation, patience becomes defeatism.*

A defective eschatology, such as that which prevailed in Armenia and the Eastern Orthodox church, can lead to a theology of suffering, a kind of spiritual masochism. It always results in defeat and death. There can be various types of defeatist eschatologies, but the *martyr complex* is common to many of them, especially those that are not of the premillennial and pretribulational variety. The latter are more escapist in orientation, hoping for a discontinuous break in history, the physical return of Christ to set up His thousand-year kingdom. But where a culture adopts an eschatology of defeat, as Eastern and Central European Christians did, it becomes a ripe plum for the picking by dedicated foes of Christian civilization. The Arabs, the Mongols, the Turks, and the Communists found little or no resistance as they swept across perpetually patient cultures with their perpetually defeatist eschatologies.

Rushdoony has referred to the *permanent remnant psychology* of modern Christianity. The modern churches, like the doomed

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11. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1965: An Experiment in Literary Investigation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), I, chap. 1.

European churches, have not understood that Christians are called by God to exercise dominion. "Has not the church also abdicated from reality? Has not church-going become a mere social ritual in which countless millions regularly participate without thought or meaning and in flight from meaning? And are not orthodox Christians to be numbered among the retreating in their surrender of life and thought to the devil, or in their permanent remnant psychology?"<sup>12</sup> Religious leaders are content to dwell on mountaintops, literal and spiritual, and withdraw from the crises of life, telling their followers that there is no literal confrontation coming, at least none that Christians will go through. Sporadic confrontations, yes; skirmishes, yes. The Armenians knew that much. But no, there will be no inescapable and historically decisive life-and-death confrontation, culture by culture, between God's people and Satan's. The remnant will always be a remnant, we are told; God will always protect it in its condition of permanent earthly helplessness. The permanent remnant must become permanently patient. *The remnant must dwell in caves forever.*

There is another form of eschatological defeatism, the attitude which says, "We cannot win, of course, but we can make it miserable for the conquerers." This has been the attitude of the zealots of history. The Zealots were a Hebrew sect that defied the Romans and helped take Israel into a suicidal confrontation with Rome in 70 A. D. The zealot cares nothing for the long-term effects of rebellion. That Israel would be scattered from the early second century until the mid-twentieth would not have persuaded the zealots to restrain themselves. The zealots favor the big show, the headline-grabbing demonstration. No dwelling in the houses of widows for three years. No dwelling in caves. They want a premature confrontation on some Mt. Carmel, irrespective of historical circumstances, whether or not a drought has softened up the opposition. This is a self-fulfilling form of defeatism. It leads to a premature confrontation that is unlikely to produce a victory.

### *Resistance Today*

The ministry of Elijah testifies against both perpetual patience and zealotry. Elijah was willing to run when necessary, become inconspicuous when necessary, and challenge the

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12. R. J. Rushdoony, *Van Til* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1960), p. 13.



highest authorities in the land when necessary. He respected historical conditions. He was neither a quietist nor a zealot.

A popular country music song in the late 1970s in the United States, Kenny Rogers's "The Gambler," compared life to a game of cards. The gambler's philosophy was to be taken as a philosophy of life. His words of wisdom:

You've got to . . .  
 Know when to hold 'em;  
 Know when to fold 'em;  
 Know when to walk away;  
 Know when to run.

This strategy for a card game is also applicable to the art of covenantal resistance. The resistor may not ignore his historical environment, nor may he ignore the word of God. He must master the Scriptures, so that his application of the law in history will "fit" the circumstances. It takes wisdom, as does any other program of dominion. Covenantal resistance and revolution are part of an overall strategy of dominion.

A biblical strategy of resistance is simultaneously positive and negative. It seeks to remove the political and institutional barriers to God's law (negative), in order to impose the rule of God's law (positive). It must be understood that in most instances, this must be a "bottom-up" program, not a "top-down" political scheme. Even in the ancient Near East, with its centralized political kingdoms, this was the rule.<sup>13</sup> How much more in modern societies in which representative civil government is the political and ethical norm. Biblical resistance to tyranny involves the steady reshaping of public opinion, and the enlistment of local and regional magistrates. Elijah called for the assembling of the nation of Israel, meaning the local, tribal representatives. He wanted to change

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13. A seeming exception to this rule in the Old Testament was in the case of a confrontation between Israel and a foreign nation. The pagan nations of the ancient Near East were theocratic kingdoms that frequently held to a theology that linked the ruler's being with God's being—a divine-human continuity. In such a case, the king spoke for the people and for the city's gods. The sons of Jacob persuaded the king of Shechem to circumcise the entire city as a covenantal sign (Gen. 34). But the sign of circumcision was always given to subordinates in a household, and this was a case of a city-household, a city called by the same name as the king's son. Moses confronted the Pharaoh, not the Egyptians as individuals, but Pharaoh was the owner of Egypt (Gen. 47:20), and therefore the owner of the Hebrew slaves. There was no reason to go to the people in this instance. Jonah preached to all the people of Nineveh, and they repented, "from the greatest of them even to the least of them" (Jonah 3:5). Then the king responded (v. 6).

their minds. He was not competing for the allegiance of the court prophets; he was preparing for the destruction of the court prophets (negative), with the co-operation of the assembled representatives (positive). *A resistance movement which is strictly negative cannot hope to survive.* But a positive philosophy of resistance which does not acknowledge the inevitability of a decisive public confrontation between God's representatives and Satan's is also futile. *Those who are unwilling to prepare for a literal, historical, risky confrontation with a rebellious society are as suicidal as those who refuse to enter a cave temporarily during a time of danger.*

When Christians find themselves being called to resist an existing civil government, they had better consider the historical circumstances. First, they should examine *the nature of the call*, as well as *the ministry of the person who is issuing the call*. Is he calling for a frontal assault, or a systematic program of battling the bureaucracy by tying it in knots with its own rules and regulations? If he is calling for a frontal assault, is he issuing this call to open, public resistance after years of personal self-discipline and experience in civic affairs? In other words, *does he know what he is talking about?* Has he counted the costs? Furthermore, is he issuing the call to an identifiable group of self-educated, trained, disciplined, politically aware, self-conscious resisters who are ready to become organized into a political and even military fighting force, and who are willing to pay the price of resistance, or to a silent mob that answers not a word until they see which is the way of greatest safety? If the latter, why should the resister call attention to himself prematurely?

Second, are the churches in general ready to support a new governmental structure, to anoint a new king? If not, are the Bible-preaching churches willing to declare their lawful status as the only legitimate churches in God's eyes, and then support the resistance movement? In short, are they willing to eliminate the court prophets, as Elijah did, by working in principle—though perhaps not prematurely in public—toward the removal of tax exemption for the liberal denominations, not to mention the cults? Are they at least willing to deny the myth of religious neutrality and affirm that such theologically indiscriminate tax exemption is illegitimate in principle? Are they willing to affirm that such public, proselytizing religious organizations—religions not confined to private household worship—would not be tolerated in a fully

consistent, officially non-neutral, godly social order? If not, the prospective revolutionary had better question the commitment of the churches, not to mention asking himself just what kind of Christian society he is being called upon to sacrifice his fortune and perhaps his life for.

Third, are the lesser magistrates ready to step in and provide institutional continuity during a period of crisis? If they do, will they be able to lead the resisters in the battle against the apostate central government? Are they prepared to become effective leaders? If not, the rebel is being called upon to risk everything to create conditions of anarchy, which almost always leads to the creation of an even more tyrannical central government.

The answers to these questions do not inspire confidence in the present-day Christian resistance movement, so-called. In our generation, we have lacked the eschatological optimism, the respect for God's law (and the mastery of it), and the faith in the Bible as the self-attesting word of God in a world devoid of neutrality. We have not trained our children in the subtle ways of resistance, nor have we trained them to exercise dominion across the earth. Our own generation was not trained in such a manner, nor were the generations of our parents and grandparents. Thus, the time for open confrontation does not appear to be here. We are still in the wilderness, still in the widow's house, still in the cave, waiting for the opportune time for a successful confrontation. Better to resist today as Gary Alexander recommends: "If a law is unjust, quietly disobey it. Take the consequences if necessary, but return like a dripping faucet to the forehead of the bureaucrat."<sup>14</sup>

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14. *Alexander's Monthly Economic Newsletter* (July, 1981), p. 4.

## RAHAB'S JUSTIFIABLE LIE

Jim West

WHEN you leave your home and purposely leave one or more lights on, pensively ask yourself, "Am I really at bottom a situation ethicist?!" Situation ethics, you may recall, is the philosophy that was dished up with a startling alacrity a few years ago by Joseph Fletcher when he virtually asserted that morality must be determined by a *non-inscripturated* standard of personal love. In holding that there is no law but love the situationalist says "every man must do what is loving in his own eyes." The Bible would put it into the prosecutable language of "every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

Now, of course, we live in the Watergate and Korea-gate era; it is an age when Presidential commitments suddenly become "inoperative"; it is a time when judicial perjury as well as slander and libel have become almost unprosecutable crimes. One might ask, then, about the legitimacy of writing an article on Rahab's justifiable lie (on guard, but not checkmate!). Perjuries, Watergates, the breaking of conjugal vows, and certainly deceitful taking of ordination vows for the Gospel ministry where mental-dissent casuistry exists are clear examples of the sort of cunning that we do not condone. But does telling an untruth to a malefactor or even leaving the lights on in your home fall under the same censure as the examples previously enlisted?

It would be well for us to provide a montage of the different forms of deception that we (often unknowingly) practice regularly. For example, if one asserts that it is a misuse of Edison's light-bulb to deceive a would-be thief, he should think twice about discontinuing his paper and mail service while on vacation, and even (assuming a turbulent conscience) make certain that the living-room drapes are drawn lest any would-be thief is inadvertently bamboozled. Moreover, if one interprets the Bible to teach, "Thou shalt never tell a

falsehood," the practical implications could be easily reduced to the ludicrous. We are acquainted, for example, with a man who in conversation tenaciously claimed that it was never right to tell a lie. Months later when his moral guard was lowered he was offered a "gift" in the form of a sign etched with the famous warning, BEWARE OF DOG. Of course, the one who was offered the gratuity did not have a dog. The offerer of the gift knew that, but the former did not know that the whole transaction was a charitable ruse to test the sterling character of his "never tell a lie" convictions. He smiled, thought about it, as the bearer of the present waited for the Trojan to accept his Trojan horse. Then came the climax of what was expected to be either a valiant refusal or a contradictory acceptance; he said, "I'll have to ask my wife."

### *Some Practicalities and Impracticalities*

Our sign representing the imaginary canine is more than just the dramatic kernel of an amusing vignette. What it tells us is that Christians must realistically face the ramifications of their theological tenets and that if a believer holds that it is *never* right to tell a lie, he may not in good faith even nail a misleading BEWARE OF DOG sign on his fence. The reason? Because such a sign *verbally deceives* in that it does not accurately represent the reality of what it claims; it would have to fall under the censure of the Word of God. The "approprium" of our BEWARE OF DOG sign would in fact be compounded by a serious, double aggravation: *distant neighbors* as well as scheming thieves would be misled to draw fallacious conclusions from erroneous premises.

When Rahab told her "fib" at Jericho in order to save the lives of the spies, she would have been dumbfounded to learn that her act of faith would become the controversial subject of increasing discussion for the next three thousand years of church history. Was Rahab a situation ethicist? Let us modernize the question. Was Corrie ten Boom a situation ethicist? Is it right to have a C.I.A.? Should a Christian work underground in the local police department? Is deception ever justified in fighting crime? You can see that our BEWARE OF DOG sign has some far-reaching ramifications into the personal lives of the people of God. The question is particularly relevant today when crime has crystallized itself into bureau-

cracies of totalitarian regimes as well as into the individual whims of private thugs. So the question about telling untruths to hoodlums is an intensely pastoral and practical problem.

If we accept as a "given" the elimination of *all* forms of deception, we are immediately confronted with a *reductio ad absurdum*. Football's famous "statue of liberty" play would be *ipso facto* eliminated. It would have been gross sin for a Sandy Koufax to throw a change-up when the batter had been just mesmerized by that great pitcher's fastball; a fake jump-shot from the baseline by Julius Irving would be morally indictable; and Roger Staubach would be prohibited from screaming "hut, hut, hut!!!" when specific orders had just been given for the center not to hike the ball "on hut" in order to draw the opposing defensive line off-sides. The "jocular lie" would be an abomination and the refusal to tell a lie could conceivably lead to the burlesque of "going the second mile" in order to tell the truth to your enemy even if it meant placing the lives of your neighbors in jeopardy.

### *Logically and Hermeneutically*

BEWARE OF DOG signs tell us something more than what either may or may not be in our backyards: They tell us to beware of misapplying Biblical generalizations. There is a Scriptural rule of logic that needs emphasizing — the fallacy of accident is that process by which we apply a general rule to a particular case whose "accidental" or providential circumstances render the rule inapplicable. Many general statements of Scripture must be open to admitting exceptions even though those qualifications are not immediately spelled out. Why are so many generalizations stated without qualification? *Because the exact conditions restricting their applicability are not known, or because the "accidental" or providential circumstances that render them inapplicable occur so seldom as to be practically negligible, or because such a qualification has already been stipulated in another inscripturated context.* Jesus tells Peter, "... All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," but in Romans 13 Paul approvingly speaks of the *jus gladii* of civil authority (Matthew 26:52, Romans 13:4). Prayer is another generalization where Jesus ostensibly teaches a *carte blanche* in one place, whereas the unanswered

prayer of lust is condemned in another (Mark 11:24; James 4:3). Romans 7:1-3 seems to teach that if your husband is alive but you are married to another man, you are without qualification an adulteress. But Jesus' statement in Matthew 19:9, where fornication is enlisted as just ground for divorce and remarriage, is emphatically exceptional. The same applies to truthtelling, which is qualified by Scriptural precept and Scriptural example. On the one hand, there are generalizations that exalt truthtelling (Romans 12:17); on the other hand, there is the inspired qualification (James 2:23; I Samuel 16:1-5). So we must register the logical point that what is right "in general" may not be universally and without qualification. This is the logical cliché of the exception proving the rule instead of negating it.

### *The Significance of the Ninth Commandment*

The words, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" mean exactly what the words indicate: It is morally unlawful to speak falsely *against* your neighbor. The force of this commandment is to protect human relationships as well as to foster love. Note: The commandment does not say that "thou shalt never tell a lie."

Words are often more visceral than cerebral, and the word "lying" is not an exception; so a point on terminology: It needs to be underscored that there does not have to be a one-to-one correspondence between the English word and the Biblical word. Why? Because the languages are different. So we can be flexible on terminology as long as the point is clear. Connotatively, "lying" is an opprobrious term; denotatively, "lying" may not always be. For example, one might say, "she lied, but did not bear false witness." The Bible, and not the Queen's English, must be our focus. That Rahab spoke falsely is incontrovertible; but that Rahab spoke falsely *against* her neighbor is what is denied. One cannot intelligently discuss the Ninth Commandment without contrasting the Western (Greek) and Hebrew conceptions of truth. As Dr. Hendrick Krabbendam has said:

The former pertains to the exposure of that which is hidden. The latter denotes dependability; constructive, rather than destructive ability. The Bible opposes truth as exposure (such as gossiping); but promotes truth as a constructive entity.

See also the Ninth Commandment, "You shall not bear false witness." That is to say, you shall not illegally jeopardize one's standing or position in life. Hence, one must conclude that Rahab and the midwives were dependable and constructive at the risk of their own lives, in the face of attempted murder. This is a prime example of love toward God and their neighbor.<sup>1</sup>

It is possible to speak the truth "in the Lord" and it is possible to do so "outside of the Lord" (such as gossipmongering). It is sometimes argued that Jesus never spoke an untruth, therefore we must never utter an untruth. Of course, this proves too much. If this was valid argumentation then it might be maintained that since there is no record that Jesus disobeyed Caesar, then we should never, or since Jesus never disobeyed His parents, we should never. The Apostles' "We ought to obey God rather than man" (Acts 5:29), as well as Jonathan's disobedience to his earthly head (I Samuel 20:30, 42), effectively counters this specious reasoning. Yet Jesus *does* command us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and Rahab's untruth mirrors this *agape*. The Ninth Commandment, as a litotes, does not scrap the idea of bearing false witness in *behalf* of your neighbor.

### *The Rahab Precedent*

Rahab's falsehood in Joshua 2:4-6 is not an island by itself but one of many in a vast archipelago. The midwives lied to Pharaoh's gendarmes (Exodus 1:15-20); Jael tricked Sisera to his doom and received the praise of God's prophetess (Judges 4:18-21; 5:24-27); Solomon's threat to divide the child was intended to trick the harlots and thereby extract the true confession of the rightful mother, albeit through a disavowal (herein was "the wisdom of God," I Kings 3:28); Jeremiah's lie to the princes of Jerusalem is noteworthy (Jeremiah 38:24-28); there is the deception by the Lord Himself to conceal the true mission of Samuel (I Samuel 16:1-5; and see also I Kings 22:19-23); Michal puts off Saul's dragoons with some blanket legerdemain (I Samuel 19:12-17); David feigns a psychosis before Abimelech (the occasion of the praise of Psalm 34); David gives crafty counsel to Jonathan (I Samuel 20:6,

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1. Dr. Hendrick Krabbendam, *The Book of James*, p. 22. This is a syllabus printed in 1973 for members of the Sunnyvale Orthodox Presbyterian Church and ministers of that denomination.



28-29). These are a few of the praiseworthy actions of godly men and women bearing acceptable false witness.

Rahab's lie at Jericho is singled out for two important reasons: it is one of the first examples of pious subterfuge, and it is the occasion of a two-fold Apostolic imprimatur (Hebrews 11:31; James 2:23). Hebrews 11 states that Rahab "received the spies with peace." This was a work of faith. The receiving of the spies resulted in her not perishing with those who did not believe. This receiving is a synecdoche: The part stands for the whole. It certainly would be grotesque exegesis to limit the reception of the spies simply to their initial entrance into the house. Remember—Hebrews 11 as a kind of spiritual "Hall of Fame" records God's champions who are characterized by a *valiant* faith. The emphasis is not that the falsehood was a demonstration of a faith that *works* (James), or of a faith that is *obedient* (I Peter), or of a faith that is *justifying* (Romans), but the focus is on a faith that is *courageous*, since the issue of Rahab's life, the lives of the spies, the lives of the Israelite armed forces, and even the future of the theocracy and the birth of the Messiah were at stake.

Whom did Rahab receive? She received the spies. And what is a spy? In the Biblical context a spy is a secret agent who gains information about an enemy for the purpose of overthrowing that enemy (Joshua 2:1). A spy by definition relies upon the stratagem of falsehood, whether it be in *words, behavior, or dress*. In other words, Israel's God commissioned these spies to engage in a cloak and dagger operation, and Rahab showed the genuineness of her justifying faith by not only receiving the spies, but by becoming a Fifth Columnist herself.

James is the other New Testament writer who extols Rahab. Because James is interested in the fecundity of faith, he says that Rahab was justified by works (James 2:23-25). This means she was vindicated by her works; her works proved that she had been already justified by faith. Here it is said that she not only received the messengers, but "*sent them out another way*." (*Another way—a way other than the way she told the soldiers of Jericho*. Even if it is insisted that the text means she sent them out by a route other than the one they used when they entered the city, deception is still in view, for she let them down the wall by a cord [Joshua 2:15]. Thus, whichever way we take it, James is explicitly praising her act

of *deception*.) Here is faith bursting out "at the seams!" Here is a comprehensive summary of faith's growth and expansion. Both the receiving of the deceivers and their emancipation is stressed. And what better way to emancipate a spy than to employ spy techniques?! *Both the words of the deception and the spies' cooperation leading to the ensuing deliverance must be treated as unitive. They are distinctly correlatives, implying and implicating each other.*

The spies wilily entered the city, wilily hid in the stalks of flax, while listening approvingly to Rahab's wily explanation to the Jericho authorities. The spies were *uncoerced accomplices* to Rahab's untruth so that when they fled the house they must have done so only when they were persuaded that their enemies were convincingly deceived. The mission of the spies was shrouded in deceit since it was a wartime mission when normal communication was impossible. Her sending the spies out "another way" was indeed hinged upon deceit, and hence could not be wrenched from that deceit. The falsehood then was not (as some have suggested) simply the fine dross of an otherwise golden action. The New Testament writers recognize bullion-gold when they see it, and praise Rahab to the hilt. R. J. Rushdoony accurately critiques the Rahab debunkers:

[Their criticism] involves wrongly dividing the word, trying to divide an act from itself, and denying that God's praise of the act was indeed praise.<sup>2</sup>

### *Application and Conclusion*

Two tasks remain: A disclaimer of situation ethics and an extension of the moral applications into our present scenario of living. First, the term "situation ethics" is, *per se*, one that we do not find to be repugnant for the simple reason that there is a situationalism for *all* ethics. The situationalism of *the school* of situation ethics, however, is a philosophy which seeks to promote a contentless love in contexts where normal communication may or *may not* have been broken. This has a double-feature: The love is anchorless since it is defined in terms other than the law of the Lord, and thus is reduced to

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2. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (Nutley, New Jersey: The Craig Press, 1973), p. 545.

sheer arbitrariness and feeling. Secondly, the situations where deceit is envisaged may be normal or abnormal, whereas we have *limited them* to the abnormal (that is, war against crime especially when life and possessions are at issue). The words of John Warwick Montgomery are a telling indictment of the school of situation ethics:

This brings us necessarily to a corollary of the ancient logical conundrum, treated at length by Bertrand Russell and others: 'If a Cretan tells you that all Cretans are liars, can you believe him?' Our restatement goes: 'If a situation ethicist holding to the proposition that the end justifies the means in love, and tells you that he is not lying, can you believe him?'<sup>3</sup>

The Bible states that love and the commandments of Christ are mutually affinitive. What is the law of the Lord but an elucidation of the demands of love? We must echo Montgomery again: in listening to the school of situation ethicists there is absolutely no way of determining, short of sodium pentothal, when they are telling the truth. Any degree of prevarication may be allowed on the basis of homage to love.

Keeping in mind that a Christian is always under a vow to refrain from speaking evil against his neighbor, we must make at least a limpid attempt to apply these principles. Lovers of fictitious canines can rest easier as well as wily vacationers who set their light to go on and off automatically. The Christian has no obligation to speak truthfully to those who have forfeited the right to hear the truth (Bonnie and Clyde citizen).

Because a Christian is always at war with crime he has the moral responsibility to lie, if necessary, to protect his neighbor. Since it is a responsibility mandated by God, it should not be defined as a "lesser of two evils" either. To make this contention is not only to deny that a lawful escape is always open (I Corinthians 10:13), but promote the practical effect of de-Christianizing the Christian by enslaving him in the old unconverted state where he is faced once again with "not possible not to sin" alternatives (Romans 3:10-12; Matthew 7:17-18). So, in what contexts may the justifiable lie be rightly used? Some suggestions: A Christian may fake a heart attack if he is about to be robbed; he may speak falsehoods to

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3. John Warwick Montgomery, "Situation Morality: The Ethics of Immaturity," *The Outlook* (February, 1972), p. 22.

totalitarian authorities when life itself is imperiled; he (she) may tell a rapist that she is a syphiloid or go into a pseudo-seizure to frighten him off; he may tell a thief that he has no money, and even place a BEWARE OF DOG sign on his fence when friendly neighbors as well as would-be thieves would be fooled. Camouflage in warfare is certainly lawful, and a Christian may properly engage in espionage. In 1969, for example, the North Koreans offered to return the crew of the *U.S.S. Pueblo* on condition that the United States confess that the ship was engaged in espionage in North Korean waters. Before making the "confession" to the North Koreans at Panmunjom, Major General Gilbert H. Woodward publicly stated that the admission was *false* and that he would sign the "confession" only to free the crew. Thus, he confessed to a lie before he told it!

The above are just some suggestions; they are not intended to teach that there may not be (in God's providence) some other strategem that may be viable in particular situations. But let us also conclude with a warning not to use these principles as leverage for license to sin, either. Yet, it must also be concluded: These principles cannot be invalidated by their liability to abuse.

## PACIFISM AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

### A Survey of Four Recent Books

James B. Jordan

**H**ISTORICALLY, the Reformed and evangelical churches, not to mention the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox, have held that the Anabaptist tradition is in error in holding to pacifism. British and American Baptists, being modified Presbyterians rather than root-and-branch Anabaptists, have concurred with that opinion. Recently, however, Anabaptist theology has enjoyed a tremendous upswing in popularity. Among "Reformed Baptists" there has been a considerable movement away from a Spurgeonian "modified Presbyterianism" toward more of a wholesale adoption of Anabaptist theology, which has resulted in not a little tension between the two camps. (Roughly speaking, and the situation is quite fluid, we are speaking of a difference between the "Banner of Truth" Baptists, and the "Baptist Reformation Review" neo-Anabaptists.)

At the same time, Mennonite theologians have begun to be regarded as within the boundaries of acceptable "Christianity Today" evangelicalism, and Anabaptist theology has had continuing and strident advocacy by "left-wing evangelicals," the best known of which is Ronald Sider. All of this has meant that Anabaptist views of war, capital punishment, and resistance to tyranny have become live issues once again in Christendom.

Generally speaking, Anabaptist theologies have had a tough time incorporating any kind of positive view of the Old Testament, because of its holy wars and its mandatory capital punishment. In recent years, however, the development of the discipline known as "Biblical Theology," which seeks to understand the Bible in a more historical, less logicistic fashion, has been called upon to serve the Anabaptist cause. Recent writers have argued not that "New Covenant pacifism" is radically opposed to "Old Covenant militarism," but that the

change from "militarism" to "pacifism" in the Covenant represents a predictable and inevitable development in redemptive history. Thus, they argue, the Old Covenant itself teaches us pacifism. We are confronted with an Anabaptist argument which seeks to advocate an Old Testament pacifism, on the basis of Biblical Theological insights.

The purpose of the four reviews included in this essay is to explore these new lines of argumentation, as set forth by four respected authors. If indeed Biblical Theology is pointing us in a pacifistic direction, then we must take it most seriously.

Peter C. Craigie, *The Problem of War in the Old Testament*.  
Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1978. 125 pp. \$3.95.

Craigie's book is not a study of Old Testament war tactics, nor is it a systematic study of the Old Testament laws regarding warfare. Rather, what Craigie addresses is the problem of how a God of love could ever have become involved in the horrors of warfare. Craigie, who served in the Royal Air Force, and who is now Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Calgary, in Alberta, Canada, is concerned about the contrast between the loving Christ of the New Testament and the warring YHWH of the Old Testament.

Historically the Christian Church has dealt with this supposed problem by pointing to the fact that there is plenty of wrath in the New Testament, by pointing to the eternal fires of hell as taught by Jesus Himself, and by pointing to the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent—an enmity placed in the heart by God Himself (Gen. 3:15). The horrors and pain of warfare, the orthodox argument goes, come nowhere close to the horrors and pain of eternal fire. Sinful man deserves hell; thus, when he experiences war, he is only getting what he deserves.

This is not Craigie's approach, nor does he even allude to this line of argument. In the first paragraph of this book, he writes that the frequent use of the word 'war' is "disturbing in a book which is associated so intimately with the Prince of Peace." (p. 9). He writes that "it is disturbing—or at least it *should* be—for the Christian to read the ruthless laws of war in Deuteronomy 20:10-18, or to meditate upon the bloodthirsty execution of war in the books of Joshua and the Judges" (p. 10). It is hard, he states, to reconcile the Old Testament

description of God as Warrior with "the New Testament description of God as loving and self-giving" (p. 11).

Craigie accepts the notion that orthodox Christians tend to be more violent and warlike than more heterodox groups (p. 14f.), and he believes that the use of the Old Testament by orthodox Christians has influenced them in this direction (pp. 26ff.). Craigie overlooks the intense Phariseeism which often accompanies pacifistic groups, and does not note the verbal abuse and violence which has so often been their hallmark.

Craigie's real problem is with God, however. "Can God be both loving and warlike? The immediate answer would seem to be: No!" (p. 35). Craigie asserts his premise on p. 42: "*war is always evil.*" Craigie attempts to resolve the dilemma created by his approach to Scripture by saying that God's involvement in Israel's wars simply shows His identification with His sinful people. It shows God's activity, not His moral being (p. 41f.). As a result, we may seek God, even in our sin (p. 43). This sounds nice, but does it also mean that we may seek God in the act of murder, or of adultery? Since God, in Craigie's view, employs sinful war to further His purposes, does He also employ adultery? Scripture nowhere indicates such a thing. Moreover, if war is always wrong, why does God *order* warfare? For God is not only involved in war, He also commands it! Further, we must ask if God identifies Himself with sin when He identifies Himself with sinners. Surely the multitude of laws in both Testaments, as well as the carefully spotless life of the Lord Jesus Christ show that God need not identify with sin in order to reach down to the sinner!

Perhaps we should say, with orthodox Christianity, that war is like divorce, slavery, and disinheritance: it is a response to the evil of sinful man. These institutions are necessary in a world of sin, or at least occasionally necessary; but the institutions can be abused as well as properly employed according to Scriptural law. Is war always evil?

Having asserted that war is always morally evil, Craigie then has trouble with the holy wars of the Old Testament, particularly the extermination of the Canaanites. "Can the ruthless requirement for the extermination of the enemy—men, women, and children—in any way be regarded as holy? I think that it can not!" (p. 49). Again, Craigie's argument boils down to an expression of prejudice. As a matter of fact, war in the Old Testament was precisely "holy." When a city

was burned to the ground under the ban (Num. 21:3, Josh. 6:16-24, Jud. 1:17), the fire was taken from the altar and the city was considered a whole burnt sacrifice (Deut. 13:16f.). The fire on the altar, again, was never lit by human hands, but was fire from heaven, kept burning continually but initially poured out by God Himself (cf. Gen. 22:7, Lev. 9:24-10:2, II Chron. 7:1, I Kings 18:38). Holy war, then, was the execution of God's own fiery judgment against those who refused to have Christ as their sacrificial Substitute. The fires and judgments of holy war simply issued the enemies of God into the fires of hell.

Craigie's explanation of why God involved Himself in the evil of Israel's wars is that war is "a practical necessity for survival as a state" (p. 66). He goes on to note that "the form which the Kingdom of God assumed in Old Testament times was that of a *nation state*" (p. 70). Thus, "the state is a form of human organization through which God worked in the times of ancient Israel, and war was a form of human activity inseparably linked to the existence of the state" (p. 74). Since sinful warfare is the inescapable concomitant of every nation state, at least God directed it against especially wicked people, the Canaanites, who deserved it (p. 74). In criticism of this, the fact is that while it is probably correct to say that war inevitably is necessary to secure the civil order of a fallen world, it is not presented as evil in Scripture. The Divinely inspired Psalter glories in war and the destruction of the wicked (e.g. Ps. 58:10; 139:19-22; 149:5-9). It is the presentation of Scripture, as opposed to Craigie's theories, that the Canaanites were God's enemies, and God used the good tool of holy war to slay them.

It is also debatable whether the Kingdom of God assumed the *form* of a nation state, or whether it was merely *tied to* and *sheltered by* a particular nation state during its time of immaturity. If the former be the case, the theocracy must be seen as a peculiar form of the *Church*; but if the latter, then the civil government of ancient Israel is simply a description of what *any* just state should be like (cf. Heb. 2:2), with some additional peculiarities due to the Church's tie thereto.

Why would God set up such a state-church in the first place? Craigie argues that it was so that the Church would learn the futility of relying on the sinful arm of the flesh. The defeat of the Israelite nation state "functions as a parable of



warning: political institutions may be essential to the existence of human society, but they cannot be equated with the Kingdom of God" (p. 81). From this sad history we learn that the Church is not a state and thus can never be promoted by war (p. 82). Doubtless this is a legitimate moral lesson, but it is nonetheless morally problematic. The Church is not propagated by adultery either; should God have created an adulterous Church so that its failure would stand as an object lesson? If war is evil, then the state is itself always evil, just as adultery is evil.

This being the case, it would seem that an Anabaptistic retreat from citizenship is the only proper course of action. Craigie argues that the Christian is inevitably a citizen of both Church and state, and is thus caught in a dilemma between good and evil. This is because "the fundamental principles of the Kingdom are love and non-violence" (p. 108), a questionable assertion in the light of the doctrine of hell. We shall return to Craigie's attempt to resolve this problem below.

The last chapter of his book is entitled "Some Conclusions." First, Craigie attempts to deal with the problem of God and war. Essentially he tries to dissolve the problem in mystery (a popular tact with dialectical theologians and those influenced by them). "The first point which it is important to stress in this context is the nature of human language when it is applied to God" (p. 94). Our limited language points to the fact that "God participates in human history" (p. 95), but His participation in warfare points "not to his *moral being* but to his *will* and activity" (p. 96). The Bible, however, presents holy war as a reflex of God's righteousness.

Secondly, Craigie deals with the problem of inscripturation. Why was all this bloodshed recorded for us to read, and for the orthodox churches to misinterpret? Craigie is unable to deal with the historicity of the narratives (though he does not deny them, nor does he deny God's revelation through them). All he is able to do is turn Old Testament history into a parable, so that although his view of the facts is evangelical, his theology is parabolic and dialectical. "To use an analogy, the Old Testament's treatment of war may be seen as a parable, but the whole parable must be read if the message is to emerge" (p. 97). This "parable" shows two things: first, that violence is of the essence of sinful man's nature, war being one manifestation thereof; and second, that any

political form of God's Kingdom must fail because of its tie to sinful state warfare. The "parable" thus points to a need for a Saviour. Christ saves us by *submitting* to violence (but Craigie omits to note that the ascended, enthroned Christ poured out violence on Jerusalem in 70 A. D., and continues to destroy His adversaries all through history, according to the Book of Revelation, written by the "love Apostle," John). Craigie misinterprets both the Old and the New Testaments, pitting them against one another, and then can only resolve his self-made problems by invoking a parabolic *heilsgeschichte*.

The third problem is the problem of Christian ethics, as it grows out of the sinful warfare recorded in the Bible. Craigie distinguishes between an "order of necessity" (p. 109) and an order of goodness. The state is necessary, and necessarily sustained by evil warfare. Thus, evil is necessary and inescapable. The Christian cannot escape being entangled in this order of necessity. This is a "paradox," which Craigie does not know how to resolve, "yet I affirm both within my theological perspective" (p. 110). Craigie's theology, however, is not merely dialectical; because the order of necessity is *evil*, Craigie's theology at this point is *Manichaeism*. "Now these remarks may seem to have all the hallmarks of a 'woolly' position, neither one thing nor the other. In a sense that is true. Nevertheless, I think it may be inevitable. It is, I believe, one of the implications of being *in* the world, but not *of* it" (p. 110). Craigie affirms that "to function responsibly in that state involves, directly or indirectly, participation in violence. I cannot escape that; I must share not only responsibility, but also *guilt*, without attempting to justify it" (p. 111).

Craigie's unfortunate, mystical piety is only a sad mish-mash of neo-orthodoxy and Manichaeism. The Christian doctrine of war is surely an offense, but is only an extension of the doctrine of eternal judgment, which is also an offense. Can Craigie believe in the doctrine of hell, given his prejudices? What about the doctrine of God's wrath and the doctrine of propitiation? All of these fall to the ground before Craigie's all-loving God. Christ is Prince of Peace, true enough; but not for all men, only for His own sheep.

One is reminded of an oft recounted story concerning Spurgeon. A woman once approached the preacher and asked him how he could believe that God actually hated Esau. In words to this effect, Spurgeon replied: "Madam, it gives me

no pause for thought that God should hate Esau, or me, or any other man; what astounds me is that God should love Jacob." And so it is. Craigie, like Spurgeon's assailant, *seems* in this book to have no conception of the holiness and wrath of God, and no conception of the depravity and just deserts of man. We should marvel that God loves any of us, and should be astounded that there is any let up in His holy warfare.

Jacob C. Enz, *The Christian and Warfare:  
The Roots of Pacifism in the Old Testament.*

Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1972. 95 pp. \$1.95.

The back cover of this short book states that "the objective of the author is not to formulate a biblical doctrine of pacifism but to reexamine the biblical concepts to see just what is there." In his preface, Dr. Enz says, "If pacifism is not found in the very fabric of biblical thought, no amount of proof-texting will be convincing." Thus, the intent of these six chapters, originally lectures delivered at Bethel College in Kansas, is to provide a Biblical-Theological argument for pacifism. At the time of publication, Dr. Enz was a Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana.

There is virtually nothing in this book to attract the orthodox Christian thinker. First of all, a low view of Scripture pervades Enz's discussion. The Bible is seen as contradictory: "When it [love] narrows down to a nationalistic motivation as in Psalm 2, the New Testament, in addition to Ruth and Jonah, *corrects* it" (p. 15). "*Both accounts* of creation in Genesis . . ." (p. 42). "Hence in the *earliest* material in the Pentateuch . . ." (p. 45). "What could be more *haughty* and *brutally nationalistic* than the two best known Messianic Psalms . . ." (p. 70)? [Emphasis added to all quotations.] Each of these assertions is gratuitous, betrays a low view of the normativity of God's holy Word, and indicates influence from liberal higher-critical methodologies.

Second, the view of the atonement set forth in this book is not Christian but gnostic.<sup>1</sup> On p. 39 we find, "Christ nailed

1. On gnostic-anabaptist thinking, see James B. Jordan, "The Moral Majority: An Anabaptist Critique," in *The Failure of the American Baptist Culture. Christianity and Civilization 1* (Tyler, TX: GDS Press, 1982).

Himself to the human race on His cross till the last who wants it may accept. He demands, but He also descends to the lowest level of human need to walk upward with those who respond." There is no notion of the propitiation of God's wrath here, or of any kind of legal transaction on the cross. Everything points to the idea of a gnostic savior reaching down the scale of being to draw up souls caught in the slime. But perhaps we are being too harsh, reading too much into this one sentence.

Dr. Enz, however, leaves no doubt as to where he stands. A plethora of ancient heresies find expression on pp. 62-65. For instance, "In addition to the incarnation of God in His people and in Christ there is yet a sin-neutralized incarnation of God in everyone." And, "When we destroy others we are destroying not only God, but also self since in God our own self cannot be separated from the self we destroy in others." This is pantheism, or panentheism. Christ's incarnation is the same as everyone else's. We are all little pieces of God. We are gods ourselves. Enz's argument against taking life is identical to that of the Hindu: all life is God, so to take any life is to attack God.

Again, "We live in a world of right and wrong that has its own built-in judgment." No, God is the judge. There is no such thing as natural law. This is again pantheism, or if Enz wants to say God created these laws, deism.

Again, Enz's God not only imputes the guilt of sin to Christ and punishes it in Him, He actually makes Christ a sinner: "Here is the God of the second mile, for it means the *toleration of sin* (not committed, of course, but taken upon Himself); that which He has forever set Himself against is *taken into His own nature*." There is more: "I am convinced that there is a basic evident continuity of both incarnation *and* substitution from Jesus to us. Here is a willingness to take or share in the consequences of the wrong act of another even if we have had no part whatsoever in the wrong act; this is in order to help restore integrity in and fellowship with the wrongdoer. The effectiveness of accepting or sharing those consequences can only be sure as *we share the purity of Christ* on the one hand and *completely identify* ourselves with the wrongdoer on the other." [All emphasis added, except for the word *and*.] The work of Christ, in this scheme, is not unique, but only exemplary. We are all gods, and we can each "atone"

(whatever that means in this system) for one other. Christ is a gnostic savior who has come down into the world to infuse toleration of evil, and a power to avoid evil, into the world.

Thus, third, Enz's theology has no category of Divine justice. His God is not even a creator, eternally separate from His creation. The essence of the gospel is a love which woos people back to God through toleration (pp. 7ff.). The Christian gospel is that God hates and punishes sin and sinners, even calling on men to implement His work (through the sword). Salvation comes from the vicarious death of the unique God-man under the fury of God's wrath. All men must die for sin, but the elect die in Christ, and thus are resurrected. Judgment, then, is the foundation of resurrection, and of the experience of love.

Enz closes his book with what must be taken as a wholly Satanic attack on God: "Because he has his own war to wage, the Christian breaks completely with the earthly strategy of physical combat. If the Christian is to be true to the Lord Jesus Christ, he must make a full break with the *ancient and ultimate apostasy*. His weaponry is not the *belligerent word of ultimatum* issuing in the thrust of the sword that divides, destroys, and perpetuates the very evil he is seeking to eliminate. His weaponry is rather the persuasive word of the gospel issuing in compassionate concern for liberation, reconciliation, and celebration of the approaching Christ-ordained age of peace" (p. 88). [Emphasis added.] The God of Scripture, Who punishes evil, is obviously the author of "the ancient and ultimate apostasy." Christ, who came to divide households (Matt. 10:34ff.), is perpetuating evil. The Gospel According to Enz is but the siren song of Satan, that God ought to love everybody and excuse sin. In fact, God ought to come down and taste a little sin for Himself (which Enz says Christ did). The God of Enz is the Satan of Scripture.

Oh, yes: the Old Testament and pacifism. Well, Enz actually deals very little with the Old Testament. His sole argument seems to be that since God miraculously delivered Israel on important occasions, this militates against the notion that Israel should ever have taken up the sword to defend itself (pp. 52f.). Enz thinks that his gnostic God was trying gradually to lead people away from violence toward tolerance, by showing them that He could deliver them and so they should not try to arm themselves to do so. Well, it is true that the

Bible tells us not to trust to human arms, and to trust in the Lord, but there is nothing in Scripture to indicate that trusting in the Lord cannot involve, as an act of faith, training for defensive warfare. We are to trust God for food and raiment, but we are also told that "a good man leaves an inheritance to his grandchildren" (Prov. 13:22). There is no reason to pit these things against each other. Moreover, if Enz is right, then the recorded commands of God to execute capital punishment, and to war against Amalek and the Canaanites, are errors, and the Bible is not trustworthy.

As a work of Christian theology, this book is totally heretical. As a work of Biblical Theology, it is shabby. The Mennonite churches have tried to set their faces against the gnostic aspects of their heritage,<sup>2</sup> but it is alive and well in this book.

Vernard Eller, *War and Peace, from Genesis to Revelation*.

Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1981. 216pp. \$8.95.

This book is an updated and revised version of the author's *King Jesus' Manual of Arms for the Armless* (Abingdon Press, 1973). Eller is a minister in the Church of the Brethren, and professor of Religion at the University of La Verne, in California.

We are confronted with a problem in the very introduction, p. 11, where Eller describes "violence" as including "any activity that *violates* the dignity and God-image of persons, whether physically, verbally, psychologically, socially, economically, spiritually, or in any way whatsoever." C. S. Lewis, in his classic essay on capital punishment, has pointed out that treating people as sick and refusing to punish them for crimes is dehumanizing in essence, while capital punishment (a form of violence, to be sure) treats the criminal as a real man who has made a real decision.

This ushers us into a basic problem that runs throughout the book: there is no appreciation, it seems, for the legal foundations of the covenant between God and man. The laws of

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2. See the introduction by John S. Oyer of Goshen, Indiana, in Werner O. Packull, *Mysticism and the Early South German-Austrian Anabaptist Movement 1525-1531. Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History 19* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1977), and the review of this book elsewhere in this symposium.

Exodus-Deuteronomy are ignored, though they have much to say to the issue of pacifism. The atonement is seen as expiation (p. 118), never as propitiation of the wrath of God. Indeed, Eller tells us that man is not God's enemy (p. 31). Thus, a fundamental lack of theological orthodoxy once again colors everything said about the movement of redemptive history. "Violence" is not defined and circumscribed by God-given law, but by what seems to us to be right. Eller rightly points out, repeatedly, that many crusaders for pacifism are as "violent" as those they oppose, but he never allows the Bible's own laws to define the proper use of force.

In chapter 1, Eller points out that man was created to take dominion, and this implies "fighting" or wrestling with the creation. When Eve was brought to Adam, however, it was not for fighting but for companionship. Then came the Fall. In historic orthodox Christianity the following propositions are taken as Biblical and true: 1. God and man are now enemies, and God's wrath is against all men (Rom. 1-3), and His hatred against those outside Christ (Psalm 5). 2. God poured out His wrath upon Christ, instead of on His covenant people. Those covenant people are now enlisted as His dominion agents, and enthroned over those who will not convert. 3. God has privileged righteous men to execute His judgments on the earth, to a limited extent. The limits are prescribed in His law: certain capital crimes, certain occasions of warfare. 4. Evangelism is by persuasion, never by the sword. 5. Nationalism is idolatry, and most wars are unjust, though not all.

Now, because of Eller's theological position, we cannot expect him to take this ground, but we do have a right to expect him to argue against it. He does not, however. "God does not fight against man; man is not the enemy," he writes (p. 31). "The enemy is *in* man, but man is not the enemy" (p. 31). If we understand "man" as *mankind*, we might agree in part with Eller, but he will not permit that view. "Man" for him means all men. Eller does not want to be counted as a universalist, as he makes clear toward the end of the book, but he does want to leave that open as a possibility.

The next step in the discussion is the city of Cain. Eller says that Cain's basic motivation was a search for *security* (p. 32, and p. 147). This, however, is again a fundamental theological error. The basic motivation for fallen man is

hatred for God. Cain's walled city was built first of all to make a name for himself against God (Gen. 4:17; 11:4), as an act of defiance. Cain's problem was moral, not metaphysical, first and foremost. Modern theology says that man's basic motive is fear of non-being, of chaos, so that his basic drive is to find security. This is based on the being/non-being dualism of all pagan thought.<sup>3</sup> In Christianity, however, man's problems are ethical. There is no such thing as non-being, since after death men continue to exist. Man's basic fear is not non-being, but judgment. Man only tries to hide from this, and cover it up, by pretending that he really fears non-being.

Now Eller does say, rightly, that war is not first of all a political problem, but a theological one. Because, however, his view of God is askew (wrathless), his understanding of the nature of the theological problem is also askew.

What other conclusion can we come to when we read in chapter 2, "Joshua and company had a true perception regarding war and peace but misapplied it (and it takes the remainder of the Bible and Jesus to get that matter straightened out)" (p. 40)? Further, "Now goodness knows, we find plenty of early Hebrew actions that *strike us* as being very inconsistent with what Yahweh's war actually is all about; and the remainder of the Bible will work at correcting those inconsistencies. Nevertheless, all the evidence suggests that these people were doing *the very best they knew how* in getting their lives hallowed in accordance with Yahweh's will" (p. 52). I have emphasized "strike us" because I think it is revealing. Eller, however, emphasized the phrase "the very best they knew how." This is false on two counts. First, God repeatedly judged Israel, even in Joshua's time (at Ai), for *not* doing the best they knew. Second, what they did do right was in accordance with God's revealed law, which required "violence" in holy war. Eller is saying that Joshua and company were right in siding with God, but wrong in killing other people. God, however, condemned Saul and Ahab for *not* killing people (I Sam. 15; I Kings 20), and made a covenant of *peace* (yes, *peace*) with Phineas because he *did* kill some people (Num. 25). But for Eller, "It simply is impossible to reconcile the

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3. See Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1936); and Rushdoony, *The One and the Many* (Fairfax, VA: Thoburn Press, 1978).



savage, city-leveling Yahweh of Joshua with the God and Father of Jesus. Where—even with their best intentions (better than ours)—did these old Hebrews get off the track?” (p. 58). Answer, they did not realize that “man is not the enemy” (p. 59).

At this point the theological point should be clear: Eller has an unorthodox view of God and of salvation. If we are looking for an *evangelical* Biblical theology of pacifism, we shall not find it here any more than we found it in Enz.

Quickly, then, some other observations on the book: *First*, orthodox Christians must object to the low view of Scripture that runs throughout the book, most prominently in Eller’s adoption of the worn out nonsense of two Isaiahs. *Second*, Eller interprets Isaiah 30, 31 as teaching that Israel’s military preparedness was sinful, whereas the text itself identifies the sin as an alliance with Egypt (p. 70f.). *Third*, a logical flaw (p. 71): “There is no such thing as a *just war*, because there are no peoples who themselves are just enough to fight them.” No, because (1) God’s grace is sufficient to overcome this problem, and (2) a just (i.e. defensive) war is measured not by the *motives* of the defenders but by the *actions* of the aggressors.

*Fourth*, “once Israel had determined that she was going to fight, God determined that, whether he *approved* of such fighting or not, he was going to *use* it to preserve Israel, give her a homeland, and lead her in the way toward the peaceable kingdom” (p. 78). False, for Israel initially *refused* to fight (Numbers 14), after God had *commanded* them to. Eller has his facts backwards, because he patently does not take the Bible seriously as God’s inerrant Word.

*Fifth*, “if the suffering-servant ethic is not meant to apply in social situations, then the gospel gives *not the slightest hint* as to what ethic is to apply; there is no other ethic in the New Testament” (p. 153). Why just the New Testament? Did not Jesus come to confirm and enforce *all* the law (Matthew 5:17-19)? Moreover, Romans 12 and 13 clearly separate personal from social (civil) ethics in this area.<sup>4</sup>

In conclusion, two things: One, Eller does make some good points in this book, well worth considering, such as his

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4. On Matthew 5 and Romans 12 & 13, see Greg L. Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Craig Press, 1977). Even if Bahnsen is only generally correct, Eller is in error.

contention that men who fight against evil, rather than fighting for the good (God), become evil in the process. Here is the danger in a political faith, and Christianity is not a political faith, though (as Eller would agree) it has political ramifications. In my opinion, however, Eller's failure to use an orthodox theological perspective, and his bad view of Scripture, gut his book of any real value.

Two, at this point we might take up an argument that runs through Eller's book, and those of others as well. It is this: since God fought for Israel, Israel was morally obligated to do nothing in its own defense. This argument is the same as saying that since God will take care of the poor, the poor must do nothing for themselves, and we are obligated to do nothing for them. In short, it does not wash. God fought for Abram, but since Abram was a man of means, Abram had to fight, too (Gen. 14). When David fought, God's army fought right above him, but he was still ordered, by God, to fight (2 Sam. 5:23f.).<sup>5</sup>

Millard C. Lind, *Yahweh is a Warrior:  
The Theology of Warfare in Ancient Israel.*

Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1980. 232pp. \$9.95.

Millard Lind is professor of Old Testament at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, and a minister in the Mennonite Church. Lind's point is that in the Old Testament God always fought for Israel in a manner which emphasized the discontinuity between His actions and those of His people. Either God did all the fighting (as at the Exodus), or He did the foundational, definitive fighting and His people only engaged in mop-up activities (as at Megiddo, Judges 4, 5), or He arranged matters so that in battles where human action seems to have been paramount, it was clear that without His activity the battle could not be won.

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5. Another example of this argument is in John H. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 199: "Christians are told (Rom. 12:19) never to exercise vengeance but to leave it to God and to wrath. Then the authorities are recognized (13:4) as executing the particular function which the Christian was to leave to God. . . . This makes it clear that the function exercised by government is not the function to be exercised by Christians." This peculiar interpretation is contradicted by the entirety of Scripture.

There is no problem with this, obviously, except that Lind overstates his case on the first page of his text (numbered p. 23): "This conviction was so emphatic that Israel's fighting, while at times a sequel to the act of Yahweh, was regarded as ineffective; faith meant that Israel should rely upon Yahweh's miracle for her defense, rather than upon soldiers and weapons." This implies an opposition between God's activities and those of men, which does not square with the Biblical presentation of the relationship between the two.<sup>6</sup> God's actions are the foundation of human action, not a negation of it. The notion that God's actions and those of men cannot be dependently parallel assumes that God and man exist on the same continuum. Thus, to the extent that God predestinates, man is a mere puppet, and to the extent that man acts, God does not act. On the contrary, however; the doctrine of creation teaches us that God predestinates all things, and acts in all things, yet the actions of men are genuine free moral choices, and indeed only have meaning against the background of God's sovereignty.

Now, in the case of holy war, this simply means that the victory is always ultimately ascribed to God, whether any human actions take place or not. As pointed out above, David was to follow God's army into battle, fighting on the ground while God fought in the treetops (2 Sam. 5:23f.). The actions are parallel, yet man is wholly dependent on God for the outcome.

A second problem enters in here, which Lind does not discuss at all. That is, that there is a distinction between what we might call "holy war" and "just war," the former being salvific and absolute in character (liquidating the Canaanites, destroying the Egyptians), the latter being defensive and limited in character (as the laws of Deuteronomy 20:10-20).

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6. An example of theological messiness is on p. 38, "If one truly believes in the promise of grace that God will *give* the land, then one has no need to take the way of works by fighting for it. The logic of Paul's doctrine of grace—calling for a response of faith rather than works—is here prefigured. . . ." On the contrary, grace calls for both faith and faithful works; it only negates faithless works of the law, done in pride. Moreover, if God was giving the land in the sense Lind means, why did He tell Israel to fight also? Jesus said, giving us insight into this, "the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every one is forcing his way into it" (Luke 16:16). Christ's saving actions on our behalf do not negate our need to strive.

The stress in the Exodus, that God did everything and that man was wholly passive, stands as a type of the eternal redemption wrought when God poured out His "holy war" wrath against Jesus Christ, and against all His enemies in hell forever. The stress in later wars, which Lind misses, is on the outworking of the implications of God's initial victory. All the later wars, those of Joshua and David particularly, are mopping up actions in which man is *privileged by grace* to have a hand. That it is a privilege to engage in God's wars is clearly seen in the Psalms, perhaps nowhere better than in Ps. 149:5-7, where the saints sing for joy on their beds while they contemplate warring against God's enemies, or Ps. 58:10, "The righteous will rejoice when he sees the vengeance; he will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked." Those who cannot say "Amen" to such sentiments have not yet learned to think God's thoughts after Him.

As the New Testament makes clear, the coming of the Gospel is the coming of God's justice-judgment to the earth. This has both positive and negative aspects. The same Christ who prayed for His elect on the cross, also prayed for the destruction of His enemies (Ps. 69:20-28). The same Christ who carried the cross for His people, warned the women of Jerusalem of the wrath He shortly was to bring upon the city (Luke 23:27-31). The same Jesus who sent the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to save the church, sent His wrath at Holocaust to destroy Jerusalem 40 years later (Matthew 24). Those who question this do so on the basis of a faulty premise: that the Gospel is first and foremost a declaration of forgiveness to all men. This is not the case; first and foremost the Gospel is a declaration of a theodicy, that God is just, and has implemented His justice while (amazingly!) justifying His people (Romans 1-4). When we see that the Gospel age is the age of judgment, of the Day of the Lord, we have no problem rejoicing in His judgments, or in seeing it a privilege to be called to execute them. [So, the question is this, courteous reader: would you rejoice to be appointed public hangman?]

As a *general* canon, we may say that "holy war" of extermination does not exist in the New Covenant, since God's liquidation of Egypt is fulfilled at the cross, in 70 A. D., and in the fires of hell, and since His extermination of the Canaanites has no corresponding special order in the New Testament (i.e., "you will totally wipe out such and such

tribes"). In the Gospel, "holy war" is the evangel, destroying sinful men by applying to them the death and resurrection of Christ in preaching and in sacraments. On the other hand, "just war" continues to be relevant. We shall return to that at the end of this essay.

Returning to Lind, there are good points made in this study concerning the relation between the deliverer and the king: that since the Lord is the Deliverer, He is the king. Again, Lind tends to absolutize this, so that he is unsure whether the Biblical writers approve of David's subordinate kingship or not. All the same, the contrasts Lind draws between the oriental pagan conception of kingship and the Biblical one are frequently useful.

Lind points out that when Israel adopted the ways of the pagan kings, the Lord went to war against Israel. Indeed, one of the most insightful suggestions Lind makes is that there was a problem between David's personal army, a professional corps which grew up during David's years under Saul, and the Israelite militia. Lind suggests that David's sin of numbering the people consisted in an attempt to reduce the voluntary militia of Israel into a part of his permanent army corps (p. 118f.). The young king David who played the part of God's fool and slave by dancing before the Ark, and who earned the contempt of Saul's daughter (possessed as she was by the oriental pagan view of kingship), has now become an oriental tyrant to a great extent himself.

Unfortunately we cannot recommend this book, all the same. Lind's method of approaching the Bible is that of radical redaction criticism. Unless the reader is pretty familiar with the spurious fantasies of Martin Noth and Gerhard von Rad, he had best leave this book alone. Radical criticism such as Lind employs enables the author to pick and choose which parts of the Bible to hearken to, according to an evolutionary scheme. The Bible ceases to be the Word of God, and becomes a set of interwoven theologies of men. As a result, the text is frequently not examined seriously. There are not enough good insights scattered through this book to make its purchase worthwhile.

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In conclusion, we should like to make a number of points. First, it does not seem as if anyone has taken the Old Testa-

ment seriously and worked out a pacifistic world-view from it. If Biblical Theology is to lead us to pacifism, it must do a better job. Invariably a less than orthodox theology is brought in to undergird the pacifist position, and this has been the case from the early church (with its wholesale borrowing from Greek philosophy, most notably in Lactantius) until today.

Second, God is a God of wrath, and the blessings of the Gospel are the blessings of the the implementation of His justice, and justice means the punishment of the wicked. The great psalm of peace, Psalm 122, argues that it was the setting up of God's throne of justice which led to peace (v. 5). In short, capital punishment and just war are essential foundations of peace.

Third, a false antithesis runs through much of this writing, an antithesis between violence and non-violence. In the Bible, this is never the antithesis. The righteous take the kingdom by violence, we are expressly told (Luke 16:16). The antithesis is between obedience to God's law and disobedience. The unregenerate and disobedient tend to be violent in the wicked sense, because of their hatred of God and of His image in other men. The righteous, however, are called by God's law to exercise a holy "violence" against certain of the wicked, thereby manifesting God's wrath. In essence, and despite all qualifications, the antithesis "violence/non-violence" reduces the Gospel from theological to political terms.

Fourth, while the Bible forbids street fighting, and any taking of the law into one's own hands (Ex. 21:18-25), it does allow for self defense in situations where the officers of law cannot be called on for help (Ex. 22:2, "If a thief is caught while breaking in, and is struck so that he dies, there will be no bloodguiltiness on his account."). Since the entire premise of the Sermon on the Mount is that Jesus came not to change but to "fulfill" (enforce) the law, and since much of the Sermon consists of turning the people away from Pharisaical accretions and back to Moses,<sup>7</sup> nothing in the sermon on the Mount can properly be read as opposing this principle of judicious self defense. The principle of just war is but an extension of this.

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7. In this respect, Jesus was doing what all the prophets had done, and was bringing the prophetic tradition to its culmination.

Fifth, the extermination of the Canaanites was a special action, carefully delineated by God, and not repeated. It cannot be repeated today, for God has given us no list of nations to destroy.

Sixth, the law of God specifies that war is to be only defensive. The king might maintain no standing army, no horses (Deut. 17:16). Israel would go to war only when attacked (e.g., Ezk. 38:10ff.). At such a time, terms of peace were to be offered, but if these were not accepted, all the men were to be killed, but the women and children incorporated into Israel (Deut. 20:10-20). Thus, the most that can be gleaned from the Old Testament is that Christian nation states may only fight defensive wars, and surely such wars are just wars.

Seventh, we may question whether some modification in just war strategy is implied by the coming of the New Covenant. The vanquished nation in the Old Testament was incorporated into Israel, either by enslavement or by the elimination of the men and the simple incorporation of the women and children (Deut. 20:10-20). In the Gospel age, however, the integrity of each and every language and people seems emphasized by the multiplication of tongues at Pentecost (Acts 2) and by the assurances of worldwide conversion (Rev. 21:24; 22:2). Thus, I should like to propose that in a Christian just war there would be no aggrandizement of the defending nation at the expense of the aggressor. Reparations might be exacted in the form of war debt, but not colonization, nor the elimination of the entire male citizenry. Certain guarantees might be exacted, such as free trade (not neo-imperial, neo-colonial mercantilistic trade) and safe passage for Christian missionaries, but no more. This is also predicated on the Christian view that "national" boundaries should be drawn along ethnic and lingual lines, not along lines of conquest.

Finally, evangelism was not conducted by conquest in the Old Testament, for the Canaanites were not evangelized but exterminated, and no other nations were conquered save when they attacked first. Evangelism, the spread of the faith and of the church, is by proclamation, in both Testaments.

## NATURAL LAW AND CHRISTIAN RESISTANCE TO TYRANNY

Archie P. Jones

IT is no secret that we live in a time of profound crisis for American and Western Civilization, and for the Church. The crisis is gargantuan and multi-faceted: it is military, economic, political, legal, educational, moral, social, and religious. The proportions of the crisis, and the diversity of its manifestations threaten us with the onset of a new, true Dark Age, unless the Lord withholds His hand of just judgment, and Christians begin to act in accordance with Biblical mandates for godly dominion.

The crisis is the consequence of the pride of modern man; it is the result of Humanist<sup>1</sup> assaults and Christian compromises and retreats. Our current predicament, from the Christian side, is the result of our abandonment of the *whole counsel of God* as the standard for the Church's teaching and practice, of our abandonment of *God's law* as the standard for social, economic, and civil governmental practice, and of our abandonment of *God's dominion mandate* (Gen. 1:26-28; Gen. 9:1-17; Luke 19:13; Matt. 28:18-20) as His prescription for our social action. The other side of this retreat by the Church has been our acquiescence in the substitution of the myth of neutrality and the fact of intellectual schizophrenia<sup>2</sup> for the authority of the whole counsel of God, the substitution of Humanistic man-centered law for God's law as the standard

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1. Although it does not conform to accepted grammatical practice, I have sought throughout this essay to emphasize the religious nature of *Humanism* by capitalizing both the noun and its derivatives, just as one properly capitalizes both the proper nouns and their derivatives which designate other religions (as in *Christian*, or *Buddhist*). Humanism *is a religion*, and we ought not to let conventional grammatical standards obscure that fact.

2. See R. J. Rushdoony, *The Nature of the American System* (Fairfax, Virginia: Thoburn Press, [1965] 1978), pp. 67-77, and *Intellectual Schizophrenia* (Fairfax, Va.: Thoburn Press, [1961] 1978).



for social, economic, and governmental practice, and the substitution of the notion that the worshippers of Satan, not the Church of Christ the Lord, will have dominion over the earth in history.

Our predicament springs, as do all human predicaments, from bad theology, but a key vehicle for applying bad theology to produce the manifold crises of our day has been the perversion of law. We have gone from a society based mainly on the Bible, the infallible, inspired word of the autonomous, perfect, and unchanging God, to a society based on the pseudo-autonomous, changing, and uncertain mind and word of man. Hence we have gone from a society grounded mainly on the bedrock of God's revealed law-word to a society grounded on the shifting sands of the pseudo-revelations of man's law. Thus we have "progressed" from a society and civil government under God's law to a society and government *over law*; from a governmental system in which magistrates make law under God and under a constitution built upon the presupposition of the lordship of Christ<sup>3</sup> to a government in which magistrates are over law and the meaning of the Constitution—regardless of God and His word, and are free to pervert the intended meanings of the law and the Constitution in accordance with contemporary fashions and preferences. We thus have "progressed" from a government of laws to a government manifestly of men: transitory majorities,<sup>4</sup> imperial executives,<sup>5</sup> officious and self-serving bureaucrats,<sup>6</sup>

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3. Aside from the Christian principles in the Constitution, the dominantly Christian practice of our early government, and the dominantly Biblical content of our early laws, the concluding words of the Constitution are often neglected by Christians: ". . . DONE . . . in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven. . . ."

4. Majoritarianism was feared and despised by the Framers, but has been glorified by "liberal" Humanists as a fulfillment of the principles of the Constitution! The classic work on the despotic tendencies of non-Christian democracy is Alexis De Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, which is therefore seldom studied in American schools and colleges.

5. "Liberals" have made much of the real abuses of power by leftist presidential heroes. Victor Lasky's *It Didn't Start With Watergate* (New Rochelle, N. Y.: Arlington House, 1978) is a valuable corrective on this point, as is Bill Gulley and Mary Ellen Reese's *Breaking Cover* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1980).

6. Paul Craig Roberts ably explains the self-interested nature of bureaucrats in "The Political Economy of Bureaucratic Imperialism," *The Inter-*

and an imperial judiciary.<sup>7</sup>

The policy decisions of our new Lawgivers, the anti-nomian, Constitution-perverting presidents, congresses, judges, and bureaucrats, have been nothing short of irrational and disastrous. Their pseudo-laws are irrational in their conception, in their content, and in their consequences. Their *conception* is irrational because it denies God and His law and providential control of history, and thus denies the only possible source of meaning to history and human action. Their conception is irrational because it supposes that man in an irrational world devoid of the God of Scripture can save himself from all that ails him, via the centralized, planning state, and because the very notion of central planning involves the assumption by the state of an omniscience which only God possesses.<sup>8</sup> Their *content* is irrational because it seeks to plan where no adequate knowledge can be obtained, because the notion of planning as salvation is based on a false view of the nature of man, and because different statist agencies produce contradictory regulations (indeed, frequently there are contradictory regulations within a particular agency). The *consequences* of the pseudo-laws of our would-be-Gods are irrational (if we are to take their public promises seriously) because the consequences are contrary to the grandiose and utopian claims of our would-be saviors.<sup>9</sup>

All this irrationality should not be surprising: it is

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*collegiate Review*, 12:1 (Fall, 1976):3-10; for some interesting statistical confirmation, via an analysis of the growth of the IRS, see James T. Bennett and Manuel H. Johnson, Jr., "Bureaucratic Imperialism: Some Sobering Statistics," *The Intercollegiate Review*, 13:2 (Winter-Spring, 1978): 101-193.

7. See Rep. Robert K. Dornan and Csaba Vedlik, Jr., *Judicial Supremacy: The Supreme Court on Trial* (New York: Nordland Publishing Co., 1980), Raoul Berger, *Government by Judiciary* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), and Thomas J. Higgins, S. J., *Judicial Review Unmasked* (West Hanover, Massachusetts: Christopher Publishing House, 1981).

8. In order to plan an economy, government must know at least the following: (1) all resources, including that terrible modern term, "human resources," currently available, (2) all the resources that will be destroyed or lost, or that will become available, through discovery or invention, (3) the current desires of all consumers, and (4) the *future* desires of consumers. This is manifestly impossible, for all but God.

9. The best treatment of this is M. Stanton Evan's *Clear and Present Dangers: A Conservative View of America's Government* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975). Evans is a distinguished Christian conservative.

precisely the result of the fundamental irrationalism of Humanism, ancient and modern, an irrationalism which finds its fruit in arbitrary government and political pragmatism and absolutism, together with the economic, political, and social chaos which God visits upon those who apostatize from His law (Deuteronomy 8; 28).

In domestic policy, American lawmakers have abandoned the basically Christian restraints of the Constitution for a centralized planning bureaucratic monstrosity, which seeks to play God with the economy, society, the education of our children, and even the functioning of the institutional church and the family. The results have been predictably disastrous: huge and growing federal and state bureaucracies; teeming, unpredictable, and often incomprehensible bureaucratically-concocted-and-enforced regulations with the force of law; skyrocketing governmental costs, budgets, and taxation; decapitalizing governmental borrowing on the investment capital market; government-created monetary debasement or inflation; government-imposed inefficiency and increased costs; counter-productive regulations and declining economic competitiveness; increasing crime and social unrest; the murder of more than ten million by abortion; and assaults on Christian liberty in school, church, and family, as well as in social and economic life. In the name of "realism," policy-makers have abandoned the tried and true—not to mention the Biblical!—for the illusory and utopian. In the name of "pragmatism," they have abandoned the workable for the disastrous.

American foreign policy has been no better. Christian representative government and honest, consultative, constitutional foreign policy formulation has been largely abandoned for secretive executive agreements, subservience to organs of international Humanism, such as the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund, and subversive machinations by leftists in the State Department and other agencies.<sup>10</sup> To

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10. From a growing number of fashionable academically neglected works on the reasons for American foreign policy failures, see John T. Flynn, *The Roosevelt Myth* (N. Y.: Devin-Adair, [1948] 1965), on F. D. R.'s abuses of executive power and adherence to the Humanistic myth of peace via international organization as prelude to disaster in Europe and Asia; on the Far East, the best work is Anthony Kubek's *How the Far East Was Lost* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1963), which details the roles of the Executive, the

what end? To the end that our allies are treated like enemies, "neutrals" like friends, and enemies like neutrals or friends.<sup>11</sup>

To the extent that Congress has been consulted in the formulation of American foreign policy, the dominance of "liberal" Humanists in that body has but swelled the tide of suicidal policy.<sup>12</sup> In the name of democracy, anti-colonialism, progress, freedom, and peace—Humanistic slogans and good-words all—we have perverted the principles of our foundation and mocked the God of history, pursuing a threefold course to national self-destruction. First, we have assaulted or abandoned our own allies, in favor of anti-American, pro-communist, and even manifestly communist regimes,<sup>13</sup> thereby both jettisoning allies and strategic positions<sup>14</sup> and fostering anti-American attitudes, distrust, and disrespect abroad. Second, we have allowed ourselves to be lulled to

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Congress, the State Department, and the Treasury Department in supporting Mao, the world's greatest mass murderer, against our ally Chiang Kai-Shek; on Cuba and Latin America the best work is still Paul D. Bethel's *The Losers* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, 1969); Mr. Bethel's knowledge of the subject surpassed that of all the "academic experts" who have had so crucial a role in the formulation and justification of American foreign policy disasters in the area.

11. Unhappily, this has not changed appreciably under the Reagan administration, despite the president's rhetoric.

12. The best work on the role of "liberalism" as the ideological justifier of the self-destruction of Western Civilization is James Burnham's *Suicide of the West: The Meaning and Destiny of Liberalism* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, [1964] 1975). Though the work of a conservative Humanist, this book should be required reading for all Christians, especially for young people going off to avowedly secular or church-affiliated colleges (which maintain Christian forms for parental consumption only). The Humanism of "liberalism" is apparent in Burnham's survey of its historic function: "Liberalism permits Western civilization to be reconciled to dissolution; and this function its formulas will enable it to serve right through to the very end, if matters turn out that way: for even if Western civilization is wholly vanquished or altogether collapses, we or our children will be able to see that ending, by the light of the principles of liberalism, not as a final defeat, but as the transition to a new and higher order in which Mankind as a whole joins in a universal civilization that has risen above the parochial distinctions, divisions and discriminations of the past" (p. 305).

13. The Western colonial regimes, China, South Vietnam, Taiwan, Cuba, Rhodesia, Katanga, etc.

14. The Suez Canal, Cuba, and the Panama Canal are three obvious examples, with our treatment of the former white regime in Rhodesia and then the non-communist black regime in the renamed Zimbabwe (locus of

sleep by communist tactics of "peaceful coexistence"<sup>15</sup> and "detente,"<sup>16</sup> pursuing trade and aid to our sworn and proven foes, together with disarmament talks, even while our would-be destroyers have been undertaking the greatest peacetime arms buildup in the history of the world. Third, we, together with our western "allies," have supplied our active and dedicated enemies with technological wherewithal to account for the vast bulk of Soviet economic and industrial growth and modernization since 1917, and particularly since 1933, thereby also contributing to the buildup and modernization of the world's greatest strategic and conventional military force, by supplying everything from the world's largest and most productive truck (and tank) plant to computers for missile guidance systems. Anthony Sutton, our foremost expert on the subject, is not inaccurate when he terms such policies *National Suicide*.<sup>17</sup>

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many strategic metals which we surrendered to a pro-communist regime under the Carter Administration) and our continued adversary relationship to South Africa running a close second for stupidity and ungodliness. The Carter Administration's sellout of our ally Somoza, and of Nicaragua, is of a piece with past policy; for, having given away our Panama Canal, one of the four main strategic waterways in the world, to a pro-Castro Marxist, it is only logical that we should give up Nicaragua, historically the alternate canal route, to a group of Marxist terrorists, the Sandinistas.

15. Evans, pp. 305-307, reminds us that communist bosses from Lenin to Brezhnev have affirmed and reaffirmed an intention to use "peaceful co-existence" as a means of gaining ultimate victory over America and the West. Lenin stated the basic doctrine with stark clarity: "The existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with the imperialist states for a long time is unthinkable. In the end one or the other will conquer, and until that time comes, a series of most terrible collisions between the Soviet republics and the bourgeois states is inevitable."

16. Brezhnev said in 1966: "It goes without saying that there can be no peaceful coexistence where matters concern the internal process of the class and national liberation struggle in the capitalist countries or in the colonies. Peaceful coexistence is not applicable to the relations between oppressors and oppressed, between colonialists and the victims of colonial oppression." In 1972, he said of "detente" that it "in no way signifies a possibility of weakening the ideological struggle. . . . On the contrary, we should be prepared for an intensification of this struggle." As Evans notes, the "liberals" have fallen into this communist trap consistently.

17. Anthony Sutton's *National Suicide: Military Aid to the Soviet Union* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, 1973) should be required reading for every Christian, and for every American. The work is but a distillation and a sequel to Sutton's earlier authoritative and scholarly studies which docu-

We must remember that *it was law which was the vehicle for most of these domestic and foreign policy failures: law reinterpreted away from the intentions of the men who wrote and ratified our Constitution and its amendments; law perverted from the settled rules of strict construction and legal precedent; law tortured from a Constitution interpreted, as Woodrow Wilson would have it, "according to Darwinian principles"*<sup>18</sup> *with the Supreme Court acting as a Constitutional Convention in continuous session.*<sup>19</sup> Law generated by executive fiat or secret executive agreement or treaty. Law enacted by the unchecked votes of faceless radicals in the bureaucracy and the courts, and ratified by the propaganda of brazen media men and milquetoast academics.

#### *Four Kinds of Legal Thought*

The history of Western legal thought may be seen as the history of a struggle among four basic kinds of legal thought, within which there are many kindred but contending sub-species. There are wanings and waxings of each school, but there is also a discernible historic drift or current, especially in the modern era: *from Biblical Law, to Christian theories of Natural Law,*<sup>20</sup> *to Pagan Normative (or rather Pseudo-Normative) Natural*

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ment in exhaustive and enraging detail the (at best) incredible stupidity of western and American officials and businessmen in building up the Soviet economy and military machine. See his *Western Technology and Soviet Economic Development, 1917-1930* (Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1968), *Western Technology and Soviet Economic Development, 1930-1945* (Hoover Institution, 1971), and *Western Technology and Soviet Economic Development, 1945-1965* (Hoover Institution, 1973).

18. See Wilson's 1912 campaign speech, "What is Progress?", in Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1961), p. 42.

19. This is the manifest consequence of the teaching of Wilson as both political scientist and popular orator. See Paul Eidelberg, *A Discourse on Statesmanship: The Design and Transformation of the American Polity* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974), pp. 279-362, esp. pp. 290-296, 348-352. Eidelberg's comment on latter nineteenth and twentieth century legal thought is telling: ". . . here we see the beginning and true significance of the 'pragmatic' revolt against the Constitution during Wilson's era, a revolt which, in our day, has reduced the Constitution to wax work. . ." p. 279n.

20. It is not fashionable to capitalize *natural law*, but we shall again deliberately violate convention in the interest of truth, emphasizing the nature of Natural Law as an identifiable, though quite diverse, body of thought by capitalizing it just as it is fashionable to capitalize Positivism or Pragmatism as bodies of philosophical and political thought.

*Law, to Pagan Naturalistic Natural Law.*<sup>21</sup>

The vast majority of American lawyers today are taught a philosophy of law, but not legal philosophy, much less *the* true philosophy of law, God's law revealed in Scripture. They are taught Pagan Naturalistic Natural Law as the fundamental fact of law and as a relatively new discovery of modern legal "science" or "political science," although, as any reader of Plato's *Dialogues* or the Bible (Gen. 3:5; 10:8-10) should know, the fundamental philosophy or this "new discovery" is thousands of years old. But it is precisely because American lawyers—and American students in general—are kept ignorant of the fundamental issues in legal and political thought (for the two are obviously bound together) that Christians should be aware of the issues and history of legal thought. Ideas have consequences: especially when they have the power of civil government behind them.

Law means "binding." All four philosophies of law consider their laws to be authoritatively binding on men. But three of the four kinds of legal thought can ultimately give no valid reason why laws passed in accordance with their theories should be, or are, binding on men, and at least the two explicitly Humanistic kinds of legal thought lead directly to statism and tyranny. Now, if law is without ontological basis in the structure of God's created and providentially sustained and directed world, if law has no basis in knowledge, since it cannot be objectively known by man, it can have no moral basis and no true basis of authority. Hence, such law can have no binding authority, can be based only on the vicissitudes of force and deceit, and in its own terms can admit of no true right to resist the state, however ungodly, and at the same time can admit no basis in right for obeying the state, either. Law without foundation thus opens the way to both tyranny and anarchy. In order to see why this is so, as well as to understand the natural and historic drift of Western and American legal thought, and to attain a fuller understanding of the consequences of legal thought, it will be helpful to outline the distinctives of these bodies of legal thought.

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21. We shall refer to Pagan Normative Natural Law simply as *Pseudo-Normative Natural Law*, and to Pagan Naturalistic Natural Law simply as *Naturalistic Natural Law*. It should go without saying that these theories are anti-Biblical and pagan.

*Biblical Law*

Biblical Law has its source in the eternal plan and righteous will of the triune Creator and Sustainer of all things (Gen. 1:1; Heb. 1:3; Acts 17:24-28), the Author and providential Determiner of history,<sup>22</sup> who is the sovereign Victor over the forces of evil in history (I Cor. 15:24, 25; Ps. 110:1; Heb. 1:13), and the supreme and final Judge of the world and men (Acts 17:30, 31). The basis of authority for Biblical Law is precisely the existence and attributes of God, who is the Sovereign Creator, Sustainer, Ruler, and Judge of man and the universe, and who as the Unchanging (Malachi 3:6) Lawgiver (Ex. 20; Deut. 6-8) has revealed His will to man in *all* of His infallibly inspired Holy Scripture (II Tim. 3:16). *God and His attributes, not man and his attributes, God and His sovereign unchanging word, not man and his word of flux,*<sup>23</sup> *is the Source of Authority of Biblical Law.*

Since the God of Scripture is an unchanging God, and a covenantal God who in faithfulness "keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations and repayeth them that hate Him to their face, to destroy them" (Deut. 7:9, 10; see also Deut. 28, the passage upon which American presidents used to be sworn into office), it is manifest that His law is unaffected by time and place, and that it is still binding on men and societies. This is confirmed in the New Testament, by the very authority of the inspired Apostle Paul, who tells us that all of Scripture is both inspired of God and profitable for doctrine and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be *thoroughly* furnished unto *all* good works (II Tim. 3:16, 17). How much more is this

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22. See Gordon H. Clark, *Biblical Predestination* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1979) and *Predestination in the Old Testament* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1978). See also R. J. Rushdoony, *The Biblical Philosophy of History* (Presb. & Reformed, 1969).

23. The word of would-be-autonomous man, be he ancient or modern, must inevitably be a word of flux, since man on his own "autonomous" — hence Godless — premises must confront a world of irrational chance and flux, in which he can find no indissoluble Rock, no infallible and sure standard, upon which to ground his thought or guide his actions. See Cornelius Van Til, *A Survey of Christian Epistemology* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1977), and R. J. Rushdoony, *The Word of Flux: Modern Man and the Problem of Knowledge* (Fairfax, Virginia: Thoburn Press, 1975).



confirmed by the words of God Incarnate, the Lord Jesus Christ, who declared:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill [establish]. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 5:17-19)<sup>24</sup>

Consequently, God's law may be known by reading His revealed word in the Bible, and provides an unchanging standard of justice and law which stands over men and governments, over all magistrates, who are to be ministers of God unto righteousness, punishing outward manifestations of evil and protecting the good (Rom. 13:1-10, esp. 3-4). Rulers are thus both under an objective and universally valid moral law and under a law which, being revealed in the Old and confirmed in the New Testament, is publicly and clearly discernible, not esoteric, vague, or pragmatic. Civil government is a ministry of justice, not of injustice; it is to embody the rule of law, not of men; and the law which is the standard and rule is God's perspicuous law, not man's pragmatic law.

Biblical Law presupposes not only the authority of God, but also the fallenness of man. The Bible forbids us to countenance pagan notions of neutrality on the part of man's mind or reason. Greg Bahnsen's pithy summary of Biblical teaching against neutrality is a valuable reminder, in light of the fact that the other three basic theories of law presuppose the neutrality, and hence the autonomy, of man's mind:

. . . we know that presuppositionless impartiality and neutral reasoning are impossible and undesirable because God's word teaches that (1) all men know God, even if suppressing the truth (Rom. 1); (2) there are two basic philosophic and presuppo-

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24. On the applicability of "Old Testament law" today, see Greg L. Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics* (Phillipsburg, N. J.: The Craig Press, 1977); Rousas J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (The Craig Press, 1973); and R. J. Rushdoony, *Law and Society: Volume II of The Institutes of Biblical Law* (Vallecito, California: Ross House Books, 1982), which has many further applications of God's law to society. Roger Campbell's *Justice Through Restitution: Making Criminals Pay* (Milford, Michigan: Mott Media, 1977) provides a much-needed application to our "criminal justice system."

sitional outlooks—one after worldly tradition, the other after Christ (Col. 2); (3) thus there is a knowledge falsely so-called that errs according to the faith (I Tim. 6) and a genuine knowledge based upon repentant faith (II Tim. 2); consequently, (4) some men (unbelievers) are “enemies in their minds” (Rom. 8) while others (believers) are “renewed in knowledge” (Col. 3), and characteristic of these two mindsets is the fact that the former cannot be subject to God’s Word (Rom. 8) but sees it as utter foolishness (I Cor. 1), while the latter seeks to bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (II Cor. 10) in whom is found all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2) because the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (Prov. 1).<sup>25</sup>

Biblical teaching is at once the denial and the destruction of all would-be-autonomous “Natural Law” doctrines,<sup>26</sup> for it denies true knowledge to man apart from God’s grace. Neutrality is at best the attempt to serve two masters, a vain and sinful exercise in deceit condemned by our Lord when He said: “no man can serve two masters” (Matt. 6:24). Indeed, Jesus affirmed that a man, far from being neutral, is either with Him or against Him (Matt. 12:30). Because man is not neutral in his thinking, there can be no such thing as neutral, common “Natural Law,” ascertainable to the autonomous mind of man, and no “neutral,” “secular” state.

Because the clear teaching of the Bible is both that men’s minds are not neutral and that all men—even saved men and rulers—are sinners, and because the Bible provides clear, detailed, and publicly knowable standards of law, Biblical Law places limits on the power and activity of rulers. Since we are given God’s law as an unchanging legal and ethical standard which stands above all civil governments, and since we are told that “we ought to obey God, rather than men” (Acts 5:29), *Biblical Law provides both an authoritative limitation on rulers and a duty of resistance to tyranny, as well as a basis for disobedience to ungodly laws promulgated by magistrates who fail to fulfill the high duties of their God-ordained ministry* (Rom. 13:1-10).

It was a Biblical distrust of human nature, together with respect for the authority of God’s laws, which placed theoretical and practical checks on the powers of civil rulers

25. Greg L. Bahnsen, “Inductivism, Inerrancy, and Presuppositionalism,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 20 (1977): 300f.

26. As we shall see, Natural Law is naturally destroyed by its assumption of the neutrality and autonomy of man’s natural reason or mind.

during the Medieval period. As Carlyle and Carlyle noted,

it was the supremacy of justice and law which was the fundamental principle of Mediaeval Political Theory, but we must now put beside this the principle that, subject to the final authority of justice and the divine and natural laws, it was the community which was supreme—the community which included the king, the nobles and the people.<sup>27</sup>

The authority of the prince was seen to be derived ultimately from God, but directly from the community. The supreme authority in medieval political society was the law of God, which was seen by Christian thinkers from Aquinas to the Huguenots as embodied in God's revealed Biblical Law, Natural Law, and the constitutions and customary laws and orders of society. The prince or king was seen as controlled by law and the courts of law, in relation to private persons and their property; this was commonplace, both in medieval political theory and in the constitutional law of the period. Moreover, the legal relationship between the prince and the community or people, in all the community's feudal orders, was seen, under God's laws, as a contractual union, resting upon "the immemorial tradition of the mutual oaths which prince and people made to each other in the Coronation ceremonies, and it was obviously related to the whole character and principles of feudal society."<sup>28</sup> Finally, as Carlyle and Carlyle point out,

the right of the community to resist and even if necessary to depose the prince who persistently violated the laws of the community was founded upon important precedents in various countries, and had been maintained not merely by violent and highly controversial writers like Manegold and John of Salisbury or Marsilius of Padua, but by such careful and judicious writers as St. Thomas Aquinas.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, rulers were seen to be under God's law from above, and limited from the side and from below by feudal oaths and duties, traditional constitutions and customs, and contractual oaths with, and obligations to, the community—all in terms of God's laws. Because of this Biblically-derived emphasis on

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27. R. W. Carlyle and A. J. Carlyle, *A History of Medieval Political Theory in the West* (N. Y.: Barnes & Noble, n.d.) IV:524.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 414.

29. *Idem.*

the rule of God's laws—albeit tainted by Natural Law doctrines—the question of the locus of the law-making power in society was not raised until the later “Middle Ages,”<sup>30</sup> when the rise of Humanistic thinking led men to look to the study of pagan Roman law as an alternative to and replacement for the God-centered, God-given, Bible-based laws of the pre-Renaissance period. In Machiavelli and the Humanists of the sixteenth century we see in principle the Humanistic theory and practice which was soon to become manifest in Western Civilization and today has become dominant. Men looked back to classical antiquity in general, and to the Roman Empire in particular, to justify the centralization and concentration of power and absolutism. They returned to the “original sources” as *pagan* original sources, “discovering” in them their preoccupation with law as the product of power and historical process. Fleeing God's universal law, they sought a new universal “understanding” of law as “historical fact,” of law as a merely historical (and implicitly evolutionary) development, and so, like later Humanists, abandoned God's law for laws “appropriate to the conditions of their times.” They sought to replace Christian law with pagan law, Christian Natural Law with secular and “philosophical” “Natural Law,” feudal law with centralized, bureaucratic, “rational” law, and in so doing paved the way for the new secularization and immanentization of God's sovereignty in the ruler and the state.<sup>31</sup> Their man-made, man-centered positive law displaced Christian theories of Natural Law with amoral Naturalistic Natural Law. As in twentieth century American legal thought and practice, the limited government and basically mixed, decentralized regime of the feudal period were replaced by monolithic, absolutist, and centralized regimes, in theory and in practice. Liberty and the fixed rule

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30. The term “Middle Ages” was coined in the Renaissance by Petrarch, as a loaded label by which to condemn as outmoded and “superstitious” the dominant Christianity of the medieval period. By contrast, the “Modern” era was seen as gloriously replacing the “ignorance and superstition” of the Christian era with the “wonderful” reign of autonomous reason.

31. See Carl Joachim Friedrich, *The Philosophy of Law in Historical Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, [1958] 1969), pp. 51-56ff. The best work on the very influential and commonly misread Machiavelli is Leo Strauss, *Thoughts on Machiavelli* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, [1958] 1969.)

of God's laws was replaced by servitude under the arbitrary and changing laws of kings, oligarchies, or majorities.

It was precisely against the theory and practice of such revived pagan doctrines in church and state that Calvin, Beza, Mornay, and their Reformed Christians reasserted traditional Biblical doctrines of resistance to tyranny, doctrines which laid the theoretical and historical groundwork for the Dutch and American Wars for Independence and Declarations.<sup>32</sup> Many of today's Calvinists, infected with neo-platonic thinking which tends to reduce their Christianity to pietism, and burdened by the prevalent ignorance of Calvin's complete teachings and practice in relation to civil government—not to mention those Calvinists infected with autonomous Natural Law notions overlaid with socialist doctrines<sup>33</sup>—deny that John Calvin advocated resistance to tyrannical government. In an important study, however, Christoph Jungen has laid this myth to rest, at least intellectually:

... we cannot possibly doubt any longer that John Calvin himself had a clearly developed theory of legitimate political resistance that went significantly beyond the brief formulation given in the *Institutes*, but at the same time was absolutely faithful to the principles laid down there years before. Calvin did not desperately try to prevent active resistance from being put into effect, but rather, once clear grounds for disobedience were present, encouraged and even implored those who he thought were legitimate agents of resistance.<sup>34</sup>

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32. Both the historical parallels of circumstance, preparatory theory, and actual practice, and the theoretical and markedly legal, conservative, and traditional justifications of the two wars for independence are unmistakable, though the two events were separated by nearly two centuries. Moreover, the literature, practice, and justification of the Dutch "Revolution" were important influences on the American "Revolution." See Albert Hyma, *Christianity and Politics* (Birmingham, Michigan: Brant Publishers, 1960), pp. 156-170, and *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction* III:1 (Summer, 1976) for more on the connection.

33. See Frederick Nymeyer's fascinating six year, six volume battle against the socialist teachings in ostensibly Reformed colleges, in his *First Principles in Morality and Economics* (formerly *Progressive Calvinism*) (South Holland, Illinois: Libertarian Press, 1955-1960).

34. Christoph Jungen, "Calvin and the Origin of Political Resistance Theory in the Calvinist Tradition" (Philadelphia: Unpublished Th.M. Thesis, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1980), p. 186. Jungen's study is valuable both for its thesis and for its use of Calvin's usually neglected post-1559 letters.

In the manner later to be followed by Americans in the War for Independence, and to be sanctioned in the intentions of the Framers of the Constitution by the supposedly arch-centralist, Alexander Hamilton, in Federalist No. 28, Calvin advocated resistance to preserve the existing constitutional, customary, and godly order, against centralization, abuses of power, and violation of rights and liberties by a tyrannical central power, when initiated and led by lesser "powers that be," by lesser magistrates.<sup>35</sup> Calvin's pervasive concern was for legitimacy and the rule of law, a concern which led him to qualify and limit the Christian's duty of obedience to God's appointed civil authorities. Like the later American colonists, the goal of Calvin and his followers was not the revolutionary overthrow of the existing order, but rather the preservation of revealed and historically given law against the usurpations of tyrants.<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, the allegedly "radical" followers of Calvin did not break with Calvin's political and legal thought:

For not only did most of Calvin's allegedly radical and politicized followers rely heavily on the basic directions that Calvin himself had given them . . . but Calvin in turn was himself relying to a large extent on formulations and theories of his own followers. Rather than trying to discourage their theories, he heartily welcomed them and incorporated them into his own arguments for the legitimization of resistance.<sup>37</sup>

Although the duty of obedience to civil government was Calvin's primary concern, his Biblical commitment led him both to formulate and to practice a Biblical theory of resistance to ungodly rulers. In Calvin, as in Beza, Hotman, Mornay<sup>28</sup> and the mainstream of medieval political and legal thought, recognition of the continuing validity of God's Biblical Law<sup>39</sup> led to Christian social, legal, political, and even military action to resist godless rule.

This tradition was continued in Scotland, in Samuel

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35. In this, Calvin was at one with the main thrust of medieval theory as well.

36. Jungen, p. 187 and *passim*.

37. *Idem*.

38. For a recent translation of the main works of these men, see Julian H. Franklin, ed. and trans., *Constitutionalism and Resistance in the Sixteenth Century: Three Treatises by Hotman, Beza and Mornay* (N. Y.: Pegasus, 1968).

39. Note that in Calvin, as in others, Biblical Law and Natural Law were both intertwined and equated: as in the thought of earlier and later Christian writers, there was no fundamental separation between the two.

Rutherford's *Lex, Rex* (1644), which argued that both king and people are under God's law, that people are to obey the law of God rather than antinomian "laws" of kings, that such conduct is the maintenance of true law and godly conduct, not its destruction. Since the king is under God's law, is not the sole and final interpreter of the law, and contains no royal prerogative which places him above the law; since magistrates of inferior position have the power of the sword no less than the king; and since both self-defense and defensive wars, which oppose violence to unjust violence, are recognized as just in the law of God in Scripture and nature, there is no "sacred and royal prerogative of Christian (or other) kings," and Christians, led by their lesser magistrates, are justified in both resisting unjust kings and aiding brethren beset by tyrants.<sup>40</sup>

As we have noted, this was essentially the traditional theory of godly resistance to tyranny, a theory summarized in the Declaration of Independence and practiced in the American War for Independence. Rutherford's work was influential in preparing the way for that defense of Americans' traditional, constitutional, God-given legal rights, as was Mornay's *A Vindication Against Tyrants*.<sup>41</sup> As Alice Baldwin noted long ago, we should not be surprised at this, for the New England clergy had taught such doctrines since at least the 1640s, thereby helping to lay the groundwork for the eventual defensive war to maintain our inherited, legally established, and God-given rights and liberties.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, recognition of the validity of Biblical Law established the validity of resistance to tyrants. It also established the validity of the practices of interposition and nullification by lesser magistrates of unjust laws promulgated by central authorities.<sup>43</sup> It is only with middle and latter nineteenth and twentieth century Humanistic absolutism in American legal

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40. This great old work has been reprinted (P. O. Box 1094, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801: Sprinkle Publications, 1980). It is also the basis for Francis A. Schaeffer's fine new book, *A Christian Manifesto* (Westchester, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1981).

41. The *Vindiciae* has been reprinted in Franklin, *op. cit.*

42. Alice Baldwin, *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1928).

43. See Tom Rose, "On Reconstruction and the American Republic," in this volume, pp. 285ff.

and political thought and practice that these Biblical principles and God-given duties have been obscured or denied. It is a powerful testimony to the strength and endurance of Christian influence in American legal and political thought that what Europe and England experienced in the sixteenth century we did not experience (as a powerful intellectual and social force) until the late nineteenth century.

### *Christian Natural Law and Its Problems*

Christian theories of Natural Law have frequently been found in close association with Christian Biblical Law thought. After all, Christian theories of Natural Law presuppose God as the source of law and the fundamental locus of authority for law, since they presuppose that God has created into His universe universal meaning and ethical-legal principles revealed to man in God's created and sustained natural world, and that God has created man in His image, as a rational creature who can therefore rationally know these God-created ethical and legal principles—especially when he reasons on the basis of the promptings of his conscience.<sup>44</sup> Christian thinkers such as Calvin and the American Puritans, among others, have maintained that since there is no contradiction between God's law revealed in His natural creation and God's law revealed in the Bible, one can obtain the clearest understanding of "Natural Law" by reading God's law in Scripture. Thus, Calvin preached extensively on Deuteronomy, maintaining the abiding validity of God's revealed laws, in detail, for today<sup>44</sup> and still believed in Natural Law; and the Puritans, while theonomically attempting to apply God's case law to their civil government,<sup>45</sup> also early affirmed belief in Natural Law, a belief which lay at the foundation of the War for Independence.<sup>46</sup>

The characteristics of law and the role of civil government

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44. Calvin's sermons on Deuteronomy, not reprinted in English since 1583, are available today, in newsletter form, from the Geneva Divinity School (708 Hamvassy, Tyler, Texas 75701); title: *Calvin Speaks*.

45. See *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction; Symposium on Puritanism and Law* V:2 (Winter, 1978-1979).

46. See Baldwin, *op. cit.*, and *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction: Symposium on the American Revolution* III: 1 (Summer, 1976), especially pp. 19-51, 59-62, 69-73, 103-112.



in relation to the person, church, and family under Christian theories of Natural Law, therefore, have often been highly similar to those under the regime of Biblical Law. Law has been seen to be both objective and specific; government has been seen to be limited in its derivative authority by the content of Natural Law and God's word. Consequently, as intimated above, Christian disobedience and even resistance to ungodly, tyrannical laws and governments has been seen to be both a justified act and a godly duty. As with Biblical Law, government has been seen to be under, not over, law, and there has been both a justified act and a godly duty. As with Biblical Law, government has been seen to be under, not over, law, and there has been both theoretical and practical protection for the liberty of the person, as well as for God's ordained institutions, the family and the church, by means of acts of resistance against tyranny.

The problems with Christian theories of Natural Law originate in its Greco-Roman historical derivation, but stem particularly from its faulty epistemological foundation, in the means of knowing or determining the content of "Natural Law." For "Christian theories of Natural Law make man's reason the means of knowing the nature and content of God's creation-manifested laws."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Christian Natural Law conceives of man's reason as being autonomous, in relation to knowing God's creation-revealed laws, so that it affirms an epistemological, ethical, and Natural Law-legal common ground between Christians and pagans, and thus holds that pagans, using their God-given reason, can know and will proclaim God's moral law just as well as Christians. Furthermore, because many Christian Natural Law theorists reduce God's law taught in nature to merely general ethical principles, omitting the case law applications of the Ten Commandments given in the Old Testament, "Natural Law" according to their reading "loses the specificity, concreteness, and applicability of Biblical Law, and becomes vague, abstract, and uncertain, and hence increasingly removed from the ken of the common man and increasingly useless as a guide to or restraint on Government. When combined with natural men freed to proclaim their naturally ungodly hearts' desires as law, this spells trouble."

Even where Christian Natural Law theories explicitly recognize the necessity of reasoning upon conscience, they

run afoul of the naturally rebellious heart of the unregenerate man, which naturally seeks to repeal the law of God; and of the besetting nature of sin, which plagues even the regenerate man, and which requires constant grace, and the study of Scripture and hearing of the revealed word of God to counteract its destructive tendency in one's heart—and these things the natural man lacks. Lacking the regenerating grace of God, the natural man will always, in some way or another, distort the promptings of the conscience, so that there is and can be no true common ground between him and the regenerate man whose delight is in the law of the Lord (Ps. 1).

A practical consequence of the abstraction of Christian Natural Law theories (which depart from Natural Law as the equivalent of detailed Biblical Law—the position of Calvin and the Puritans) is that an abstract and esoteric law known only to an elite cannot serve as an effective check on abuses of power by government, and thus cannot serve as an effective guide for either the rulers or the ruled. "Lacking clear, concrete, and detailed universals, those placed in the ministry of government (Rom. 13:1-5) lack specific rules by which to rule. The way is thus opened to both widespread disagreement about what specific laws and policies to enact—which follows from disagreements about which principles to apply to specific cases—and to pragmatic, seat-of-the-pants lawmaking.<sup>11</sup> Should laws be traditional or innovative? How much should old ways be changed to accommodate new circumstances? Such questions, answered by Biblical Law, must continually plague rulers and ruled in a regime founded on abstract Natural Law, throwing public life into the continual agitation and turmoil that we see all around us (even among conservatives) today.

A further consequence of abstract Natural Law is that not only rulers, but also the ruled, lack an effective guide to civil obedience, disobedience, and resistance to governmental tyranny. When law is abstract, esoteric, and pragmatic, there can be no such clear standards for civil disobedience and resistance, because there are then no specific standards of law and justice, right and wrong, good and evil.

For example, many professing Christians today support (to one degree or another) governmental welfarism and income redistribution, which obviously involves theft, which is condemned by God's word, both in the Ten Commandments

and in case law. Though many of these folks may not like the *degree* of theft (ungodly taxation and inflation) or the specific *kinds* of theft practiced in Russia or the U.S., they still accept the *principle* of the "welfare state," the forced redistribution of wealth, or theft. But having accepted the principle of theft as legitimate for government—thereby saying that God's law does not apply to government, or to groups who use government for their own ends—how does one objectively tell where theft must stop? It always must be a matter of individual opinion and debate, in the absence of Biblical Law. Now, since property is obviously related to the well-being of the family and the church as well as of the individual, it should be obvious that lacking fixed restraints on governmental taxation and income redistribution the ruled lack standards by which to protect not only personal property, but also the family and the church. It is precisely because we lack such publicly accepted standards today that the Humanists have been able to launch such wide-ranging attacks on the Christian family and church. And it is precisely because many Christians have abandoned objective and detailed Biblical standards of law that they permit such anti-Christian attacks on their brethren. The state, they reason, must have a legitimate interest in closing down Christian schools, licensing Christian institutions, taking over church properties for taxes, and taking children from Christian parents who discipline them Biblically or send them to Christian schools.<sup>47</sup> Christian liberty is the loser under such theories.

The American War for Independence was based on the premise that the Bible and created nature give us specific standards for limits on government, specific protections for life, liberty, person, property, family, and church. The Constitution, designed by men who were overwhelmingly

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47. For an excellent introduction to this legal and political battle, see Kent Kelly, *The Separation of Church and Freedom* (Calvary Press, 400 South Bennett Street, Southern Pines, N.C. 28287; 1980); Onalee McGraw, *Family Choice in Education: The New Imperative* (The Heritage Foundation, 513 C Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002; 1978); and Martin P. Claussen and Evelyn Bills Claussen, eds., *The Voice of Christian and Jewish Dissenters in America: U.S. Internal Revenue Service Hearings on Proposed "Discrimination" Tax Controls Over Christian, Jewish, and Secular Private Schools, December 5, 6, 7, 8, 1978* (The Piedmont Press, P. O. Box 3605, Washington, D.C. 20007; 1982).

Christian,<sup>48</sup> was based on the same view, and so recognized the right of revolution against tyrannical government.<sup>49</sup> Abstract theories of "Natural Law" can provide no such protections for the individual's life, person, property, or liberty, nor for the family or church.

As if these were not enough difficulties, a whole series of insoluble problems, which we can but summarize here, follow from the notion of man's reason's autonomy, upon which Natural Law theories are based.

Biblically, "man's reason cannot autonomously discover law because man's reason has been damaged by the Fall, in that man's heart, the control center of his being which guides his reason, is in rebellion against his Creator (Rom. 1). Man since the Fall is radically affected by Original Sin, which is nothing less than the desire to be his own god, determining good and evil for himself (Gen. 3); this, in the absence of regeneration (and even after regeneration not fully healed, in this life), is the ruling motivation of his life. Moreover, nature itself is fallen and imperfect (Rom. 8:22); hence, even if man's reason were autonomous he could not hope to derive perfect laws from a fallen nature.<sup>50</sup> But the problem in the real world is compounded by the fact that both man's reason and nature itself are fallen, realities which destroy his pretensions to know and proclaim naturally available principles of law."<sup>11</sup>

On top of that, *man's mind is not neutral* (as the notions of autonomy, and a common intellectual ground between Christians and pagans, suppose), and does not think with presuppositionless impartiality, but rather in terms of presupposed

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48. M. E. Bradford's *A Worthy Company: Brief Lives of the Framers of the United States Constitution* (Plymouth Rock Foundation, Inc., 6 McKinley Circle, Marlborough, N. H. 03455; 1982) shows that at least fifty, and probably fifty-two, of the framers were Christians, not, as the lying Humanists have told us, Deists or agnostics. This work is must reading for Christians, as will be his sequel, a volume of biographical sketches of the leading men in the state ratifying conventions. Here, too, his research indicates that it is the non-Christian who is the exception among America's early leaders.

49. Again, see Hamilton in *Federalist* No. 28. This doctrine, in one form or another, was common among the framers, as a future book by Prof. Bradford will show. It is not surprising that in our age of statist Humanism the founders' teachings on this subject have been neglected.

50. Bahnsen, "Inductivism, Inerrancy and Presuppositionalism," p. 300f.

religious ideas about God, ethics, men, and things.<sup>51</sup> The Bible is clear that men have two basic religious philosophies: one anti-Christian and worldly, and the other Christian and anti-worldly. These two religious philosophies take diametrically opposite views of God and His word. The worldly tradition of unbelievers makes them enemies of God, who see God's word as utter foolishness and will not be subject to it. The Christian view fears God, sees Christ as the source of all wisdom and knowledge, and seeks to make every thought captive to Him. More to the point, these two religious philosophies have *diametrically opposite results*. The worldly tradition achieves at best a knowledge falsely so-called, which is a true error and the opposite of wisdom. The Christian view achieves genuine knowledge, due to its repentant faith, and is thus renewed in knowledge and wisdom.<sup>52</sup> The Bible condemns the ideas of autonomous reason, neutral or impartial thinking, an intellectual-moral common ground between Christians and pagans, and the acquisition and advocacy of Truth by pagans. This is not to say that pagans can learn nothing, nor that Christians can learn nothing from pagans. The mind that seeks to replace God's law with man's law may admit the truth of *some* of God's laws, but its enmity against the Lord, and its desire to be its own Lord, will never let it admit the goodness and justice either of *God's law as a whole or of God's law in its details*. Man wants to make God's thoughts and laws captive to himself; but *God commands man to make every thought captive to Christ*, to think, as Van Til has phrased it, God's thoughts after Him. We have it on the highest Authority that man cannot serve two masters. Either man will love God's revealed law-word, or he will love the word and pseudo-

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51. Dr. Cornelius Van Til has done the most to make the Church aware of this humanistically obscured fact. See his *A Survey of Christian Epistemology* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1977); his *The Defense of the Faith* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1955); and his *A Christian Theory of Knowledge* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1969).

52. If the reader doubts the applicability of these points to Christian and other theories of Natural Law, let him but read the writings of those who adhere to such theories—writings which give but a perfunctory nod to the reality of the Fall, and which act as though Scripture were irrelevant. I am also indebted to John W. Robbins's important essay, "Some Problems with Natural Law," *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction* II:2 (Winter, 1975-1976):14-21, for many of the foregoing and subsequent points.

law of man: there is no neutral ground between the two.<sup>53</sup>

Philosophically, a number of difficulties are added to those stemming from man's ethical rebellion against God. First, there are problems stemming from man's finitude: Since all men are finite, no one can know everything. Being finite, man must start somewhere, in order to acquire a knowledge of things in general and of law in particular. What is the key to evaluating his experience? How is he to make sense of the stability and flux with which his senses seem to confront him? He must start somewhere. It would seem easiest to be a rationalist and begin from universals, in order to see the order in the flux of experience, and unity and purpose in the multiplicity of being. But how can finite man know universals on his own? The rationalist must presuppose the existence of universals, but autonomously presupposed universals are not, and cannot be, proven universals, so rationalism is inadequate as a source of knowledge and law.

Perhaps autonomous empiricism (the "scientific method") would be better. But empiricism seeks to go from individual, particular things to universals. Unless, however, he knows all there is to know—the total picture—the empiricist cannot be sure of the significance of any particular thing. This problem is derived from the fact that the empiricist seeks to go from a knowledge of the evidence which is seemingly presented to his mind or reason by his senses (physical evidence) to a knowledge of universals in terms of which (he hopes) the particular things he observes (or thinks he observes) through his senses are ordered. But until he observes everything he cannot truly know all the factors affecting anything. Thus, he cannot truly know anything until he knows everything—which, we must admit, is difficult! Furthermore, empiricism limits man to the study of that which he observes (or thinks he observes) through his senses—or through gadgets which extend the range of his senses. But (assuming that he can truly know that the evidence of his senses is accurate) since he is limited to that which he observes through his senses, he can never know that there is not something which his senses cannot detect

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53. Again, pagan thinkers, living in God's world and being given consciences by their Creator, may acknowledge some of God's laws, but their rebellious hearts will never let them admit the Truth and Goodness of the fullness of God's law.

that does not affect or (as God) control that which he observes through his senses. Since this is the case, he can never be sure that the things which he thinks he observes are affected or controlled by the causes that he assigns to them, or that the causes he thinks he has observed are truly causes, truly laws of the relationships of things. Worst of all, the accuracy and reliability of the senses in relation to human observation is beset with a number of ancient additional problems, so that not even the "evidence of the senses," "the evidence of experience," is trustworthy, on autonomous human terms. Empiricism, in a word, is no better than rationalism as a source of knowledge and law.<sup>54</sup>

Nor is the resort to intuitionism or other forms of irrationalism an answer. For autonomous intuition is by definition irrational. How do I know that your "intuition" is not really indigestion, insomnia, irascibility, or intrigue? What if your "intuition" contradicts my intuition? That's easy: *your* intuition is wrong; *my* intuition is right! But if you're bigger than I am, or smarter than I am, or more hardheaded than I am, I am going to have a difficult time persuading you of the universality of the laws that my intuition has discovered. The problem is that there is no rational standard above all of us to which I can appeal to prove the validity of *anyone's* intuition.

And declaring man or the universe to be irrational is obviously a dead end. If man is irrational, how can he discover rational, universal laws? If the "universe" is irrational,<sup>55</sup> how can man—even if he is rational—discover universal, rational laws?

Then there is the insoluble problem of Hume's Gap: the unbridgeable difference or separation between the "Is" and the "Ought," between *propositions* and *commands*. Propositions (statements about existing conditions) are either true or false. Commands (orders to do, or refrain from doing something) are neither true nor false (unless, of course, they are God's commands: but in that case we should have to submit to God's laws, and cease claiming to be autonomous). Because propo-

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54. Gordon H. Clark's fine little book, *Three Types of Religious Philosophy* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1977) is an excellent introduction to these problems, to which I am greatly indebted. See also Rushdoony, *The Word of Flux*.

55. As Rev. Rushdoony has pointed out on one of his tapes, if the "universe" is irrational, then we cannot properly speak of it as a rational unity; hence the quotes herein.

sitions (the "Is") and commands (the "Ought" ) are so radically different, no secular thinker has ever been able to bridge Hume's Gap.<sup>56</sup> Hence, "autonomous" man, lacking the ability to go from the "Is" of experience to the "Ought" of law's commands, cannot possibly autonomously know "Natural Law."

Finally, Christian theories of Natural Law face the problem noted by Robbins:

If, as natural law theorists hold, man can discover ethical truths by his own efforts, then what need have men of revelation? The hypothesis of God and the necessity of his commands becomes superfluous or positively detrimental: superfluous, because if God is reasonable, He can simply and only command those things which we can discover on our own anyway; and detrimental, because He may command things that we cannot discover using our own reasons and even things that may be contrary to our own reasons. God can only be superfluous or irrational.<sup>57</sup>

It is the continuing danger of Christian theories of Natural Law that they will forget that *God's created universe is also His providentially sustained and directed universe* (Heb. 1:1-3; Acts 17; Col. 1:17). Nature operates according to discernible laws not because nature is autonomous in origin or operation, but rather precisely because the visible creation is sustained, in all its minutest details, by the providential activity and decrees of the sovereign God of Scripture. A fundamental danger of Natural Law theory in general is that it tends to conceive of nature as being deistically independent of God's sovereign providential control. Hence, *the "laws of nature" are seen as in nature, not over nature.*<sup>58</sup> Thus, many Christians believe in an unbiblical "common ground" of both Christians and pagans, in the form of laws inherent in a created but now essentially autonomous nature, to be discovered by the supposedly neutral man or reason of man. The fact that this conception of nature is an essentially pagan concept, derived from the Greeks via Thomas Aquinas and other would-be synthesizers of revelation and autonomous reasoning, of Jerusalem and

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56. Robbins, p. 18. The reference is to David Hume, the philosophical destroyer of "autonomous" empiricism.

57. Robbins, p. 16.

58. Robbins, p. 17.



Athens,<sup>59</sup> is overlooked by many Christian Natural Law theorists. It is, however, easy to see that such a concept of nature as normative and unfallen, and of man's mind and reason as essentially unfallen, by reducing God and His revelation in Scripture to a position of ethical, and hence legal, superfluity,<sup>60</sup> is a slippery slope, which leads from Christian to Pagan Normative—or rather Pseudo-Normative—Natural Law. Thence, we shall readily see, the slope leads—and has invariably led, sooner or later—to the pit of Naturalistic Natural Law,<sup>61</sup> in ethics, law, and politics.

*The False Norms of Pagan "Normative" Natural Law*

Whatever its specific theoretical form, Pagan "Normative" Natural Law denies that God—the sovereign God of the Bible—is the source of law. Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and Kant (among others) may speak of "God," but they invariably mean a sort of limited, unknown, uncommunicative "God," not the God who reveals Himself—and His law—in Scripture, not the sovereign Lord who providentially determines history according to His eternal plan and will. "Normative" pagan systems want a god who is anchoretic, without having the God who truly holds all things together because He upholds and directs all things by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3). But without having such a God they cannot have a god who can truly hold all things together, make anything permanent, or even make any sense of anything, for in denying the sovereign God of Scripture the pagan systematizers have affirmed a limited "God" who exists in a universe containing chance, and no god who exists in a "universe" containing chance can preserve eternal moral and legal principles against the unpredictable assaults of cosmic irrationality. If change exists in the universe, then there can be no truly permanent things. Cosmic chance, irrationality, alone is sufficient to destroy the pretensions of such philosophical and legal

59. For a more extended analysis of this fundamental problem, see E. R. Geehan, ed., *Jerusalem and Athens* (Nutley, N. J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1971).

60. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

61. The denial of moral-legal universals or absolutes, which is the essence of Naturalistic Law in its various forms, legitimizes all conduct, and results in the equal legitimacy and truth of both anarchy and totalitarianism, and in the destruction of all objective and true law (so far as rulers and ruled are concerned) by reducing law to power, deceit, and command.

systems.<sup>62</sup>

But when we see that such "normative" systems place authority effectively in the "autonomous" mind or reason of man—by making man's autonomous rationalistic thinking (Plato, the Stoics), empirical-teleological autonomous reasoning (Aristotle), or intuitionist autonomous reasoning (Kant and his followers) the mode of knowing the moral laws: or by positing a standard of goodness and justice which exists independent of the "God" of the system (Plato's "Forms" or "Ideas," Aristotle's "ends," Kant's "categorical imperatives")—then we know that *Pseudo-Normative Natural Law falls prey to all the insoluble problems which plague Christian versions of an autonomously-known, autonomously-existent moral law in nature*. Then we know that all the claimed objectivity of pagan "Norms" can have no more binding or staying power than chaff in the wind, and consequently that pagan laws must, on the irreparable weaknesses of their own philosophies, both collapse and produce incalculable harm.

It is no wonder, then, that the "norms" formulated by pagan theorists, ancient and modern,<sup>63</sup> are characterized by abstraction, or that the knowledge of them is effectively placed in the hands of an elite. For the vicissitudes of a God-ordained reality destroy philosophical affirmations and applications that are not consistent with God's laws (Deut. 28), and this in turn requires that terms be undefined and abstract, in order that new meaning can be poured into them at appropriate times by pagan rulers. Despite the claims of objectivity, *pagan*

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62. This point has been repeatedly made by Cornelius Van Til. See his epistemological writings cited above, and his six volume *In Defense of the Faith* for applications of this truth. For further application of Van Til's Biblical method of destruction of the false philosophies of Humanistic thinkers, see C. Gregg Singer's fine work, *From Rationalism to Irrationality: The Decline of the Western Mind from the Renaissance to the Present* (Phillipsburg, N. J.: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1979).

63. Since we lack the space for extended explications and critiques of the various sub-species of legal thought, the reader would do well to study Friedrich's historical-critical (but Humanistic) survey and John Hallowell's (Christian Natural Law-based) *Main Currents in Modern Political Thought* (N. Y.: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963), together with R. J. Rushdoony's important Christian survey of the main thrust of political and legal thought deriving from men's answers to the philosophical problem of *The One and the Many* (Thoburn Press, 1971). The discerning reader will be able to supply the necessary critiques.

*"universals" are in fact ultimately subjective, changing, and pragmatic: that is why the "prudence," "moderation," "goodness," and "justice" spoken of by Plato and Aristotle entail murder (abortion and infanticide) and theft (redistribution of wealth), when deemed appropriate by the rulers. But there is at least one other reason for these things: ancient and modern pagans agree in rejecting Natural Law as the law of God, as Biblical law, because God's law would place too many restrictions on the "statesman." It would take control of history and the "salvation" of the city or nation out of man's hands and place it squarely in the providential hands of God.*<sup>64</sup>

These problems are not merely theoretical difficulties in the various pagan "normative" theories of Natural Law: they are theoretical failures which produce practical results. From among these, two are of crucial importance here. First, the very vagueness of the pseudo-universals concocted by the pagans gives rulers *no really concrete guidelines or standards—and yet control of all things is effectively given to the rulers*, both because of the abstractness of the "norms" and because of the pagan faith in the ability of "wise men" or great men to "save" the city or nation by the exercise of their autonomous ordering of others' lives via the force of law. Second, the abstract, elitist, subjective, changing, and pragmatic nature of such law, as well as the surrender of all areas of life to the state (either as a categorical condition of rule, as in Plato and Aristotle, or as an emergency measure, as in Roman practice and Locke's and the "liberals" doctrine of "executive prerogative"), obviously places the liberty of the individual, the family, and the church in a perilous condition. Since there are no clear, public rules for rulers, there are also no limits on government, and no clear rules for the protection of the individual, the family, or the church, via civil disobedience or resistance to tyranny. Sooner or later, this is the consequence of Pseudo-Normative Natural Law. Thus, the liberty of Christians and all other citizens is jeopardized by the failures of Pseudo-Normative Natural Law, which spring from the genius of Paganism and the natural thrust of its "Natural Law": its enmity against God's laws, and against the activities and institutions which spring from obedience to the word of God.

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64. For an important Humanistic affirmation of this point, see Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), pp. 162-164.

*Natural Law on All Fours: Naturalistic Natural Law*

However one arrives at Pseudo-Normative Natural Law, once there at least three problems lead legal thought into a naturalistic devolution from its lofty affirmations of virtue: *the problem of knowing norms*, *the problem of the nature of "nature,"* and *the problem of pragmatism*. Having surveyed the insoluble problems of autonomously knowing moral and legal universals, one can easily appreciate the reluctance of many pagans intellectually to adopt professedly moral "universals" as standards of law. This reluctance, of course, is also due to two other factors: the ethical rebellion of man against his Creator, and the extreme vagueness of Natural Law thinkers' formulations of the content of "Natural Law." The differences among Natural Law theorists over the nature of "Natural Law" are one of the biggest scandals of Natural Law, and are so great as to have led Justice James Iredell to remark that "the ideas of natural justice are regulated by no fixed standard: the ablest and purest men have differed upon the subject,"<sup>65</sup> an observation easily derived from any careful survey of Humanistic philosophical, ethical, legal, and political thought. But such abstractionism and differences of opinion about ethical and legal norms among men who have set themselves up to be as gods, knowing or determining good and evil on their own, should not surprise those who have read Genesis 3:5 and the book of Judges. For the moral and legal relativism of the history of Humanistic legal thought is, like the Humanism of covenant-breaking Israel, a rejection of the thoroughly Biblical ethical and legal standard set forth by Gideon: ". . . I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you" (Judges 8:23). When men make themselves the sources of ethical and legal prescription, the end, in theory and practice, is inevitably that moral and legal anarchy described in the book of Judges: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). Such is the result of the substitution of the lordship of man for the lordship of Christ the King.

The problem of *the nature of "nature"* is, of course, at the center of the question of the nature of ethics and law. The essence of Pagan Natural Law thought is to deny that nature is providentially sustained and directed by the God of Scrip-

65. Quoted in Raoul Berger, *Government by Judiciary: The Transformation of the Fourteenth Amendment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 251, in a chapter interestingly titled "From Natural Law to Libertarian Due Process."

ture, for such an affirmation would require men to bow to God's revealed word and law. Having denied God's sovereign control over nature, men are left with the task of discovering whether there be ethical principles for law inherent in nature, and if so, what these are. If God is not in control of nature, then nature is normative for man, who lives in nature. But, does nature contain rules or laws of morality and justice, or not? The appeal to "nature" is insufficient for knowing objective moral principles, for as David Hume, the philosophical destroyer of Natural Law, noted: "*The word natural is commonly taken in so many senses, and is of so loose a signification, that it seems vain to dispute whether justice be nature or not.*"<sup>66</sup> In light of the diverse definitions of "nature" and "natural," it is no wonder that Hume was led to conclude that one cannot derive normative ethical commands from descriptive propositions, for men's diverse presuppositions about God, men, and things lead them to formulate different definitions of "nature" and to describe "nature" differently; and in the absence of God there can be no agreed presuppositional starting points, and hence no agreed definition of nature, nor common principles of ethics and law. Thus, it is natural that "autonomous" men, finding themselves unable to agree on "natural" morality and justice, will naturally descend from the principled search for principles to the principle and practice of pragmatism.

*The root of pragmatism is the denial of God's providence.* The opposite of a providentially directed nature is an essentially autonomous nature, within which man can be autonomous. In such a nature, there can be no objectively knowable moral universals; consequently, man is left free to do whatever he thinks or feels is workable, for his own purposes, which may be either individually or collectively determined. Now, man was created and commanded to have dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:26-28; 9:1-17), so despite the Fall men continue to have the urge to dominion, though in perverted forms. Since man has the desire for dominion, he wants to be able to effect his will, especially as the imposition of his will on men and things enables him to gratify the desires of his heart. In a nature devoid of autonomously knowable moral standards or absolutes, in a world in which men cannot agree on the nature of nature or the nature of "Natural Law," men will seek to

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66. Berger, p. 251, note 11, emphasis added.

effect their wills by any means. Hence they will either suspend what men in their cultures believe to be moral norms, or deny outright (publicly or, as in the ancient Sophists, Machiavelli, and many modern "liberals," to a select group of devotees) the existence of such moral restraints on individual or group action, in order that the actions of men may either "save" men and nations from danger, or enable them to gratify their desires.

In such a nature, however, each man is morally free to do whatever he desires, whatever is right in his own eyes. And many *will* do whatever they desire, or can get away with, for such a nature is the "amoral"<sup>67</sup> nature of Machiavelli and de Sade, a nature beyond good and evil, in which ". . . there is just as much harm in killing an animal as a man, or just as little, and the difference arises solely from the prejudices of our vanity."<sup>68</sup> Robbins's comment on de Sade's conclusions from the Natural Law premise that nature is normative, that there has been no ethical fall and curse, and that God is ethically therefore superfluous, is telling:

Since it is nature that prompts us to murder, steal, slander, fornicate, and since we have a "natural inclination to such actions and ends as are fitting"—to quote Thomas Aquinas—none of these things can be wrong, for nature is normative. The logic is commendable.<sup>69</sup>

*Such a nature teaches the virtue of lawlessness*, by antinomian theory and practice. Such a nature teaches the equal validity of anarchy and totalitarianism. *Law in such a nature is based on force, deceit, and command, and man can have no objective standards of ethics, justice, or law to guide him as ruler or citizen*, and thus no just standards of either obedience or disobedience to government. Obey, or suffer! Obey, or die! These are the ultimate standards of law and obedience in such a world, and they are only as good as the force and deceit of the rulers. All law then becomes positive law: *there can be no constitutional or higher moral restraints on the will of those in power*, on the will-to-power or rulers, whether they be kings, oligarchies, or majorities,

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67. Nature, of course, does point to God, and thus cannot be truly amoral, however fallen men are inclined to *interpret* it as amoral, or as morally different from God's authoritative interpretations.

68. Marquis de Sade, quoted in Robbins, p. 17.

69. Robbins, p. 17.

because law is seen as a product of will, power, and command, not of objective right and justice. *All law then becomes pragmatic, ever-changing law*, for in the course of human events both conditions and rulers change, and the desires of rulers change, and in the absence of universal or enduring moral norms, there can be no reason why those in power should not change the laws to effect their wills, just as American "liberals" on the Supreme Court have done.

In the final analysis, it matters not what particular naturalistic theory of law one chooses. One may speak of law as merely historical fact (the Renaissance Humanists, contemporary Legal positivists), or as statutory law enacted by the "sovereign's" will (Bodin, Hobbes, contemporary Legal Pragmatists and Positivists), or as command (Hobbes, the Utilitarians), or as the basic law of the constitution (Locke, Montesquieu, many Humanistic Conservatives), or as the expression of "pure reason" (Spinoza, Thomasius), or as the "general will" (Rousseau, Kant), or as the working of the Hegelian "Spirit," freedom in history (Hegel, Historicists, Liberals), or as the ideology of the ruling class (Marx, Communists, Marxists, and in a sense National Socialists and Fascists), or as the state's purposes, methods, or processes in legislating (Liberals, Legal Positivists), or as the open ethical skepticism and moral relativism of formalism of the executive, judicial or legislative process (Legal Positivism and Pragmatism, popularly known as "loose construction" of the Constitution) which have been so destructively influential on the legal and political thought of American lawyers, political scientists, and intellectuals since the 1890's.<sup>70</sup> *But the specific formal differences among these various theoretical sub-species ultimately matter little. The basic thrust of all — despite the rhetoric of each against the others — is the same: law is merely will-to-power, command, force, and the threat of force mixed with deceit, not objective justice or morality.*

*These have been the vehicles for the abandonment of the basically Biblical principles of law and society in America and the West. These have been the vehicles for the old false religion of secular salvation by collectivist planning and controls, and are the roots of the acrid and sickening*

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70. I use here the categories of legal thought surveyed by Friedrich. The Biblically thoughtful Christian will be able to supply the extended critiques which we cannot undertake here. The common denominator of all these theories in arbitrary will is obvious.

*fruits which are manifest in our social, legal, political, and economic life today. In such circumstances law, whatever its public pretensions, has descended to all fours, and there is no teaching of godliness conveyed to rulers or ruled, no standard of righteous rule or citizenship, and no protection for the individual, the family, or the church against anarchy, arbitrary rule, injustice or tyranny.*

*The Failure of "The Revival of Natural Law"*

All law is the product of will and command. The fundamental question is: Whose Will? Whose command? Who has the authority to know and command what men should or must do: God, or man? The answer to this question makes all the difference in the world, for man will either obey the unfounded and self-destructive laws of man or the matchless and blessing law of God.

American, and to a lesser extent Western, legal thought was dominantly influenced by the Bible, especially through the incorporation of the English Common Law<sup>71</sup> and the influence of our formerly dominantly Christian culture and society on our founders and lawmakers. But the Biblical basis of our law has also always been diluted by a strong mixture of Natural Law thought, mostly in the form of Christian Natural Law, though also with a Pagan Normative Natural Law component, influenced by both ancient and modern theories, particularly modern Christian-derived theories of natural rights.<sup>72</sup> Because of the syncretistic merger of Biblical Law and rationalistic Natural Law doctrines, there has been a tendency for "Natural Law" to dominate Biblical Law in historical accounts—especially in the accounts of Humanistic scholars.

Because of the inner dynamic of "autonomous" theories of Natural Law, the desire of man to abandon God's laws for his own laws in classic unneutrality, the tendency of "Natural Law" to dominate Biblical Law first becomes an actuality, then transforms itself into an attack on Biblical Law and the tradi-

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71. We again depart from general grammatical form in the interest of identifying a distinctive body of thought as a proper noun.

72. Russell Kirk's *The Roots of American Order* (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1974) gives a good overview of the components of our American tradition, and should be read by those interested in understanding our nation's heritage.



tions which have embodied it.<sup>73</sup> Then, as men's autonomous thinking follows its natural downhill course, the remaining Christian content of Natural Law becomes leached out by the rising current which springs from man's "autonomous" desires and logic: "nature" and "Natural Law" become "progressively" Pagan. As the theory and practice of Pagan "Natural Law" becomes increasingly destructive of the old order, and follows its inevitable downhill path, defenders of the old order awake and arise to protect their inherited ways and laws: conservatism of one sort or another becomes an intellectual and social force.

American and Western conservatives of one sort or another have sought to defend the old order's protection of diversity, localism, tradition, diffusion of authority and power in society, and individuals' and groups' (state and local governments, churches, voluntary associations, families) legal and constitutional rights, together with the inherited morality and liberty protected and fostered by the old legal order. But until recently these defenses have been made in terms of "autonomous" reason alone, or of reason over revelation, or of reason and tradition: in terms of variants of the older, syncretistic versions of Natural Law. Lacking a Biblical foundation, such defenses are thus open to challenge and assault on the grounds of both their own premises and their consequences.

The premises of the revivalists of Natural Law<sup>74</sup> are defective on at least four grounds. First, they presuppose the autonomy of man's reason, which, as we have seen, is both unbiblical and self-destructive. Second, as a correlative, they presuppose a non-fallen nature, which is both unbiblical and incompatible with men's diverse definitions of nature, from which flow their diverse theories of the laws of nature.

Third, they presuppose the practical irrelevance of God,

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73. Traditions such as Puritanism and the other Christian faiths which dominated early American society, and the English Common Law, which was incorporated into American law under the Constitution.

74. The term "revivalists" is ironic, of course, for these thinkers are, almost without exception, opposed to Christian revivalism, even while they seek to revive *their* faith. These thinkers are surveyed in Friedrich's concluding chapters, and in Henry B. Veatch's important bibliographical essay, "Natural Law: Dead or Alive?" *Literature of Liberty*, I:4 (October/December, 1978):7-31.

ethically speaking, and hence, as a correlative, a common ground of autonomous discovery of law between Christians and pagans; both of these assumptions are unbiblical and the first is destructive of the possibility of the existence of moral and legal principles. The strength of this motivation may be discerned when we note that

even so eminent and devoted a Thomistic scholar as Professor Vernon Bourke is inclined to give up on the use of the term "natural law" altogether. He feels that its usage has become almost totally infected by that one use of the term, which dates back to the Middle Ages, and which firmly associates the notion of natural law with "a code of moral precepts divinely implanted in man's nature, or mind, and issuing from the legislative will of God." Hence he thinks it is hopeless to try to restore to the term the sense which it had in Aquinas, and according to which law is defined as a "rational plan and rule of action."<sup>75</sup>

There are few clearer assertions of the will to rationalistic autonomy and antinomianism (and this by a self-proclaimed Thomist!) inherent in such theories of "Natural Law," but we must constantly keep such forthright declarations of "Natural Law" thinkers to be their own lawgivers in mind when reading their lamentations of the decline of "Natural Law."

The fourth defective premise of the revivalists of "Natural Law" is their denial of nature as a God-created and God-sustained entity. At least two approaches have been advocated. Friedrich and others adopt the evolutionary dogma, and so conceive of nature as changing; from this it follows that "Natural Law" must also be continually changing.<sup>76</sup> Thus, we have a changing "justice" and man-created "law,"<sup>77</sup> both of which are obviously relativistic and inadequate as moral or legal standards. Veatch and others opt for a dualism in human thought, which is ultimately reflective of a dualism in nature, in order that we may have a teleological (ends-oriented) ethics and a non-teleological natural science. Thus, ethics, in typical Neo-Kantian fashion, would be concerned with "nature-in-itself," a realm of fore-conceived natural ends, while natural science would be concerned only with nature as it appears to be, not with "nature-in-itself," and the

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75. Veatch, p. 29, note 15.

76. Friedrich, pp. 179, 182, and *passim*.

77. Friedrich, p. 198.

"basic incompatibility between what the scientists have to say about nature and the concept of nature that is required by a natural law or natural rights philosophy" would supposedly disappear.<sup>78</sup>

But the Bible is clear that God created and sustains nature, controlling its minutest processes and most calamitous events, through which He providentially works His will, which is always good and just. The Bible knows no dualism such as that proposed by Veatch and others. Nor does the Bible recognize an autonomous or neutral natural science, for natural scientists are, after all, but men (though some would, in effect, have us think otherwise), fallen men, either saved or unsaved, men who reason according to religious presuppositions, just like the rest of us, men who inescapably interpret the world, even while they are describing its natural processes. Natural science is no more separated from ethics than is man's sexual activity or economic policy. Moreover, if "nature-in-itself" is separated from the use of reason in empirical scientific investigation, then nature is rendered schizophrenic and irrational, and man's morality must be separated from his knowledge of the world in which he lives and acts. In such a situation, we are merely again faced with the same insoluble problems which have always stemmed from Pagan "Normative" Rationalism and Pagan "Normative" Intuitionism, for there can be no objective proof of the claimed norms of "Natural Law" thinkers according to such a scheme.

Having to reason from such premises, it is no wonder that "Natural Law" thinkers have failed to bridge Hume's "Is/Ought" Gap. Julius Kovesi, for example, argues that moral judgments are not evaluations of actions made according to criteria of goodness, that the moral problem consists of whether or not to do something, and that since morality concerns itself with the issue of whether or not we can substantiate our descriptions, those who fear a restriction of their freedom by moral evaluations of their actions need not worry.<sup>79</sup> But obviously one cannot tell whether or not to do something unless he can know whether it is *good* to do it. And

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78. Veatch, p. 28.

79. "Against the Ritual of 'Is' and 'Ought,'" *Midwestern Studies in Philosophy* 3 (1979):5-16; summarized in *Literature of Liberty*, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

if moral evaluations do not restrict our freedom to do as we will, what good are they? Kovesi reduces morality to mere positivistic academic description, to a speculative game for idle intellectuals; but the Lord of heaven and earth sees righteousness as that which exalts a nation, and sin as a reproach to any people (Prov. 13:34).

Nor is Neo-Thomist Ralph McInerney's attempt to circumvent the "Is/Ought" Gap by arguing that men are in fact engaged in the pursuit of a vast variety of ends or goods, that human good is the group of hierarchically ordered values or goods which perfect human nature, and that human reason and will, through a sort of process of rationalistic trial and error, can define and direct men to achieve these goods of any help.<sup>80</sup> For the questions of the nature of human nature, the nature of the good, and the standard for determining the hierarchy of goods remain unsettled—not to mention the insoluble problems of knowing anything via autonomous human rationality or autonomously interpreted experience—and until these questions are answered it is obvious that one cannot know what truly constitutes human perfection, how ethically to choose among the vast variety of things that men claim as "good," or how to formulate a hierarchy of true goods.

"Hume's Gap" has not only withstood the assaults of these would-be restorers of "Natural Law," it has swallowed them whole: they have fallen headlong into the deadly pit of moral and intellectual relativism which lies at the bottom of that autonomously impassible chasm.

"Natural Law" is dangerous for its consequences as well as for its premises. Its assumption of the autonomy of man's reason leads, as Francis Schaeffer has pointed out, to the liberation of fallen man's claim to autonomy, to his denial of the very God whom medieval Christian Natural Law theorists worshipped, to the secularization of all of life, to the denial of objective morality, and even to the prison of man's *Escape from Reason*.<sup>81</sup> The consequences of the doctrine of an autonomous "Natural Law" derivable from man's autonomous reasoning on the nature of nature and the nature of men and things in

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80. "Naturalism and Thomistic Ethics," *The Thomist* 40 (April, 1976): 222-242; summarized in *Literature of Liberty*, pp. 38-39.

81. (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1968).

the natural world has been the denial of the rationality of nature, the denial of man's rationality, the denial of true moral absolutes, and the rise of modern anarchism and totalitarianism in law and politics.<sup>82</sup> The consequences of these philosophical, intellectual, and legal developments have been massive enslavement of nations and mass murders on a scale unprecedented since the dark ages of pagan times, together with the crisis of liberty both civil and ecclesiastical in America and the West. Christian theories of "Natural Law," by adopting Pagan assumptions as foundation stones, have led to compromise with Pagan "Normative" theories of "Natural Law," which in turn, because of their own manifold weaknesses, have naturally led from Pseudo-Norms down the slippery slope of human autonomy into the pit of Naturalistic "Natural Law."

If the originally intended function of the doctrine of "Natural Law" was to place rationally known limits on the exercise of political and legislative power, and to preserve individuals' and groups' liberties against tyranny, then the attempted revival of "Natural Law" is a noble effort but also an abject failure. Autonomous "Natural Law" theory is a slippery slope, which leads naturally downward to its own destruction, and the destruction of the cultures and nations which follow its way. It cannot be revived by men who, with one of its key historians and proponents, Michael B. Crowe, seek to avoid the problems of its at best ambiguous definitions of "nature" and "law" by giving it a "variable content," which would supposedly allow it "to function more coherently as a non-arbitrary, objective norm to judge government power and law."<sup>83</sup>

Variable content means changing standards of law and ethics; it means that there is no rule of law, no bedrock of absolute standards for man in a world of flux, no clear rules for rulers or ruled, and nothing clear but the way to pagan abyss or moral and legal relativism and legal and political absolutism.

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82. Hallowell's *Main Currents in Modern Political Thought* (N. Y.: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963) traces these developments masterfully.

83. "Natural Law: A Twentieth Century Profile?" in *The Changing Profile of Natural Law* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), pp. 246-290; summarized in *Literature of Liberty*, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35. Even the title of the book in which the essay appears is indicative of the fundamental relativism and intellectual bankruptcy of the position.

To revive "Natural Law" is not even an adequate holding action, especially not in an intellectual world so taken by the premises of revolutionary Humanism that even "Natural Law" theorists want changing standards of ethics and law. *Men need to be called to faith in and obedience to Christ, not to a revived notion of autonomy. "Autonomous" "Natural Law" naturally self-destructs, bringing God's judgment on the culture or nation which abandons faith in Him and obedience to His law (Deut. 28; Judges). Those who would preserve or restore limits on lawmakers and government, who would restore ecclesiastical and civil liberty to America and the West against our contemporary tyrants, who would restore the connection between Biblical morality and their nation's law, who would restore God's providential blessings on their civilization, must therefore work to teach and implement God's Biblical Law.*

## WHAT'S WRONG WITH HUMAN RIGHTS

T. Robert Ingram

THE "human rights" idea has been cried up for an alternative to Divine law as "the basis and foundation of government" ever since the Declaration of Rights of Virginia in 1776. It is a foundation of sand.

What are called rights of life, liberty, property, or any of the other of a long list of claims are in fact conditions that prevail when the common law of nations is upheld. Since this common law must presuppose a Divine author, unbelief forces men to seek another explanation.

A "right" is a legal claim to own or to do something. Rights cannot stand on their own. As a ground of law, they are indeed "nonsense upon stilts," being derived from law.

In his book, *What's Wrong With Human Rights*, the Rev. Ingram argues for a return to the universal law of God as the only rock upon which government can stand, and which in turn upholds the benefits so wrongly attributed to imaginary impersonal natural forces.

The following is a selection from that book, available for \$3.50 from: St. Thomas Press, P. O. Box 35096, Houston, Texas 77035.

### *Because of Unbelief*

Since President Carter has injected something called "human rights" into diplomacy, it might be in order to take a close look at what he is talking about.

"Human rights" has been around for a long time as a doctrine. It was accepted apparently without much question in America in 1776, in France in 1791, and probably a long time before that in the general atmosphere of the Enlightenment.

Men seem to have known what they meant by it because it inspired prolonged outbursts of revolutionary energy time and again in many parts of Christendom.

A Declaration on Human Rights was even adopted by the United Nations organization in 1948, although that declaration has faded into relative oblivion.

Undoubtedly President Carter knows what he means by human rights and, since even his strongest critics have not bothered to ask what he means, we may suppose the rest of us think we know too.

But if the foreign policy of the United States is to be hitched to it, shouldn't we *know* we know what it is?

Anyone who takes the trouble to look into the matter will find some difficulty. I have not been able to find in usually available big city library resources even a record of the famed "Rights of Man" declared by the French revolutionists. It gets short shrift in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and others.

Determined pursuit reveals a vague and confused history.

It is easy, of course, to get a copy of the first ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States, which are linked to the Rights of Man by the popular title, Bill of Rights. But this is small help in ferreting out universal principles of human rights, simply because it is patently a statement of sovereign powers of states withheld from the federal authority of the Union. It should be called the Bill of States' Rights since it most certainly is not a declaration of human rights.

It is far more instructive to go back to the Virginia Declaration of Rights, drawn originally by George Mason and then adopted unanimously by the Convention of Delegates at the Capitol in Williamsburg on June 12, 1776. Since this concerns a sovereign government and its subjects, not a federation and its federating sovereignties, it may be expected to deal with really properly-called rights.

Moreover, this Virginia declaration seems to tower above all other attempts at specific statements of universal principles, since it was the first such statement with official sovereign endorsement and admittedly served as both a model and an inspiration for all later proclamations.

There are two characteristics that stand out in the Virginia declaration: first, there is the underlying metaphysic which is clearly set forth; and secondly, there are the particular applications of the metaphysic to those partisan, local and class



interests of the time and place.

It quickly appears that the second characteristic is a blind alley in the search for principles. The particulars are often inconsistent, seldom thorough-going, and always reflect the superficial political controversies of the time. Typical is the case of universal suffrage which is offered in Virginia only to "men, having sufficient evidence of permanent common interest with, and attachment to, the community;" i.e. those whom the representative assembly shall deem qualified. While stated as principle, it is not extended in fact—not even in modern times with universal female suffrage. Children are still excluded.

It may be possible to trace through the history of practical applications and find universal principles, or at least a consistent drive along certain lines, that are commonly called progress.

But it is probably far more revealing simply to accept the statement of metaphysic as it appears in the Virginia Declaration of Rights and then see how this is historically used to fit the various exigencies of times and occasions as an axe or a hammer to break down the walls of whatever particular society is being attacked.

Using the Virginia declaration as the standard expression of the human rights idea does not automatically impugn either the Christianity of colonial Virginians generally or of those political leaders who were directly responsible. It is well known that the whole of colonial America was overwhelmingly oriented toward vigorous Christianity, and most historians recognize that this prevalence of religion was the dominant force in society both before and after the War for Independence. James Madison, for example, who worked long and hard for disestablishment of the Church, argued his case on religious grounds.

If Christian sentiment was as strong as is generally admitted and as such contemporaneous writers as France's Alexis de Tocqueville and the Presbyterian divine Ashbel Green said it was, it may well be asked why the upholding of the Christian faith was not made a part of the American Constitution. The answer must in part be that the Christians themselves were averse to anything which made religion a state establishment. John Witherspoon and all the Presbyterian leaders, far from wanting a connection established between their church

and temporal government, considered such a connection a "calamity and a curse." But at the same time, the knowledge of God revealed in Scripture was so commonly diffused, and Washington's dictum that religion is a pillar of society was so commonly believed, that it was probably not anticipated by Christians of the Revolutionary era that the Constitution might be made to operate on the human rights principle without any recognition of God.

Yet again it is notoriously the case that few who take a wrong turn in the path of life anticipate the misery that they will come to further along. The direction taken by the Virginia declaration has no other way to go but toward, at the very least, holding God to have no place in temporal government. The analysis agrees in toto with that of Groen van Prinsterer, a nineteenth century Dutch thinker now being republished. He finds the cause of revolution to be unbelief: "I should therefore like to let you see that as a matter of simple logic atheism in religion and radicalism in politics are not only the exaggeration, misuse or distortion, but that they are in fact the consistent and faithful application of a principle which sets aside the God of Revelation in favour of the supremacy of reason. I should like you to see, in addition, that because this principle contradicts the very essence and immutable order of things, it is possible to predict, even without the light of history, the drift of events and the metamorphosis of the principle as it has continued to reassert itself." I would amend this so as to say simply, "the principle which sets aside the God of Revelation" for any vain notion or imagined substitute.

The Virginians need not have anticipated this logical development and probably never thought of themselves as leaving the "Rock" of belief.

In fact, it will be shown later on that insofar as human rights as set forth in the Virginia declaration are made specific, they are in fact a kind of back-handed statement of benefits of the common law which Christians enjoy. It was easy to confuse logical origins. The common law punishes any dishonest violation of each man's person or his goods and so it is easy to understand a condition in which each may be said to enjoy the "right to life, liberty and property."

Nevertheless, colonial Virginians did know they were doing something different. They were introducing a change, and a radical one. The whole Christian world understood the

boldness and daring of setting up any kind of temporal government which not only had no direct connection with the Church but also made no recognition of the role of God in government. The Westminster Confession of Faith on this point had to undergo a revision in the Presbyterian Church in America. Attribution of "inalienable rights" to the endowment of the Creator is not an idea that can be drawn from Scripture or from Christian doctrine, but is a pietism tacked on to the root idea of a state of nature which is postulated as being without law or dependence on God.

The purpose of the argument here is to show what the human rights mystique is in the plain sense of the words in which it is set forth in their context. Modern man can go astray too, and for the same reasons. The thesis here is not an attempt to trace the origins of modern nonsense and revolutionism through some imagined historical evolutionary process, but rather to put the finger on the root idea which makes the mischief in every age. There undoubtedly can be shown a process of dissolution and decay of public Christian values, but this is relatively unimportant to the argument. The progress of a deadly disease does not reveal its cause or even whether the cause can be remedied. But in this case at least, the exposure of the deadliness of the notion that there exists any area at all in life which operates on a natural law accessible to the mind of man without reference to a personal God has a bearing on immediate concerns.

The Christian metaphysic of society should be stated succinctly and clearly first, because the human rights metaphysic arises *in* Christendom and is understandable only as a repudiation *of* Christendom.

Christianity begins with the firm conviction that all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, were created out of nothing. This means there is a Creator who is Uncreated Being and is that than which nothing higher can be imagined, namely God.

Therefore, all power and all authority is of God.

Further, the doctrine of Creation implies God's providence or personal government and rule over all that he has made, since its very existence is derived from him and all would fall back into the nothing from which it came without his everlasting providential power.

All the rest of the Christian doctrine of law and government

and of human order is derived from and must be consistent with this one fundamental truth of Creation. It presupposes harmony and not "nature red in tooth and claw;" the nature of man as a dependent being; the familial structure of all that can be called order; and the very concept of law and justice.

It is in light of the doctrine of Creation that the "human rights" metaphysic is made clear as a subtle repudiation of it, at least of its implications.

It is stated simply and clearly in the first paragraph of the Virginia declaration:

"That all Men are by Nature equally free and independent, and have certain inherent Rights, of which, when they enter into a State of Society, they cannot, by any Compact, deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the Enjoyment of Life and Liberty, with the Means of acquiring and possessing Property, and pursuing and obtaining Happiness and Safety."

The definitive proposition is that all men are what they are said to be as regards their rights "by Nature." Granting that it is possible to read into the statement that this nature is created, the silence about God the Creator adds great weight to the importance of what that nature is rather than where it came from. But actually what it is in terms of the present consideration is determined by its origin. To be created means to be dependent. That man is a dependent being is axiomatic among Pagan as well as Christian thinkers of old. His dependence is seen not only because of the Christian belief about origins but simply as an observation of fact. It is also commonly stated as axiomatic that man is a "social being"—that is, he can exist only in community with other human beings.

Granting further that the statement "equally free and independent" can bear the added interpretation that men are so only to the same degree and the words do not necessarily mean "absolutely free and independent," if they do not mean absolutely, then they are false because the proposition becomes self-contradicting and equal limitations are placed on all. The true sense of the words is undoubtedly meant and understood to be that it is the nature of human beings to exist without law or society so that each individual may be said to have restraints and be in a state of absolute independence. This natural state is held to be understandable without any reference to a personal Creator God. The very omission of any

mention of him is the error of unbelief which falsifies all the rest that is said about human life.

The true force of this proposition was widely and clearly understood. It was simply that law and government are not natural to man; that man wittingly at some point entered into a state of society of his own making; that human law and government are contrary to nature; and that, finally and most importantly, law and government are human inventions. What man gave, man can alter or take away. Many Christian people found this notion acceptable if they explained law and government as having been made necessary by Adam's fall. That Scripture will not support such a notion did not deter those who wanted to believe it. That such is the correct understanding of what the Virginians and others of their day had in mind is seen in succeeding paragraphs of the declaration.

The second paragraph says, "That all power is vested in, and consequently derived from the People; that Magistrates are their Trustees and Servants, and at all Times amenable to them." The meaning could not be more clear, nor more opposite Biblical thought. The ruling proposition of Scripture and Christian doctrine is that "power belongeth unto God" (Psalm 62:11); or "There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1). Magistrates are not trustees and servants of the people, but ministers of God for wrath (Romans 13:4).

The conclusion that mankind, having given government, may also take it away is made explicit in the third paragraph: "Whenever any government be found inadequate or contrary to these Purposes, a Majority of the Community hath an indubitable, unalienable, and indefeasible Right, to reform, alter, or abolish it . . ."

This is the heart of the matter. It is the explosive ground of revolution in all its forms. The attribution of power to "reform, alter, or abolish" any government to a "Majority of the Community" only gives assent to Rousseau's lame attempt to shore up his social contract theory by postulating such a thing as the "general will," which in turn could be determinable only by majority vote. However, this simply means law and government are no more than what the strongest force in the community can make it at any given time. That this is almost word for word the analysis of law given by Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes of the United States Supreme

Court is not unrelated. However stated, it makes some men the manipulators of other men, and that validated by no more than who can get away with the most. It is the imaginary law of the jungle, giving rise to the abominable dogma of "survival of the fittest" and the warrant for every political upheaval that may be engineered. Law and government are play-things for man, and what "human rights" always boils down to in practical analysis is the defense of any and all political upheavals simply because they are political.

Freedom of speech and freedom of press are, in fact, applied seriously only to giving government protection to instigators of riot and rebellion, as well as those who would undermine human order by more subtle attacks on morals and customs. When Mr. Carter advises the Kremlin he wants them to respect human rights, he cannot possibly mean the right to own property, since this is expressly repudiated by the very doctrine that makes Communism what it is. Since no one has yet been able to explain what "liberty" is without reference to the Creator God, it follows that Mr. Carter has no concrete notions about that either. But what he means is clear as a bell: he means he wants Russians to be allowed to criticize their government to any degree without going to jail for what they say or do. Further, he wants those who are in jail for subversion or political offenses to be set loose. How far he wants to go with this right to revolution no one can tell, but this is without doubt what he is advocating.

### *Lawful and Right*

The dream that mankind might become its own law-maker, of course, is not new. Adam's sin was precisely that he undertook to live by such a system (the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, "knowledge" meaning also control or determination). We can only dimly imagine the extent of the catastrophe that followed immediately upon the whole earth; but we do know that the end of Adam's scheme was death. And we also know that God overrode Adam, instituted restrictive decrees to curb his drive back toward the nothing from which he came, and held out the promise of redemption through the "seed of the woman." In short, God, through law and justice, prevailed and God was not thwarted in his purpose for human destiny.

It is the fantasy suggested to Adam by the spirit of rebellion that man, by acting as his own prime lawgiver without reference to a personal God, could thereby "be as gods, determining good and evil," it is this fantasy, I say, that fires the ambitions of those who are caught up in "human rights" and focuses their energies on revolution.

At this point it may be well to recapitulate the argument by which I have sought to explain the metaphysic of the "human rights" doctrine. First, there can be no such thing as law without a lawgiver. Secondly, by renouncing God the Creator of heaven and earth as lawgiver, there remains only man himself. The source of law, then, must be found in man.

So far, so good. But mankind is complete in each individual, male or female. The only true sense in which there can be any such thing as "equality of man" is in that all are equally human. I would suppose this axiom would extend even to an idiot or a mongoloid: despite the manifest imperfections in nature, still such individuals are human. But this is no more than a typical "classification" of living creatures such as was made by Adam when he named them all. All sheep are equally sheep, too.

This brings us to the heart of the matter. When God is disregarded as universal lawgiver, man must take God's place. Human society must have a law. That means each individual is entitled to legislate without restraint. This is the "freedom" attributed to man and to every man in the imagined "state of nature."

It is a curious thing that many 19th century writers, who remained generally Christian in their thinking and who denied that there ever was or could have been such a "state of Nature," still seem to accept the notion and refer to it as a true expression of the root principle of lawmaking for nations.

The notion was given a popular name by Rousseau's famed Social Contract theory, but no Rousseau was needed to fabricate it: it is inescapable from the first denial of God as lawgiver and judge of all that he has made; then each individual must at least by right of nature be "free" to do as he pleases since there was no law until man made it. It should be remarked here that it is only God who is free to do whatever he wills to do, having authority, wisdom and power to do all but still unable to deny himself or contradict himself or hate himself. With God out of consideration, then this original free-

dom must be assigned to man, and to each man.

Society, then, is falsely seen as a human construct, formed by several men for the benefits of concerted action and protection. Law is agreed to as a limitation of the "natural" freedom of each by a contractual arrangement to achieve certain benefits. Men are said to give up certain of their freedoms or rights voluntarily in order to accommodate to the group. There are no absolutes, since each man is a law unto himself, and all that remains is manipulation of each other to the temporary advantage of the best manipulator.

The "common good," meaning the good of the social order as a whole, no longer means a condition of peace upheld by law and justice which can be enjoyed by all without denying its benefits to any, but means the greatest happiness and well-being for the greatest number. This, together with an imaginary notion of power as increasing by the numbers, has to result in accommodation to majority rule. The majority not only has the greatest power but also the highest "right" to have its way.

"Human rights" now have been modified by practical necessity so that it is not each individual who is by nature free to do as he is able, but rather the greatest number of individuals who agree on a single purpose. The late greatly admired Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court and author of the only modern text on the common law in any appreciable use in our law schools, Oliver Wendell Holmes, declared this idea in such a way as to leave no room for doubt as to what was meant. He said in many ways and at many different times that law is whatever the greatest force in the community can make it at any given time. There are no absolutes, he opined. Although he squirmed at calling "fire!" in a crowded theatre as an absolute wrong, he held his miry ground majestically about the relativity of law.

This explains, I think, why it is impossible to locate any acceptable codification of "human rights." There are none. If *everything* is lawful, then *nothing* is lawful, and there is no law. And rights by definition are conferred by law: A true "right" in the present context may be said to be a legal claim to own or to do something: but in original purity and an imagined godless "state of nature," man has a claim to do anything and he gives up this absolute freedom and divine power in exchange for corporate identity with other individuals.



All this is spelled out in the Virginia Declaration. Its propositions are as follows: Men are by nature equally free and independent; they have certain inherent rights (still unnamed); they enter into a State of Society and are not, contrary to what we all know, born into one; and they cannot bind even their own posterity to whatever social contract they themselves enter into. Finally, there is an unsuccessful attempt to be specific about these "rights." They are, "namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety."

Although named, these vanish like the Cheshire cat on close examination, leaving only the grin.

It may be said without contradiction that all men seek happiness; but no sane person has ever claimed there is an inherent claim to happiness in each one of us. Happiness is the reward of right living (or good luck to those for whom Fortune is supreme), but it is always counterpoised by misery. A reward is a "right" only for those who have earned it or who have a lawful claim by gift of Fortune or inheritance over which they exert no control. It is absurd to imagine for a moment that any one has a "right" to enjoyment of anything, or to happiness, or to safety, whatever may be meant by this last.

It is tempting to say all men want safety too; but I am not so sure. There is a certain zest in meeting danger to which most men must be responsive. Besides, there is an inherent contradiction in the idea of having a "right" to pursue and obtain safety while at the same time have the "right" to acquire and possess property. For ownership implies risk; he who risks nothing owns nothing. There is a risk in being alive, and there is a risk in marrying and "entering into a state of society." Augustine observes that wicked men may be described as those who seek to remove all obstacles to their enjoyment of things they may lose against their will, and thereby live lives of wickedness and crime. The power of ownership is a duty, not a privilege, and is inescapable. It is indeed inherent in human nature, but put there by the express will of God, who said, "Let us make man in our image, and let them have dominion." Having dominion means owning. We are commanded to possess and take care of worldly things entrusted to each one but forbidden to fix our desires on them. We are to control things; things are not to control us.

All that remains of the "named" rights is the grin.

Yet stay a moment.

There is one discoverable "right" implied and expressed in all human rights codes, one that is common to all and identifies each as belonging to the collection of human rights, one I have noted above. This is the right to rebel.

The Virginia Declaration marks a decisive departure from such often proposed evolutionary ancestors as the Mayflower Compact or documents of the Massachusetts and Connecticut colonies in that it assumes the root premise that man naturally is without society and government, and that government itself is humanly devised. It is surprising how universally this concept infected the writings even of such stalwart Eighteenth Century Christian thinkers as William Paley.

It may be that the Mayflower Compact itself gave great impetus to the social contract notion, for certainly it was an instance in which a body of men consciously entered into contract for a body politic which was previously not explicit. Yet this must be radically modified by the fact that the Mayflower Company already existed as an ecclesiastical body, which by its own doctrine held Divine authority to do whatever was necessary to promote tranquility for God's people on earth, as well as for the salvation of souls. Moreover, these same men had never existed apart from society and were giving up no "rights" appertaining to individual sovereignty or liberty whatsoever. The Fundamental Orders of Connecticut of 1638/39 represent a parallel case. The statement of Liberties of the Massachusetts Colony is merely a forthright statement of common law rights presented in terms of common law thinking dear to all Christians and bears no hint of rights inherent in a supposed lawless state of nature.

In truth, right to dissent is not a lawful claim to own or to do something, which is the true right: it is a turning upside down of right and wrong, calling good evil and evil good. It says men have the right in the true sense of duty to overthrow their rulers whenever it pleases them: or, in other words, it is a negation of right. It is a claim to the worst of all moral evils, the right to be wrong.

There are many popular slogans which state the case as well as it can be stated. One is well known: "I disagree wholly with what you say, but I will defend with my life your right to say it."

This is utter nonsense. But it adequately defines the sense

of "human rights."

Scripture says it is wrong to resist authority. "Human rights" says it is right to resist.

Anyone who wishes may proceed from this point to trace out particular applications of the "human rights" metaphysic to the exigencies of times and occasions. In every case, there is claimed a specific "right" to resist a particular institution or custom or law of a given social order.

The Virginia Declaration specified the "right" to dismantle the order of the nobility, the officer caste of Christian peoples, who were—by virtue of their responsibility—the ruling class. This was stated in the negation of the true lawful right of inheritance which is inseparable from the right to property or dominion. The declaration said no emoluments or privileges from the community could be awarded except in consideration of services rendered and are not "descendable." Unless the "community" be equated with the government, the declaration would outlaw all inheritance (a popular cause among human rightists even today). It also, more to the point, anticipated independence from Britain.

The French revolutionaries, of course, made no bones about their desire to dismantle the whole social order, not only the nobility and the clergy but all other structures, and this by virtue of "the rights of man."

Yankee radicals inflamed the Northern peoples to mount the Civil War in the name of a "human right" to be free and, if they did not destroy the whole Southern order, they did at least dismantle its vast and efficient plantation economy.

Tradition, law, and custom, which preserved public peace and order in the bi-racial state of the union, both North and South, were the target of the right to resist in the 60's, the supposed human rights justifying the violent means.

The list could be extended considerably, but enough has been said to make the point. There is, however, one present application of the "human rights" metaphysic making it lawful to revolt: that is the insistence upon the legalization everywhere of revolutionary parties, especially Communist parties.

As against the Soviets, no doubt, it makes sense for us to try to force the government to permit and even protect dissent without regard to how it may affect the stability of the regime. It would be to our advantage. But those who cheer for the

application of "human rights" to Soviet and Cuban internees and dissidents are glum about doing the same, let us say, in Spain or Chile. Yet those who are cheering for "human rights" in Chile are silent about them in Russia and other Communist dominated lands.

It's all well and good to cheer rebellion and resistance in and of itself as long as the resistance is against true power and authority—that is, power that is of God. But what happens when the resistance is directed against the resisters? Surely, if those who revolt against the principle of revolting are right, then that which they revolt against is wrong, and revolution itself is wrong, and it is wrong to resist.

It looks more and more as if Mr. Carter's high sounding policy is stalled at an impasse. If what is good for the goose is not good for the gander, we have only a sometime right and we must look elsewhere for a standard of goodness.

We may get somewhere if, on the other hand, we recover our sense and accept the nature of man as a dependent being, dependent on both his Maker and his fellows into whose society every man ever born has been born (neither Adam nor Eve was born), and respect the universal moral law of our Maker, which Scripture says is written on the hearts of all men, and uphold the law because it is just and in accord with the eternal law of God, and meets the Divine requirements of truth in such changes in the laws of nations as may be made necessary by the exigencies of time and occasions.

This would mean a return to what is called "absolutes."

I think it is Solzhenitsyn who has said if we give up the absolutes of right and wrong (given universal law of God) there is nothing left but to manipulate one another. "Human rights" would seem to be the lever by which to dislodge lawful maintenance of peace and law and justice in order that the majority of noses can be counted on to manipulate the minority. Since each is a minority of one, being under God unique and individual, none can be a majority and we all are the losers.

### *God is Our Lawmaker*

Common law rights on the surface coincide with those declared to be inherent in human nature and so are called human rights. The difference is subtle. One is real, explicit

and inherent in a universally known complex of law and justice. The other is an imaginary idea of origins which implies self-sufficiency as over and against creatureliness, and in application leads only to confusion.

"Human rights" postulates conflict between individuals. Common law rights are blessings of public peace in which wrongs are punished. Wrongs are not seen as infringements of individual rights, but violations of God's commands. It is wrong to murder, not because each has a right to live, but because God said it is wrong for any person to kill a man except as a public official acting in the administration of justice or the conduct of war.

The true import of the "rights" set forth in the Virginia Declaration is much better and more convincingly expressed in Article V of the so-called Bill of Rights amending the United States Constitution. It says, "no person . . . (shall) be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." The meaning hangs on the word "law," which in both Christian and pagan thinking describes a fixed, universal decree of right and wrong. The sense, then, is essentially that no man may be deprived of life, liberty or property except as a just penalty for crime.

## THE COUNTERPRODUCTIVITY OF NOT LINKING CHRISTIANITY AND POLITICS

A Reply to Sen. Mark Hatfield

Joseph C. Morecraft III

**B**EFORE Christians today can hope to make any contribution to the solution of the social and political ills afflicting our nation this is an imperative: they must dispose of the humanist myth of the neutrality of politics so far as religion is concerned."<sup>1</sup>

What is religious neutrality in politics? Hebden Taylor answers, "According to this neutrality principle Christians may participate in the political process only as citizens but never as believers. Thus in his book *The Christian in Politics* Walter James argues: 'The Christian is called upon to act beside other men and no assurance is given him that he will sense God's purpose better than they. He can no more aim to be a Christian statesman than a Christian engineer. Politics has at any one time its own techniques, aims and standards, vary though they may, and in the light of them as they are in his lifetime, the Christian's effort must be to make a good politician and no more. He stands on a par with the non-Christian, just as there are no denominations in the science of physics. His religion will give him no special guidance in his public task, as it will do within his personal relationships with close neighbors.' In this advocating that Christians must abide by the prevailing doctrine of neutrality which seeks to exclude religion from politics and in suggesting that Christians should restrict their religion to the field of personal relationships, James has neatly fallen right into the secular liberal humanist trap which tried to place religion alongside man's other activities and interests, whether these be academic,

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1. E. L. Hebden Taylor, "The Myth of Religious Neutrality in Politics" (unpublished essay), p. 1.

social, economic, political, or artistic. This modern idea of 'religion' is one which the secular apostate world around us today loves to have Christians accept. Secular humanists have no objection to our Christian faith at all, provided we reserve it strictly for ourselves in the privacy of our homes and church buildings, and just so long as we do not try to live up to our Christian principles in our business and public lives.

"On no account must the Spirit and Word of the Lord Jesus Christ be allowed to enter the ballot booth or the market place where the real decisions of modern life are made, nor must religion interfere with such vital matters as education, politics, labor relations, profits and wages. These activities are all supposed to be 'neutral' and they can therefore be withdrawn from sectarian influences so that the secular spirit of the community may prevail. This is the spirit of reason, science and pure technique of the practical pragmatist. For him truth is only what works out in practice and for whom the God of the Bible is thought to be the projection of the father image or at least a being concocted out of man's image of himself or of the society in which he lives."<sup>2</sup>

Bernard Zylstra has well spoken in *Challenge and Response*, "Neutralism is the view that man can live wholly or partly without taking God's Word into account. Those who pay homage to the fiction of neutrality maintain that many segments of modern culture are merely technical. It is then thought that a corporation, a union, a school, a government can be run by making exclusively factual, technical decisions which have no relation to one's ultimate perspective on the basic issues. . . . This 'technalism' is the result of a pragmatic philosophy. The defenders of 'technalism' are among the most dangerous guides to a wholly secular world. For it is inevitable that the realm of the 'neutral' and the 'factual' will constantly increase until it has swallowed all of human morality and faith."<sup>3</sup>

Religious neutrality in politics has been advocated in a recent *Congressional Record* (Vol. 126; No. 66) by Sen. Mark Hatfield, who espouses "evangelical" Christianity. The title of his article (p. S4271) reveals its main thrust, "The Counter-productive Linking of Religion and Politics." In this speech,

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2. *Idem.*

3. *Ibid.* p. 2.

which is a response to the "Washington for Jesus" rally on April 29, 1980, Sen. Hatfield commends the leadership of that rally for not "linking their religious concerns with so-called political issues." He says "I want to commend them for seeing the danger in such a strategy and putting aside an organized lobbying effort on issues which people of goodwill have a difference of opinion." Bear in mind that those attending the rally were fellow "evangelical" Christians.

Sen. Hatfield included in his speech an article by Stanley Mooneyham, entitled, "United We Fall." In this article, Mooneyham misinterprets and misapplies several biblical texts to make his point: "I am as scared of an evangelical power bloc as I am of any other. . . . Although it is not impossible to harmonize the two in some situations, there is actually a basic conflict between Christian commitment and political power. The strength of faith is in its avalanche of powerlessness, its tidal force of love. If politics is the art of achieving the possible, faith is the art of achieving the impossible. Politics says, 'Destroy your enemies.' Christian faith says, 'Love your enemies.' Politics says, 'The end justifies the means.' Christian faith says, 'The means validates the end.' Politics says, 'The first shall be first.' Christian faith says, 'The last shall be first.' "

Mooneyham's redefining of faith and dichotomizing of faith and politics is tantamount to making faith irrational, contentless, and irrelevant, and to making politics autonomous, pragmatic, and sovereign. It sounds as if he found his definition in Karl Marx or some other advocate of secular pragmatism. Furthermore, man-as-individual or man-in-society is dependent upon Almighty God, Who alone is autonomous and sovereign—so believes the Christian.

Sen. Hatfield refers to a second article written by Charles Bergstrom entitled, "When the Self-Righteous Rule, Watch Out!" This article is an attack on "evangelicals" who believe the Bible is to be used as a political textbook, as our founding fathers believed. Mr. Bergstrom sets up a man of straw and then proceeds to knock him down. His exaggeration of the position he is opposing shows that he does not really understand that position. He identifies those Christians who "read the Bible without a sense of mystery and ambiguity" with those who gave us "the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition and the Salem witchcraft trials." He goes on to intimate that these



Christians are self-righteous, because they hold this position. I thought only God could see the heart?!

There are two fundamental weaknesses with this position held by Sen. Hatfield concerning religious neutrality in the political arena. First, there is a misunderstanding of the relationship of religion to culture (life, including politics). And, second, there is an (unintentional) denial of two basic principles of Christianity: (1) the lordship of Jesus Christ over all of life; and (2) the all-embracing authority of the Law of God.

### *Religion and Culture*

What is the relationship of religion to culture (life), according to the teachings of the Bible, and recognized by many Christians and non-Christians alike? This is not an irrelevant theological debate. It is central to the whole discussion of the role of the Christian and of Christianity in American politics. A misunderstanding here can be, and has been, devastating for Americans.

What do we mean by the word 'religion'? It is "the binding tendency in every man to dedicate himself with his whole heart to the true God or an idol,"<sup>4</sup> according to F. Nigel Lee. In this sense all men are religious because no man can escape being a man in the image of God created to worship and serve God, rebellious and unregenerate though he be. Romans 1:25 says, "For they [mankind] exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator. . . ." Man is inescapably religious.

What do we mean by the word 'culture'? It is religion externalized. Culture "is the unavoidable result of man's necessary efforts to use and to develop the world in which he lives either under the guidance of the Lord or under the influence of sin, in accordance with whichever of the two controls his heart. As such, culture includes all of man's works—his arts, his science, his agriculture, his literature, his language, his astronomical investigations, his rites of worship, his domestic life, his social customs, (his politics)—in short, the cultural products of the whole of man's life stand either in the service

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4. F. N. Lee, *The Central Significance of Culture* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1976) p. 121.

of God or in the service of an idol," writes Lee.<sup>5</sup> Man was created by God for culture, i.e., to "cult-ivate" the garden (Gen. 2:15); to multiply and have dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:28). He cannot escape his calling, although unregenerate man perverts it, while regenerate man does it for the glory of God and in submission to God's command.

Now concerning the relationship of religion to culture. It bears a similar relationship as "faith" does to "works." Works grow from the root of faith and are expressions of that faith. "Faith without works is dead," according to James 2:26. Culture is religion externalized. It is the outgrowth and expressions of the religion of the people. All cultures, then, are thoroughly religious and never can be a-religious. (That is not to say that they are all theistic. For instance, secular humanism, as recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court [*Torcaso vs. Watson*], is a non-theistic religion, believing only in man.) Every aspect of a nation's life will reflect, and cannot help but reflect, the religion of the citizenry, whatever that religion may be. Religious neutrality in politics, and in every other facet of a nation's culture and life, is a myth. Because religion (faith) is all-inclusive, all human activity will be colored by the religion (faith) one holds. There are no neutral cultural activities, as there are no neutral "works"; they are either "good works" or "evil deeds," done either to the glory of the God of the Bible or to the glory of an idol (non-god).

Van Til writes on this subject, that "Culture is not something neutral, without ethical or religious connotation. Human achievement is not purposeless but seeks to achieve certain ends, which are either good or bad. (For the Christian, the one standard of morality, public and private, is the Bible.) Since man is a moral being, his culture cannot be a-moral. Because man is a religious being, his culture, too, must be religiously oriented. There is no pure culture in the sense of being neutral religiously or without positive or negative value ethically. Although the realization of values in a culture may seem on the surface to be concerned merely with the temporal and the material, this is appearance only, for man is a spiritual being destined for eternity, exhaustively accountable to his Creator-Lord. All that he does is involved in the whole of his nature as man.

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5. *Ibid.* p. 123.

"Culture, however, does not include religion. The notion that it does is the basic error of practically all our cultural anthropologists, which fact may be ascertained by perusing casually any standard work on anthropology by such authors as Vander Leeuw, Malinowsky and others. But the basic assumption underlying this position negates Christianity and is thoroughly naturalistic. For the position of the cultural anthropologist is that religion is simply a projection of the human spirit, an attempt to manipulate the unseen by magic, or, in any case, that man creates the gods of his own image, thus making it a cultural achievement. This is also the general attitude of the religious liberal, who uses religion for achieving man's ideal goals such as world peace. . . .

"The reason religion cannot be subsumed under culture is the fact that whereas man as a religious being transcends all his activities under the sun, culture is but one aspect of the sum total of these activities and their results in forming history. To divide life into areas of sacred and secular, letting our devotions take care of the former while becoming secular reformers during the week, is to fail to understand the true end of man."<sup>6</sup>

We need to understand that a man never can lay down his religion and act as a religionless person. He can have his religion changed, but he cannot act or think in a religionless manner, because religion is the governing principle of all he does, is, and says. Religion is like the "heart," out of it flow the issues of life, prejudicing all areas of human experience and thought (Proverbs 4:23). This is re-affirmed by Jesus, when He taught that it is the heart that influences the thinking and behavior, and not vice versa (Mark 7:20). The implication, then, is clear: The Christian may never think or live as anything other than a Christian governed by the Word of God. He is never his own person, being "bought with a price." He may not claim sovereign rights over his own opinion or behavior. He is a person under authority, who is striving to "bring every thought captive to Christ," even his political thoughts.

To attempt to act "neutrally" in any field of endeavor is to make the mistake of Eve, who assumed that after God had

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6. H. Van Til, *The Calvinistic Concept of Culture* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1972) p. 27f.

spoken ("Don't eat!") and after Satan had spoken ("Do eat!"), she had to take a neutral position and decide for herself and by herself who spoke the truth. Thus, in a fallen condition, she, as the first humanist, pretended to have the autonomous ability and responsibility to determine for herself "good and evil" (Gen. 3:5). The Christian asks, "Who is man that he should ever take a neutral position to the command of the living God?" Neutrality is disobedience.

The other side of this coin should be obvious also. Since religious neutrality is a myth, those who profess to be such, have, in fact, laid aside their Christian presuppositions and have (unintentionally perhaps) taken up another religion. The humanists will not lay down their presuppositions, goals, and objectives. And when the Christian does so, he falls into the humanists' well-laid trap. He, in reality, joins the humanist in striving for his goals and objectives. He adopts, in the political arena, the humanist's presupposition, which is the belief that man-in-community can solve his problems without reference to God or to His written revelation.

Religious neutrality in politics is especially dangerous, because of the far-reaching impact of legislation and laws. The source of law for a society is the god of that society. If the source of law is the Bible, the Almighty God is the God of that society. On the other hand, if the source of law is man, the Man becomes the god, and that spells slavery and chaos for that society. As Rushdoony has written, "Law is in every culture religious in origin. Because law governs man and society, because it establishes and declares the meaning of justice and righteousness, law is inescapably religious, in that it establishes in practical fashion the ultimate concerns of a culture. Accordingly, a fundamental and necessary premise in any and every study of law must be, first, a recognition of this religious nature of law.

"Second, it must be recognized that in any culture the source of law is the god of the society. If law has its source in man's reason, then reason is the god of that society. If the source is an oligarchy, or in a court, senate, or ruler, then that source is the god of that system.

"Modern humanism, the religion of the state, locates law in the state and thus makes the state, or the people as they find expression in the state, the god of the system. In Western culture, law has steadily moved away from God to the people

(or the state) as its source, although the historic power and vitality of the West has been in Biblical faith and law.

"Third, in any society, any change of law is an explicit or implicit change of religion. Nothing more clearly reveals, in fact, the religious change in a society than a legal revolution. When the legal foundations shift from Biblical law to humanism, it means that the society now draws its vitality and power from humanism, not from Christian theism.

"Fourth, no disestablishment of religion as such is possible in any society. A church can be disestablished, and a particular religion can be supplanted by another, but the change is simply to another religion. Since the foundations of law are inescapably religious, no society exists without a religious foundation or without a law-system which codifies the morality of its religion.

"Fifth, there can be no tolerance in a law-system for another religion. *Toleration is a device used to introduce a new law-system as a prelude to a new intolerance.* Legal positivism, a humanistic faith, has been savage in its hostility to the Biblical law-system and has claimed to be an 'open' system."<sup>7</sup>

*Religious neutrality in politics, then, is a subversive, revolutionary, and anti-Christian principle!*

### *The Lordship of Christ*

The second fundamental weakness of this principle is that it betrays two cardinal truths of the Christian religion: (1) the lordship of Christ over all of life; and (2) the all-embracing authority of the Bible, as the written Word of God.

One of the clearest teachings of Christianity is that Jesus Christ is King. He was hailed as such at His birth.<sup>8</sup> He professed to be such throughout His life.<sup>9</sup> He died as a King, in total control of the situation.<sup>10</sup> He arose from the grave as a majestic King.<sup>11</sup> He reigns over all today, and is working to establish His kingdom over all the earth.<sup>12</sup> He shall return at

7. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1973) p. 4f.

8. Luke 2:11.

9. Mark 2:10, 28.

10. Colossians 2:15.

11. Acts 2:32-36.

12. I Corinthians 15:23-28.

the end of history to consummate His reign.<sup>13</sup> Faith is spoken of in terms of submission to His lordship.<sup>14</sup> Two things, then, become absolutely clear: (1) the lordship of Christ is unlimited and unrestricted, i.e., it includes all areas of life without exception. There is no area of human life or in the entire creation that is not under His lordship and accountable to Him.

(2) Christ's lordship is of particular importance for the political realm. Revelation points out that Christ's rule includes the political arena, when He is called, "the ruler of the kings of the earth."<sup>15</sup> Psalm 2 directly addresses civil governments and calls upon them to "Do homage to the Son, lest He become angry, and you perish in the way. . . ." The book of Acts indicates that the civil governments of Christ's day were intimidated by the political implications of the universal lordship of Christ. The early church certainly was aware of the conflict with Rome the lordship of Christ brought them into. "And when they did not find them, they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, 'These men who have upset the world have come here also; and Jason has welcomed them, and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus' " (Acts 17:6-7).

The point appears to be obvious. Jesus Christ is the unrivaled monarch of the political process of the United States of America. Christians have the duty to declare His lordship in the American political arena; and they may not rest until His divine rights and absolute authority are recognized and submitted to in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of our civil government at the national, state, and local levels. For a Christian to seek anything less is to act as if Christ is something less than what He, in fact, is—King of kings and Lord of lords, Who possesses all authority and power in heaven and on earth.<sup>16</sup> Neutrality in politics is rebellion against the Lord Christ.

An example of proper zeal for the crown rights of Jesus Christ was found in Rev. James Henley Thornwell, who, in

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13. Philippians 2:9-11.

14. Romans 10:9.

15. Revelation 1:5.

16. Matthew 28:18.

1861, fought for the following preamble to be included in the constitution of the Confederacy: "Nevertheless we, the people of these Confederate States, distinctly acknowledge our responsibility to God, and the supremacy of His Son, Jesus Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords; and hereby ordain that no law shall be passed by the Congress of these Confederate States inconsistent with the will of God, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures."<sup>17</sup>

### *The Authority of Scripture*

This brings us to the other cardinal truth at stake in this issue, which is the all-embracing authority of the Bible as the written Word of God. American Christians, since the landing of the pilgrim fathers, have been committed to the authority of Biblical Law as the only basis for a just, orderly, and prospering society.<sup>18</sup> If Jesus Christ is Lord, He has given a law that is to be obeyed by all men and all nations.<sup>19</sup> Since Christ is King, it is impossible for a relationship to exist without revealed law. God's law was given to govern the entire life, thought, and economy of a godly nation.<sup>20</sup> Righteousness, i.e., conformity to Biblical Law, "exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). God tells Israel in Deuteronomy 4:8 that there is no legal code or system of laws that is as just as the revealed Law of God. Throughout the Old Testament, God judges Israel and many other nations, as nations, if they disregard or transgress Biblical law. In the New Testament, the civil government is said to be "the minister of God for good" and the "avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil." Both of these phrases are found in Romans 13:1-7. Their point is that it is the civil government's God-given responsibility to administer justice solely in terms of right and wrong. For the Christian, as well as the writers of the New Testament, the only standard of right and wrong is the written Word of God. As a "minister" the civil government has the responsibility before God to administer

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17. "Thornwell's Theocracy" in *Presbyterian Heritage*, Vol. 1, No. 1, published by Atlanta Christian Training Center, Atlanta, Georgia.

18. Deuteronomy 28-30.

19. Exodus 20:1ff.

20. Study the book of Deuteronomy to see the all-embracing nature of God's Law.

His Law. It does not have the right to legislate laws by fiat. Its authority is ministerial, not legislative, according to the Bible. That makes the Bible of critical importance in politics, because justice is impossible, unless it is based upon the final authority of Biblical Law.<sup>21</sup> Jesus specifically says that the Scriptures, which can never be broken were especially addressed to civil officials, in John 10:35.

Consider these examples of the attitude the founding fathers of the United States had toward Biblical Law. First of all, we have a quotation from the "Fundamental Orders of Connecticut" (1638): "... well knowing where a people are gathered together the word of God requires that to maintain peace and union of such people there should be an orderly and decent government established according to God, to order and dispose of the affairs of the people at all seasons as occasion shall require; do therefore associate and conjoin ourselves to be as one public state or commonwealth; and do . . . enter into combination and confederation together, to maintain and preserve the liberty and purity of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ which we now profess. . . ."<sup>22</sup>

Then we have a quotation from the New Haven Colony: "March 2, 1641/2: And according to the fundamental agreement made and published by full and general consent, when the plantation began and government was settled, that the judical law of God given by Moses and expounded in other parts of scripture, so far as it is a hedge and a fence to the moral law, and neither ceremonial nor typical nor had any reference to Canaan, hath an everlasting equity in it, and should be the rule of their proceedings. April 3, 1644: It was ordered that the judicial laws of God, as they were delivered by Moses . . . be a rule to all the courts in this jurisdiction in their proceeding against offenders. . . ."<sup>23</sup>

Last, we have a quotation from the "Address to the Reader" by Aspinwall in John Cotton's *Abstract of the Laws of New England* (1655): "This model far surpasseth all the municipal laws and statutes of any of the Gentile nations and corporations under the scope of Heaven. Wherefore I thought

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21. Proverbs 28:4, 5; 29:4, 14.

22. R. Walton, *Fundamentals for American Christians*, (Plymouth Rock Foundation, N.H.) I:44.

23. Rushdoony, p. 1f.



it not unmeet to publish it to the view of all, for the common good. . . . Judge equally and impartially, whether there be any laws in any state in the world, so just and equal as these be. Which, were they duly attended to, would undoubtedly preserve inviolable the liberty of the subject against all tyrannical and usurping powers. . . . This Abstract may serve for this use principally to show the complete sufficiency of the word of God alone, to direct his people in judgment of all causes, both civil and criminal. . . . But the truth is, both that we, and the other Gentile nations, are loath to be persuaded to . . . lay aside our old earthly forms of governments, to submit to the government of Christ.”<sup>24</sup>

For the United States to survive, prosper, and enjoy peace under the blessing of Almighty God, we must as a people and as a political structure confess that “the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King; He will save us” (Isaiah 33:22). The Christian must work toward the repeal of all laws that originate with humanism and toward the reinstitution of Biblical Law as the basis for the laws and legislation of the United States. Religious neutrality here amounts to the questioning of the justice and integrity of the revealed law of God. Rushdoony makes the point dramatically, in his comments on Deuteronomy 6:4-9, known as the SHEMA ISRAEL, “The first principle of the SHEMA ISRAEL is thus one God, one law. It is the declaration of an absolute moral order to which man must conform. If Israel cannot admit another god and another law-order, it cannot recognize any other religion or law-order as valid either for itself or for anyone else. Because God is one, truth is one.

“All this illustrates a second principle of the SHEMA ISRAEL: one absolute, unchanging God means one absolute, unchanging law. Men’s social applications and approximations of the righteousness of God may alter, vary, and waver, but the absolute law does not. To speak of the law as ‘for Israel’ but not for Christians is not only to abandon the law but also to abandon the God of the law. Since there is only one true God, and His law is the expression of His unchanging nature and righteousness, then to abandon the Biblical law for another law-system is to change gods. The moral

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24. G. Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics*, (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1977) p. 549f.

collapse of Christendom is a product of this current process of changing gods.

"A third principle of the SHEMA ISRAEL is that one God, one law, requires one total, unchanging, and unqualified obedience. The meaning is that man must obey God totally, in any and every condition, with all his being. Since man is totally the creature of God, and since there is not a fiber of his being which is not the handiwork of God and therefore subject to the total law of God, there is not an area of man's life and being which can be held in reservation from God and His Law."<sup>25</sup>

This should suffice to impress us with the fact that a Christian cannot enter the political arena and leave the Law of God behind. To do so is to endanger his own welfare and to lay aside that guide which God gave to enhance the life, prosperity, and peace of a nation according to Deuteronomy 28. Let it be made very clear, "Christ cannot be accepted if His sovereignty, His law, and His word are denied."<sup>26</sup>

In conclusion, I trust it has been shown that the religious neutrality in politics principle is destructive to justice and to Christianity. It is another myth of secular humanism. It must be repudiated by all Christians. It is my earnest prayer that Sen. Mark Hatfield will re-evaluate his position in the light of the principles we have set forth here, insofar as they are in accordance with God's Word. I sincerely pray that, in rebuilding his political position in exclusively Christian and biblical terms, God will richly bless Sen. Hatfield to be one of the powerful men in Congress whom God is using in the Christian reconstruction of the United States into a truly Christian Republic.

May all Christians everywhere re-commit themselves, by the grace of God, to pray for and diligently work toward the establishment of the crown rights of Jesus Christ over all the earth and the reconstruction of all aspects of American society and culture by the inerrant and all-sufficient Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit to the glory of Almighty God.

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25. Rushdoony, p. 18ff.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 667.

## THE EARLY CHURCH AND PACIFISM

A Review by Allen G. Guelzo

Jean-Michel Hornus. *It Is Not Lawful For Me To Fight: Early Christian Attitudes Toward War, Violence, and the State* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1980). 226pp. Appendix, postscript, notes, systematic tables of primary and secondary sources. \$13.95.

CHRISTIANITY has, for centuries, sanctioned the use of the "just war": that is, in certain instances, it has been permissible to suspend the general injunction to love one's enemies, and defend oneself or punish evildoers. For that reason, Christians have not only been able to serve in armies, but have, on occasion, used armies as a means of protecting or spreading Christianity. The problem is that it is not easy to sort out a jumble of motives, and declare one set of reasons as proper grounds for war, and condemn another as "aggression." It is easy to see where some "just wars" were just so much righteous pillaging—one thinks in this regard of the Crusades, which ended up by destroying, not the Infidel, but the Christian civilization of Byzantium. But war tends to bring out the worst even in the best of men and causes, and even a conflict so heavily laden with righteous overtones as the Puritan civil wars in England had its moments (and considerably longer periods of time, too) of depraved conduct and hypocritical politicking. A holy war and a just war are not necessarily the same—in fact, hardly ever are.

That swings the pendulum back the other way, to pacifism, where (it is declared) that no war is ever just, no violence ever justifiable for Christians. That is the position of the Mennonites, Moravians, and Quakers (to name a few) and that is largely the background from which this book springs. Ostensibly, it is a book of history, detailing early Christian attitudes toward war, participation in war, and toward the Roman state, and in that respect it is an interesting contribution to patristic studies. But flavoring the history at

certain points is the author's ethical commentary, and while the history is well-grounded in early Christian literature, the commentary is grounded in a number of highly gratuitous assumptions.

M. Hornus's book is already a book with a history. It was first published in French in 1960, and the English language rights were bought in 1965. Hornus revised the book in 1970, however, and not until 1974 was an English translation of the revision available—and even then, the whole work had to be re-translated all over again, so that publication was delayed until 1980. The American publisher, Herald Press, is the chief Mennonite organ in the U.S., and the fact that they have designated the book as part of their "Christian Peace Shelf" collection says a good deal, not only for their approval of its implications, but also for the impact they have expected it to have.

Taken as a work of history, it justifies many of those expectations. The contents of the book are extremely well-organized, the writing is spare, economical, and clear, and fully in the style of the usual patristic history. The first six chapters, in fact, are so self-contained that they can almost be read as separate essays: only the seventh chapter, because it contains much more of the author's ethical speculations, needs to lean on something else. The essential point Hornus sets out to defend is strictly historical and defensive (in contrast to the much more aggressive ethical outbursts), and it runs like this: historians imply that conscientious objection to war by early Christians was a minority position, a late development, the preserve of a few "bloodless intellectuals" rather than the leadership, and arose only because of Christian objections to the official army emperor-cult—and the historians, says Hornus, are wrong (p. 13).

The chapters then proceed to deal with the various aspects of this disagreement. Hornus admits that early Christians were plagued by a fundamental ambiguity toward Rome and its army. On the one hand, they disliked soldiers because they saw in them the instrument of Roman persecution (pp. 19-23), and frequently looked upon the Roman state as Anti-Christ (p. 43). But at the same time, the Christians were also Romans themselves, and found it impossible to think of civilization, law, and order apart from Roman rule (p. 28). Hence, one encounters views that run the gamut from Tertullian,

who would obey imperial law only insofar as *he* deemed it good law, to Eusebius, who slavishly hailed all imperial edicts as divine (pp. 30-37). Christians also displayed their ambiguity toward military obligation in another way, that of language. Early Christianity easily fell into the habit of using military metaphors, and the prime example is the adaptation of the term "sacrament," which referred at first to a soldier's "identity plate" but which Christians transformed into a term to fit baptism and the Lord's Supper, which also "identify" the Christian (p. 69). The term "pagan" likewise originally meant merely "civilian," but as Christians increasingly came to speak of themselves as *milites Christi*, the natural contrast one had with the unbeliever was to identify him as a *paganos*. And yet, Christians used military metaphors strictly as metaphors, and frequently used them in a spiritualized sense so as to point up a contrast with literal, carnal warfare (pp. 79, 90). The most powerful ambiguity Christians dealt with, however, was in their concept of God. The early Christians, claims Hornus, were not Marcionites. They did not try to explain away the fact that the God of Israel was a God of battles, and they fully expected that God would violently overthrow the Roman Antichrist as well. But at the same time, the early Christians saw no immediate role for themselves in that cataclysm. The Christian was "a witness, not a warrior. He accepted the wrath of God upon himself; he discerned it in the history of others. He warned and admonished. He did not himself administer the punishment" (p. 65).

The point for Hornus, in introducing these sets of ambiguities, is not to prove that the early Christians were necessarily pacifists, but to establish that at the least there was no uniform consensus in the early church *against* conscientious objection. From establishing this possibility, Hornus moves in Chapter Three toward suggesting the likelihood of such an attitude, primarily in two ways. First, declares Hornus, early Christians cultivated an attitude of detachment toward earthly loyalties (pp. 91-106), regarding the "present system" as "fallen and sinful" and therefore "completely uninteresting." "One could only let this mad planet go its own way and desire personally to leave it as soon as possible." Second, early Christians regarded human life as "sacred" and revolted, not only against abortion, but against (and here he quotes Tertullian, Chrysostom, and Lactantius) execution of

criminals. The unspoken conclusion *a fortiori* is that, if Christians were opposed to these kinds of violent death, how could they not be opposed to killing in war? The problem with this logic, as Hornus admits, is that in reality there *were* Christian soldiers, and Hornus devotes Chapter Four to explaining (or explaining away) just how, with these detached, non-violent attitudes, one can find, not merely Christian soldiers, but soldier-saints as well. On the whole, Hornus handles his problem well: statistically, based on collections of Christian funerary inscriptions, one can find only a tiny percentage of soldiers among the Christians, and there is much to indicate that these few were only converted while they were soldiers, not that they became such after conversion (pp. 118, 123). Hornus refuses to give the "soldier-saints" much weight, and solidly disputes whether many of them existed except in legend. Where we do have concrete accounts of Christian soldiers, they are on the order of St. Martin of Tours (p. 143) or Marcellus of Tangier (p. 128), who renounced their military profession upon baptism, and in the case of Marcellus, suffered martyrdom for refusing homage to the legionary standards. Hornus does admit to one difficulty, though, and that is the case of St. Maurice and the Theban Legion, an entirely Christian military unit whose collective martyrdom appears in the *Passion of the Martyrs of Agaunum* in 185-186 AD. If the Theban Legion did exist, then Hornus concedes that the presence of "entire fighting units" of Christians "would obviously contradict my entire interpretation of the Early Church's attitude toward military service" (p. 155), but Hornus (rather unconvincingly) prefers to believe that the Theban Legion was also legendary—but perhaps only because he prefers to.

One must needs explain how, if conscientious objection to war and military service were so prevalent, the Church moved to sanction it by the time of Augustine, who formulated the just war thesis (see Augustine's epistles nos. 138, *Ad Volusianum* and 183, *Ad Bonifacium*). Hornus explains this change in Chapters Five and Six in terms of a sell-out. Although one finds the official pronouncements of the Church (such as Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition*) at first strongly condemning participation in military affairs, the closer one gets to Constantine, the more willing the Church becomes to barter ethical concessions for tolerance and political power. Hornus

points the finger particularly at the Synod of Arles (314 AD), which was convoked by Constantine and which "in return for governmental protection, at last wholeheartedly accepted the civil and military obligations that the state was entitled to demand of any citizen" (p. 172). And the pity was, as Hornus observes, that the Church got so little for its bargain. In perhaps the best and most forceful chapter in the book, Hornus shows Constantine for what he probably was: a hypocrite, a political bargainer, and a murderer, who never stopped promoting the pagan cults even up to his death, and who was baptized on his deathbed by an Arian bishop under the delusion that a delayed baptism would wash away more sins (pp. 201-208). Mournfully, Hornus's last chapter concludes that early Christianity overwhelmingly condemned "homicidal violence" of any sort, but sacrificed its belief to pursue the "illusion of a Christian empire."

It seems pretty plain that the starting point of Hornus's book is precisely this suspicion of "Christian empire," and of statism in general. Of all the people described and quoted in the book, one suspects that Hornus harbors the greatest admiration for Tertullian, who refused to admit of any higher authority than God. That certainly would harmonize well with Hornus's French Reformed origins. In fact, it is a thoroughly laudable proposition in many respects: the opposition of Cromwell to Charles I, of the Hussites to the Emperor, and even of the Huguenots to the French kings, were all based on the same idea. Yet, their application of that idea did not take the form of pacifism. Therefore, one can heartily agree with Hornus's basic thesis—that ungodly government ought to be resisted—without it necessarily following that one ought to do so by becoming a pacifist. The one, single, tenuous connection that Hornus is able to make between just resistance and pacifism is what he called the "affirmation that all human life is sacred," and it is tenuous simply because in quoting Tertullian, Chrysostom, and Lactantius in support of that "affirmation," he quotes them wildly out of context. Tertullian, he insists, opposed even criminal execution: which is true, but only as we consider that Tertullian was protesting the *type* of execution (people being pulled to pieces by beasts in the arena for the gratification of the spectators and, in the dedication ceremonies preceding, the gods), not execution *per se*. This one failure of historical judgment on Hornus's part is

peculiar—but not if we realize that, only by insisting that early Christians held all human life “sacred,” could he close off the possibility of all other types of resistance except pacifism.

The “sacredness of life” dogma is fragrant with the aroma of other ideas as well. The principle of resistance ought to be based on reverence for God’s law, rather than reverence for “life,” lest we be guilty of worshipping, indirectly, the creature rather than the Creator. Death is not the ultimate moral evil, and attempts to make it such have brought our own society to the point of paralysis in criminal punishment. Hornus admits, especially in his 1970 postscript, to having difficulty distinguishing between war (which is illegitimate) and police action (which is legitimate) and the only basis he can fumblingly offer for distinction is size. Yet, if life be “sacred,” then Hornus really has no standard for distinguishing war or police action, big or small. This is not to say that conscientious objection to military service is *never* a justified response to state command: if a Christian were ordered to take up arms against his fellow Christians *because* they were Christians, refusal to participate would not only be justified but might almost be the only available response. But the motive would be different from the “sacredness of life” dogma; it would be an objection that springs up as opposition to a violation of God’s law, and not on what Hornus queerly calls the Church’s “all encompassing universalism” (p. 112).

One may criticize Hornus, therefore, not so much for recommending conscientious objection to war, but for offering us the wrong kind of objection based on the wrong authority. Hornus declares that, in connection with the Theban Legion account, “Obviously we have here an attitude which is personally heroic but illogical. For how can one ‘fight for justice’ at the emperor’s command, and yet refuse to ‘defend the cause of justice by the sword’ when it is the emperor who imperils justice?” The answer is, of course, *very easily*. One can fight to preserve oneself and others, and do it under the emperor’s command, *because God’s law specifies it*, and at the same time resist the emperor if he oversteps justice *because God’s law specifies it*. Apart from God’s commands, Hornus’s point is perfectly true; in the light of divine standards for judging emperors and evildoers, Hornus’s insistence that we can make no separation among “life” makes no sense.

What we are groping toward here is really the need to



make a distinction between conscientious objection to military service (which implies a specific reaction to a specific situation) and pacifism (which implies a pragmatic philosophy of refusal to bear arms under any circumstances, and the interdiction of those who do). A conscientious objection to military service may be based on concrete ethical principles, as outlined above. Pacifism tends to blur the distinction between ethics and masochism to the point where one indulges in a rapture of self-destruction. Hornus narrowly verges on this when he cites the example of the Asian Christians who responded to persecution by showing up at the tribunal *en masse*: What would they do, Hornus coyly reasons, "if thousands upon thousands . . . were to come and offer themselves voluntarily for martyrdom?" Or, to put it in modern terms: What if they gave a war and nobody came? Presumably the persecutors and warriors would fold up in shame and call the whole thing off. Yet Hornus is realistic enough to cite a counter-example in the *Acts* of the Coptic martyrs, who showed up *en masse* and were routinely butchered *en masse* by a local governor who had no appreciation for numbers or shame. And again, to be modern: If the Soviet Union "gave" a war, one doubts that the refusal of the U.S. to "come" would in the slightest deter the Soviets from blowing the U.S., pacifists and all, to pieces.

Pacifism holds such cruel results in reserve for its devotees principally because it is not, as its claimants swear, an act of faith but of works. Hornus quotes Origen in one of his less-well-balanced moments, saying that "If all the Romans were convinced and prayed, they would be superior to their enemies, or would not even fight wars at all, since they would be protected by divine power." Much as that sounds at first like ebullient trust in God, it also smacks heavily of throwing oneself from the pinnacle with the expectation that God is obliged to bear one up—in other words, it smacks of tempting God. It is, therefore, a work, because it is performed in the belief that God is bound to observe it. Another, less cosmically cruel, result of pacifism is the danger to which it subjects others: Like the smoker who insists upon his "right" to expose everyone in the vicinity to his favorite carcinogen, the pacifist insists upon inviting attack upon his fellows by advertising his unwillingness to resist aggression. Perhaps the greatest threat to nuclear disarmament today comes from the American

nuclear disarmament demonstrators, whose activities convince the Soviets that there is no need for them to bargain for arms reduction with the U.S., since the activists will eventually pressure the U.S. into unilateral disarmament anyway, without any Soviet concessions. Likewise, the knowledge that no resistance will be offered by numbers of people to aggression will embolden the evildoer and aggressor, and encourage him to take what he wants at any cost from all the others. It may not bother the pacifist to be robbed or murdered in this fashion, since Hornus's pacifists were entirely other-worldly in their orientation, but that does not absolve the pacifist of the guilt of having brought it down on the heads of others who did not desire it. Hornus himself, perhaps somewhat chastised by the Sixties, wrote in his 1970 postscript that one must avoid "intellectual naiveté" or "political utopianism," and he warned, "Let Christian conscientious objectors stop talking in absolute terms, for their position must remain both human and relative" (p. 245).

Ultimately, one must level a very basic criticism at Hornus for relying so heavily on the witness of the early Church for his ethical comments on the virtues of resistance to military service. It is true that Hornus early repudiates any Romanist desire to give tradition a separate place of authority; nevertheless, he also declared that, since "the understanding of the gospel of the Christians of the first three centuries was far closer to the authentic gospel than the understandings which have been prevalent since then," they must carry an unusual weight. But there is no more reason to award the first three Christian centuries any greater authority than the next three or the three after that. The early Christians made their share of errors, and much of what is now recognized as Biblical doctrine went unrecognized then; e.g., St. Anselm did not begin to teach the doctrine of substitutionary atonement until the 12th century. All things considered, I should rather trust St. Augustine, writing in 410, than Tertullian (the Montanist) or Origen (the Platonist) writing centuries earlier. Moreover, to accord the first century (or second or third) a hallowed place of example in addition to that of the Bible (as some fundamentalists do in their desire to form a "first century church") is to denigrate the progressive work of the Holy Spirit who has worked through the Church in all times. It is absurd to suggest that the Holy Spirit was working harder and

more sincerely in the first century than in the twelfth, since St. Paul's reminder to the Corinthians that we all share the same Spirit is applicable to time as well as geography; nevertheless, many people believe that particular absurdity. The fact that the Church has, for 1600 years, sanctioned the "just war" rates, with me, far more heavily than the fact that it *may* have not yet developed a "just war" thesis in the first three hundred. But again, Hornus may have some other motives: he frequently speaks of Roman Catholics as someday sharing "the same ecclesiastical structures" with Protestants, in a "faith which increasingly appears to be fundamentally the same" (p. 239). Little wonder, then, that he should treat the Protestant end of history so lightly and the "Catholic" end so heavily; no wonder he should dismiss later witnesses in favor of "tradition." That, after all, smoothes the ecumenical bridges back to Rome.

But enough has been said about Hornus's ethics, and that without even touching on the other, linked assumption of Hornus's pacifism, that Christians ought to withdraw themselves from the world, make no attempt to building righteous societies, or develop patterns of Christian culture. As history, Hornus's book is exhaustively researched and his case — when a strictly historical one — is skillfully put. But as for his call to pacifism, that, I am tempted to say, is one that we'll have to fight about.

## THE LESSER MAGISTRATES\*

John Calvin

THE first duty of subjects towards their rulers is to entertain the most honourable view of their office, recognizing it as a delegated jurisdiction from God, and on that account receiving and reverencing them as the ministers and ambassadors of God. For you will find some who show themselves very obedient to magistrates and would be unwilling that there should be no magistrates to obey, because they know this is expedient for the public good, and yet the opinion which those persons have of magistrates is, that they are a kind of necessary evil. But Peter requires something more of us when he says, "Honour the king" (1 Pet. ii 17); and Solomon, when he says, "My son, fear thou the Lord and the king" (Prov. xxiv 21). For, under the term honour, the former includes a sincere and candid esteem, and the latter, by joining the king with God, shows that he is invested with a kind of sacred veneration and dignity. We have also the remarkable injunction of Paul, "Be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake" (Rom. xiii 5). By this he means, that subjects, in submitting to princes and governors, are not to be influenced merely by fear (just as those submit to an armed enemy who see vengeance ready to be executed if they resist), but because the obedience which they yield is rendered to God himself, inasmuch as their power is from God. I speak not of the men as if the mask of dignity could cloak folly, or cowardice, or cruelty, or wicked or flagitious manners, and thus acquire for vice the praise of virtue; but I say that the station itself is deserving of honour and reverence, and that those who rule should, in respect of their office, be held by us in esteem and veneration.

From this, a second consequence is, that we must with

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\*From *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1559), Book 4, Chapter 22. The translation is by Henry Beveridge.

ready minds prove our obedience to them, whether in complying with edicts, or in paying tribute, or in undertaking public offices and burdens, which related to the common defence, or in executing any other orders. "Let every soul," says Paul, "be subject unto the higher powers." "Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God" (Rom. xiii 1, 2). Writing to Titus, he says, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work" (Tit. iii 1). Peter also says, "Submit yourselves to every human creature" (or rather, as I understand it, "ordinance of man"), "for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them to do well" (1 Pet. ii 13). Moreover, to testify that they do not feign subjection, but are sincerely and cordially subject, Paul adds, that they are to commend the safety and prosperity of those under whom they live to God. "I exhort, therefore," says he, "that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim. ii 1, 2). Let no man here deceive himself, since we cannot resist the magistrate without resisting God. For, although an unarmed magistrate may seem to be despised with impunity, yet God is armed, and will signally avenge this contempt. Under this obedience, I comprehend the restraint which private men ought to impose on themselves in public, not interfering with public business, or rashly encroaching on the province of the magistrate, or attempting anything at all of a public nature. If it is proper that anything in a public ordinance should be corrected, let them not act tumultuously, or put their hands to a work where they ought to feel that their hands are tied, but let them leave it to the cognizance of the magistrate, whose hand alone here is free. My meaning is, let them not dare to do it without being ordered. For when the command of the magistrate is given, they too are invested with public authority. For as, according to the common saying, the eyes and ears of the prince are his counsellors, so one may not improperly say that those who, by his command, have the charge of managing affairs, are his hands.

But as we have hitherto described the magistrate who

truly is what he is called—viz, the father of his country, and (as the Poet speaks) the pastor of the people, the guardian of peace, the president of justice, the vindicator of innocence, he is justly to be deemed a madman who disapproves of such authority. And since in almost all ages we see that some princes, careless about all their duties on which they ought to have been intent, live, without solicitude, in luxurious sloth; others, bent on their own interest, venally prostitute all rights, privileges, judgments, and enactments; others pillage poor people of their money, and afterwards squander it in insane largesses; others act as mere robbers, pillaging houses, violating matrons, and slaying the innocent; many cannot be persuaded to recognize such persons for princes, whose command, as far as lawful, they are bound to obey. For while in this unworthy conduct, and among atrocities so alien, not only from the duty of the magistrate, but also of the man, they behold no appearance of the image of God, which ought to be conspicuous in the magistrate, while they see not a vestige of that minister of God, who was appointed to be a praise to the good and a terror to the bad, they cannot recognize the ruler whose dignity and authority Scripture recommends to us. And undoubtedly, the natural feeling of the human mind has always been not less to assail tyrants with hatred and execration, than to look up to just kings with love and veneration.

But if we have respect to the word of God, it will lead us farther, and make us subject not only to the authority of those princes who honestly and faithfully perform their duty toward us, but all princes, by whatever means they have so become, although there is nothing they less perform than the duty of princes. For though the Lord declares that a ruler to maintain our safety is the highest gift of his beneficence, and prescribes to rulers themselves their proper sphere, he at the same time declares, that of whatever description they may be, they derive their power from none but him. Those, indeed, who rule for the public good, are true examples and specimens of his beneficence, while those who domineer unjustly and tyrannically are raised up by him to punish the people for their iniquity. Still all alike possess that sacred majesty with which he has invested lawful power. I will not proceed further without subjoining some distinct passages to this effect.<sup>1</sup> We

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1. Job xxxiv 30; Hos. xiii 11; Isa. iii 4, x 5; Deut. xxviii 29.

need not labour to prove that an impious king is a mark of the Lord's anger, since I presume no one will deny it, and that this is no less true of a king than of a robber who plunders your goods, an adulterer who defiles your bed, and an assassin who aims at your life, since all such calamities are classed by Scripture among the curses of God. But let us insist at greater length in proving what does not so easily fall in with the view of men, that even an individual of the worst character, one most unworthy of all honour, if invested with public authority, receives that illustrious divine power which the Lord has by his word devolved on the ministers of his justice and judgment, and that, accordingly, in so far as public obedience is concerned, he is to be held in the same honour and reverence as the best of kings.

And, first, I would have the reader carefully to attend to that Divine Providence which, not without cause, is so often set before us in Scripture, and that special act of distributing kingdoms, and setting up as kings whomsoever he pleases. In Daniel it is said, "He changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings" (Dan. ii 21, 37). Again, "That the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Dan. iv 17, 25). Similar sentiments occur throughout Scripture, but they abound particularly in the prophetic books. What kind of king Nebuchadnezzar, he who stormed Jerusalem, was, is well known. He was an active invader and devastator of other countries. Yet the Lord declares in Ezekiel that he had given him the land of Egypt as his hire for the devastation which he had committed. Daniel also said to him, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all" (Dan. ii 37, 38). Again, he says to his son Belshazzar, "The most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him" (Dan. v 18, 19). When we hear that the king was appointed by God, let us, at the same time, call to mind those heavenly edicts as to honouring and fearing the king, and we shall have no doubt that we are to view the most iniquitous tyrant as occupying

the place with which the Lord has honoured him. When Samuel declared to the people of Israel what they would suffer from their kings, he said, "This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to plow his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants" (1 Sam. viii 11-17). Certainly these things could not be done legally by kings, whom the law trained most admirably to all kinds of restraint; but it was called justice in regard to the people, because they were bound to obey, and could not lawfully resist: as if Samuel had said, To such a degree will kings indulge in tyranny, which it will not be for you to restrain. The only thing remaining for you will be to receive their commands, and be obedient to their words.

But the most remarkable and memorable passage is in Jeremiah. Though it is rather long, I am not indisposed to quote it, because it most clearly settles this whole question. "I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power, and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant: and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come; and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with famine, and with pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand" (Jer. xxvii 5-8).



Therefore "bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live" (v. 12). We see how great obedience the Lord was pleased to demand for this dire and ferocious tyrant, for no other reason than just that he held the kingdom. In other words, the divine decree had placed him on the throne of the kingdom, and admitted him to regal majesty, which could not be lawfully violated. If we constantly keep before our eyes and minds that fact, that even the most iniquitous kings are appointed by the same decree which establishes all regal authority, we will never entertain the seditious thought that a king is to be treated according to his deserts, and that we are not bound to act the part of good subjects to him who does not in his turn act the part of a good king to us.

It is vain to object that that command was specially given to the Israelites. For we must attend to the ground on which the Lord places it—"I have given the kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar; therefore serve him and live." Let us doubt not that on whomsoever the kingdom has been conferred, him we are bound to serve. Whenever God raises any one to royal honour, he declares it to be his pleasure that he should reign. To this effect we have general declarations in Scripture. Solomon says—"For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof" (Prov. xxviii 2). Job says—"He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle" (Job. xii 18). This being confessed, nothing remains for us but to serve and live. There is in Jeremiah another command in which the Lord thus orders his people—"Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace" (Jer. xxix 7). Here the Israelites, plundered of all their property, torn from their homes, driven into exile, thrown into miserable bondage, are ordered to pray for the prosperity of the victor, not as we are elsewhere ordered to pray for our persecutors, but that his kingdom may be preserved in safety and tranquility, that they too may live prosperously under him. Thus David, when already king elect by the ordination of God, and anointed with his holy oil, though causelessly and unjustly assailed by Saul, holds the life of one who was seeking his life to be sacred, because the Lord had invested him with royal honour. "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth

mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord." "Mine eyes spare thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed" (1 Sam. xxiv 6, 11). Again—"Who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?" "As the Lord liveth the Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into battle, and perish. The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed" (1 Sam. xxiv 9-11).

This feeling of reverence, and even of piety we owe to the utmost to all our rulers, be their characters what they may. This I repeat the oftener, that we may learn not to consider the individuals themselves, but hold it to be enough that by the will of the Lord they sustain a character on which he has impressed and engraven inviolable majesty. But rulers, you will say, owe mutual duties to those under them. This I have already confessed. But if from this you conclude that obedience is to be returned to none but just governors, you reason absurdly. Husbands are bound by mutual duties to their wives, and parents to their children. Should husbands and parents neglect their duty; should the latter be harsh and severe to the children whom they are enjoined not to provoke to anger, and by their severity harass them beyond measure; should the former treat with the greatest contumely the wives whom they are enjoined to love and to spare as the weaker vessels; would children be less bound in duty to their parents, and wives to their husbands? They are made subject to the forward and undutiful. Nay, since the duty of all is not to look behind them, that is, not to inquire into the duties of one another, but to submit each to his own duty, this ought especially to be exemplified in the case of those who are placed under the power of others. Wherefore, if we are cruelly tormented by a savage, if we are rapaciously pillaged by an avaricious or luxurious, if we are neglected by a sluggish, if, in short, we are persecuted for righteousness' sake by an impious and sacrilegious prince, let us first call up the remembrance of our faults, which doubtless the Lord is chastising by such scourges. In this way humility will curb our impatience. And let us reflect that it belongs not to us to cure these evils, that all that remains for us is to implore the help of the Lord, in whose hands are the hearts of kings, and inclinations of

kingdoms.<sup>2</sup> "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods." Before his face shall fall and be crushed all kings and judges of the earth, who have not kissed his anointed, who have enacted unjust laws to oppress the poor in judgment, and do violence to the cause of the humble, to make widows a prey, and plunder the fatherless.

Herein is the goodness, power, and providence of God wondrously displayed. At one time he raises up manifest avengers from among his own servants, and gives them his command to punish accursed tyranny, and deliver his people from calamity when they are unjustly oppressed; at another time he employs, for this purpose, the fury of men who have other thoughts and other aims. Thus he rescued his people Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh by Moses; from the violence of Chusa, king of Syria, by Othniel; and from other bondage by other kings or judges. Thus he tamed the pride of Tyre by the Egyptians; the insolence of the Egyptians by the Assyrians; the ferocity of the Assyrians by the Chaldeans; the confidence of Babylon by the Medes and Persians, — Cyrus having previously subdued the Medes, while the ingratitude of the kings of Judah and Israel, and their impious contumacy after all his kindness, he subdued and punished, — at one time by the Assyrians, at another by the Babylonians. All these things, however, were not done in the same way. The former class of deliverers being brought forward by the lawful call of God to perform such deeds, when they took up arms against kings did not at all violate that majesty with which kings are invested by divine appointment, but armed from heaven, they, by a greater power, curbed a less, just as kings may lawfully punish their own satraps. The latter class, though they were directed by the hand of God, as seemed to him good, and did his work without knowing it, had nought but evil in their thoughts.

But whatever may be thought of the acts of the men themselves,<sup>3</sup> the Lord by their means equally executed his own work, when he broke the bloody sceptres of insolent kings, and overthrew their intolerable dominations. Let princes hear

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2. Dan. ix 7; Prov. xxi 1; Psalm lxxxii 1, ii 10; Isaiah x 1.

3. The French adds, "Car les uns les faisoient estans asseurez qu'ils faisoient bien, et les autres par autre zele (comme nous avons dit)." — For the former acted under the full conviction, that they were doing right, and the latter, from a different feeling, as we have said.

and be afraid; but let us at the same time guard most carefully against spurning or violating the venerable and majestic authority of rulers, an authority which God has sanctioned by the surest edicts, although those invested with it should be most unworthy of it, and, as far as in them lies, pollute it by their iniquity. Although the Lord takes vengeance on unbridled domination, let us not therefore suppose that that vengeance is committed to us, to whom no command has been given but to obey and suffer. I speak only of private men. For when popular magistrates have been appointed to curb the tyranny of kings (as the Ephori, who were opposed to kings among the Spartans, or Tribunes of the people to consuls among the Romans, or Demarchs to the senate among the Athenians; and perhaps there is something similar to this in the power exercised in each kingdom by the three orders, when they hold their primary diets). So far am I from forbidding these officially to check the undue license of kings, that if they connive at kings when they tyrannize and insult over the humbler of the people, I affirm that their dissimulation is not free from nefarious perfidy, because they fraudulently betray the liberty of the people, while knowing that, by the ordinance of God, they are its appointed guardians.

But in that obedience which we hold to be due to the commands of rulers, we must always make the exception, nay, must be particularly careful that it is not incompatible with obedience to Him to whose will the wishes of all kings should be subject, to whose decrees their commands must yield, to whose majesty their sceptres must bow. And, indeed, how preposterous were it, in pleasing men, to incur the offence of Him for whose sake you obey men! The Lord, therefore, is King of kings. When he opens his sacred mouth, he alone is to be heard, instead of all and above all. We are subject to the men who rule over us, but subject only in the Lord. If they command anything against Him let us not pay the least regard to it, nor be moved by all the dignity which they possess as magistrates—a dignity to which no injury is done when it is subordinated to the special and truly supreme power of God. On this ground Daniel denies that he had sinned in any respect against the king when he refused to obey his impious decree (Dan. vi 22), because the king had exceeded his limits, and not only been injurious to men, but, by raising his horn against God, had virtually abrogated his own power. On

the other hand, the Israelites are condemned for having too readily obeyed the impious edict of the king. For, when Jeroboam made the golden calf, they forsook the temple of God, and, in submissiveness to him, revolted to new superstitions (1 Kings xii 28). With the same facility posterity had bowed before the decrees of their kings. For this they are severely upbraided by the Prophet (Hosea v 11). So far is the praise of modesty from being due to that pretense by which flattering courtiers cloak themselves, and deceive the simple, when they deny the lawfulness of declining anything imposed by their kings, as if the Lord had resigned his own rights to mortals by appointing them to rule over their fellows, or as if earthly power were diminished when it is subjected to its author, before whom even the principalities of heaven tremble as suppliants. I know the imminent peril to which subjects expose themselves by this firmness, kings being most indignant when they are contemned. As Solomon says, "The wrath of a king is as messengers of death" (Prov. xvi 14). But since Peter, one of heaven's heralds, has published the edict, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts v 29), let us console ourselves with the thought, that we are rendering the obedience which the Lord requires, when we endure anything rather than turn aside from piety. And that our courage may not fail, Paul stimulates us by the additional consideration (1 Cor. vii 23), that we were redeemed by Christ at the great price which our redemption cost him, in order that we might not yield a slavish obedience to the depraved wishes of men, far less do homage to their impiety.

## JOHN CALVIN'S THEOLOGY OF RESISTANCE

Michael R. Gilstrap

THE year was 1572. It was Saturday, August 23rd, the day before the festival of St. Bartholomew. The Roman Catholic Queen Mother, Catherine de Medici, was meeting with her sordid group of advisors. Her plan to murder the hated Huguenot leader, Admiral Coligny, had back-fired. He had lived through the assassination attempt. Now her son, King Charles IX, was marshalling efforts to locate and bring to trial the would-be assassin and all of his accomplices. Her other son, Anjou, would probably be executed for his part in the ill-fated plan. Although she would escape with her life, she would be forced to leave France in exile and disgrace. Her plans to control the French court for the Roman Catholic Church were about to be destroyed by the accursed Huguenots.<sup>1</sup>

Her advisors included a select group of nobles who were united in their mutual greed, hatred of the Huguenots, and loyalty to the Roman Church. All of these men were desperate, and were more than willing to listen to any suggestion that Catherine had to make. Her plan was simple. First, the Admiral must be murdered. Then a carefully organized and precisely executed coup must be made against the Protestant leaders, so that by one forceful blow the enemy would be destroyed. Anjou, Nevers, Gondi, Birague, and Gaspard de Saulx-Tavannes, Marshall of France agreed, but they insisted that it was the King who must give such an order, and so he must be brought to agreement with their plans. They decided to use the argument that new civil wars would begin in order

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1. Janet Glenn Gray, *The French Huguenots: Anatomy of Courage* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981). This book is probably the best historical work on the Huguenots during the period of the French religious wars from an evangelical perspective. The details of this historical narrative are lifted from this excellent work.

to avenge the Admiral's attempted assassination, and that it was necessary to strike before being struck.

Gondi was given the assignment of relating the astonishing news to the King that it was his mother, along with his brothers and the Guises,<sup>2</sup> who had planned the attempt on the Admiral's life. While Gondi was explaining to the increasingly angered King, Catherine, along with Anjou and the rest of her group, entered the court room. She began by lying to Charles, telling him that the Admiral had sent dispatches to Germany and Switzerland in an effort to raise arms against the King, and then pressed the point that civil war was imminent. With the finesse of the good Machiavellian that she was, Catherine persuaded the King: "You must know that all the Catholics, tired of seemingly endless troubles and dreading new calamities, are resolved to be done with them: if the King does not take their advice—that is, strike first by killing the chief Huguenot leaders tonight—they will be determined to elect a captain-general and organize a league under his protection. Thus you will be left alone, exposed to the worst dangers, with neither power nor authority; you will see France separated into two great parties, over which you will have no command and from which you will obtain no obedience!"<sup>3</sup>

The implied threat made by Catherine was, of course, that Anjou would be made "captain-general" and take the place of his brother. This thrust at the sorest point of this weak king, his envy of his brother, was enough to cause Charles IX to agree to the offensive murders. He stormed around the room swearing in fury and anger. If his noble friends and family felt it advisable for the Admiral to be killed, then he too wanted it. But he also wanted the death of all the Huguenots in France so that none would remain to reproach him later. He gave the orders for the plan of his mother to go into effect immediately. He then left the room, leaving his mother and her advisors to give such specific orders as were necessary for the execution of such a diabolical enterprise.

During the next 24 hours, the streets of Paris ran with the

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2. The noble house of Guise controlled the Lorraine in northeastern France. They were fiercely loyal to the Roman Church, and were probably agents of Philip II, King of Spain, the most powerful monarch in the Vatican stable at the time.

3. Quoted in Gray, p. 136.

blood of Huguenot men, women, children, and infants. Paris was filled with a fanatical and irresponsible mob of people. The white cross of St. Bartholomew, being displayed everywhere, gave to the crowd an identity, and it lent to the mob the "holy cause" of wiping out the accursed heretics. As the day progressed, the taste of blood in the Parisian mob's collective mouth moved them to an even greater slaughter. Three to five thousand Huguenots were murdered in one day in Paris alone. During the coming months the slaughter spread to the surrounding countryside. In fact, this venom so threatened anyone of the Reformed faith, that Geneva, which is southeast of France, feared that the madness might spread even into Switzerland. Beza wrote to Bullinger at Zurich: "Our friend Lochmann will advise you concerning the cruelest, the most atrocious events. I am sure that in that day more than 300,000 of our own people bare their throats in France; one no longer takes account of rank, sex, or age. Here we are assuredly exposed to the same danger and it is perhaps the last time I write to you. One could not doubt that it is a question of universal conspiracy which is going to erupt. My father, be advised of our common peril and more than ever pray with us. I am quite particularly aimed at and am thinking about death more than life. Farewell to you as well as your dear brother."<sup>4</sup>

For a period of three to six months after the initial massacre, France was controlled by the mob, and violent death at the hands of one's neighbor was a common occurrence. As one might guess, what began as a massacre of the Huguenots soon developed into such a slaughter that anyone could be a victim. As the nobleman Mexeray writes, "If one had money, or a well-paid office, or dangerous enemies, or hungry heirs, then one was a Huguenot."<sup>5</sup> The overall effect on France was devastating. Economically, the nation lost the most productive citizens that it had. Commerce was disrupted by the widespread destruction from armies, sieges, pillages, and sackings. The King was not able to control the seas or the highways. The greatest loss for France, however, was in the raping of morality and true religion. The Huguenot was a

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4. Quoted in Gray, p. 138. Beza was the chief advisor to the Huguenots from Geneva.\*

5. Quoted in Gray, p. 140.



believer in the Reformation faith with a deep sense of his obligations to God. He was a follower of John Calvin and the theology that was emanating from Geneva. In one fatal swoop, France lost whatever hope she had of becoming a strong nation once again. In the aftermath of the massacre, most of Europe viewed France as something below despicable. From this time on, France was never to gain the position and power that she once had held and aspired to. Two hundred years later, the French Revolution finished the job that was begun on that infamous day in 1572.

The reason that this article has begun with the historical narrative of St. Bartholomew's day is to set the stage for the reader to understand, albeit with an extreme, climactic example, the context in which the Calvinistic doctrine of resistance to tyrants was worked out. The work that was done by Calvin and his disciples cannot be fully appreciated unless one understands that it was done in the fires of intense persecution in their native France.

Due to the confines of this paper, the subject is being limited to the theology of resistance in the thought of John Calvin. The seminal thinking in the area was done by Calvin, and his followers, most notably Theodore Beza and Francis Hotman, merely built upon what the master had taught them without any substantial change. Calvin's doctrine of civil government will be presented first, and then his notions regarding resistance to tyrants will be discussed.

### *Background to Reformed Political Thought*

Reformed political thought has been neglected by most evangelical thinkers as well as most Christian historians. In fact, the history of the Reformation has been treated largely as a strictly ecclesiastical phenomenon. Nothing could be further from the truth. The history of the Reformation is the history of a cultural upheaval that had dramatic effect on every area of life, especially the political. The struggle of 16th century politics had much to do with the success or failure of the Reformation in different countries, as can be most accurately seen with respect to France. On the one hand, the Reformers, in direct opposition to the Anabaptists,<sup>6</sup> everywhere asserted

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6. The best book available on Calvin's relations with the Anabaptists is Wilhelm Balke, *Calvin and the Anabaptist Radicals* (Eerdmans, 1980), \$17.95. The book is available from Geneva Divinity School Press at a discounted price of \$11.00.

that the gospel must be applied to the everyday concerns of political life. On the other hand, they rejected the medieval idea of ecclesiastical and political union in order to fracture the Holy Roman Empire. Their situation was a difficult one. Not only did they have to contend with the Anabaptists, but they also had to fight the might and power of the Roman Catholic Church and her political allies. The Reformers, therefore, had to establish their churches against both ecclesiastical and political opposition.

The dilemma that this situation created is obvious. On the one hand, God requires his people to give supreme allegiance to Him even to the point of hating father and mother (Luke 14:26), while on the other hand, a Christian must also take seriously Paul's admonition to be "in subjection to the governing authorities" (Rom. 13:1f.).

Each of the different "arms" of the Reformation answered this dilemma in different ways. The Lutheran Reformation ultimately solved the problem via a compromise that is summed up in the formula *cuius regio, eius religio*, which means "he who reigns, his religion." In other words, the local prince decided what the religion of that locale would be. As Christoph Jungen notes, "One of the consequences of this compromise-solution was that after the Peace of Augsburg (1555), the Lutheran Reformation stagnated and advanced only insignificantly beyond those areas in which it had already been established by that day."<sup>7</sup>

The Zwinglian Reformation was not very different, although in many respects more militant. The various loci of the Swiss Reformation usually began with popular resistance to the corrupt Roman Catholic Church, but it almost invariably ended by imposing the religion of the Reformation upon the cities and cantons by the civil magistracy. Where the magistracy was not converted, the Reformation made little inroads.

The Calvinistic arm of the Reformation was quite different. "Not only did Calvinism succeed in gaining a large following in France," writes Jungen, "where opposition and persecution were most severe, but it also succeeded in break-

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7. Christoph Jungen, "Calvin and the Origin of Political Resistance Theory in the Calvinist Tradition" (Unpublished Th.M. Thesis, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1980), p. 3.

ing all national boundaries and established itself in many places throughout Europe that otherwise remained staunchly Catholic."<sup>8</sup> The case of France, which was previously referred to, is the prime example. Of all the countries in Western Europe, the absolutism of the Roman Catholic ruler in France had progressed the farthest. As can be seen by Calvin's own early exile, toleration of the new "heresy" was not even an option. Regardless of this opposition, Calvinism was as popular in France as it was anywhere else in Western Europe.

In a period of some twenty to twenty-five years, Calvinism, in the person of the Huguenots, became so influential that it even threatened the power of the King of France. What kind of political ideas were necessary in order to provide this driving force? That is the question with which this paper is concerned.

### *Two Key Considerations*

There are two key considerations that must be touched upon before moving on to the corpus of Calvin's thought. The first involves the traditional conception of Calvin as a theologian and philosopher, and the second involves the sociological changes that the culture of the Reformation went through during this time.

In answer to the above question, "What kind of political ideas were necessary to provide the driving force behind the Calvinistic Reformation," many scholars simply throw the question back by flatly denying a political consideration at all. They say that Calvin was first, last, and always a theologian. There were times when he dabbled in philosophy, but he certainly was not a political ideologist! In the opinion of this author, it is important not to think of Calvin simply in the traditional categories of theologian and philosopher as those terms are defined. Traditionally, the power of a theology has been in its capacity to offer believers a knowledge of God and so make possible an escape from the effects of the curse and provide communion with God. Likewise, the power of a philosophy lies in its capacity to explain to its students the world and human society as they are and must be, and so to win for them that freedom which consists in an acknowledgement of

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8. Jungen, p. 4.

those necessities. Calvin, on the other hand, not only brought the knowledge of God, freedom from the effects of the curse through Jesus Christ, and consequent communion with God, but he also activated his disciples and motivated them to change the world. His theology involved not only a description of contemporary experience as being unacceptable and unnecessary (that is, he showed a way to escape the effects of the curse), but at the same time he rejected a merely personal salvation. Rather, he called for the salvation of the world by Jesus Christ.<sup>9</sup> It is, therefore, a mistake to limit the thought of John Calvin to the ecclesiastical realm; he had much to say about the political sphere.

The second consideration has to do with the progression of political thinking from the time of the Roman Empire up through the Middle Ages. During the Roman Empire, the average citizen had a very narrow sense of political duty. He was ready to perform any public tasks for which he might be made responsible by birth or by appointment. But he had no sense of public vision, no idea of the state reformed, no particular political purpose. His aim in his office was nothing more than an honorable performance. He had very little political imagination, and could discover no ideal to pursue patiently and systematically. During the Roman Empire, citizenship had lost its meaning, and all men had become, in one way or another, subjects, whose political existence had but one essential characteristic: that they obeyed impersonal, more or less legal commands.<sup>10</sup>

The collapse of the Empire and her universal sovereignty shattered even this politics, subjecting men to a frightening variety of extra-legal commands and forcing them to make private and personal arrangements. The feudal system that eventually emerged from these arrangements virtually precluded political relations. For the formal, impersonal, legal, and functional-rational ties established by a conventional political system, it substituted the extended family and the private treaty, relations intensely personal and in substance natural, patriarchal, and affective. For the

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9. Greg Bahnsen, "The Prima Facie Acceptability of Postmillennialism," *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, Vol. III, No. 2, ed. Gary North (Vallecito, CA: 1976), pp. 48-105.

10. Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* (New York: Atheneum, 1976), pp. 5ff.

interests and ideals that bound men together in the pursuit of political goals, it substituted the bonds of personal loyalty, kinship, and neighborhood. For the rational consideration of political methods, it substituted blind adherence to customary ways. Men came to inherit not merely their lands and possessions, but also their social place and their moral and personal commitments. Reverence for tradition paralleled the reverence for fathers and lords, and similarly precluded impersonal devotion to ideas, parties, and states. Familial and dynastic aggression or retreat replaced political activity. Distant and largely powerless kings retained some vestiges of authority and some claim to dominate the world of feudal arrangements only by invoking divine right and acting out the magical rites of religious kingship. But if this somewhat increased the respect with which the monarchy was regarded, it also intensified the apathy of the citizens—leaving the kings no dependable supporters except God and their relatives. The religion of the Middle Ages didn't help any either. Under the synthesis of pagan cults and Christianity, politics became tied to the realm of magic and religion. Ordinary man lived in a narrower world, tied to family, village, and feudal lord, and forgot the ideas of citizenship and the common good. Religion reinforced the philosopher's advice: politics and religion don't mix. As Michael Walzer notes, "the traditional world-view of medieval man, with its conception of an unchanging political order, hierarchical and organic, and its emphasis upon personal and particularistic relations, probably precluded any sort of independent political aspiration or initiative."<sup>11</sup>

All that the Middle Ages could muster, even from a more Biblical perspective, were men, not movements. The world-view and cultural outlook of the people precluded any sort of broadly based movement. The most important example of this is Savonarola, the Florentine Reformer. It was his endeavor, he wrote, to "make Florence virtuous, create for her a state that will preserve her virtue."<sup>12</sup> This might have provided an ideal around which to shape political activity and organize a party of zealots. But the single motor force of the Savonarolan reform was Savonarola himself. He exerted a

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11. Walzer, p. 8.

12. Quoted in Roberto Ridolfi, *The Life of Girolamo Savonarola* (New York, 1959), p. 105.

charisma so purely personal, so incapable of organizational expression, that there remained after the death of the man himself nothing more than an exotic memory and a rather uninteresting collection of sermons. The Florentines were entirely correct to recognize in Savonarola a man but not a movement, a passion but not an ideology. Half a century later the people of Geneva would discover precisely the opposite was true of John Calvin.

The final step in this progression of political thought came during the Reformation itself, specifically the Genevan and French Reformation. As was noted, prior to the Reformation, the men and women of the Middle Ages found their political identity in terms of familial and dynastic relations. Interests, ideals, goals, and convictions were all subservient to these considerations. With the coming of the Reformation, however, there was a radical change in the way people looked at themselves. Instead of finding their identity with their family, or the dynasty which they served, these new converts to the Reformed faith began to find their identity with the Church of Jesus Christ, as opposed to the Church of Rome. Because of the medieval conception of the union of the political and ecclesiastical spheres, it was relatively easy for these new converts to accept the applicability of the Word of God to all of life, including their politics. Now their allegiance was directed not by feudal loyalties, but by their religious and ecclesiastical convictions. Reformed interests, ideals, and goals dictated their politics, and the bond that was formed by being in covenant with God and His Church also bound them together politically so that a new "party" was formed. As we have earlier remarked, this new "party" changed the complexion of a large part of Western Europe, and it was largely the result of John Calvin.

### *Calvin and Civil Government*

Calvin begins his remarks on civil government with these words: "But my readers, assisted by the very clarity of the arrangement, will better understand what is to be thought of the whole subject of civil government if we discuss its parts separately. These are three: the magistrate, who is the protector and guardian of the laws; the laws, according to which he governs; the people, who are governed by the laws and obey

the magistrate."<sup>13</sup>

Before Calvin's doctrine of civil disobedience can be adequately discussed, it is necessary to understand his thinking with regard to civil government. Here we generally follow the outline that he himself lays down. First, it is necessary to look at the origins of civil government. Then Calvin's view of the magistracy will be examined. Third, his conception of civil law and constitutionalism will be covered; and finally, the place of the people in Calvin's system will be discussed.

### *The Origins of Civil Government*

Calvin insisted very strongly that civil government was ordained by God. Before the twelfth century, the prevailing understanding had been that it was God who instituted a unified state that was enclosed within definite boundaries.<sup>14</sup> But with the popularization of Aristotle, this theocratic notion was replaced by the notion that the state originates in the natural society of men. This origin may follow a more familial or dynastic route, or it may originate along geographical lines, but common to all of these medieval theories, God was the remote cause. At the same time, the feudal ties that had limited the monarchy in the past were steadily being broken down, and the way of absolutism was left open. Already in the fifteenth century, the French estates had declared as an offense against the majesty of the king and as heresy, the denial that the King was to be recognized as the supreme sovereign.<sup>15</sup>

This situation proved something of a dilemma to the progress of the Reformation. The anabaptists responded to this by describing the magistrate's office as "carnal" and affirmed that the sword of the magistrate is "outside the perfection of Christ."<sup>16</sup> The Reformers, on the other hand, insisted that civil government is ordained by God, and that there is no authority which is not so ordained. Calvin was, therefore, not alone in his thinking, but he did have certain distinctives.

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13. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. by Ford L. Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960) IV, xx, 3.

14. Jungen, p. 15.

15. Jungen, p. 16.

16. William Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith* (Chicago, 1959), p. 27f.

The question that the anabaptists forced Calvin to deal with was whether or not civil government was really necessary. Most of the governments of his day had little to offer to the Protestants, and more often than not persecuted and oppressed them. Would it not be better to bring in the fulfillment of the Kingdom of Christ immediately and do away with civil government altogether, so that the gospel of Christ might directly rule the world?<sup>17</sup>

Although Calvin despised the absolutism that had swallowed up his native France, and had no intention of lending a hand to the terrible abuses of power that accompanied absolutism, he everywhere disagreed with this militant anabaptist approach. As Jungen observes, Calvin "agreed that the civil order did not exist for its own sake, and did not have a value of its own, apart from the ordinances of God."<sup>18</sup> Although some scholars claim otherwise, neither did Calvin believe that the civil order would continue forever, or had been there from the beginning. In a sermon upon Deuteronomy 16:18, 19 he said: "If we had continued in the same soundness of nature wherein God created us: the order of Law (as men term it) should not be so needful, because every man should carry the law in his heart, so as no man needed to be compelled to obedience, but every man should know his rule, and we should all with one accord follow that which is good and rightful."<sup>19</sup>

Here Calvin assigned to the civil order the place to which he thought it belonged, namely the history of the world between the fall and consummation. In so doing Calvin distanced himself not only from those who glorified the state or the magistracy for its own sake as if it had perpetual legitimation in the order of nature apart from God, but also from those who did not take the fall seriously, and wished to establish the Kingdom prematurely.<sup>20</sup>

In Calvin's opinion, something happened between the creation and the present day to occasion the system of laws and magistrates that we refer to as civil government. That "occasional cause" was the fall of man into sin. As Michael Walzer

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17. This is what the anabaptists did try to do at Munster in 1535.

18. Jungen, p. 17.

19. John Calvin, *Sermons on Deuteronomy*, Ch. 16:18, 19.

20. Walzer, p. 30 ff.



rightly observes, the first plank upon which Calvin built his entire political system is the inescapable estrangement of man from God which was caused by the fall.<sup>21</sup> He did not believe that the fall actually produced the order, however, but he did believe that were it not for the fall, civil government would have been unnecessary.

Although Calvin assigned the "occasional cause" of civil government to be the fall, he firmly believed that the "effectual cause" is found only in God, whose redemptive work started with the fall, and thus, in a very real sense, included the establishment of a civil order. It is most enlightening to note that Calvin placed his chapter on civil government within the section which as a whole deals with "the external means or aims by which God invites us to the society of Christ and holds us therein."<sup>22</sup> Further, Calvin lists as the purpose of civil government "to cherish and protect the outward worship of God, to defend sound doctrine of piety and the position of the Church, to adjust our life to the society of men, to form our social behavior to civil righteousness, to reconcile us with one another, and to promote general peace and tranquillity."<sup>23</sup> Again he writes, "it has not come about by human perversity that the authority over all things on earth is in the hands of kings and other rulers, but by divine providence and holy ordinance."<sup>24</sup> Calvin unequivocally claimed that there are no powers except those ordained by God.

Against the anabaptist's claim that civil government was carnal, and should be opposed upon the ground as inhabiting the Kingdom of God, Calvin asserted that the state was a "testimony of the grace of God,"<sup>25</sup> and the system of laws is due to His "admirable bounty" and "singular grace."<sup>26</sup> Calvin sweepingly asserted that "all kings of the earth have been placed upon their thrones by the hand of God, and the kingdoms of this world are appointed by the decree of heaven,"<sup>27</sup> and although these kings are either more or less good, he was careful to maintain that civil government is the

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21. Walzer, p. 27.

22. *Institutes*, title of Book IV.

23. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 2.

24. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 4.

25. Quoted in Jungen, p. 20.

26. Quoted in Jungen, p. 20.

27. *Commentary* on Psalm 110.1.

greatest gift that God has given us in this transitory life.<sup>28</sup>

Calvin held out a very high view of the magistrate and his offices to his readers and hearers, and this served as a warning and reminder to those who wished to give little respect to the magistrates; but he did not support any of the absolutistic notions common in his day. "For Calvin the fact that monarchs and other magistrates hold office by a sovereign act of God does not so much imply that their rule is absolute and inviolable, but rather it is an expression of the ultimate authority of God over them that implies heightened duties and responsibilities to him."<sup>29</sup>

### *The Magistrate*

For Calvin, each man had a distinct calling before God and accompanying duties, whether he realized them or not. Some were endowed by the Spirit of God for the difficult task of being magistrates. Others were subjects whose primary duty it was to obey the laws and the magistrates who enforced them. For Calvin, the scriptural injunction concerning submission to the will of one's parents and the responsibility of their calling as parents had similar applications to politics. He writes, "In the fifth commandment are comprised by synecdoche all superiors in authority. . . . The name of God is, figuratively indeed, . . . applied to magistrates, upon whom, as the ministers of his authority, he has inscribed a mark for his glory. . . . His own dignity is claimed for the judges, in order that the people may reverence them, because they are God's representatives, as His lieutenants, and vicars.

"It is a signal exaltation of magistrates, that God should not only count them in the place of parents, but present them to us dignified by His own name."<sup>30</sup>

If it were not enough that God appointed magistrates as His representatives, and invested them with His dignity, in Calvin's view, He actually makes them the external medium of salvation in the broad sense of the term. Indeed, as he wrote in the *Institutes*, their function is not less than that of "bread, water, sun, and air."<sup>31</sup> They are one of the ordinary

28. *Commentary* on Romans 13:1f

29. Jungen, p. 21. Cf. *Commentary* on Psalm 110:1.

30. *Commentary* on Exodus 22:28.

31. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 3.

means of bestowing the abundant blessings of everyday life.

The magistrate's responsibilities are many-fold, but chiefly it is to promote "humanity" among men.<sup>32</sup> He is to prevent idolatry, sacrilege against God's name, blasphemies against the truth, and other public offenses against religion from arising and spreading among the people. He is to promote the public peace, and see to it that each man is able to keep his property safe and sound. The magistrate is also to provide that men carry on blameless intercourse among themselves, and that honesty and modesty be preserved in their jurisdiction.<sup>33</sup>

In addition to the more formal functions that a magistrate must fulfill, great demands are placed upon his personal life and character. "What great zeal for uprightness, for prudence, gentleness, self-control, and for innocence ought to be required of themselves by those who know that they have been ordained ministers of divine justice? How will they have the brazenness to admit injustice to their judgement seat, which they are told is the throne of the living God? How will they have the boldness to pronounce an unjust sentence, by that mouth which they know has been appointed an instrument of divine truth? With what conscience will they sign wicked decrees by that hand which they know has been appointed to record the acts of God? To sum up, if they remember that they are vicars of God, they should watch with all care, earnestness, and diligence, to represent in themselves to men some image of divine providence, protection, goodness, benevolence, and justice. . . . They are deputies of God, to whom they must hereafter render account of the administration of their charge."<sup>34</sup>

As can be seen from this statement, magistrates are invested with the authority of God, and are wholly His representatives and acting as His vicegerents.<sup>35</sup> In some sense, God shares His very attributes and titles with those in authority, He lights them with the spark of His splendor, and they have some share in His honor so that their subjects may

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32. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 3.

33. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 3.

34. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 6.

35. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 4.

recognize the divine ordination, and respect them accordingly.<sup>36</sup>

Yet, in spite of his comments concerning the authority and dignity of the magistracy, Calvin must be understood as not lending his support to absolutism. He insists that though it is God alone that invests kings with authority, and it is by His will that they hold their positions, all power remains lodged in Him, and in so far as respects themselves, they have no legitimate title to reign.<sup>37</sup> Calvin, speaking as the true prophet that he was, often sounded a warning to the magistrates: "Judges and magistrates should not arrogate to themselves a power uncontrolled by any laws, nor allow themselves to decide anything arbitrarily or wantonly, nor, in a word, assume to themselves what belongs to God. Magistrates only acquit themselves properly when they remember that they are representatives of God."<sup>38</sup>

"Let not kings and princes flatter themselves that it seems that the world is created for them, for they are created for the multitude. Has not God established principalities and kingdoms for the common good?"<sup>39</sup>

"Kings are warned to submit reverently to God's Word, and not to think themselves exempted from what is common to all, or absolved, on account of their dignity, for God has no respect of persons."<sup>40</sup>

"God has set his own arm and power in opposition to the pride of those who thought that they stood by their own power, and did not acknowledge that they were dependent on the hand of God alone, who sustained them as long as he pleased, and then overthrew and reduced them to nothing when it seemed good to him."<sup>41</sup>

Calvin's position, rather than supporting the idea that his elevated view of the magistracy lent itself to the rising absolutism in France, proves without a shadow of a doubt that his view of the magistrate, instead of diminishing the ruler's responsibility to God, the law, and his subjects, rather enhanced it, and placed the ruler, as well as the people, in the

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36. *Institutes*, II, viii, 35.

37. *Commentary* on Psalms 110:1.

38. *Commentary* on Exodus 18:15.

39. *Calvin's Sermons from Job* (Baker Book House, 1980), p. 192.

40. *Commentary* on Jeremiah 36:29.

41. *Commentary* on Jeremiah 27:5.

position of owing supreme allegiance to their Creator, and ultimately responsible directly to Him.

*The Civil Government and Its Laws*

"Next to the magistracy in the civil state come the laws, stoutest sinews of the commonwealth, or, as Cicero, after Plato, calls them the souls, without which the magistracy cannot stand, even as they themselves have no force apart from the magistracy. Accordingly, nothing truer could be said than that the law is a silent magistrate; the magistrate, a living law."<sup>42</sup> So Calvin introduces his section on the civil government and its laws.

It has been shown that Calvin had a very high view of the magistracy. The logical question at this point then might be, "Is it not enough that rulers have been set over the people in a way that whatever they say is the law that has to be obeyed? Would it not detract from their authority to say that the law is something different from the power of the magistrate himself, a law that he himself would then be responsible to?" The proponents of absolutism answered affirmatively, but that is just what Calvin opposed. The quotation above makes that clear.

Human society, according to Calvin, includes both subjects and magistrates, over which God alone is sovereign. The means by which a commonwealth is to be governed is by law, law that has its origin only in God, regardless of whether it is conceived of as divinely revealed, natural, or "man-made" positive law. "Therefore it is not the magistrates as such, but the law that holds the organism of human society together. The civil order is ordered by laws and the state cannot be regarded to be such unless it is actually constituted by law."<sup>43</sup>

For Calvin, law has three levels: divine, natural, and positive. As might be guessed, his concept of divine law is the inscripturated Word of God. Although it may be contested by some, Calvin also has a very clear teaching regarding natural law.<sup>44</sup> But for him, nature is the divinely instituted creation order.<sup>45</sup> Although it has suffered through the fall, as a whole it

42. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 14.

43. Jungen, p. 30.

44. *Institutes*, II, ii, 12-17; *Commentary* on Romans 2:14ff.

45. *Institutes*, I, v, 5f.

has been essentially preserved.<sup>46</sup> Calvin sees revealed law as teaching us the very things that are deposited in nature, but which because of our sin are only dimly known.<sup>47</sup> According to Calvin, both natural and revealed law are ultimately divine law and each is equally a living expression of the personal, spiritual will of God.<sup>48</sup> "The written law is just an attestation of the law of nature, through means of which God recalls to our memory that which he has previously engraven on our hearts."<sup>49</sup>

But that which still remains unanswered is exactly what things are known from natural law. And for purposes of civil government, by what principles are these things transformed into positive law?

As one might expect, much of what natural law has to reveal is the same thing that the Scriptures teach. Calvin particularly highlights the laws that are sometimes called creation ordinances: the sanctity of life,<sup>50</sup> monogamy,<sup>51</sup> obedience to parents and superiors,<sup>52</sup> and primogeniture.<sup>53</sup> These all belong to the principles of natural order.

For Calvin, positive law is the particular set of laws that a nation arrives at according to the principles inherent in natural law (which as has been demonstrated is in some sense divine). Aside from the relatively few concrete pieces of information which were mentioned above, nations must make specific decisions according to these common principles. Calvin refers to these "common principles" as an "equity"<sup>54</sup> that is the same among all men. He is quite clear in his insistence that any positive law, even Old Testament judicial law, is only a "surface-expression" of these underlying principles inherent in natural law.<sup>55</sup> In other words, Calvin distinguishes between positive law and the principle of equity upon which the law depends. Although the equity is natural, and the same

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46. *Commentary* on Genesis 3:19, 8:21.

47. *Institutes*, II, viii, 1f.; *Commentary* on Ezekiel 16:1-3.

48. *Institutes*, II, xvi, 2f.

49. *Commentary* on Psalm 119:52; cf. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 16.

50. *Commentary* on Genesis 4:15.

51. *Commentary* on Genesis 42:22f.

52. *Commentary* on Genesis 9:22, Exodus 20:12, Deuteronomy 5:16.

53. *Commentary* on Genesis 48:17.

54. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 16.

55. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 16.

for all men, the concrete historical constitutions and judicial laws, because of differing circumstances, may well differ, as long as they look to the same end of equity. This equity alone must be the rule and end and limit of all laws. As he writes, "Whatever laws shall be framed to that rule, directed to that goal, bound by that limit, there is no reason why we should disapprove of them, however they may differ from the Jewish law, or among themselves."<sup>56</sup>

Therefore, the laws made by a specific state ought to be an expression of the natural equity in terms of the situation and needs that the context dictates. For that very reason Calvin refused to speculate about the concrete form of the laws of different nations, since such discussion could go on forever, and would not be profitable.<sup>57</sup>

In addition to the nature of civil law, the point that is particularly important to this discussion, and must be reiterated, is that Calvin described the relationship of the magistrate and the law by means of the ancient formula, "the law is the silent magistrate, and the magistrate a living law." In other words, the magistrate cannot stand without the law, but it is also true that the laws themselves have no force apart from the magistracy. It is extremely important for Calvin that the magistrate not be beyond the law, or without law.<sup>58</sup> In fact, for Calvin, the notion of being beyond the reach of the law is the main characteristic of what constitutes a tyrant.

### *The People, or The Ruled*

It has already been shown that for Calvin each man has his distinctive calling before God, whether he realizes it or not. The place of the magistrate in Calvin's political thought has already been examined. Now it is time to turn to the people, or the ones who are ruled.

To understand Calvin's position, it is appropriate to present the two major contrasting views alongside of his. As has been noted, absolutism was a problem in Calvin's native France. Absolutism is the tyranny of the ruler. It is best described by the phrase, "The people are made for the sake of

56. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 16.

57. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 16.

58. *Commentary* on Exodus 3:22.

the king." In absolutism, the law is whatever the king decrees. The opposite extreme is democracy. Democracy is the tyranny of the people. In other words, "The king is made for the sake of the people." The law, under a democratic form of government, is whatever the people decide, because they have decided it. Calvin's view, on the other hand, was that the king and the people, together, in their proper places, form a government and well-ordered society which is sovereignly ruled by God. As can be seen, the trinitarian principle of the one and the many is applied here. Government is created by God and ordered by His laws. Both the king and the people are under that law.

Calvin begins his section regarding the people with these words, "The first duty of subjects toward their magistrates is to think most honorably of their office, which they recognize as a jurisdiction bestowed by God, and on that account to esteem and reverence them as ministers and representatives of God."<sup>59</sup> Note carefully that by "honor," he does not mean simply to tolerate them as a necessary evil, but that they must be respected and revered as God's ministers. A magistrate should be obeyed out of love for God (the source of his office), rather than out of fear of the magistrate himself. This principle leads to Calvin's insistence that a magistrate must be obeyed and respected because of the dignity of his office, even though a wicked person may occupy that office.

Calvin next quotes Paul, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. . . . For he who resists authority resists what God has ordained" (Romans 13:1-2, Vg.). Because of this passage, he writes that "with hearts inclined to reverence their rulers, the subjects should prove their obedience toward them [the magistrates], whether by obeying their proclamations, or by paying taxes, or by undertaking public offices and burdens which pertain to the common defense, or by executing any other command of theirs."<sup>60</sup> He goes on to say that resistance to the magistrate is resistance to God, and that "even though it seems that an unarmed magistrate can be despised with impunity, still God is armed to avenge mightily this contempt toward himself."<sup>61</sup>

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59. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 22.

60. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 23.

61. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 23.



Calvin then makes a very important point with regard to civil disobedience: "Moreover, under this obedience I include the restraint which private citizens ought to bid themselves keep in public, that they may not deliberately intrude in public affairs, or pointlessly invade the magistrate's office, or undertake anything at all politically. If anything in a public ordinance requires amendment, let them not raise a tumult, or put their hands to the task—all of them ought to keep their hands bound in this respect—but let them commit the matter to the judgement of the magistrate, whose hand alone here is free."<sup>62</sup>

Two points must be highlighted from this statement. First of all, in the thought of Calvin, the private citizen has very little authority or responsibility outside of the deference and obedience that he owes to the magistrate. Secondly, the righting of wrongs, or the amendment of an ordinance to make it better, is the sole responsibility of the magistrate, and should be left in his hands. The only way that a private citizen can actively contribute to the well-being of the state, according to Calvin, is to pray for the magistrates. Not only can they therewith benefit the magistrate and themselves, but their prayers are at the same time a sign of their submission and obedience. "We ought not only to obey the kings under whose authority we live, but we ought also to pray for their prosperity, so that God may be a witness of our voluntary subjection."<sup>63</sup> He goes on to make the point that if citizens at least do that, they will certainly be reminded of their other duties in the process.<sup>64</sup> In another place he says that such constant prayer also keeps the citizenry from being indifferent whether God-fearing or godless men exercise rule over them, and should remind them that it is also their responsibility to see that upright men obtain office when the opportunity offers itself.<sup>65</sup> To sum up, Calvin maintains that the people must regard all magistracy as ordained by God, even though it may not, in character or form, correspond to the ideal of what the magistracy should be. For if this is not done, then it is as if God Himself is being reviled, and the citizenry is casting Him

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62. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 23.

63. *Commentary* on Jeremiah 29:7; cf. *Commentary* on I Timothy 2:2.

64. *Commentary* on Jeremiah 29:7.

65. Quoted in Jungen, p. 28.

off so that He may not reign over them.<sup>66</sup>

### *The Two-Kingdom Doctrine*

Before the specifics of Calvin's theory of resistance can be examined, one more foundational element in his teaching on civil government must be touched upon: his two-kingdom doctrine.<sup>67</sup> It is true that for Calvin all of life is important, and all areas alike must be brought under subjection to Christ. But out of concern for that, the fact that he structured his whole teaching on civil government on the distinction between the spiritual and the political kingdom must not fail to be appreciated.<sup>68</sup> He begins his chapter on civil government with these words: "Now, since we have established above that man is under a two-fold government, . . . this is the place to say something also about the other kind, which pertains only to the establishment of civil justice and outward morality. . . ."

"First, before we enter into the matter itself, we must keep in mind that distinction which we previously laid down so that we do not (as commonly happens) unwisely mingle these two, which have a completely different nature."<sup>69</sup>

As has already been noted, Calvin is very systematic with regard to the arrangement of his teaching. It is, then, extremely important to understand the significance of these introductory remarks, and to take them into account in the immediate context of his discussion of civil government, as well as the larger context of the *Institutes* as a whole.

In the last chapter of the 1536 edition of the *Institutes*, Calvin covered the subjects of Christian freedom, ecclesiastical power, and civil government. Before he dealt with each of them in turn, he introduced them with the distinction that was going to be foundational for what he was going to say: "There is a two-fold government in man: one aspect is spiritual, whereby the conscience is instructed in piety and in reverencing God; the second is political, whereby man is educated for the duties of humanity and citizenship that must be maintained among men. These are usually called the

66. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 7.

67. Jungen, p. 50.

68. In the following section, I am indebted to Christoph Jungen for his helpful insights.

69. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 1.

"spiritual" and the "temporal" jurisdiction, by which is meant that the former sort of government pertains to the soul, while the latter has to do with the concerns of the present life. The one we may call the spiritual kingdom, the other, the political kingdom. Now these two, as we have divided them, must always be examined separately; and while one is being considered, we must call away and turn aside the mind from thinking about the other. There are in man, so to speak, two worlds, over which different kings and different laws have authority."<sup>70</sup>

After having dealt with conscience, Christian freedom, and the Church, Calvin again reiterated the distinction at the beginning of his section on civil government in order to make sure that it was understood that he was shifting from speaking about the spiritual to speaking about the political kingdom: "The two kingdoms are alike valid, but definitely distinct. . . . Whoever knows how to distinguish between body and soul, between this present fleeting life and that future eternal life, will without difficulty know that Christ's spiritual kingdom and the civil jurisdiction are things completely distinct. . . . Spiritual freedom can perfectly well exist along with civil bondage; . . . It makes no difference what your condition among men may be or under what nation's laws you live, since the Kingdom of Christ does not at all consist in these things."<sup>71</sup>

In light of the thoroughly positive assessment that Calvin makes of civil government, discussed earlier, it is difficult simply to conclude on the basis of the above statements that Calvin is, in the final analysis, a Christian platonist; and, in his opinion, man is split into a lower, insignificant physical aspect and a higher spiritual principle. Calvin was not unaware of this possible misunderstanding, and therefore hastened to add: "Yet civil government has as its appointed end, so long as we live among men, to cherish and protect the outward worship of God, to defend sound doctrine of piety and the position of the church, to adjust our lives to the society of men, to form our social behaviour to civil righteousness, to reconcile us with one another, and to promote general peace and tranquillity."<sup>72</sup>

70. *Institutes*, III, xix, 15.

71. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 1.

72. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 2.

It is therefore quite clear that although Calvin distinguished the two realms, he did not separate them into upper and lower realms with some form of a chain of being inherent in his system. In Calvin's view, these two realms join and interpenetrate one another rather than standing in opposition to one another. Even though it is impossible to reduce the political and spiritual worlds to one another, it is equally impossible to separate them. For Calvin, any real alienation between the two would have spelled disaster. Although part of the reason for his insistence may be vestiges of a spirit-matter dualism, Calvin's self-conscious reason for such a distinction must be found elsewhere.

Looking back at the quotations above, and taking into consideration the fact that in the 1536 edition of the *Institutes*, Calvin, in one section, covered Christian freedom, ecclesiastical power, and civil government, one can see that Calvin uses the term "spiritual kingdom" as synonymous with the "kingdom of Christ." It is likely, then, that the distinction between spiritual and political kingdom has something to do with the distinctive character of the kingdom of Christ.

In Calvin's development of the three offices of Christ, he is careful to maintain that Christ exercises His offices *pro nobis*—for us. Specifically, the prophetic office is not universal, but primarily for the Church, His body, so that the power of the Spirit may be exercised through the Church's preaching of the gospel.<sup>73</sup> The same is true for the priestly office of Christ. This office has the primary purpose of making atonement for the sins of the world and to acquire eternal life for men.<sup>74</sup> Christ is high priest and sacrifice at the same time and fulfills His function specifically *pro nobis*—for us who are the redeemed sinners united to His body. Therefore, when we come to the kingly office of Christ, this pattern is not suddenly altered. For Calvin, Christ's kingship is just as much soteriologically qualified. He distinguishes between the kingdom of the Father and the dominion of Christ,<sup>75</sup> and makes clear that the kingdom of Christ is only stable and abiding because it is not of this world and not carnal.<sup>76</sup> The foundation of the Kingship of Christ is that He has conquered death and redeemed His people. God has installed him as

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73. *Institutes*, II, xv, 2.

74. *Commentary* on Acts 26:22.

75. *Institutes*, II, xv, 5.

76. *Institutes*, II, xv, 3, 5.

King on that basis.<sup>77</sup> In Calvin's view, Christ does not exercise any power apart from his redemptive purpose, which the Church participates in. The Kingly office is therefore particular, and is exercised *pro nobis*, for us, and its purpose is His people's participation in the heavenly life.<sup>78</sup> When Calvin, therefore, speaks of "spiritual", he is not talking about some element in a Platonic dualism, but about the work of the Holy Spirit, which is particular and "restricted" as the work of Christ.

One must not misunderstand Calvin's position and place some modalistic construction upon it. He does not imply that there is a separation between the dominions of Christ and of God the Father. In this respect, he is a thorough-going trinitarian. As Jungen notes, Calvin sees neither identity nor disunity, but he does distinguish among three kinds of life in this world:<sup>79</sup> "The first is animal life, which consists only of motion and the bodily senses, and which we have in common with the brutes; the second is human life, which we have as the children of Adam; and the third is that supernatural life which believers alone obtain. And all of them are from God."<sup>80</sup>

The three levels of life might be better conceived as three concentric circles in which the wider circles in some sense exists for the sake of the narrower one. Thus the cosmos exists for the sake of humanity and humanity ultimately for the sake of the church. This would explain Calvin's insistence that civil government should protect the outward worship of God and the position of the church.<sup>81</sup>

Regardless of how this is characterized, it is clear that for Calvin the kingly rule of Christ belongs to the innermost circle, for this rule is concealed from the flesh.<sup>82</sup> The reign of Christ is a spiritual reign that is governed by the Word and spirit. "The kingship of Christ is therefore a rule that has been delegated to the son by the Father and that in the present age is restricted to the government of the church through the Word and spirit."<sup>83</sup>

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77. *Institutes*, II, xv, 3.

78. *Institutes*, II, xv, 4.

79. Jungen, p. 56.

80. *Commentary* on Ephesians 4:18.

81. Jungen, p. 56.

82. *Commentary* on Luke 19:12.

83. Jungen, p. 57.

The "earthly," "temporal," or "political" kingdom, then, includes all that which does not directly pertain to this rule of Christ, but has reference to all the things that "have their significance and relationship with regard to the present life and are, in a sense, confined within its bounds."<sup>84</sup> Calvin does not deny that the Kingdom of Christ is in this world, but "strictly speaking, although it dwells within us, it is a stranger to the world, since its state is completely different."<sup>85</sup> The kingdom of Christ is firm and stable and will never be overthrown or shaken, but the same cannot be said of earthly kingdoms. The reason that this is so, according to Calvin, is precisely due to the fact that the Kingdom of Heaven is not earthly.<sup>86</sup>

But just exactly what does all of this have to do with civil obedience or disobedience? From Calvin's viewpoint, a great deal: "Through this distinction it comes about that we are not to misapply to the political order the gospel teaching on spiritual freedom, as if Christians were less subject, as concerns outward government, to human laws."<sup>87</sup>

In another place, commenting upon Matthew 22:21, he is even more specific: "A clear distinction is set out here between spiritual and civil government, that we should know ourselves to be under no external constraint from holding a clear conscience in the sight of God. The error Christ wanted to refute is the idea that a people cannot belong to God unless it is free of the yoke of human rule. . . . God's law is not violated or his worship offended if the Jews in external government obey the Romans. . . .

"Keep the distinction firm: the Lord wishes to be sole lawgiver for the government of souls, with no rule of worship to be sought from any other source than his word, and our adherence to the only pure service there enjoined; yet the power of the sword, the laws of the land and decisions of the courts, in no way prevent the perfect service of God from flourishing in our midst."<sup>88</sup>

In other words, Christian freedom does not mean that civil government has become unnecessary, or that it gives one an excuse to rebel against the civil government. On the one

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84. *Institutes*, II, ii, 13.

85. *Commentary* on John 18:36.

86. *Commentary* on John 18:36, and Acts 5:34.

87. *Institutes*, II, xix, 15; IV, xx, 1.

88. *Commentary* on Matthew 22:21.

hand, the distinction between spiritual and political kingdoms serves to reinforce the authority of the civil magistrate, but it is also a safeguard against absolute rule in that it assigns him a limited sphere of responsibility, the boundaries of which he cannot overstep without being legitimately disobeyed. For, "the overthrow of civil order is rebellion against God, and obedience to leaders and magistrates is always linked to the worship and fear of God, but if in turn the leaders usurp the rights of God they are to be denied obedience as far as possible, short of offence to God."<sup>89</sup>

"That God rather than man must always be obeyed is probably the most significant platitude in the history of political thought,"<sup>90</sup> so notes Michael Walzer. Calvin was guided by this platitude, and drew the line for civil disobedience when civil rulers illegitimately intruded into that which belongs only to Christ and His rule by Word and Spirit. Only then is disobedience warranted, but even then it is not proper actively to resist the magistrate, or deny his legitimate authority to rule.<sup>91</sup>

Calvin makes an important point in this respect. He sees a difference between civil and ecclesiastical rule and authority. "There is a certain distinction between civil magistrates and leaders of the church. For although the administration of earthly or civil sovereignty is disorderly and corrupt, yet the Lord wishes submission to it to remain unaffected. But when the spiritual rule degenerates, the consciences of the godly, are released from obedience to an unjust domination."<sup>92</sup>

In commenting upon Acts 4:19, Calvin is even more pointed: "The apostles make clear that obedience offered to evil and unfaithful pastors, even though they exercise lawful authority in the church, is contrary to God."<sup>93</sup> He touches upon this same theme again in his comments upon Romans 13. After elaborating upon the inviolable authority of the civil magistrate he writes, "The whole of this discussion concerns civil government. Those, therefore, who bear rule over men's consciences attempt to establish their blasphemous tyranny from this passage in vain."<sup>94</sup>

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89. *Commentary* on Matthew 22:21.

90. Walzer, p. 57.

91. *Commentary* on Acts 4:19, 23:5.

92. *Commentary* on Acts 23:5.

93. *Commentary* on Acts 4:19.

94. *Commentary* on Romans 13:5.

*Calvin and Civil Disobedience*

At this point, having looked in some detail at Calvin's view of civil government, the question might understandably be asked if Calvin indeed had a doctrine of resistance, or civil disobedience. Nevertheless, it is clear, after having read the pertinent portions of the *Institutes*, that he did indeed have a well thought out notion of civil disobedience. Calvin's thinking is divided into two major sections: the grounds for disobedience and the agents of resistance.

*The Grounds for Disobedience*

As noted in our introduction, in Calvin's time the French monarchy was becoming increasingly absolutistic, and as a result, the issues of resistance and civil disobedience were burning ones. Calvin realized that the situation was difficult, and that the monarchy was less than ideal. While "he was realistic in his assessment of the actual state of affairs, he never tired of appealing to the ideal."<sup>95</sup> Calvin called upon the monarchy to supply the pastors and ministers of the Word with all that was necessary for their well-being. He appealed to the crown to allow the Church the freedom to build more schools and hospitals, and make better provisions for the poor. In short, to fulfill every arrangement that belongs to the protection and defense of the Church. With his appeals, however, Calvin also recognized that "matters are now very different, and that kings are not the 'nursing-fathers,' but the executioners of the Church."<sup>96</sup>

The question that had to be dealt with by Calvin was whether the less than ideal situation that prevailed constituted legitimate grounds for rebellion against the magistracy that was in power. He was confronted on all sides with the clamour over legitimate grounds for resistance.

Calvin responded to this problem along two lines. First of all, he outlined what he considered to be illegitimate grounds for resistance, and then, he generally set out the guidelines for legitimate resistance.

One of the arguments that was popular can be termed the "pagan ruler" or "enemy of the gospel" argument. In answer-

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95. Jungen, p. 64.

96. *Commentary* on Isaiah 49:23.



ing this argument, Calvin makes a comparison between the struggling reformed churches and the early churches who lived under hostile governments. On the one hand, he writes, "by refusing the yoke of government, they would have given the Gentiles no little occasion for reproaching them," for, "obedience towards magistrates is a part of honest behavior."<sup>97</sup> On the other hand this responsibility to obey was even made more difficult because these magistrates "were Christ's adversaries, and they so abused their authority that no image of God, which secures special reverence, was seen in them."<sup>98</sup> In spite of these magistrates being executioners instead of nursing fathers, Calvin insisted that such magistrates must be obeyed. He did not call upon the Christian to endorse or approve their tyranny or unchristian behavior: nor did he teach that their actions or attitudes were pleasing to God. Rather he reasoned that a Christian's submission is unaffected because it lies in the will of God who has given the magistrate power and authority. "Obedience is due to all who rule, because they have been raised to that honor not by chance, but by God's providence. Most people are in the habit of inquiring too closely by what right power has been attained, but we ought to be satisfied with this alone, that we see that they exercise power."<sup>99</sup>

While these rulers certainly may not act in a legitimate way or are enemies of the gospel, the office that they hold is a divine institution that can never be obliterated by the viciousness and faithlessness of those holding the office. The "pagan ruler," or "enemy of the gospel" argument is invalid. Calvin sums up his position very concisely when he says: "Even if we lived under the Turks, tyrants or deadly enemies of the gospel, it would still be incumbent upon us to be subject to them. Why? Because it is the good pleasure of God!"<sup>100</sup>

The second argument that Calvin dealt with was the argument that an unbiblical government, that is one that is not governed solely from the laws in the Bible, is illegitimate and may be opposed. Calvin rejects this rationale by another appeal to the early church, and then to the providence and will of God. "Since Peter refers especially to the Roman Emperor,

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97. *Commentary* on 1st Peter 2:13.

98. *Commentary* on 1st Peter 2:13.

99. *Commentary* on 1st Peter 2:13; cf. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 28.

100. Quoted in Jungen, p. 66.

it was necessary to add this admonition (to obedience), for . . . the Romans . . . subdued these countries more by unjust guiles than in any legitimate way. Besides, the Caesars who then reigned had snatched possession of the monarchy by tyrannical force. Peter, therefore, forbids all these things to be brought into debate."<sup>101</sup>

"Divine Providence has wisely arranged that various countries should be ruled by various kinds of government. . . . Countries are best held together according to their own particular inequality. However, all these things are needlessly spoken to those for whom the will of the Lord is enough. . . . It is our duty to show ourselves compliant and obedient to whomever he sets over the places where we live."<sup>102</sup>

As far as obedience is concerned, it does not matter whether rulers live up to the expectations put upon them, whether or not they rule according to biblical principles, or even whether they have been elected by popular vote or not. Christians must recognize that it is God who places the ruler in office, and it is their duty, then, to obey.

The third and final argument that Calvin had to deal with involved the derelict or tyrannical ruler. Although these are in reality two different categories, Calvin dealt with them as one. The prominent argumentation here is Calvin's appeal to the fifth commandment. As has been previously noted, Calvin parallels family life and the political life of the nation. Just as children are bound to obey their father and a wife her husband whether he exercises his authority as he should or not, so we owe obedience to those in authority over us.<sup>103</sup> "The perpetual law of nature is not subverted by the sins of men; and therefore, however unworthy of honor a father may be, he still retains, inasmuch as he is a father, his right over his children."<sup>104</sup>

"Kings and magistrates often abuse their power, and exercise tyrannical cruelty rather than justice. . . . But . . . tyrants and those like them do not do such things by their abuse, without the ordinance of God still remaining in force, just as the perpetual institution of marriage is not subverted even

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101. *Commentary* on 1st Peter 2:13.

102. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 8.

103. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 29.

104. *Commentary* on Deuteronomy 5:16, Exodus 20:12.

though the wife and the husband behave in an unseemly way. However men go astray, the end fixed by God is unchanged in its place."<sup>105</sup>

Two important points must be noted here. First of all, a magistrate exercises his power only as long as God allows him to. God has ordained his authority, and even though he rules badly and tyrannically, he rules by God's decree. In addition, the exercise of authority is by the grace of God, and always by the grace of God. Even though a man is a tyrant, God does not completely withdraw His grace from him. It is God who makes sure that there is no tyranny in which, however cruel and unbridled, does not appear some of the justice and equity which he wants magistrates to maintain. In any case, some kind of government is still better and more beneficial than anarchy.<sup>106</sup> As Calvin writes in another place, if magistrates still turn out to be unprofitable to us, we should seek the fault with ourselves and attribute their tyranny to the wrath of God against our sins rather than to the good ordinance of God itself.<sup>107</sup>

The second point that must be kept in mind is that Calvin makes a clear distinction between the divinely ordained office that a man holds and the office-bearer himself. The office-bearer is fully responsible for his actions, and just as guilty because of his sin. In other words, for Calvin, the obligation of a ruler to his subjects, and more importantly for this discussion, the obligations of subjects to the ruler, never imply that government only exists as long as the office of magistrate is properly fulfilled, but is maintained even when it degenerates into something less than ideal.

It is time now to look at what Calvin considers the grounds for legitimate resistance actually are. Surprisingly enough, he does not hesitate to point them out. He repeatedly makes clear that authority is legitimate that keeps within the bounds divinely prescribed for it. These "boundaries" are defined using the distinction previously discussed under the heading "the Two Kingdom Doctrine." Calvin clearly states that the limit to obedience comes when the honor and worship of God, or God's direct authority over us is in danger of being

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105. *Commentary* on 1st Peter 2:14.

106. *Commentary* on 1st Peter 2:14.

107. *Commentary* on Romans 13:3, and I Timothy 2:2.

violated. God maintains his supreme authority, and does not allow it to be infringed upon. This argument from the two kingdoms is very explicit in some comments made on Acts 17:7: "Paul and Silas were only striving to set up the kingdom of Christ which is spiritual. Therefore, if religious considerations compel us to withstand tyrannical decrees which forbid us to give to Christ and to God the honor and worship which we owe them, then it can rightfully be claimed that we are not violating the majesty of kings. . . . If they are not content with their lawful (temporal) authority and wish to uproot in us the fear and worship of God, then there is no reason for anyone to say that we are despising them because the glory and the kingdom of God are of more worth to us."<sup>108</sup>

Obedience to God in the sphere of Christ's kingdom, where he exclusively rules according to his Word and Spirit, always takes precedence over everything else. A man is not excused for doing what displeases God or for not worshipping God as he has commanded by appealing to the authorities and saying that all that has been done has been obedient to the lawful magistrates. Calvin's addresses this point in no uncertain terms in his comments on Hosea 5:11: "The vengeance of God would be just against Israel, because they willingly followed the impious edicts of their king, . . . all were implicated in the same guilt before God, because the people adopted the impious forms of worship which the king had commanded. . . . We now see how vain the excuse of those is who say that they ought to obey kings, and at the same time forsake the Word of God: for what does the prophet reprove here, but that the Israelites had been too submissive to their king? . . . When the king perverted God's worship, when he set up corrupt superstitions, then the people ought to have firmly resisted him."<sup>109</sup> Calvin's strongest resistance statements, however, are found in his comments upon Daniel where he praises Daniel for continuing to pray to God in spite of the edict of the King. "The fear of God ought to precede, that kings may obtain their authority. For if anyone begins his reverence of an earthly prince by rejecting that of God, he will act preposterously, since this is a complete perversion of the order of nature. . . . For earthly princes lay aside all their power when they rise up against God, and are unworthy of being

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108. *Commentary* on Acts 4:19, 5:29.

109. *Commentary* on Hosea 5:11.

reckoned among the number of mankind. We ought rather utterly to defy (lat. "conspuere in ipsorum capita"—"to spit on their heads") than to obey them whenever they are so restive and wish to spoil God of his rights, and, as it were, to seize upon his throne and draw him down from heaven."<sup>110</sup>

Calvin appends his statement by pointing out that even though such unwavering obedience to God's commands may result in persecution, "we should comfort ourselves with the thought that we are rendering that obedience which the Lord requires when we suffer anything rather than turn aside from piety."<sup>111</sup> For it would be absurd if, in satisfying men, one should incur the displeasure of Him for whose sake obedience to superiors is given in the first place.<sup>112</sup>

It is important to underline the fact that disobedience to a magistrate who illegitimately oversteps his sphere and seeks to legislate areas over which he has no authority does not conflict with Calvin's teaching regarding obedience to magistrates, even those who are tyrannical. Calvin teaches that disobedience is only to be observed in that specific area, and those legitimate areas of authority must be respected. In other words, although a magistrate may be disobeyed in certain cases, he is not to be completely rejected without due process.

It is also significant to note that although many cruelties must be borne, and many injustices tolerated, when a magistrate seeks to rob God of his right, resistance in such a case is something that God requires, and it is considered an act of faithlessness not to do so. "The submission paid to them ought to be a step toward honoring that highest Father. Hence, if they spur us to transgress the law, we have the perfect right to regard them not as parents, but as strangers who are trying to lead us away from obedience to our true Father. So should we act toward princes, lords, and every kind of superior."<sup>113</sup> The point, therefore, at which resistance becomes legitimate is, according to Calvin, always a question of actual lawbreaking. What is common in every actual case of resistance is that illegitimacy is determined by departure from the legitimate order. Resistance is, therefore, really a means of bringing the legitimate order back to its rightful

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110. *Commentary* on Daniel 6:22.

111. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 32.

112. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 32.

113. *Institutes*, II, viii, 38.

place. In other words, resistance is not to be carried out against the existing order, but rather in the interests of the existing order. Resistance is carried out against the particular magistrate in office, and not against the office itself. Although it is a fine line, it spells the difference between revolution and an act of Christian resistance.

### *The Agents of Resistance*

It has been established that, for Calvin, there are cases in which it is lawful for a ruler to be resisted, but it has not been shown what concrete forms such resistance can take, and who are the lawful agents in such a resistance. Just because the circumstances allow for some form of resistance, does not mean that anyone is automatically authorized to resist a tyrant by whatever means seems good.

Building upon his principle derived from God's being a God of order, Calvin insists that any resistance against a tyrant must be done in accordance with the legitimate laws of that particular order. An illegitimate and tyrannical ruler does not warrant an illegitimate reaction on the part of the people, but rather resistance is to seek to restore the *status quo* and thus must be proceeded with lawfully.

*Private Citizens:* What has already been noted regarding the magistrate is also true for the private citizen. Society is made up of both the rulers and the ruled, both subject to God's law. Each is to maintain his specific calling, and may not illegitimately overstep his boundaries.

What this implies for private citizens, then, is utmost restraint in public matters, so "that they may not deliberately intrude in public affairs, or pointlessly invade the magistrate's office, or undertake anything politically."<sup>114</sup> Even if offences are committed against them, private citizens do not have any independent rights except those allowed by law, and even these may not be pushed privately, but only through the due process of law.<sup>115</sup> Calvin violently disagrees with the modern concept of democracy in which all power is seen as ultimately in the hands of the people. For him, God is the only sovereign, and delegates power to whom He wills. In Calvin's

114. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 23; cf. *Commentary* on I Thessalonians 4:11; *Commentary* on Psalm 101:5.

115. *Commentary* on Psalm 18:48.

view, the people have primarily responsibilities and duties to fulfill; they are not some sort of check against the magistrate. For those private citizens who would want to rebel and advocate some change of the order, Calvin reserves his strongest rebuke: "These men unblushingly belched forth abuse against the magistrates to take away all respect for public law and order, and this was openly to attack God with their blasphemies. There are many turbulent men of this kind to-day who boast that all the power of the sword is heathen and unlawful and who busy themselves furiously to overthrow the body politic. Such ragings which upset the progress of the gospel are stirred up by Satan."<sup>116</sup> In another place he writes even more categorically and uncompromisingly: "The wilfulness of kings will run to excess, but it will not be your part to restrain it; you will have only this left to you: to obey their commands and hearken to their word."<sup>117</sup> The only comfort will be that "they who have proudly and tyrannically governed shall one day render their account to God," and that "God, whose prerogative it is to raise the abject and to relieve the oppressed," will come to their help.<sup>118</sup> But as far as individual action on the part of private citizens is concerned, "the very desire to shake off or remove this yoke is tacit proof of an evil conscience that is plotting some mischief."<sup>119</sup> "It does not lie in the will of the people to set up princes."<sup>120</sup> "We should rather consider that an unjust ruler is God's punishment for the sins of the people and that it is not our calling to supply a remedy, but that we have to wait upon God and implore His help."<sup>121</sup>

*The Lesser Magistrates:* Calvin has one long sentence which outlines his views with regard to the right and duty of resistance to tyrants by the lesser magistrates. "For if there are now any magistrates of the people, appointed to restrain<sup>122</sup> the wilfulness of kings (as in ancient times the ephors were set against the Spartan kings, or the tribunes of the people

116. *Commentary* on 2nd Peter 2:10.

117. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 26.

118. *Commentary* on Genesis 16:8.

119. *Commentary* on Romans 13:3.

120. *Commentary* on Jeremiah 38:1-4.

121. *Commentary* on Romans 13:3; *Institutes*, IV, xx, 29.

122. The Latin has "intercedere," the French editions "s'opposer et resister."

against the Roman consuls, or the demarchs against the senate of the Athenians; and perhaps, as things now are, such power as the three estates exercise in every realm when they hold their chief assemblies), I am so far from forbidding them to withstand, in accordance with their duty, the fierce licentiousness of kings, that if they wink at kings who violently fall upon and assault the lowly common folk, I declare that their dissimulation involves nefarious perfidy, because they dishonestly betray the freedom of the people, of which they know they have been appointed protectors of God's ordinance."<sup>123</sup> In order to understand exactly what Calvin is getting at, it will be necessary first of all to understand what the import of his examples is, especially with regard to the "three estates."

The ancient examples are merely illustrative, and are only casually important. The Ephors were five Spartan magistrates whose task it was to exercise restraint upon the king. The Roman tribunes were officers chosen by the people to protect their liberties against the Senate and Consuls. The Greek Demarchs performed similar functions in Athens.

The "three estates" was a body of representatives made up of individuals from the three estates of the Clergy, Nobility, and Commoners or Burghers. This political body existed in several European nations, including France, and was permitted, at least in theory, to restrain monarchical absolutism. "Calvin thus seems to be suggesting that rulers are not only not above the law, but that they must be brought to heel by the duly appointed representatives of the law if the need arise."<sup>124</sup>

Even though in his native France, the Estates had not met for over 50 years when Calvin first penned the above statement, and would not meet until a year after the final edition of the *Institutes* had come off the press,<sup>125</sup> the strength of his argument lies in the fact that he summons them to a realization of their duty given them in the law. In other words, if the Estates have the constitutional right that he assumes that they have (and he is not alone in so assuming), then they also have a corresponding duty. As has already been shown, this is not an optional duty, but is in fact sinful if neglected, and would thus place them under God's disapproval.

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123. *Institutes*, IV, xx, 31.

124. Jungen, p. 96.

125. Note the "perhaps" in the quotation.



It is important to understand that this representative body that Calvin has in mind does not exercise its authority "in behalf of the people," but rather they are so commissioned by God as His lawfully ordained ministers. "What Calvin seems to have in mind is not a democratic, but rather a judicial approach to the question of resistance in which the laws and not the people are supreme and the Estates are thus not so much representatives as guardians of the people and of their rights."<sup>126</sup>

### *Summary of Calvin's Position*

Calvin's position is based primarily upon legal and judicial argumentation. In Calvin's opinion, the grounds for resistance are not dictated by narrowly conceived theological or religious considerations, but are based in the legal situation as it actually exists in a particular country. Legitimate resistance is not done in the name of some higher order or principle against the established political order, but it is carried out as part of the existing order.

Calvin sees no place for the private citizen actively to resist the duly ordained authorities. Rather he calls upon those officials whose constitutional power compels them to protect the established order against a usurper or tyrant. It is the duty of these officials to resist lawfully, using resistance to bring order back to the country, and to restore the nation to the constitutional *status quo*.

### *Contemporary Applications*

We who believe in the sovereignty of God and in His all-ruling providence recognize that there is much to learn from history. History is the unfolding of God's decree, and it is presumptuous for us to cut off our "Hall of Heroes" with the closing of Hebrews 11. By God's standards, John Calvin is a hero of the faith, and with regard to Christian resistance, he should be listened to.

To begin with, Calvin's division of the agents of resistance into private citizens and magistrates is important. In 20th century America, with the radical egalitarianism that has

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126. Jungen, p. 100.

been popularized as a result of our baptistic moorings, it is important to emphasize that a nation's constitutional basis must be defended by constitutional defenders. Too often the attitude that prevails in many churches is projected into political life. In most American churches, the "people" vote on everything, and make a decision on everything. If enough of the membership doesn't like something, then they band together and proceed to change it. Government, however, doesn't work that way. We may not like the federal funding of abortions, the United Nations, or the huge giveaway programs, but we as private citizens do not have the right actively to resist. In other words, even though the government does fund abortions, we must still pay our taxes.<sup>127</sup> If the time ever comes, and there is the need for armed, active resistance against a tyrannical federal government, then that resistance must come about as a result of the leadership of lesser magistrates. The people must never take matters into their own hands. The duties of the private citizen are primarily obedience to the laws of the land, and deference to the magistrates. It is only when obedience involves one in an actual sin that civil disobedience is acceptable. Active resistance, however, never is.

The second point made by Calvin that is important for us today is his teaching that the laws of the land are supreme over both magistrates and subjects. The magistrates as well as the people are subject to the law. For Calvin, the definition of a tyrant is one who claims for himself exemption from the laws of the land. In our antinomian culture, law is not appreciated as it should be, but a nation cannot forever harbor a low view of the law before God gives them what they deserve: one just like themselves—a ruler with a low view of the law; that is, a tyrant.

Third, it is important to underline the fact that Christian resistance is conducted within the established order, and not against it. In other words, we resist—not revolt. The popularity of modern day revolutionary movements has been a bad example for the average Christian. Christian resistance, however, seeks to bring order back to a country, rather than

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127. The Tax Revolt issue is much more complicated than simply not paying as a result of disaffection with present governmental practices. This statement is not intended as an across the board condemnation of the tax strike.

create disorder for the purpose of overthrowing the reigning government. An act of Christian resistance works to bring the country back to the *status quo*, and when that is done, the resistance stops, even if all the wrongs haven't been righted. Those unrighted wrongs are then approached through the proper channels via the lesser magistrate.

Finally, although there is not time to go into detail, with the popularity of Francis Schaeffer's *A Christian Manifesto*, it is important to touch upon the relationship of the Scottish Reformed tradition and the Continental tradition which was molded largely by John Calvin. Schaeffer has highlighted one work from the Scottish tradition, *Lex, Rex* (translated—"The Law and the Prince") by Samuel Rutherford, and pointed to John Knox as a preeminent example of Christian resistance in Christian history. There is, however, a genuine divergence of views between the Continental and the Scottish reformed tradition. The Scots, under Knox, John Ponet,<sup>128</sup> and Christopher Goodman,<sup>129</sup> endorsed such things as the right of private citizens to depose an evil governor by force and even to kill a tyrant.<sup>130</sup> Goodman appealed to private citizens to remove an evil ruler from their midst lest they become polluted and guilty of his sins. Knox, who was a student of Calvin's at Geneva, expressed his most radical views in his famous *Trumpet Blast Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, where he argues that resistance is legitimate because of an unbiblical government (a female monarch). His view received an even more permanent place in the Scot's Confession of Faith (1560), where "repressing tyranny" is listed under the heading of "Good Works."<sup>131</sup> As can be seen in this very brief view, the Scottish tradition is considerably more radical than Calvin's.<sup>132</sup>

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128. John Ponet, *On Politicke Power* (1556; reprinted 1972, Theatrum Orbis Terrarum Ltd., Amsterdam).

129. Christopher Goodman, *How Superior Powers Ought to Be Obeyed* (1558; reprinted 1931, New York).

130. See Ponet, *On Politicke Power*.

131. Chapter XIV, "The works which are counted good before God."

132. See Richard L. Greaves, *Theology and Revolution in the Scottish Reformation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980).

DEFENSIVE WAR IN A JUST  
CAUSE SINLESS (1775)\*

David Jones

*AND I looked and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: Remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses.*

Nehemiah 4:14.

When a people become voluntary slaves to sin; when it is esteemed a reproach to reverence and serve God; when profaneness and dissolute morals become fashionable; when pride and luxury predominate, we cannot expect such a nation to be long happy.

Israel, when first planted in the land of Canaan, were a brave, heroic and virtuous people, being firmly attached to the true worship of God. They were both formidable and invincible: when their armies went forth to battle, thousands and tens of thousands fell before them: thus being clothed with the majesty of virtue and true religion, a panic seized the hearts of all their enemies around them. But when vice and immorality became prevalent; when they forsook and rebelled against their God, they lost their martial spirit, and were soon enslaved by the king of Babylon. Yet, as God is gracious and merciful, when seventy years were expired in this furnace of affliction, he remembered their low estate, and stirred up Cyrus, king of Persia, to proclaim liberty for the Jews to return and build their temple at Jerusalem. Nevertheless some of the people still remained in Persia, of which Nehemiah was one. He was a favourite in the days of Artaxerxes the king, therefore he obtained leave to go and build the

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\* A sermon preached on the Day of the Continental Fast, at Tredyffryn, in Chester County, by the Rev. David Jones, A.M., Philadelphia, July 20, 1775.

walls of that ancient city of Jersuaalem. But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian heard that there were men come to seek the welfare of the Jews, they were filled with indignation: therefore, in scornful language, they bring a state-accusation against them, saying: "What is this thing that ye do? Will you rebel against the king?"<sup>1</sup> However, though they treated the Jews with scorn and insult, yet their labour became a subject of conversation. Sanballat once speaking on the occasion, Tobiah makes a reply to this effect, viz. "Tush, Sanballat, it is not worth your notice, nor should you give yourself the least concern about these feeble wretches, they build indeed, but if a fox in his meanders was to ascend their stone wall, and only give a few scratches, it would fall down." These scornful insults were spoken that the Jews might hear them, and be discouraged; but when they saw that the work went on with rapidity, they were filled with the highest indignation, and resolved, if bitter taunts, these swords of their mouths, would not discourage them, their swords of steel should compel them to cease from their work: therefore Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, the Ammonites and Ashdodites all conspired together, to come with their united force against Jerusalem. Their design was made known to Nehemiah; and, as all should do, especially in distress, he lifts up his eyes to heaven, and makes his supplication to the Lord of hosts; nor does he think his preservation shall be effected in neglect of the use of means; therefore he sets a watch against them day and night, and addresses himself to all ranks of people in these spirited and excellent words, viz. *Be not ye afraid of them: Remember the LORD, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses.*

In the words observe,

1. A caution against cowardice, or fear of an enemy unjustly enraged. *Be not ye afraid of them.*

It is of great importance in war to be delivered from fear of the enemy; for soldiers in a panic generally fall a victim in the dispute.

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1. These three gentlemen were governors, and consequently pensioners. It is common for such to profess great loyalty to kings, when in reality it is their pension they love, and not their king. They speak in court language, "Will ye rebel against the king?"

2. We have an argument to excite fortitude and firmness of mind in martial engagements. *Remember the LORD, which is great and terrible.*

3. A fervent call to present duty in times of distress. *And fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your houses.*

To improve the words suitable to the occasion of the present solemnity, the following order shall be attempted.

I. An endeavour shall be made to prove, that in some cases, when a people are oppressed, insulted and abused, and can have no other redress, it then becomes our duty as men, with our eyes to God, to fight for our liberties and properties; or in other words, that a defensive war is sinless before God, consequently to engage therein, is consistent with the purest religion. Here some texts in the New Testament, which prevent some good men from engaging in the present dispute, shall be considered.

II. Some particulars shall be presented to our consideration, to demonstrate the alarming call, which we now have to take up arms in our own defence.

III. A few arguments shall be advanced to excite fortitude in martial engagements.

And lastly, some inferences shall be drawn.

The subject before us is of great importance. It is to be lamented that we have the present occasion to consider it. It is very copious, and as it is new to me, brevity and great accuracy can scarcely be expected. If God shall enable us to consider each proposition consistent with his honour, and worthy of his majesty, we may rest satisfied. Your attention, my Brethren and Countrymen is begged, while an endeavour is made.

I. To prove, that in some cases, when a people are oppressed, insulted and abused, and can have no other redress, it then becomes our duty as men, with our eyes to God, to fight for our liberties and properties; or in other words, that *a defensive war is sinless* before God; consequently to engage therein, is consistent with the purest religion.

If antiquity, if the united voice of all kingdoms, that now or ever have existed, could be admitted as a proof, the point would easily be determined; for there has been no kingdom, whether composed of Jews or Gentiles, Barbarians or Christians, but have embraced it as their common creed, that a defensive war is innocent. But though this is a presumptive

argument, yet it must be confessed, that it is not a decisive proof: for ancient mistakes are mistakes, and a multitude may be wrong.

But if this proposition can be made appear from the holy scriptures, as we profess them to be our only rule of faith and practice, then it must be acknowledged that a defensive war is sinless, and consistent with the purest religion. To them let us repair with attentive ears, to hear what the lively oracles of God will say on this point.

Among all the ancient servants of God none is more famous for true piety and pure religion than the patriarch Abraham—to him the highest epithets are given—he is more than once called the friend of God—in his steps the righteous are to walk—to him were many great and precious promises made, and yet we find this great, this holy man firmly of the faith that a defensive war is sinless. He makes a bright display of his faith, when the four kings took Lot, his brother's son, captive. Doth his religion prevent his pursuit of the enemy? No, verily. With a heart depending on the most high God, he collects his servants and some confederates; with martial weapons in his hands, he pursues the foes, and utterly discomfits the four kings, and triumphantly brings back the captives, with all the spoil. This was the very time that Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God, met him. And did he reprove or curse him? No, says the text, "he brought forth bread and wine," giving him the highest expressions of approbation, he thus addressed him, viz. "*Blessed be Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth, and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand.*" *Gen. xiv:18, 19, 20.* This passage proves not only that this was Abram's belief, but also that Melchizedek, priest of the most high God, Melchizedek, the brightest type of CHRIST, was fully of the same opinion, and therefore may be admitted as an evidence in favour of a defensive war. For any of us to presume that we have a better conscience than Melchizedek, would argue either pride or ignorance.

If we trace the sacred history, and descend to succeeding ages, we shall find that Moses is of the same faith. Among all the children of men none was more meek, and admitted to greater familiarity with God, than Moses. He is often called, by way of eminence, "Moses, the servant of God." By his hands we received the lively oracles of God, and the apostle

bears him witness, that "he was faithful in all things;" yet we find him often engaged in bloody battles. One instance may suffice at present, out of many that might be produced, and that is, when, on the most reasonable terms, he requests to pass through the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, pledging his honour that no damage should be done; *Num. xxi. 22.* but Sihon, instead of granting the small privilege of passing along the highway, advances with all his armies against Israel. Doth Moses think it his duty to make no defense? Let us view his conduct. Israel advances with sword in hand, and utterly discomfits the Amorites. If we read the book of Joshuah, his immediate successor, we shall find him of the same mind. Israel are called the peculiar people of GOD, to whom his mind was revealed, and this is the faith of the whole house of Israel. If it was a sin to engage in a defensive war, can we suppose that Israel should be ignorant of it? Seeing therefore that it is sinless, it is meet that we should tread in the footsteps of this flock, which is gone before us. And were we further to attend to the sacred history, we shall find, that after the death of Joshuah and the elders, which saw the mighty works of God, that Israel first being enslaved by sin, were oppressed by various nations; but when they cried unto the Lord, he raised up deliverers, among whom were Othniel, Ehud, Barak, Gideon, Jephtha, and many others, which performed glorious exploits, and were blessed instruments under God to deliver Israel from oppression and bondage. Some of these, you know, are spoken of as the worthies of Israel, and have much recorded in their praise; and yet all these died in the faith, that a defensive war is sinless before God. Still were we to descend and pursue the chain of history, we shall find all the kings of Israel of the same faith. Among many that might be mentioned, we shall at present take notice only of one. David, a man eminent for pure religion, the sweet psalmist of Israel, David, a man after God's own heart, yet all his life is a scene of war. When he was even a youth, he began his martial exploits, and delivered Israel by slaying great Goliath of Gath, the champion of the Philistines. And what shall I say more? The time would fail me to enumerate all who were avouchers of this proposition: It is therefore a clear point, that a defensive war is sinless, and consistent with the purest religion.

This indeed is generally acknowledged, when our dispute is with a foreign enemy, but at present it seems like a house



divided against itself; our dispute is with administration. This is cause of great sorrow, that such a heavy judgment has befallen the kingdom; and yet we are not without some instances in scripture of people refusing obedience to kings, when they became arbitrary and oppressive. When Rehoboam threatened Israel with nothing but tyranny, they did not long hesitate till they gave the king this answer, "*What portion have we in David? Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: To your tents, O Israel! Now see to thine own house David.*" *I Kings xii:16.*

And this certainly has been the faith of Great Britain, as might be made to appear by many instances, one of which I shall at present just mention. When King James II departed from the constitution, and became arbitrary, by dispensing with acts of Parliament by proclamation, issuing *quo warrantos* against charters, and endeavouring to introduce popery, the people esteemed it no sin to invite William, the Prince of Orange, to invade England, and obliged James to abdicate a kingdom he had forfeited his right to govern.

But there are some texts of scripture urged on this occasion, which were to be considered. The following are thought to enjoin non-resistance in the strongest terms, viz. *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers: For there is no power but of GOD; the powers that be, are ordained of GOD. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of GOD: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves condemnation. Rom. xiii:1, 2, etc.* The apostle is no friend to anarchy, for he well knew the corruption and depravity of man would oppress the innocent, if there were no legal restraints. But, in order rightly to understand these words, it is of great importance to determine first, what is meant by the higher powers: For this is what every soul is to be subject unto. We shall find no exposition liable to less exception, than to understand by the higher powers the just, the good, the wholesome and constitutional laws of a land, merely respecting civil government. The very design of these higher powers is to secure the property and promote the happiness of the whole community. These higher powers therefore appear as binding on princes as people. And as God has ordained these powers for the good of the whole, whosoever resisteth the same, resisteth the ordinance of God, and receiveth finally condemnation, and that justly; for anarchy and tyranny are essentially the same, and equally to be dreaded, as each resists

the higher powers. We cannot suppose, either that this text enjoins absolute submission to all laws, which may be made in a land; for some are so wicked, oppressive and unjust in their nature and tendency, that the best of men have thought it their indispensable duty to disobey them. You may well remember, that Nebuchadnezzar made it a certain law, that all nations in his empire should, on pain of death, worship his golden image. Was it the duty of his subjects to obey or not? The conduct of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego will determine the point, who, refusing to comply, were cast into a fiery furnace. Remember also, when Darius, king of Persia, made a statute, that no man should petition either God or man, save himself, for thirty days, Daniel refused obedience unto the decree, because it was unrighteous. Call to mind also, that in the days of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, he enjoined it as a law to all the midwives, that they should kill all the male children of the Jews. Did they obey or not? The text informs us that the fear of God prevented them, believing that no law can make that just, which in its own nature is unrighteous. The higher powers, of which Paul speaks, are ordained of God, and if ordained of him, they must be like unto him, who is a God of unspotted justice and truth.

Certain it is, that the people must be the judges whether the laws are good or not—and I think it must be acknowledged by all, that laws are not good, except they secure every man's liberty and property, and defend the subject against the arbitrary power of kings, or any body of men whatsoever.

Again, another text, used to enforce the doctrine of nonresistance in the present dispute, is, *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake, whether unto the king as supreme, or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. I Pet. ii:13, 14.* This text is to be understood in a restricted and limited sense as above. We cannot suppose, that the apostle meant obedience to all despotic ordinances of tyrants; for this would condemn the conduct of the midwives, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The ordinances here can be none other than such as are good, and ordained of God, for whose sake we are to submit unto them; for these higher powers, or ordinances, are the provision of God, which he has ordained for the Safety of the people, to defend them against oppression and arbitrary power. There is none, but God,

suitably qualified to rule according to his own will and pleasure, so that when man assumes to rule arbitrarily, he sets himself in the temple of GOD, shewing himself that he is GOD; for none is qualified for that seat, but him that is infinitely wise, just and holy. We see, when these words are taken in a limited sense, there is no evil consequence follows, but if we understand them to bind us to obey all that taskmasters require, then it is plain that we condemn King Henry VIII, for refusing obedience to the pope of Rome. Many *bulls* were thundered out against him, but he and the parliament resolved that they were a complete legislative body in themselves, paying no regard to the threats of Rome. If we were to embrace any other exposition of these passages of scripture, we should absolutely condemn the Reformation; nay, we would condemn all England, who refused obedience to King James II because he would not be subject to the higher powers, but endeavoured to subvert the constitution, and to reign arbitrarily. Such a sentiment, if pursued, would lead back to all the horrors of popery and despotism; nay, it would even condemn the blessed martyrs, who refused obedience to arbitrary and wicked laws.

Some will object, that these laws respected religion, which makes an essential difference; for when religion is affected, one may withstand a kingdom. Calvin and Luther were of this faith. It is granted, that there is great difference between state affairs and religion; for Christ says, "*his kingdom is not of this world,*" none dare impose laws in matters of religion on his subjects, without being guilty of a daring insult: but the instances above do not all respect religion, therefore are suitable on the present occasion; and those that do respect religion, were brought to prove that the words are to be taken in a restricted sense. I have met with none, but acknowledge these texts must be so understood, as to justify opposition to popish tyranny. And pray, my countrymen, what better is protestant tyranny than popish? Is there any essential difference between being robbed by a *protestant* or a *papist*? Is it not the very same thing? Tyranny is tyranny, slavery is slavery, by whomsoever it is imposed. Names change not the nature of things. If despotism is bad in a *papist*, it cannot be good in a *protestant*. If it may be resisted in one, it ought to be in the other.

But to proceed: There is another objection, which good people make against war of any kind, viz. "That war is not

agreeable to the disposition of souls newly converted to the knowledge of CHRIST: Then we long for the salvation of souls, and have a tender regard for all men: Surely martial engagements do not suit a meek and loving disciple of JESUS." I confess, no objection to me is of equal importance to this. It is a solemn consideration—Alas! alas! that ever there was occasion of even a defensive war: but occasion there has been, and occasion there now is. The reason why a defensive war seems so awful to good people, is, they esteem it to be some kind of murder: but this is a very great mistake; for it is no more murder than a legal process against a criminal. The end is the same, the mode is different. In some cases it is the only mode left to obtain justice. And surely that religion is not from heaven, which is against justice on earth. Remember all men are not converted; if they were, there could be no necessity of war in any sense. For, says the scripture, "*they shall not hurt nor destroy.*" But remember, this is when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the LORD. Alas! this is not the case now; for darkness, gloomy darkness, prevails throughout the kingdoms of this world. Oh! that the kingdom of JESUS was come, when we should have occasion to learn war no more. But to give a more particular answer to the objection, consider that the design of laws is to punish evil-doers—to bring to justice offenders, and to secure the innocent in the peaceable possession of their properties: for this end GOD has ordained these higher powers; but it some times has been the case, that those, in whose hands these powers are entrusted, become tyrannical, and the greatest offenders, and shall they live with impunity? GOD forbid! how shall justice be obtained? every mode is evaded. The case is similar with a foreign enemy, we cannot have redress any other way, no other method is left to obtain justice; and though the mode is different, the issue is the same as when we execute a criminal condemned by a jury. Suppose, a villain was to rob you of a valuable sum of money, and thereby expose you and your family to distress and poverty, would you not think it your duty to prosecute such a public offender? yes, without doubt, or else you could not be a friend to the innocent part of mankind. But suppose, he not only robs you but in a daring manner, in your presence, murders your only son, will you not think the blood calls aloud for punishment? Surely both reason and revelation will justify you in seeking for justice in that mode b

which it can be obtained. The present case is only too similar—by an arbitrary act all the families that depended on the Newfoundland fishery are abandoned to distress and poverty, and the blood of numbers split already without a cause. Surely it is consistent with the purest religion to seek for justice. Consider the case in this point of view, and he that is not clear in conscience to gird on his sword, if he would act consistently, must never sit on a jury to condemn a criminal.

II. This brings me to the second thing proposed, which was to present a few particulars to your consideration, which will demonstrate the alarming call, which we now have, to take up arms, and fight in our own defence.

We have no choice left to us, but to submit to absolute slavery and despotism, or as free men to stand in our own defence, and endeavour a noble resistance. Matters are at last brought to this deplorable extremity—every reasonable method of reconciliation has been tried in vain—our addresses to our king have been treated with neglect or contempt. It is true that a plan of accommodation has been proposed by administration; but they are men of more sense than to think it could be accepted. It could be proposed for no other purpose than to deceive England into an opinion, that we did not desire reconciliation. What was the substance of this pretended plan? In short this, that we should give them as much money as they were pleased to ask, and we might raise it in our own mode. Slaves therefore we must be, only we shall be indulged to put on our fetters, to suit ourselves. This plan is no better than that clause, which says, “That the parliament have a right to make laws to bind us in all cases whatsoever.” For if they may fix the sum, and we must raise it, the case is the same, we having nothing left, but what they have no use for—all is at their disposal, and we shall have no voice in the application of our own money. They may apply it to raise forces in Canada, to cut our throats. The call therefore is alarming—we cannot submit to be slaves—we were born free, and we can die free. Only attend to the voice of parliament, viz. “That they have a right to make laws to bind us in all cases whatsoever.” Even our religion is not excepted—they assume a right to bind us in all cases. Agreeable to this proposition, they may oblige us to support popish priests, on pain of death—they have already given us a specimen of the good effects of their assumed power, in establishing popery in

near one half of North America. Is not this the loudest call to arms? All is at stake—we can appeal to GOD, that we believe our cause is just and good. But to attend to our text, “and fight for your brethren,” our brethren in the Massachusetts are already declared *rebels*—they are treated as such, and we as abettors are involved in the same circumstances—nothing can be more unjust than such a proclamation. Rebels are men disaffected with their sovereign in favour of some other person. This is not the case of America; for if Jacobites were not more common in England than with us, we should not have had occasion of the present dispute. We very well know what follows this proclamation, all our estates are confiscated, and were we even to submit, we should be hanged as dogs. Now therefore let us join, and fight for our brethren. Remember our congress is in eminent danger. It is composed of men of equal characters and fortunes of most, if not superior to any in North America. These worthy gentlemen have ventured all in the cause of liberty for our sakes—if we were to forsake them, they must be abandoned to the rage of a relentless ministry. Some of them are already proscribed, and no doubt this would be the fate of the rest: How could we bear to see these worthy patriots hanged as criminals of the deepest dye? This, my countrymen, must be the case, if you will not now as men fight for your brethren: Therefore if we do not stand by them, even unto death, we should be guilty of the basest ingratitude, and entail on ourselves everlasting infamy. But if the case of our brethren is not so near as suitably to affect us, let us consider the condition of our sons and daughters. Your sons are engaged in the present dispute, and therefore subject to all the consequences: Oh! remember if you submit to arbitrary measures, you will entail on your sons despotic power. Your sons and your daughters must be strangers to the comforts of liberty—they will be considered like beasts of burden, only made for their *master's use*. If the groans and cries of posterity in oppression can be any argument, come now, my noble countrymen, fight for your sons and your daughters. But if this will not alarm you, consider what will be the case of your wives, if a noble resistance is not made: all your estates confiscated, and distributed to the favourites of arbitrary power, your wives must be left to distress and poverty. This might be the better endured, only the most worthy and flower of all the land shall be hanged, and widowhood and poverty

both come in one day. The call to arms is therefore alarming, especially when we consider the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel, we can expect no favour from administration. They seem to be callous, so as to have no feeling of human distress. What can be a greater demonstration than to excite the barbarous savage against us?<sup>2</sup> These, instead of coming against our armed men, will beset our defenceless frontiers, and barbarously murder with savage cruelty poor helpless women and children. Oh, did ever mortal hear of such inhuman barbarity!<sup>3</sup> Come, then, my countrymen, we have no other remedy, but, under God, to fight for our brethren, our sons and our daughters, our wives and our houses.

III. It is probable that the most will acknowledge, that the call to arms is alarming, but we are comparatively weak to Great Britain; an answer to this will bring us to the third thing under consideration, which was, to advance a few arguments to excite fortitude in martial engagements. And no argument is greater than our text, viz. "*Remember the LORD is great and terrible.*" All human aid is subject to disappointment, but when our dependance is on the almighty God, we may hope for success, *for the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him.* 2 Chron. xvi:9. He gives us a glorious display of his assistance in the case of Abraham, who lifted up his hand to the most high God, and pursued the four kings with their numerous armies, and God delivered them into his hand, for he is great, and doth great and marvellous things in behalf of them that trust in him. Remember what the LORD has done in ages past: Israel were in the days of Saul sorely beset by the Philistines—their hearts trembled at the formidable aspect of great Goliath of Gath; but God sends forth a youth, even a stripling, against this man of war, and soon we see the insulting foe lie prostrate at the feet of David. Call to mind what he did to the Assyrian host in the days of Hezekiah: with bitter taunts Rabshakeh reproaches Israel, threatening, that if they did not soon surrender, that he would oblige them to eat

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2. It is beyond dispute, that Guy Johnson is using his influence with the Mohawks against us, as well as the Superintendant of South Carolina. These must be bribed by Administration, whose tools and pensioners they are.

3. It is a received maxim, that he that employs an assassin is as bad himself.

their own excrements and drink their own urine. But behold the hand of the LORD is with Israel, therefore an angel of death is sent, who smote the Assyrian camp, so that an hundred four score and five thousand were dead corpses in the morning light. Kings and captains may boast great things, but GOD alone is truly great, and greatly to be feared; he doth his pleasure in the heavens above, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and all nations are as nothing in his sight. GOD is not only great, but terrible in his judgments; an instance we have in Pharaoh, King of Egypt, who was resolved to keep Israel in bondage, but was fatally disappointed in the Red Sea. His judgments are both great and various; how easy is it for GOD to baffle all the counsels of our enemies? How easily can he divide them, or raise up enemies that shall give them employment enough at home? So he delivered David in the wilderness of Maon. Our GOD is able to give us pity in the eyes of the nations around us, so that they will afford their aid, if required. If GOD be for us, who can be against us? We have great reason to bewail the sins of the land, yet the LORD has a people in it reserved for himself, and if this had been the case with Sodom, it would have been saved. Our present dispute is just, our cause is good. We have been as loyal subjects as any on earth—at all times, when occasion called, we have contributed towards the expense of war, with liberal hands, beyond our power, even in their estimation. When we have been called to venture our lives in defence of our king and country, have we refused? No, verily; we have been willing to spill our precious blood. We have been charged with designs of independency: This possibly may be the event, but surely against our wills; the decent addresses to his Majesty, as well as all other prudential measures, are arguments in our favour. But all our measures are disregarded, the terms offered us are but a few degrees milder than what the Ammonites offered to Jabesh-Gilead. These poor men offered more than reason could ask, but nothing would serve, only for each to have his right eye put out—the terms were bad—tears flowed from every eye—wailing reached the ears of Saul, and the spirit of the LORD came on him. *I Sam. xi:6*. By the spirit of GOD here we may understand a martial spirit stirred up in Saul. He assembles all Israel, and makes a noble resistance, attended with a glorious victory over the enemy. The spirit of GOD coming on him was a presage of success. And has not the



same spirit come on us? A martial spirit from GOD has spread throughout the land. Surely, if this is not a heavy judgment, it is a presage of success. We are fully persuaded, that this spirit is not a judgment, because our cause is good, even in the sight of other States. To the Most High we can appeal, and submit the event to his pleasure. It is more than probable that we may meet with some defeats, and have much blood shed; but even if this should be the case, let us not be discouraged; for so it was with Israel in their first battles with Benjamin, but in the third battle the whole tribe of Benjamin is cut off, save six hundred men.

There is only one consideration that is very discouraging, and that is the great and many sins that prevail in our land. "Unfeignedly to confess and deplore our many sins," is recommended by our Congress as one duty of this day. And, alas! we have many great sins abounding in our land, for which we may justly bewail our case before GOD, some of which, it may not be amiss to mention here—but where shall I begin? There is one heaven daring and GOD provoking sin, which prevails even among many who otherwise are gentlemen, that is profaneness of language, in taking the tremendous name of GOD in vain. This is a sin of the first magnitude—men have the least excuse for it—no sense is gratified—it is attended with no profit—yet how common is it in almost every town and province! Remember that it is him, who is great and terrible, that says, he will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Add to this, the dissolute debauchery, drunkenness, pride and excess which prevails in our land, and we shall not wonder that the LORD has a controversy with the kingdom. These and many other sins we have reason to bewail before GOD, and are the only discouragements in the present dispute. And if we are successful in our present struggle for liberty, we cannot expect to enjoy any lasting happiness without a reformation, and a life worthy of the glorious gospel. Was the fear of GOD suitably in our hearts, we should be invincible; for if GOD be for us, who can be against us? But, alas! there seems but little concern about forsaking sin and a saving acquaintance with GOD, though our present state is so alarming: all the horrors of a war is at hand—death is ready to triumph over his thousands, and are we still asleep in sin? We are called to fight for our brethren, our sons and our daughters, our wives and our

houses; and if GOD forsakes us, our slavery is sure. Many trust too much on the arm of flesh; but let us place all our confidence in GOD, and use every prudential step. Nehemiah prays, but omits not the use of means, he sets a watch night and day to guard against the enemy, and every man is equipped for battle.

Thus, my hearers, I have considered every point which demanded our present attention. I hope that it has been made evident, that a defensive war is sinless, and consistent with the purest religion. This I can say, these arguments have removed all difficulties from my own breast. Seeing therefore, that it is sinless, and we are called to take the bloody weapons of death in hand, let not the expense of war discourage us. This indeed must be very great, but be it so; we fight not for present profit, no, our noble struggle is for liberty itself, without which even life would be miserable—what though the half, nay the three parts, of our estates be lost, we shall have the fourth remaining—our land is good, we can live. Providence can easily compensate our loss. And remember the LORD is great, matters may have a speedy issue; he can raise the spirit of the inhabitants of Great Britain in our favour—their voice shall reach the throne—he is able to open the eyes of administration, or remove our enemies from about his Majesty, so that there may yet be a happy reconciliation with Great Britain. We have considered the alarming call, which we have to take up arms—let us unite as men possessed of a true sense of liberty. If any are not clear in conscience, let us not despise them. I confess some are provoking, but mildness is our duty; that with well-doing we may silence the obstinacy of evil men. On the whole, we are come to the unhappy state of a civil war, and I remember Bishop Burnet makes a remark to this effect, viz. “Of all calamities it is the greatest, for though we know where it begins, we know not where it shall end.” If ever there was one time that called for more religion than another, this is the very time. And yet, alas! how few are seeking GOD! how few are seeking their salvation, when death is even at the door, and all at stake! Let me therefore entreat you seriously to lay to heart the present state, and “*remember the LORD, which is great and terrible.*” Amen.

AND GOD DEFEND THE RIGHT  
The American Revolution and the  
Limits of Christian Obedience

M. E. Bradford

IN all of the noise, glamour, and patriotic enthusiasm of the 1976 beginnings of our bicentennial celebrations, most Americans failed to recognize the extent to which there is always a partisan political dimension to the way in which we understand the American Revolution. For as a nation so very much defined by its history (as opposed to blood, or religion, or language and culture, or "great men") our Revolution is both prescript and precedent. If we are to concede that our country owes its existence to an ideological explosion like the French Revolution of 1789 or the Russian Revolution of 1918, then it could rightly be used, both here and abroad, as a sanction for the same sort of *a priori*, all-or-nothing politics in 1982. Robert R. Palmer's *The Age of Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800* argues in favor of such a conflation.<sup>1</sup> And with a slightly different, less egalitarian, and more libertarian emphasis, Bernard Bailyn in his *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* reasons to the same effect and discovers in the sayings of the Fathers of the Republic a full commitment to the doctrine of the "true Whigs," the teachings of Trenchard and Gordon and the Commonwealthmen.<sup>2</sup> Even worse is Henry Steele Commager's *The Empire of Reason: How Europe Imagined and America Realized the Enlightenment*—the argument of which is well

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1. Robert R. Palmer, *The Age of Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959, 1964).

2. Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967). John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon brought out *Cato's Letters* in 1775. Professor Caroline Robbins in her *The Eighteenth Century Commonwealthman* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959) has identified the company to which they belong.

identified by its title.<sup>3</sup>

These radical versions of the original American politics, with their emphasis on equality and liberty in the abstract (and their presumption of a great break with our European past) follow from an excessive concentration upon the enthusiasms of a few articulate philosophers of the closet, upon off-hand remarks and peripheral figures, thus ignoring the fact that things assumed in a given era or community are not often defended in print. There is no credit to be had from stating the obvious—unless the obvious is in real danger of being misunderstood, or is under serious attack. To this date we may observe responsible public figures (like a former ambassador who appeared not long ago on Bill Buckley's series) who speak of the American paradigm as justifying a "continuing revolution" of constitutional tinkering, unfounded expectations, and sentimental meliorism: an impious leveraging away at a viable social and political order in the name of certain propositions which appear nowhere in our Constitution. These gentlemen are greatly confused concerning the truth about our early history. And their confusion threatens what remains intact from an originally wholesome political inheritance.

In achieving a proper perspective on the American Revolution, of what it signified and what it *did not* mean, it is first necessary that we recover some of the eighteenth-century understanding of the word "tyranny." Opposition to tyranny was a mainspring of the American Revolution. There were, of course, all sorts of justifications for the collective American decision to seek our independence of the authority of Crown and Parliament. Some of these were entirely secular; and some were both secular and religious. Both varieties, however, contained a theoretical objection to tyranny, with an attendant definition of that crime. Simplistic millenarianism of the variety that sometimes appeared in the Puritan camp during the English Revolution of the 1640s was so rare as to be an insignificant feature of the American explanation/apologia

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3. Henry Steele Commager, *The Empire of Reason: How Europe Imagined and America Realized the Enlightenment* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1977).

for the war of 1775-1783.<sup>4</sup> "No king but King Jesus!" was not an American battle cry, even though many leaders in our struggle for liberty would have agreed with John Bradshaw, Lord President of the High Court of Justice called upon to try King Charles I, that "resistance to tyranny is obedience to God." And there was to be sure, a small, since overpublicized and articulate minority of "natural rights" men who insisted that any government which violated the universal, inalienable and aboriginal rights of man forfeited its claim to the allegiance of those living under its authority and returned them to a state of nature. Tom Paine talked this way, Thomas Young, Isaac Sears, and that "baleful comet" of Boston, old Sam Adams—as did (sometimes) other leading revolutionaries who were at bottom uncomfortable with such rhetoric, but willing to use it in a particular argument, where survival was at stake.<sup>5</sup> That this convenient fiction would, in less than two centuries, lead to outcries for "economic democracy," "entitlements" and the complete elimination of the private sphere through teleocratic regulation they could not have imagined—and would not have approved. With *the right of self-preservation*, taking the form of a demand for *a social and political regime held together by the rule of law*, they were much more comfortable. It was a teaching which subsumed their view of tyranny, as the simple appeal to natural rights did not.

However, the characteristic theory of revolution adduced from the record of America's quarrel with the mother country, Crown *and* Parliament, and from the early effort of these former colonies to form a confederation, once independent, was legalistic doctrine borrowed from the example of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, which had brought William and Mary to the throne of England and driven King James II into exile. An earlier model for this revolution was the separation of the Netherlands from the authority of King Phillip II of

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4. Useful examinations of American secular millenarianism in the old Puritan commonwealths are Nathan O. Hatch, *The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought and the Millennium in Revolutionary New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); and James West Davidson, *The Logic of Millennial Thought: Eighteenth Century New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977). Usually clergy spoke of the Revolution in eschatological terms, but in this were not echoed by political figures.

5. On this group see Pauline Maier, *The Old Revolutionaries: Political Lives in the Age of Samuel Adams* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980).

Spain, accomplished by William the Silent and justified in his 1580 *Apology*, in the 1581 "Act of Abjuration" by the Estates General of the Netherlands, and the 1579 Union of Utrecht.<sup>6</sup> Both the Glorious Revolution and its Dutch counterpart were in theory prescriptive and complained of the failure of a prince to be a "shepherd" to and protector of his people, of his "infringement of their laws and customs," and of the necessity of preserving their "lives and privileges." Neither revolt was a *bellum servile*—a peasants' revolt—but developed instead when the aristocratic leaders of a society refused to practice "slavish compliance" and instead proceeded in the defense of their country to "the choice of another prince." James II had created courts out of his prerogative and treated other components of the English constitutional settlement of 1660 as if they existed only by his pleasure—as if his authority as prince and the lesser authorities beneath him (Lord Lieutenants, sheriffs, Judges, Members of Commons and the House of Lords) did not rest on a common ground. Scots found the same paradigm in their 1580 restraining of young James VI, in the struggles of John Knox with Queen Mary, and in the Bishop's War of 1639.<sup>7</sup> And many Americans knew the history of Scotland and the political thought of that kingdom better than they knew John Locke—especially the ten Princeton (College of New Jersey) graduates among the 55 Framers who had studied under Dr. John Witherspoon, and three others who were educated in Scotland itself.<sup>8</sup>

There is, to be sure, no point in denying that there were latter-day Puritans in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire who saw in resistance to the Boston Port Bill and other Coercive Acts, or to the Stamp Act (and the Quebec Act) a re-enactment of the Good Old Cause that brought Cromwell's Protectorate and the Commonwealth. But even in New England those that hungered and thirsted after a New Zion were exceptions. And to the south of Hartford and New Haven most Americans went with hesitation or reluctance up

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6. A fine discussion of this part of Dutch history is C. V. Wedgwood, *William the Silent: William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, 1533-1584* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1968).

7. Scotland's view of rightful revolution had a powerful expression in the Glasgow Assembly of June-December, 1638. See C. V. Wedgwood, *The King's Peace, 1637-1641* (Glasgow: William Collins & Co., 1955).

8. President John Witherspoon and two College of New Jersey graduates signed the Declaration of Independence. But there were many other Calvinists (or men exposed to Calvinist thought) who belonged to the same special company.

the road to revolution under the leadership of lawyers, merchants, and planters: men who continued to reverence the English Constitution and to draw upon its authority even as they formed an army, repulsed the troops of George III and adopted the Declaration of Independence. They were clearly within a pattern recognized in English and European thought when they withdrew allegiance from a "Christian king" (note Jefferson's ironic reference in the original draft of the Declaration) who had failed to act like one in insisting on "unconditional submission" (see the August, 1775 "Proclamation for Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition").

Many of the principal men of our War for Independence, the statesmen, were either trained in the Inns of Court, or educated by older men who had enjoyed such an education. Almost all of them were members of one of the established Christian communions. Therefore they accepted the obligation of the Christian to obey legitimate government and attempted no argument from definition for the right of revolution by reason of "light and transient causes" (i.e. mere irritations or ordinary injustices that entailed no change in the pattern of government to which they were accustomed). Instead, their pleading was from circumstance and history, from law and from the theology ordinarily attached to that combination. Tyranny however ("tyrant" or "tyranny" are mentioned four times in the Declaration) negates that "prudence" which "will dictate that governments long established" should not be disturbed: a tyranny whose nature is specified in the body of the Declaration, which amounts to a bill of particulars "of abuses and usurpations." And tyranny (or despotism) was not something mysterious. A crime of rulers, it occurred when the prince or chief magistrate sold himself on the thesis that law proceeds from the mouth of the king.<sup>9</sup> Tyranny existed when the people suffered in patience and petitioned for relief, while he who should be as a "father" to them in offering his protection, instead requires that they live without the shelter of the law and threatens their lives, their liberties and their prop-

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9. Sir Robert Berkeley (1584-1654), Lord Chief Justice of England (and a toady of Charles I), had issued the doctrine of *Rex Lex* in 1637, ruling concerning the ship money that "*rex is lex, lex loquens*, a living, a speaking, an acting law." Many Whigs replied—especially Samuel Rutherford in his *Lex, Rex* (1644). Berkeley's doctrine cost him his office in 1641—though it did not (as in the case of the Earl of Strafford) cost him his life.

erty. In other words, in the language of the Declaratory Act, he attempts to subject them "in all cases whatsoever"—which is to make them the slaves of his will, or (in case of Great Britain) of the will of the party gathered around his throne. Finally, he subjects the courts to his whim and binds the lesser magistrates. Then St. Paul's Christian obedience to rulers reaches its limit and good men may appeal "to the great law of nature and nations," *self-preservation*, put a "firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence," take up arms and cry "God Defend the Right."

Now as there is no place in this formula for attack on settled regimes with the engines of paradigm, we can understand the importance of colonial legislatures, colonial charters, and their coming together in the Continental Congress for the *legitimacy* of the American Revolution. The theory here is as old as Western Christendom, though it may not derive directly from the medieval doctrine of subsidiarity, Bracton, Fortescue, and Lord Coke. It is implicit in the Declaration of Independence itself (an apology for an unusual act) and in the petitions from the various colonial legislatures and Continental Congress—in the careful effort of the Americans to be (or appear to be) the injured parties, acting within the Constitution, through their rightful leaders and against a prince who has "abdicated" his throne with respect to their community, and thus forced upon them a few innovations in government. The absolutist theory of monarchy belongs properly to the Middle East, the Orient and Eastern (Byzantine) Europe. In Northern and Western Europe the Church, the barons, the inherited law and patriarchal past diminished the potential divinity of kings and even left open the possibility of regicide. Perhaps the most useful modern expression of this pious and conservative revolutionary model (one well known to many early Americans) appears in Calvin's *Institutes*: in XX. 31, concerning the rightful power of the three orders in their diets "to check the undue license of kings . . . when they tyrannise"; in XX. 32, where he speaks of kings who "have virtually abrogated" their power; and in Aphorism No. 100 where he writes, "The obedience enjoined on subjects does not prevent the interference of any popular Magistrates whose office it is to restrain tyrants and to protect the liberty of the people."<sup>10</sup>

10. See Vol. II, p. 674, 675 and 689 of John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William E. Eerdmans Publishing



According to the Old Whig view of the English Constitution, it was not a contract but a *source of identity*—with no author but the nation and its history, with God an implicit party to the process. As covenant *qua* law it grew out of the interaction of people and princes living out of the nation's *genius*, with God's blessing its confirmation. These assumptions undergird most of the early American political documents.<sup>11</sup> Parliament in Westminster had little function with reference to the colonies—was a factor only in intercolonial affairs and emergencies such as war. Kings had issued the American charters, sent out governors and requested supply from colonial legislatures. They could avoid tyranny by observing the limits of the Constitution, leaving colonial Americans with their inherited rights as Englishmen. This *English Constitution*, in its original or American version, was thus *functionally sovereign*, though the king owned his claim to the first office defined by it thanks to his status as the legitimate heir of the previous king. His situation had a Tory explanation, but not his powers. He had a mandate to administer that law within which his office existed and, with lesser magistrates who executed the mandate for him, to discover it. Those magistrates also had their right to exist from the law, not the king.

Part of the precondition of divine favor according to every version of Old Whig theory was that, when visible in the happy situation of the people, when granted, it serve as a restraint on those proud souls who would tinker with a sanctioned arrangement binding together, in Burke's phrase, "the dead, the living and the yet unborn." Hence, when tyranny cut Americans free from the source of their prescriptive law, they continued to respect the law and *generated their new constitutions out of it*. The American political theorist, William

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Company, 1972), ed. and translated by Henry Beveridge. The "100 Aphorisms" included in this edition were written by Wm. Pringle as a summary of the *Institutes*. A. S. P. Woodhouse, on pp. 61-63 of his "Introduction" to his edition of the 1647-1649 Army Debates, *Puritanism and Liberty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), puts Calvin's remarks on tyranny in the context of the thought of his time.

11. I discuss many of these documents in my *A Better Guide Than Reason: Studies in the American Revolution* (La Salle, Illinois: Sherwood Sugden & Co., 1979). A reading of their significance close to my own is M. Stanton Evans, "Toward A New Intellectual History," *Modern Age*, 25 (Fall, 1981), 364-368.

Henry Drayton of South Carolina, contended that the British government in 1774-1775 was like all other legitimate, non-tyrannical governments, in that once the pattern of "protection and subjection," linking prince and freeman, collapsed, then no true liberty could exist until it was replaced.<sup>12</sup> The popular magistrates, whose offices had the same constitutional sanction as the Crown, where the keys to what could be attempted. No abrogation of the Charters, no return to Anarchy, no starting up from "scratch"; on these grounds neither internal revolution, nor selective resistance to positive law, nor the making of unreasonable, non-negotiable demands could be elevated into a positive principle—one to be invoked at the least provocation.

Thus I would suggest an analogy between the moral freedom of the Christian who has, in the formula of St. Paul, accepted the Christian rule for life and the liberty for which the Fathers of this Republic were willing to risk their "lives, [their] Fortunes, and [their] sacred honor." Both predicate the reality of freedom *within* an accepted bond—within a political structure, sheltering a social structure. Belonging in this equation paradoxically makes men free. The doctrines of natural rights, we must remember, are heathen in their implicit primitivism. A "state of nature" is a desperate, barbarous condition. The American Revolution was not the venture of men bemused with an optimism concerning human nature.<sup>13</sup> It was not the handiwork of sentimental democrats, nor the Constitution after it. But to live under tyranny is not to enjoy a social and political estate—a civil condition for family, private property, legitimate voluntary association, and social classes which are able to maintain themselves free of unceasing political invasion or domination: a world where citizens vote on some questions, and the law within its sphere is the same for all who come before it.<sup>14</sup> To that felicity colonial

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12. My commentary on Drayton appears on pp. 111-133 of *A Better Guide Than Reason*. I paraphrase Drayton throughout this essay. The specific work quoted here is "Charges to the Grand Jury, of general session held at Charlestown 1776 and 1777, commending the constitution as established by Congress March 26, 1776; the rise of American Empire and other topics . . ." It is reprinted in Vol. II of John Drayton's *Memoirs of the American Revolution* (Charleston: A. E. Miller, 1821).

13. *Vox Populi, Vox Dei* was not their motto.

14. I quote here from Robert Nisbit, *The Social Philosophers: Community and*

Americans had been accustomed. *And to that felicity most of them intended to return.* Or to the nearest imaginable equivalent! In comprehending what tyranny meant to William Henry Drayton, John Dickinson, John Rutledge, Gouverneur Morris, Benjamin Harrison or Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, we must clear away a great body of manufactured confusion.<sup>15</sup> But the labor is worth the effort, if ordered liberty is still part of our aspiration as a people.

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*Conflict in Western Thought* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1973) pp. 396 and 411. I develop the definition of a social and political condition in my "On Remembering Who We Are: A Political Credo," in *Modern Age* 26, pp. 144ff.

15. A representative list of American Old Whigs.

## THE DUTCH-AMERICAN GUERRILLAS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

William Marina and Diane Cuervo

UNTIL recently, few historians had analyzed the American Revolution from the perspective of what in the twentieth century has come to be known as "revolutionary warfare." The military history of the Revolution was usually separated from the political, social, or economic history of the War, and dealt mostly with battles between traditionally organized armies.

John Shy, whose essay "The American Revolution: The Military Conflict Considered as a Revolutionary War,"<sup>1</sup> is recognized as a path-breaking study in this area, later acknowledged that the piece emerged out of some contract work which he did for the Pentagon in 1965 during the Vietnam War, having to do with "Isolating the Guerrilla" from his civilian support. "Skeptical of the project as a whole," he confessed, "I justified taking its modest stipend by thinking that the American Revolutionary War had a few lessons for our own time."<sup>2</sup>

In terms of revolutionary warfare, however, much of his study had to do with what is usually considered "partisan," or "irregular," warfare, rather than what is often described as "guerrilla war." In contrast to regular armies fighting each other from essentially fixed lines, irregular warfare involves skirmishes, sometimes behind enemy lines, by small army or militia units. Continued operations by such formally organized regular units indicates that the country is far from under the control of, or pacified by, the invader. On the other hand, in a technical sense guerrilla warfare is revolutionary war at its most basic level. The occupying forces are enough in control of the area that local guerrillas fight as in effect, part-time

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1. In Stephen G. Kurtz and John H. Hutson, eds., *Essays on the American Revolution*, 1973.

2. John Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed*, 1976, p. 193.

soldiers, usually attacking by surprise at night, and then resuming their civilian occupations during the day.

In a sense, therefore, theories of revolutionary war, or counter-insurgency, are really the opposite sides of the same coin. Once a country has been occupied and its regular forces defeated, an insurgency begins with the initiation of guerrilla warfare. While this may continue in some areas, as the enemy is weakened in others, a shift to irregular warfare may be undertaken, and, finally the emergence of a regular army to face the occupying forces in the field. Militarily, counter-insurgency means smashing the regular army, mopping up any attempts at irregular warfare by small units, and the restoration of order by eliminating the local guerrillas through isolating them from the rest of the population.

If this rough scenario, outlined in numerous books on revolutionary warfare, has any validity, then despite the many traditional military books to the contrary, *the British were never anywhere near "victory" in the American Revolution*. The main American Army—there were at times several others also—under George Washington was never smashed. After his defeats in New York during 1776, "the Old Fox" withdrew into the hills in New Jersey from which in any emergency he could have thrown his limited forces along a perimeter stretching from Boston to Philadelphia.<sup>3</sup> Far from being overly cautious, with even the slightest hint of advantage, Washington repeatedly engaged the British forces. When the British tried a strategy of extending a line of garrisons into the interior, much as the United States tried in Vietnam, he beat them so badly with a surprise attack on Trenton that they were dissuaded from any further pursuit of that tactic.<sup>4</sup>

Every time the British ventured into the interior, as Tom Paine predicted, they lost an army.<sup>5</sup> This was true at Saratoga, where militia units, coming from as far away as New England, attacked as irregulars, and then meshed together into an army which resulted in the surrender of

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3. Dave R. Palmer, *The Way of the Fox: American Strategy in the War for America 1775-1783*, 1974.

4. Page Smith, *A People's History of the American Revolution*, 1976.

5. Cited in James W. Pohl, "The American Revolution and the Vietnamese War: Pertinent Military Analogies," *The History Teacher* 7 (February, 1974).

General Burgoyne. Certainly the French fleet offshore and the American and French forces surrounding him were significant factors in Lord Cornwallis's decision to surrender, but we must not forget that his army had been severely weakened from numerous encounters with regular army and partisan forces. Far from liberating the interior of the Carolinas, he found himself losing men, and leaving behind war materials, as he drove to reach the coast for an attempted evacuation. Even in the case of Philadelphia, the British had abandoned it because, despite the use of considerable manpower, it was simply too difficult to keep it supplied in the face of constant harassment by militia.

In short, *the British were simply never in control of very much of North America*. During the period when their fleet was transferring the army from Boston to New York, in the face of Washington's artillery on the heights above the former, there were *no* British in the colonies. Except for relatively short periods, from 1776 until 1781, the British, on any continuing basis, controlled little more than the city of New York.

Given these circumstances, there was really very little opportunity, or need, for the Americans to organize, or attempt to sustain, a classic guerrilla insurgency. On the other hand, after the failure at a negotiated peace during early 1778, the British began to develop the outlines of a pacification plan.

One way to examine the course of the war and the effectiveness of British strategy, especially with respect to pacification, is to study its effect in a small area. That is, after all, what the English and Hessian commanders seemed to be asking for, a single county that could be pacified, and from which, like a row of dominoes, they could work out in various directions, until a whole state, and then others, were secured.

### *New Jersey: "The Middle Ground"*

The British never entertained much hope that New England would be an initial area for pacification. Connecticut, for example, had only six percent Loyalists, and no British army ventured into the countryside after the losses at Lexington and Concord. Late in the war, it was in the South that the British sought to establish the pacification program, but there, too, the image of a vast reservoir of Loyalists in the interior, waiting to be liberated, proved illusory. We noted

above the partisan attacks on Cornwallis, so incessant that the British soldiers labelled the area around Charlotte, North Carolina, "the hornet's nest."

The middle area, however, was always supposedly the most vulnerable. Inhabited by more minority groups, General Burgoyne's planned march and occupation of this area would have split the New England states off from the South. Even if this notion had not been held by the British, they had to start somewhere, if the pacification program was ever to get underway. Since they held New York City from mid-1776 until the end of the war, what better place to begin, working out from that secure area, not toward Connecticut, but to the west and south?

New Jersey, which has been called "the cockpit of the Revolution," was the natural place to begin. In this "neutral ground" the two sides contended for the duration of the war. The struggle to control this area was evident in 1776, long before any formal British commitment to a pacification program.

If ever there was a location where the British had "time," that precious commodity for which the counter-insurgency expert is always asking, it was in New Jersey. In those areas close to New York City, it would be difficult for American partisan units to operate, if at all. Instead, for five years, the major theme would be the classic confrontation of American guerrilla forces opposing whatever British and Loyalist units invaded the area. Finally, any pacification program would apparently be aided by the fact that the area contained numerous Dutch settlers, one of those minorities which, as William Nelson has noted, was constituted of certain segments susceptible to Toryism.<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, we lack detailed studies of local areas during the years of the Revolution. Fortunately, however, what Shy has called "the only intensive study made of a single community during this period," is of Bergen County, New Jersey, the area around Paramus, on the Jersey side of where the George Washington Bridge now crosses the Hudson River. Thus, the only area of which we have an "intensive study," turns out to be one of the few areas with any potential for examining the American Revolution for examples of classical guerrilla warfare, with the British in virtual control of the area

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6. William Nelson, *The American Tory*, 1967.

for an extended period of time.

Curiously, Shy made no real use of this study in his own essay, remarking that from its data, "it is apparent that the local and bloody battles between rebel and Loyal militia were related to the prewar animosities between ethnic groups, political rivals, churches, and even neighbors."<sup>7</sup> The work in question is Adrian C. Leiby's *The Revolutionary War in the Hackensack Valley: The Jersey Dutch and the Neutral Ground, 1775-1783*,<sup>8</sup> which Shy in both versions of his essay mistakenly cites as *The Hackensack Valley in the American Revolutionary War*.<sup>9</sup>

In what follows, we hope to demonstrate, contrary to Shy's implication, that there is an enormous amount of data in Leiby's work relevant to the study of revolutionary warfare and how that whole process develops over time. This is true in a strictly military sense, but, even if that were not the case, Shy's comment suggests that internal struggles between the local population involving ethnicity, politics, religion, and neighbors, is somehow not related to revolutionary warfare. But, if anything, the opposite is true! The struggle in Vietnam, for example, involved the Vietnamese divided against each other around such issues as ethnicity, politics, and religion, long before the Americans made the scene.

What this really suggests is how truly difficult a task the American revolutionary forces in this area faced. Divided by various issues, and with a considerable Loyalist population, the revolutionaries were also confronted by large British and Hessian forces. Any effective operations against the British and their Loyalist allies could only be mounted after the revolutionaries had consolidated their own forces. This brings us to an area which most theorists of the sociology of revolution have regarded as crucial: the winning over and commitment, or at the very least acquiescence, of those who would, in many respects, wish to remain neutral. Often they may want the program of the revolutionists, but as classic examples of what economists call "the free rider," they do not wish to involve themselves needlessly in a risk to achieve that goal.

The purpose of this essay is not a critique of Shy's work, but it is clear that military historians have tended to ignore, or

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7. Shy, *People*, p. 206.

8. 1962.

9. See, for example, Shy, *People*, p. 286.



touch lightly, upon the fact that *revolutionary warfare is primarily a question of psychology and politics, often including ideology*. But all great theoreticians of revolutionary war have recognized that it is a *struggle over legitimacy*. One of us has dealt with this question in some detail elsewhere,<sup>10</sup> and, as we shall see, that theme underlies much of the activities of the Americans in Leiby's description of the war in the Hackensack Valley. With these preliminary comments about revolutionary warfare in mind, let us examine Leiby's study for any illumination it might offer toward understanding this phenomena as one aspect of the American Revolution.

### *The Patriot Militiaman*

Leiby's characterization of "the patriot militiaman" who "farmed during the day and did sentinel duty at night" is almost a classic description of the guerrilla. In the "middle" actually, rather than "neutral," ground, the battle raged back and forth, and if the British came often to forage among the inhabitants of that rich farm area, so too at times did the Americans.<sup>11</sup>

To understand what was to occur there during the Revolution we must go back a few years earlier. The Dutch communities in that whole area had been deeply split by a schism, and greatly affected by the Great Awakening of the 1740s, and after that had taken place up and down the colonies, also influencing other denominations in a similar fashion. On one side was the smaller "conferentie" which still held to a strong link back to Amsterdam, and had a "violent hatred for all things American." From this group were to come the *Dutch Tories*. The other, and much larger group was the "coetus," which sought much lesser ties with Amsterdam, and much influenced by the Great Awakening, hoped to institute a more personal religion on a more than Sunday basis, along with a more democratic church polity. It has been called "the American party," and from it came the *Dutch Whigs*

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10. William Marina, "The American Revolution and the Minority Myth," *Modern Age* 20 (Summer, 1976), and Marina, "Revolution and Social Change: The American Revolution as a People's War," *Literature of Liberty* 1 (Summer, 1978).

11. Leiby, *War*, p. viii. Unless otherwise indicated, the following notes are all from Leiby's work and are indicated simply by page number.

who were to bear the brunt of the militia struggle for the area.<sup>12</sup>

The Dutch who formed the backbone of the patriotic cause were members of the Dutch Reformed Church, sharing the democratic church polity, essentially congregational, of the Presbyterians, who so angered the British, and whose churches as rebel meeting houses bore the brunt of many of their raids. Of the New York Dutch, the Loyalist historian Thomas Jones wrote, "the Presbyterian party was in possession [of the Reformed church] and . . . their leaders were nearly all on the American side, [so the British] took possession of their edifices as rebel property." One British policy maker sent to America put the matter succinctly: "When the war is over, there must be a great reform established, . . . for, . . . Presbyterianism is really at the bottom of this whole conspiracy, has supplied it with vigor, and will never rest till something is decided upon it."<sup>13</sup>

These prosperous Dutch farmers were hardly radicals, but a few of them were from the beginning quite militant in defense in American rights. Early in 1775 New Jersey was one of those states that made the transition from Royal to revolutionary government "without the firing of a gun," as the Provincial Congress replaced the Provincial Assembly, the Bergen County delegates to the meeting of May 23, 1775, having been selected by the local Committee of Correspondence. The Bergen County resolutions of May 12 were typical of those throughout the colonies in the aftermath of Lexington and Concord. They called for a union of the inhabitants and freeholders to insure safety and prevent a "State of Anarchy and Confusion" which might accompany the "present Struggle for our Liberty, unless the proper Steps are taken to preserve Regularity and Unanimity among us," and were circulated in both English and Dutch. The Provincial Congress took over the functions of government, including taxation, and established a number of militia companies.

But the fluid attitudes during this interim period before the first real battles of the war were obvious in the elections in late September, 1775. A more moderate group of men was elected which still included some of the earlier selectees of the patriot committees from some sections of New Jersey, more

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12. p. 20.

13. *Idem.*

cautious moderates, and even a few who would later become Loyalists. Leiby attributes this to a decline of peak enthusiasm after Concord, but it more likely represents the differences between a cautious electorate and a more committed Committee of Correspondence. Bergen County was one of those areas where the moderates scored most heavily. But what this demonstrated, more than anything else, was *the American commitment to legal and representative procedures*, for we find no "rump" trying to manipulate the population.<sup>14</sup>

As American defense measures got underway, Leiby tells us that one "Robert Erskine had evidently enlisted a company of soldiers for the Jersey Line [of the Continental army] from the workers at the ironworks, and outfitted them at his own expense." On the other hand, "Few Jersey Dutchmen in the Hackensack valley enlisted in the Continental army, and of the few who did, most enlisted late in the war." A few of these men, who came from among the laborers or artisans, fought with the army in the South. But, speculates Leiby, "Perhaps most Jersey Dutchmen were too well settled and prosperous to be professional soldiers; perhaps they were not sufficiently exercised about the war when it began. As it turned out, they may well have been more useful as militiamen in the neutral ground than they would have been in the regular army."<sup>15</sup> The most accurate appraisal is that *the Jersey Dutch Whig majority was solidly in favor of defending American rights*. As an organized militia they had no intention of attacking the British, but hoped that the problems separating the two parties could be worked out short of war.

The battles in and around New York City in the last part of 1776 were indicative of the recognition that war was a reality. We might recall, it was the election of the new delegation from New Jersey arriving in Philadelphia late in June, that turned the tide for independence. The American defeat of late 1776 made Bergen County a refuge for many patriots. Washington had hoped to set up a hospital in Orange County, New York, just north of Bergen, but his chief medical officer reported that no homes were available because of all the refugees, and it would be impossible short of evicting some other persons. What is glimpsed here is the patriot concern for the inhabitants, which was not to be demonstrated by the British.

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14. p. 83.

15. pp. 28-9.

*The New Tactic: Foraging*

As the British advanced, Washington this time ordered the potential forage supplies destroyed, as had not been done in New York, so that "not a blade should remain" for British use. Nathanael Greene was sent to convince the people to do so, or do so himself, but in the end there was insufficient time to destroy the crops and cattle, which would have denied them to the British. Even in a hurried retreat the Americans themselves did take considerable cattle. Thereupon began the foraging expeditions in New Jersey by British troops described earlier.

Leiby points out that "Between one third and one half of the people of the Hackensack valley appear to have been Tories and Tory minded neutrals" at this point in the war.<sup>16</sup> As the British moved into the area, they began to take vengeance on the population including destruction of some of the parsonages of ministers sympathetic to the American cause. American patriot groups struck back at the Tories, especially when British troops vacated an area, but on the whole lacked the forces to halt the continued foraging by British soldiers. While, as others have pointed out, one might under such circumstances take a Loyalist or neutral position out of self-interest, "No one was a patriot of convenience in the Hackensack valley in December 1776."<sup>17</sup>

It was during this period that Charles Lee tried to rally American forces to fight a continuing partisan war in New Jersey. When Howe, at the insistence of the Loyalists, spread his troops in garrisons, the Americans attacked him, gaining the victory at Trenton, which caused the British to abandon the strategy and spelled the end of plans to be in Philadelphia that winter. Henry Muhlenberg, a captured German officer, complained that he could not understand the American people: "When the Hessians entered Trenton and occupied the region, the inhabitants swore their allegiance to the King of Britain. But as soon as the American troops attacked on Christmas, the inhabitants shot at the Hessians from their houses. In fact, even a women fired out of a window and mor-

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16. p. 83.

17. p. 69.

tally wounded a Captain."<sup>18</sup> That the same people who had sold the Hessians food should do this is not difficult to understand. *They did not consider binding an oath that had been inflicted upon them by force*, and when they had the chance to retaliate on the conqueror they did so.

It was at that point that Bergen County truly began to take on the appearance of a middle ground between the two sides, as the British moved back to New York. But it was now the Loyalists who were the more exposed, as attacks and plundering raged on both sides. Given all of the foraging that took place, it was "amazing" that the people in the area not only found enough food and fuel to carry them through the winter, but that a thriving business in hard currency sprang up with the British in New York.

### *A Guerrilla Civil War*

Faced with the reality of perpetual warfare in their area, the majority in Bergen County in 1777 began to establish a militia that would function on a permanent basis. The nature of the American militia in the area began to change during that year. *From a passive force trying to organize defensive measures against an aggressor, it became a highly mobile force that could strike back at the invader.* The dynamics of how this came about are important.

During the same period, the "farmer-soldier" of the militia came under the usual criticism of regular army officers such as Colonel Aaron Burr and General Alexander McDougall, though, as Leiby notes, "neither of them had any real reason to regard himself as a professional military man. Burr complained that 'not a man of the militia are with me. Some joined last night but are gone.'"<sup>19</sup> Even as they began to learn the ways of the guerrilla warfare, the militia, as one would expect, choose to follow their elected leaders, whom they knew and in whom they had confidence, rather than simply any officer sent by the Continental army.

And, as Leiby further observes, "McDougall, for his part, was entirely unembarrassed by the thought that the militia could hardly be expected to do what his nine hundred troops could not do, seeing no irony whatever in complaining that

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18. pp. 99-102.

19. p. 138.

the untrained Jersey Dutch militia, less than one hundred in number, would not venture near the Regulars, at the same time that he reported that he could not even attack Clinton's pickets because, as he put it, it was 'too hazardous an experiment, considering our strength and theirs, by the lowest computation.' " Because the Continental army has had so many defenders with respect to their problems, and the militia so few, Leiby's comments are worth citing: "Since it was the Continental officer and not the militiaman who left his journals and letters for the historian, over the years the militiaman's faults have been multiplied and his virtues forgotten. There are few Jersey Dutch militiamen's writings to tell how seldom any continentals ventured down into the really dangerous part of the neutral ground when the British were near; none to note that, while the Bergen County militia daily risked brushes with Sir Henry's raiders from New York, all too many Continentals did not hear a gun fired in battle from one year to the next."<sup>20</sup>

Clinton's move into New Jersey with four thousand troops in the fall of 1777 was not an attempt to bring the area under British control, but to take all of the forage possible for the winter ahead, and there was little the militia or the American army could do to prevent such a force from doing that, and returning to New York. With the large British force gone, the battle in the middle ground settled down to a *guerrilla civil war*.

On the whole, the American troops who foraged among the population that supported the Revolution did not do so on a massive scale, and they sought, in many cases, to leave script for what was taken. The most committed Loyalists had revealed themselves, during the period when British soldiers had been in the area. Their farms were now recommended as the preferred places to forage. But the most important distinction was the way in which the two populations, Whig and Loyalist, reacted and interacted with each other and with the British, American, and external Loyalist forces that entered the area. Thus, the American majority did exercise a kind of "coercive persuasion" on the minority of Loyalists, and this could and did involve violence at times. But such violence tended to be directed at specific Loyalists and the actions which they had taken against patriots when they had had the protection of British troops behind them.

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20. p. 139.

On the other hand, the actions of the British and Loyalists were of two kinds. Neither the British nor the Hessians were familiar with the area or the people. While their foraging might to some extent be directed at known and conspicuous patriots, it could also fall on those who were neutral in attitude (of which there were few by this time), on those who were neutral in the sense of not having become an active and mobilized patriot, and even upon those who were secret Loyalists, or known Loyalists, but unknown to the soldiers on that foraging patrol. Beyond such actions of the regular soldiers, were those of the Loyalist units, made up of militants, but also comprising men with established reputations as thieves and malcontents. As a conscious minority in their own community, *local Loyalist raids against patriots* tended to be directed, not toward bringing them into line with the views of the majority, as was a dominant patriot motive for such activities, but in *violent retaliation against a majority which they had no hopes of changing*, and toward which they consequently harbored a passionate hatred. On the other hand, Loyalist bands of brigands not familiar with the local population were simply indiscriminate in their license to pillage and would attack families from the staunchest patriot to the most dedicated Loyalist. Whether in vindictiveness or in pillaging, it was among the Loyalist raiders that violence tended toward *atrocities*, not directed at any political goal. Clinton was but touching the top of the iceberg when he wrote, "I could not but view with concern the very afflicting damage [the raids] had already been productive of to private property, it never having been my intention to extend the destruction to homes of individuals, much less to those of public worship."<sup>21</sup> He was able to stop most of those in Long Island, but not in Bergen County.

The net effect of this indiscriminate British raiding seems to have been to drive the neutrals, whether in thought or in action, toward some participation in the American cause. *The only real protection could come from involvement in the Bergen County militia*. "Free riding" grew expensive. The militia not only grew with the need to organize for constant patrol and skirmishing with raiders, but with the passage of time, changed from a hastily called and inexperienced defensive group into

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21. p. 212.

a hardened band of guerrilla fighters. About this organization Leiby comments, "As the winter of 1777-78 set in, it must have been hard for Jersey Dutchmen to realize that but a single year had passed since the dread days of the British occupation; . . . a year since Bergen County had been a conquered land, helpless in the hands of its enemies. The improvement in patriots' affairs during the past twelve months was little short of miraculous, . . . A year earlier patriotic Jerseymen had been the hapless victims of a cruel invader; in the fall and winter of 1777, though by no means beyond the reach of British power, they were again actors in the war, not mere sufferers from its cruelty."<sup>22</sup>

### *1777: A Revitalized Militia*

The leader in this change was Major John Mauritius Goetschius, a graduate of the college of New Jersey, who had studied for the ministry but had been urged to do more work before application. Leiby suggests that his "spelling and grammar" were not that of an intellectual, but, as we shall see, his skill as a guerrilla tactician and leader of men was unsurpassed. In reading of his exploits and that of his militia, it is difficult to disagree with Leiby's assessment that "as the war progressed it would have been hard to find any more active and spirited officer on the continent."<sup>23</sup> One may venture the guess, however, that as American historians finally begin to explore the deeds of the local American militia, where records exist to do so, they will find numbers of men who functioned much as did this heroic Dutchman.

In late 1776, the militia had marched out to the sound of fife and drum, but "had flown apart before it could fire a shot." The militia scrapped the silly foot drills that were featured in drill manuals of the time, and only much later did the musical instruments reappear. Goetschius was not the only guerrilla who was a hunted man. One of his officers was Samuel Demarest, who had seen some action with Washington's army in New York. Leiby quotes the pension records on Demarest: "He was unable to attend to his business or even to remain at home except by stealth on account of his

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22. p. 144.

23. pp. 116ff.



exposure to capture by the enemy . . . they having made repeated attempts to effect his capture from his own house." Unable to farm during this period, Demarest later had to sell his farm to pay off debts contracted to maintain his family.<sup>24</sup>

The way in which the "farmer-soldiers" organized themselves is best told in their own words. One of them, Cornelius Board, described their preparations: "It was necessary to keep up a constant guard each night in order to protect our families and ourselves from the depredations of the Cow Boys [British-Loyalist raiders]." His group "would assemble according to orders . . . just after sundown upon the heights and keeping themselves and their station concealed as much as possible would remain under arms through the night, those not engaged on sentry or on patrols sleeping on their arms until it came their turn to relieve those on guard and keeping out sentinels and patrols through the night, then returning to our ordinary business in the morning."<sup>25</sup>

A further account is added by Cornelius Blauvelt: The companies "were divided into classes of four men in a class, and the arrangement was made that one man in a class should guard one week and be relieved by another, and so continue until each had served his week, that a continued guard might be kept and their necessary labor at home might be done in which manner the militia served until the end of the war from early in the spring until winter and often in the winter." Each class served one month in four.<sup>26</sup>

Such militia service was difficult, but slowly the men became a fighting unit in constant contact with British and Loyalist elements. That kind of defense was extremely hard, for the British could strike at any point in a radius of twenty-five miles, and the Americans never knew where they might hit next. When the British treated the captured American militia badly, the patriots threatened to reciprocate on captured British soldiers. Clinton's acceptance of the American argument simply angered the Tories, who felt a hard policy should be pursued at all times. The most important result of the British raids and the American organization was to mobilize any persons who were left in the middle, if they wished to protect their property, and to push the American militia into the

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24. *Idem.*

25. *Idem.*

26. pp. 129ff.

formation of a fighting organization undreamed of in 1776. For men thus committed, the British idea of pacification in 1778 was irrelevant. Though few, if any, would have recognized it at the time, even in the middle ground, *the war had essentially been decided by the end of 1777*. Though the continental army in the area did not grow much stronger, the militia continued to do so. As Leiby notes, "To the patriots the Revolution was no mere nationalistic revolt against legitimate government, it was a rebellion against Toryism in politics, economics, and religion, a Toryism that bred poverty, ignorance, and despair in Europe and would, given a free hand, do the same in America. . . . To patriots far more than allegiance to Britain was at stake; Tory success would have meant a far different England and a far different world."<sup>27</sup> The Jersey Dutch were no provincials, but understood the larger context of the war.

#### *The Militia Becomes Dominant*

Very slowly the militia began to assert American control of the area. Two of the more important American victories of 1779 were in the area; General Anthony Wayne's surprise bayonet and sword night attack on Stony Point, and the raid on Paulus Hook, which, while not major engagements, threw off Clinton's plans for the year. Wayne's large foraging expedition was also a success, though the farmers probably were not happy about losing their produce and animals to the American army either. Thus, "it was plain for anyone to see that it was" the Americans, not the British "who dominated the neutral ground in 1779; and the land that had filled the storehouses of the British during 1776, 1777, and 1778 now supplied" the American forces.<sup>28</sup>

Late in 1779 a "remarkable indication" of how "the British cause had lost ground in the past three years" occurred, "for which there must be few parallels indeed in the history of war and Revolution." In 1776 dozens of young men from families in the valley who were of Loyalist sympathies had enlisted for three years in the British forces. As their enlistments expired, these men sought to return to their homes and begin farming

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27. p. 215.

28. p. 225.

again, almost as if there had been no war. The American patriot militia began arresting them to be put on trial for high treason, but the men claimed to be deserters from the British army.<sup>29</sup>

General Wayne ordered them released on the basis that such desertion ought to be encouraged, and that prosecution "would inevitably deter all others under similar circumstances from coming over . . . and shutting the door of mercy against poor deluded wretches who wish to return to the bosom of their country." Though the Americans did not know of it, and no formal effort was ever made to implement it, the British were at this very time considering planting deserters among the Americans to serve as spies.<sup>30</sup>

The winter of 1779-80 was a very bad one, made worse by a drought. In late March, the British, with six hundred men, launched a raid into New Jersey from two directions. In the ensuing skirmishes, it appears that the American militia was less prone to retreat than the regular forces. The British burned many of the homes of patriots in Hackensack, and carried off all of the adult males they could find, but the American harassment was so fierce they could take little or no plunder with them. As Leiby concludes, "The time was long past when the British could attack Bergen county as a refreshment for their troops."<sup>31</sup> The prisoners were later exchanged, but the British acts only increased the enmity of the Americans. It was hardly the kind of "pacification" that would win over the inhabitants. In fairness to Clinton, it appears that the idea for such reprisals had come from the Loyalist refugees in New York, who, in the absence of Sir Henry in the South, had convinced the Hessians that such raids were a good policy. On his return Clinton was "furious," and later wrote that the raid was "ill-timed . . . malapropos" based upon "the ill-founded suggestions of . . . over-sanguine Refugees."<sup>32</sup> In April the British staged a raid on Paramus, much less interested in retaliation than foraging. While some of the regular army units were surprised by the action, it was again the militia which "again turned out like veterans, hanging on the flanks

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29. pp. 226-7.

30. p. 219.

31. p. 244.

32. p. 303.

and rear of the withdrawing troops in the best tradition of the embattled farmer, firing from behind every stone fence and tree from Paramus to Fort Lee, inflicting heavy casualties on the British columns and finally forcing them to slow their march and throw out flanking parties to protect their main force from the galling fire, with the result that a great many prisoners escaped and a good deal of booty had to be abandoned." Pursuing the British right to the edge of the Hudson, the Americans recaptured four wagons and sixteen horses.

### *The Problem of Paper Money*

Leiby's information about the regular army in the area tends to confirm other data about it. Washington continued to have supply problems, the lack of anything but inflated paper money being a prime factor. As William Pennington, a Jersey soldier stationed at Tappan, reported: "We are encamped near a pleasant little village about two miles from the Hudson. The inhabitants are principally low Dutch, though there are some refugees from New York. I am told that there are some very good Whigs here. Silver and gold is the only established currency in the country as the Dutch have substantial wealth. We are in the heart of a delightful and plentiful country but for the want of specie cannot reap much advantage from it."<sup>33</sup> Others in the regular army had far less scruples, for they foraged and plundered among the farms of Orange County while the militia in that area was away fighting Loyalist and Indian raiders farther west. A major reason for such actions was the composition of the American army, for one could not "fail to see that the troops of the line were no longer farm boys with muskets. The Continentals at Tappan were campaign-hardened professional soldiers, a good number of them captives and deserters from the red-coats, men who knew very well how to live on the country when the commissaries failed them, and plundering was only a part of the story." British intelligence files are filled with reports and information from the men who *re-deserted* after the British issued a proclamation of pardon to all such deserters. (Since many of those in the British army were foreigners, the deserters help, in part, to explain the high proportion of

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33. pp. 253ff.

foreigners in the American army.) The militia was active in pursuing these men as they re-deserted and tried to make their way to the British lines in New York.<sup>34</sup>

The "middle ground" was thus the locale for an incredible number of different levels of fighting during the war. It was near here that the most serious mutiny, that of the Pennsylvania Line, took place late in 1780. The plight of these men during the war, many of them foreign-born, was no doubt severe, their having received little or no pay for months. Some were deserting, but a larger number simply were tired of fighting without pay, and went on a rampage of plundering. Major Goetschius reported to Washington that "the wicked and inconsiderate soldiery" were "entirely destroying the Schraalenburgh neighborhood," having taken all sorts of farm animals and produce, "and in a violent manner abuse the well-affected in this place, running about with clubs and bayonets upon pikes by whole companies as bad as our enemies ever have done." General Nathanael Greene wrote, "There have been committed some of the most horrid acts of plunder by some of the Pennsylvania Line that has disgraced the American army during the war. . . . Two soldiers were taken that were out upon the business, both of which fired upon the inhabitants to prevent their giving intelligence. A party plundered a house yesterday in sight of a number of officers, and even threatened the officers if they offered to interfere." Greene recommended that such offenders be hanged without trial, while Goetschius and the militia sought to halt any deserters from reaching New York.<sup>35</sup>

Washington also found the plundering outrageous. "Without a speedy change in circumstances . . . either the army must disband, or what is if possible worse, subsist upon the plunder of the people." The army had at this point been without any meat for over a week, and foraging raids had raised only a supply for several days. "Military coercion is no longer to any avail, as nothing further can possibly be collected from the country in which we are obliged to take a position without depriving the inhabitants of the last morsel. This mode of subsisting, supposing the desired end could be answered by it, besides being in the highest degree distressing to individuals,

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34. p. 265.

35. p. 277.

is attended with ruin to the morals and discipline of the army; during the few days which we have been obliged to send out small parties to procure provisions for themselves, the most enormous excesses have been committed." As an American officer, Major Samuel Shaw, put it: "The country between us and the enemy, and below him, has been pretty thoroughly gleaned by us of the little the enemy left there. We call this foraging, but it is only a gentle name for plundering."<sup>36</sup>

### *Goals of Guerrilla Troops*

It was, of course, in this area that the treason of Benedict Arnold was uncovered, and Major John Andre was captured and hanged as a spy. As the foraging began to run short, Washington moved his army to the north and west. His orders to Goetschius as he did so are revealing of the different way in which the commander of the army perceived the war in contrast to a leader of the local militia. Washington ordered Goetschius to detach about twenty men for duty around Dobbs Ferry in New York "to protect and cover the country below as far as possible." The Dutch leader did so, but he wrote, "It makes a great uneasiness among the inhabitants at the lines of this country. My detachment is particular enlisted for a guard at the frontiers of this country. To complete the number, the inhabitants at the liens paid a large sum of money to the soldiery particular to have rest themselves and to follow their lawful employ. . . . Garrisoning the blockhouse at Dobbs Ferry which lays in York State is little or no guard to this country . . . [which] lays now open [and] horse thieves and robbers slip through to the ruin of the inhabitants."<sup>37</sup>

Goetschius understood that *such warfare involves people, not places, and that protecting the patriot population was more important than anything else*. He might also have added that only a few months before Loyalist raiders had burned his own home and barn and carried away all he owned. But perhaps even more important than his theory of warfare is his information that the militia was a paid defense force. It helps to explain the way in which Americans chose to support the war effort, and how reluctant inhabitants were to pay for the regular army, after having contributed toward the local militia.

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36. *Idem*.

37. p. 290.

Away from his home base, Goetschius and his militia were faced with the same provision problem that plagued the regular army. Thus, he wrote to the Governor of New Jersey that the militia had served some weeks "whilst the army laid here, [under] about fifteen different commanders as picket to the whole army," having to take orders from all these officers while receiving rations from none. He had applied to Washington, to the State, and to the several surrounding counties, but had received nothing. On Washington's advice, his men had also foraged, but there was little left about, and "it must be taken by force of arms. The inhabitants will not sell any longer for certificates." With all these problems, nonetheless, the militia continued to patrol the dangerous territory between the two armies, in which occurred most of the fighting. Leiby's comment is worth noting: The militia "would have been more than human, however, if they had not observed the Continental's contempt for all militiamen and if they had not observed, even more clearly, how often Continentals marched and countermarched during a whole campaign without seeing a redcoat, how seldom any Continental ventured down as close to the British as the militia headquarters posts.

"After the war, when Goetschius' old militia men stood outside the South Church at Schraalenburgh on Sunday mornings waiting for the service to begin and boasting quietly about their exploits in low Dutch, if some of them were a little scornful of Continental officers who never saw a British gun, it was perhaps natural jealousy over their own unsung feats. No Continental need have troubled himself for a moment about their mild grumbling, there were none but Jersey Dutchmen to hear them, there was to be no Bancroft or Longfellow to tell of their deeds."<sup>38</sup>

### *1781: The End of the War*

By the middle of 1781 things were little changed in the Hackensack valley. Cornwallis was in Virginia, but the British force remained in New York, able to raid into New Jersey. Washington kept his army nearby, but was unable to mount an assault on the British base. "The neutral ground continued to be the stage for probing raids, espionage, and

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38. pp. 291ff.

partisan warfare." In March the British made a large raid, but the militia drove them back before any Continental units had time to get organized to meet the threat. In these closing months of the war occurred some of the worst retributions of all. Early in 1781, the government in London agreed with the demands of the Loyalists to charter an organization, the Associated Loyalists, "to wage a private war-within-a-war, to take their own prisoners, and to treat military booty as their own; in a word to wage war without let or hindrance from British headquarters."<sup>39</sup> Though Clinton opposed it, the Loyalists were, in effect, given a license to pillage and plunder, taking out their frustrations on the population.

In May some Loyalist forces occupied old Fort Lee, and Goetschius and the militia moved to dislodge them. In the meantime Washington heard about the Loyalists and ordered several regular army units "and any Jersey militia that you may find . . . but . . . trust no officer among them . . ." to attack the fort. Before the army could make such preparations, the word arrived that the militia had taken the fort. Leiby notes that "The British command was fortunate that the Bergen and Orange County militiamen [who had quickly assembled, two hundred strong, for the joint attack] were not thrown against a more important objective."<sup>40</sup>

If there is any weakness in Leiby's study, it is his account of the last months of the fighting, and the year and a half from the British surrender at Yorktown late in 1781 until the signing of the peace agreement early in 1783. It would appear that *many Loyalists and some neutrals, who had done little in the war effort, did reintegrate themselves back into the society*, much to the consternation of many of the more committed Whigs. This upset Washington also, but we can close this account of Leiby's with a comment by Governor William Livingston: "I have seen Tory members of Congress, Judges upon tribunals, Tory representatives in our Legislative councils, Tory members of our Assemblies . . . I have seen self-interest predominating and patriotism languishing."<sup>41</sup>

It is not clear from Leiby's account how willingly the patriots accepted the reintegration of these Loyalists back into

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39. p. 303.

40. pp. 297-8.

41. pp. 305-7.



their society. That they did so at all seems to disturb him somewhat. There is no research on this question, but the suggestion offered by Leonard Liggio seems the most likely explanation. That the Jersey Dutch did have a number of Loyalists would tend to confirm Nelson's views about the prime source of that outlook among minority groups. At the end of the conflict, the patriot Dutch would have been caught in a quandary! whether to punish their deviant fellow ethnics, or very quickly to re-assimilate them back, thus affirming the idea that the Dutch were solidly a part of the patriot movement, and thus good Americans. Such an interpretation certainly fits into later patterns of American ethnic behavior. Thus, the ethnic factor may have played a part in the apparently light reaction to the Loyalist reintegration into Dutch society.<sup>42</sup>

#### *Some Observations About Revolutionary Warfare*

It is impossible in this brief summary of a few of Leiby's points about the Revolution in the Hackensack Valley, to do justice to what must be regarded as a magnificent, detailed account of local history and the interaction of military events with socio-economic developments. Anyone at all familiar with the basic concepts of revolutionary warfare, and the process by which a community organizes itself to fight a guerrilla war virtually under the gun of the invader, must acknowledge that Shy was incorrect when he suggested that Leiby's study was simply an example of "local" history dealing with "bloody battles" growing out of "prewar animosities."

It is a microcosm account of what most areas have experienced as they became involved in the process of revolutionary change, but unique in the American Revolution because the area was dominated by British forces for most of the war, and thus forced the Americans into fighting a true guerrilla war. Commitment from those in the middle came less because of ideology, than from the realization that *there would*

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42. Various conversations with Leonard Liggio during the Summer of 1976, when we (Marina) were both Liberty Fund Research Fellows at the Institute for Humane Studies in Menlo Park, California. Liggio had done considerable research with Murray N. Rothbard on the Revolution, much of which is contained in the latter's five-volume study of early American history entitled, *Conceived in Liberty*.

*be no free riders*, and that those who did not participate in the militia would not be offered protection against British incursions. Indiscriminate British, and especially Loyalist, plundering and retaliations further polarized the population toward the American cause.

As the war progressed, the militia became, in many ways, a more effective fighting force than the regular army, which contained a large segment of some of the less desirable elements in American society. In Major John M. Goetschius we glimpse an American military officer whose grasp of the principles of people's guerrilla warfare was equal to any of the great historical theorists of those concepts. Complaints about the militia by officers such as General George Washington reflected an unwillingness to recognize these concepts of warfare, and how such a force could most effectively be used.

Unlike the inflated script used to pay sporadically the regular army, *the Bergen County militia was paid, apparently, in gold*. Their commitment was to attacking the British and Loyalists whenever they chose to attack that county, and the militia leaders felt less effective when told to encamp in other, distant areas. This attitude toward the militia of some army officers is indicative of one of the major "fault lines" within the revolutionary coalition.<sup>43</sup> Some leaders had always desired *imperial territorial gains* from the war, as well as independence. This desire ran so deep that they had launched an attack on Canada early in the war, greatly over-extending American resources. Such leaders were not interested in securing peace in 1778 unless it also included Canada and Florida. *Local farmer militia self-defense forces, as those in Bergen County, were simply not excited by such imperial adventures*. A good example of this was evident late in the war, in 1781, when Washington sent General Lafayette north to attempt again to mount an assault. The leaders of the Vermont militia replied that they would not enlist unless they were promised "double pay, double rations, and plunder," a clever way of aborting the whole idea.<sup>44</sup>

For any Americans who have spent these years of the Bicentennial and after reading back on the origins of the Republic, it must have become apparent how much yet needs

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43. See Marina, "People's War," for a more detailed account.

44. Quoted in Smith, *People's History*.

to be learned about the history of this period. Even such a perceptive historian as Shy, for example, repeats the myth about John Adams' statement that it was a minority Revolution. What is apparent from some of the very careful local studies such as Leiby's, drawn from a variety of obscure, and long-forgotten records, is that perhaps the American Revolution has more than "a few lessons for our own time."

## THE DEBATE OVER FEDERAL SOVEREIGNTY, 1798-99

Introduction by Gary North

### *The Alien and Sedition Laws of 1798*

THE Alien and Sedition Acts were narrowly passed by a congress controlled by the Federalist Party. The Sedition Act was passed by a sectional vote of 44 to 41, with only two people from south of the Potomac voting in favor.<sup>1</sup> Federalists were convinced that the general European war against France was about to spread to the United States, with France as the aggressor, despite the fact that the British were “impressing” —forcibly kidnapping—American sailors to serve in the British Navy.<sup>2</sup> The Federalists were concerned that members of the Jeffersonian Republican Party would favor the French. Some of the Federalist spokesmen viewed the Jeffersonians as being pro-French, pro-Jacobin, and even pro-Illuminati.<sup>3</sup>

### *The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798-99*

The response to the Alien and Sedition Acts was im-

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1. John C. Miller, *The Federalist Era 1789-1801* (New York: Harper Torchbook, [1960] 1963), p. 231.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 224-25.

3. In May, 1798, Rev. Jedediah Morse, a conservative, Calvinistic Congregationalist minister, and America's best-known geographer—who was also the father of Samuel F. B. Morse, who later developed the telegraph—preached a fast day sermon in Boston which announced that a secret conspiracy, the Illuminati, which had fostered the French Revolution, had invaded the United States. The sermon created a sensation. Morse offered no evidence, however. He was relying heavily on the recently published book on the Illuminati, *Proofs of a Conspiracy* (London, 1797), by John Robison. Morse's sermon is contained in the Evans Bibliography, and reprinted on microcard in the Early American Imprints Series, edited by Clifford Shipton, and published by the American Antiquarian Society, card number 34149. On the panic over the Illuminati, see Vernon Stauffer, *New England and the Bavarian Illuminati* (New York: Russell & Russell, [1918] 1967).

mediate. Jefferson wrote a protest for consideration by the Virginia legislature. Madison wrote another, and Madison's version was approved. Jefferson then anonymously wrote another draft, and his friend John Breckenridge submitted it to the Kentucky legislature, which passed it. Predictably, the Federalist Party rejected the case for states' rights—limited power by the central government—and asserted the case for Federal sovereignty. New Hampshire and "libertarian" Rhode Island argued that the Federal judiciary has the final say in matters of Federal power. The Federalists, of course, had controlled the appointments to Federal judgeships over the previous decade.

Kentucky replied in February of 1799. Madison wrote a lengthy, scholarly defense of the Virginia position in 1800. The defeat of the Federalists in the Presidential election of 1800 sealed the doom of the Party at the national level, but their power was extended for a generation by Supreme Court Justice John Marshall, who created the doctrine of judicial supremacy by declaring unconstitutional and void a section of the Judiciary Act of 1799, and more famously, in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803).<sup>4</sup> Marshall was thus the intellectual father of the doctrine of the final sovereignty of the Supreme Court.

These documents are reprinted as examples of early American constitutional philosophy: a balance between the one and the many, central power and local power. The battle against the expansion of centralized political power has been going on from the earliest days of the Constitution. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions appear in volume IV of Jonathan Elliot's *Debates on the Federal Constitution* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, [1836] 1907), pp. 528-32, 540-45.

### *The Sedition Act (July 14, 1798)*

Sec. 1. *Be it enacted.* . . . That if any persons shall unlawfully combine or conspire together, with intent to oppose any measure or measures of the government of the United States, which are or shall be directed by proper authority, or to impede the operation of any law of the United States, or to in-

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4. Alfred H. Kelly and Winfred A. Harbison, *The American Constitution: Its Origins and Development* (rev. ed.; New York: Norton, 1955), pp. 2264.

timidate or prevent any person holding a place or office in or under the government of the United States, from undertaking, performing or executing his trust or duty; and if any person or persons, with intent as aforesaid, shall counsel, advise or attempt to procure any insurrection, riot, unlawful assembly, or combination, whether such conspiracy, threatening, counsel, advice, or attempt shall have the proposed effect or not, he or they shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and on conviction, before any court of the United States having jurisdiction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not exceeding five thousand dollars, and by imprisonment during a term not less than six months nor exceeding five years; and further, at the discretion of the court may be holden to find sureties for his good behaviour in such sum, and for such time, as the said court may direct.

Sec. 2. That if any person shall write, print, utter, or publish, or shall cause or procure to be written, printed, uttered, or published, or shall knowingly and willingly assist or aid in writing, printing, uttering, or publishing any false, scandalous, and malicious writing or writings against the government of the United States, or either house of the Congress of the United States, or the President of the United States, with intent to defame the said government, or either house of the said Congress, or the said President or to bring them, or either of them, into contempt or disrepute; or to excite against them, or either or any of them, the hatred of the good people of the United States, or to stir up sedition within the United States, or to excite any unlawful combinations therein, for opposing or resisting any law of the United States, or any act of the President of the United States, done in pursuance of any such law, or of the powers in him vested by the constitution of the United States, or to resist, oppose, or defeat any such law or act, or to aid, encourage, or abet any hostile designs of any foreign nation against the United States, their people or government, then such person, being thereof convicted before any court of the United States having jurisdiction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, and by imprisonment not exceeding two years.

Sec. 3. That if any person shall be prosecuted under this act, for the writing or publishing any libel aforesaid, it shall be lawful for the defendant, upon the trial of the cause to give in evidence in his defence, the truth of the matter contained in

the publication charged as a libel. And the jury who shall try the cause, shall have a right to determine the law and the fact, under the direction of the court, as in other cases.

Sec. 4. That this act shall continue to be in force until March 3, 1801, and no longer . . .

*Virginia Resolutions of 1798,*

PRONOUNCING THE ALIEN AND SEDITION LAWS TO BE  
UNCONSTITUTIONAL, AND DEFINING THE RIGHTS OF THE STATES.

DRAWN BY MR. MADISON.

IN THE VIRGINIA HOUSE OF DELEGATES,  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1798.

*Resolved,* That the General Assembly of Virginia doth unequivocally express a firm resolution to maintain and defend the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of this state, against every aggression, either foreign or domestic; and that they will support the government of the United States in all measures warranted by the former.

That this Assembly most solemnly declares a warm attachment to the union of the states, to maintain which it pledges its powers; and that, for this end, it is their duty to watch over and oppose every infraction of those principles which constitute the only basis of that union, because a faithful observance of them can alone secure its existence and the public happiness.

That this Assembly doth explicitly and peremptorily declare, that it views the powers of the federal government as resulting from the compact to which the states are parties, as limited by the plain sense and intention of the instrument constituting that compact, as no further valid than they are authorized by the grants enumerated in that compact; and that, in case of a deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of other powers, not granted by the said compact, the states, who are parties thereto, have the right, and are in duty bound, to interpose, for arresting the progress of the evil, and for maintaining, within their respective limits, the authorities, rights, and liberties, appertaining to them.

That the General Assembly doth also express its deep regret, that a spirit has, in sundry instances, been manifested by the federal government to enlarge its powers by forced

constructions of the constitutional charter which defines them; and that indications have appeared of a design to expound certain general phrases (which, having been copied from the very limited grant of powers in the former Articles of Confederation, were the less liable to be misconstrued) so as to destroy the meaning and effect of the particular enumeration which necessarily explains and limits the general phrases, and so as to consolidate the states, by degrees, into one sovereignty, the obvious tendency and inevitable result of which would be, to transform the present republican system of the United States into an absolute, or, at best, a mixed monarchy.

*That the General Assembly doth particularly PROTEST against the palpable and alarming infractions of the constitution, in the two late cases of the "Alien and Sedition Acts," passed at the last session of Congress; the first of which exercises a power nowhere delegated to the federal government, and which, by uniting legislative and judicial powers to those of executive, subverts the general principles of free government, as well as the particular organization and positive provisions of the Federal Constitution; and the other of which acts exercises, in like manner, a power not delegated by the Constitution, but, on the contrary, expressly and positively forbidden by one of the amendments thereto, — a power which more than any other, ought to produce universal alarm, because it is levelled against the right of freely examining public characters and measures, and of free communication among the people thereon, which has ever been justly deemed the only effectual guardian of every other right.*

That this state having, by its Convention, which ratified the Federal Constitution, expressly declared that, among other essential rights, "the liberty of conscience and the press cannot be cancelled, abridged, restrained, or modified, by any authority of the United States," and from its extreme anxiety to guard these rights from every possible attack of sophistry and ambition, having, with other states, recommended an amendment for that purpose, which amendment was, in due time, annexed to the Constitution, — it would mark a reproachful inconsistency, and criminal degeneracy, if an indifference were now shown to the most palpable violation of one of the rights thus declared and secured, and to the establishment of a precedent which may be fatal to the other.

That the good people of this commonwealth, having ever felt, and continuing to feel, the most sincere affection for their



brethren of the other states; the truest anxiety for establishing and perpetuating the union of all; and the most scrupulous fidelity to that Constitution, which is the pledge of mutual friendship, and the instrument of mutual happiness,—the General Assembly doth solemnly appeal to the like dispositions in the other states, in confidence that they will concur with this commonwealth in declaring, as it does hereby declare, that the acts aforesaid are unconstitutional; and that the necessary and proper measures will be taken *by each* for cooperating with this state, in maintaining unimpaired the authorities, rights, and liberties, reserved to the states respectively, or to his people.

That the governor be desired to transmit a copy of the foregoing resolutions to the executive authority of each of the other states, with a request that the same may be communicated to the legislature thereof, and that a copy be furnished to each of the senators and representatives representing this state in the Congress of the United States.

1798, December 24.

## EXTRACTS FROM THE ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE,

WHICH ACCOMPANIED THE FOREGOING RESOLUTIONS.

Fellow-citizens: Unwilling to shrink from our representative responsibilities, conscious of the purity of our motives, but acknowledging your right to supervise our conduct, we invite your serious attention to the emergency which dictated the subjoined resolutions. Whilst we disdain to alarm you by ill-founded jealousies, we recommended an investigation guided by the coolness of wisdom, and a decision bottomed on firmness, but tempered with moderation.

It would be perfidious in those intrusted with the GUARDIANSHIP OF THE STATE SOVEREIGNTY, and acting under the solemn obligation of the following oath,—“I do swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States,”—not to warn you of encroachments, which, though clothed with the pretext of necessity, or disguised by arguments of expediency, may yet establish precedents which may ultimately devote a generous and unsuspecting people to all the consequences of usurped power.

Encroachments springing from a government WHOSE ORGANIZATION CANNOT BE MAINTAINED WITH-

OUT THE COOPERATION OF THE STATES, furnish the strongest excitements upon the state legislatures to watchfulness, and impose upon them the strongest obligation TO PRESERVE UNIMPAIRED THE LINE OF PARTITION.

The acquiescence of the states, under infractions of the federal compact, would either beget a speedy consolidation, by precipitating the state governments into impotency and contempt, or prepare the way for a revolution, by a repetition of these infractions until the people are aroused to appear in the majesty of their strength. It is to avoid these calamities that we exhibit to the people the momentous question, whether the Constitution of the United States shall yield to a construction which defies every restraint, and overwhelms the best hopes of republicanism.

Exhortations to disregard domestic usurpation, until foreign danger shall have passed, is an artifice which may be forever used; because the possessors of power, who are the advocates for its extension, can ever create national embarrassments, to be successively employed to soothe the people into sleep, whilst that power is swelling, silently, secretly, and fatally. Of the same character are insinuations of a foreign influence, which seize upon a laudable enthusiasm against danger from abroad, and distort it by an unnatural application, so as to blind your eyes against danger at home.

The Sedition Act presents a scene which was never expected by the early friends of the Constitution. It was then admitted that the state sovereignties were only diminished by powers specifically enumerated, or necessary to carry the specified powers into effect. Now, federal authority is deduced from implication; and from the existence of state law, it is inferred that Congress possess a similar power of legislation; whence Congress will be endowed with a power of legislation in all cases whatsoever, and the states will be stripped of every right reserved, by the concurrent claims of a paramount legislature.

The Sedition Act is the offspring of these tremendous pretensions, which inflict a death-wound on the sovereignty of the states.

For the honor of American understanding, we will not believe that the people have been allured into the adoption of the Constitution by an affection of defining powers, whilst the

*preamble* would admit a construction which would erect the will of Congress into a power paramount in all cases, and therefore limited in none. On the contrary, it is evident that the objects for which the Constitution was formed were deemed attainable only by a particular enumeration and specification of each power granted to the federal government; reserving all others to the people, or to the states. And yet it is in vain we search for any specified power embracing the right of legislation against the freedom of the press.

Had the states been despoiled of their sovereignty by the generality of the preamble, and had the federal government been endowed with whatever they should judge to be instrumental towards the union, justice, tranquility, common defence, general welfare, and the preservation of liberty, nothing could have been more frivolous than an enumeration of powers.

All the preceding arguments, arising from a deficiency of constitutional power in Congress, apply to the Alien Act; and this act is liable to other objections peculiar to itself. If a suspicion that aliens are dangerous, constitutes the justification of that power exercised over them by Congress, then a similar suspicion will justify the exercise of a similar power over natives; because there is nothing in the Constitution distinguishing between the power of a state to permit the residence of natives and aliens. It is, therefore, a right originally possessed, and never surrendered, by the respective states, and which is rendered dear and valuable to Virginia, because it is assailed through the bosom of the Constitution, and because her peculiar situation renders the easy admission of artisans and laborers an interest of vast importance.

But this bill contains other features, still more alarming and dangerous. It dispenses with the trial by jury; it violates the judicial system; it confounds legislative, executive, and judicial powers; it punishes without trial; and it bestows upon the President despotic power over a numerous class of men. Are such measures consistent with our constitutional principles? And will an accumulation of power so extensive in the hands of the executive, over aliens, secure to natives the blessings of republican liberty?

If measures can mould governments, and if an uncontrolled power of construction is surrendered to those who administer them, their progress may be easily foreseen, and their end

easily foretold. A lover of monarchy, who opens the treasures of corruption by distributing emolument among devoted partisans, may at the same time be approaching his object and deluding the people with professions of republicanism. He may confound monarchy and republicanism, by the art of definition. He may varnish over the dexterity which ambition never fails to display, with the pliancy of language, the seduction of expediency, or the prejudices of the times; and he may come at length to avow, that so extensive a territory as that of the United States can only be governed by the energies of monarchy; that it cannot be defended, except by standing armies; and that it cannot be united, except by consolidation.

Measures have already been adopted which may lead to these consequences. They consist —

In fiscal systems and arrangements, which keep a host of commercial and wealthy individuals imbedded, and obedient to the mandates of the treasury; —

In armies and navies, which will, on the one hand, enlist the tendency of man to pay homage to his fellow-creature who can feed or honor him; and on the other, employ the principle of fear, by punishing imaginary insurrections, under the pretext of preventive justice; —

In swarms of officers, civil and military who can inculcate political tenets tending to consolidation and monarchy, both by indulgences and severities, and can act as spies over the free exercise of human reason; —

In restraining the freedom of the press, and investing the executive with legislative, executive, and judicial powers, over a numerous body of men. —

And, that we may shorten the catalogue, in establishing, by successive precedents, such a mode of construing the Constitution as will rapidly remove every restraint upon federal power.

Let history be consulted; let the man of experience reflect; nay, let the artificers of monarchy be asked what further materials they can need for building up their favorite system.

These are solemn but painful truths; and yet we recommend it to you not to forget the possibility of danger from without, although danger threatens us from within. Usurpation is indeed dreadful; but against foreign invasion, if that should happen, let us rise with hearts and hands united, and

repel the attack with the zeal of freemen who will strengthen their title to examine and correct domestic measures, by having defended their country against foreign aggression.

Pledged as we are, fellow-citizens, to these sacred engagements, we yet humbly, fervently implore the Almighty Disposer of events to avert from our land war and usurpation, the scourges of mankind; to permit our fields to be cultivated in peace; to instill into nations the love of friendly intercourse; to suffer our youth to be educated in virtue, and to preserve our mortality from the pollution invariably incident to habits of war; to prevent the laborer and husbandman from being harassed by taxes and imposts; to remove from ambition the means of disturbing the commonwealth; to annihilate all pretexts for power afforded by war; to maintain the Constitution; and to bless our nation with tranquillity, under whose benign influence we may reach the summit of happiness and glory, to which we are destined by *nature* and *nature's God*.

1799, January 23d.

#### KENTUCKY RESOLUTIONS OF 1798 AND 1799<sup>5</sup>

[THE ORIGINAL DRAFT PREPARED BY THOMAS JEFFERSON.]

[The following Resolutions passed the House of Representatives of Kentucky, Nov. 10, 1798. On the passage of the 1st Resolution, one dissented; 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, two dissentients; 9th, three dissentients.]

1. *Resolved*, That the several states composing the United States of America are not united on the principle of unlimited submission to their general government; but that, by compact, under the style and title of a Constitution for the United States, and of amendments thereto, they constituted a general government for special purposes, delegated to that government certain definite powers, reserving, each state to itself, the residuary mass of right to their own self-government; and that whensoever the general government assumes undelegated powers, its acts are unauthoritative, void, and of no force; that to this compact each state acceded as a state, and is an integral party; that this government, created by this compact, was not made the exclusive or final judge of the extent of the powers delegated to itself, since that would have

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5. Elliot's *Debates* IV: 540-545.

made its discretion, and not the Constitution, the measure of its powers; but that, as in all other cases of compact among parties having no common judge, *each party has an equal right to judge for itself, as well of infractions as of the mode and measure of redress.*

2. *Resolved*, That the Constitution of the United States having delegated to Congress a power to punish treason, counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States, piracies and felonies committed on the high seas, and offences against the laws of nations, and no other crimes whatever; and it being true, as a general principle, and one of the amendments to the Constitution having also declared "that the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people."—therefore, also, the same act of Congress, passed on the 14th day of July, 1798, and entitled "An Act in Addition to the Act entitled 'An Act for the Punishment of certain Crimes against the United States;' " as also the act passed by them on the 27th day of June, 1798, entitled "An Act to punish Frauds committed on the Bank of the United States," (and all other their acts which assume to create, define, or punish crimes other than those enumerated in the Constitution,) are altogether void, and of no force; and that the power to create, define, and punish, such other crimes is reserved, and of right appertains, solely and exclusively, to the respective states, each within its own territory.

3. *Resolved*, That it is true, as a general principle, and is also expressly declared by one of the amendments to the Constitution, that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people;" and that, no power over the freedom of religion, freedom of speech, or freedom of the press, being delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, all lawful powers respecting the same did of right remain, and were reserved to the states, or to the people; that thus was manifested their determination to retain to themselves the right of judging how far the licentiousness of speech, and of the press, may be abridged without lessening their useful freedom, and how far those abuses which cannot be separated from their use, should be tolerated rather than the use be

destroyed; and thus also they guarded against all abridgment, by the United States, of the freedom of religious principles and exercises, and retained to themselves the right of protecting the same, as this, stated by a law passed on the general demand of its citizens, had already protected them from all human restraint or interference; and that, in addition to this general principle and express declaration, another and more special provision has been made by one of the amendments to the Constitution, which expressly declares, that "Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press," thereby guarding, in the same sentence, and under the same words, the freedom of religion, of speech, and of the press, insomuch that whatever violates either throws down the sanctuary which covers the others, — and that libels, falsehood, and defamation, equally with heresy and false religion, are withheld from the cognizance of federal tribunals. That therefore the act of the Congress of the United States, passed on the 14th of July, 1798, entitled "An Act in Addition to the Act entitled 'An Act for the Punishment of certain Crimes against the United States,' " which does abridge the freedom of the press, is not law, but is altogether void, and of no force.

4. *Resolved*, That alien friends are under the jurisdiction and protection of the laws of the state wherein they are; that no power over them has been delegated to the United States, nor prohibited to the individual states, distinct from their power over citizens; and it being true, as a general principle, and one of the amendments to the Constitution having also declared, that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited to the states, are reserved to the states, respectively, or to the people," the act of the Congress of the United States, passed the 22nd day of June, 1798, entitled "An Act concerning Aliens," which assumes power over alien friends not delegated by the Constitution, is not law, but is altogether void, and of no force.

5. *Resolved*, That, in addition to the general principle, as well as the express declaration, that powers not delegated are reserved, another and more special provision inserted in the Constitution from abundant caution, has declared, "that the migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be pro-

hibited by the Congress prior to the year 1808." That this commonwealth does admit the migration of alien friends described as the subject of the said act concerning aliens; that a provision against prohibiting their migration is a provision against all acts equivalent thereto, or it would be nugatory; that to remove them, when migrated, is equivalent to a prohibition of their migration, and is, therefore, contrary to the said provision of the Constitution, and *void*.

6. *Resolved*, That the imprisonment of a person under the protection of the laws of this commonwealth, on his failure to obey the simple order of the President to depart out of the United States, as is undertaken by the said act, entitled, "An Act concerning Aliens," is contrary to the Constitution, one amendment in which has provided, that "no person shall be deprived of liberty without due process of law;" and that another having provided, "that, in all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right of a public trial by an impartial jury, to be informed as to the nature and cause of the accusation, to be confronted with the witnesses against him, to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have assistance of counsel for his defence," the same act undertaking to authorize the President to remove a person out of the United States who is under the protection of the law, on his own suspicion, without jury, without having witnesses in his favor, without defence, without counsel—contrary to these provisions also of the Constitution—is therefore not law, but utterly void, and of no force.

That transferring the power of judging any person who is under the protection of the laws, from the courts to the President of the United States, as is undertaken by the same act concerning aliens, is against the article of the Constitution which provides, that "the judicial power of the United States shall be vested in the courts, the judges of which shall hold their office during good behavior," and that the said act is void for that reason also; and it is further to be noted that this transfer of judiciary power is to that magistrate of the general government who already possesses all the executive, and qualified negative in all the legislative powers.

7. *Resolved*, That the construction applied by the general government (as is evident by sundry of their proceedings) to those parts of the Constitution of the United States which delegate to Congress power to lay and collect taxes, duties,



imposts, excises; to pay the debts, and provide for the common defence and general welfare, of the United States, and to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the powers vested by the Constitution in the government of the United States, or any department thereof, goes to the destruction of all the limits prescribed to their power by the Constitution; that words meant by that instrument to be subsidiary only to the execution of the limited powers, ought not to be so construed as themselves to give unlimited powers, nor a part so to be taken as to destroy the whole residue of the instrument; that the proceedings of the general government, under color of those articles, will be a fit and necessary subject for revisal and correction at a time of greater tranquillity, while those specified in the preceding resolutions call for immediate redress.

8. *Resolved*, That the preceding resolutions be transmitted to the senators and representatives in Congress from this commonwealth, who are enjoined to present the same to their respective houses, and to use their best endeavors to procure, at the next session of Congress, a repeal of the aforesaid unconstitutional and obnoxious acts.

9. *Resolved*, lastly, That the governor of this commonwealth be, and is, authorized and requested to communicate the preceding resolutions to the legislatures of the several states, to assure them that this commonwealth considers union for special national purposes, and particularly for those specified in their late federal compact, to be friendly to the peace, happiness, and prosperity, of all the states: that, faithful to that compact, according to the plain intent and meaning in which it was understood and acceded to by the several parties, it is sincerely anxious for its preservation; that it does also believe, that, to take from the states all the powers of self-government, and transfer them to a general and consolidated government, without regard to the special government, and reservations solemnly agreed to in that compact, is not for the peace, happiness, or prosperity of these states; and that, therefore, this commonwealth is determined, as it doubts not its co-states are, to submit to undelegated and consequently unlimited powers in no man, or body of men, on earth; that, if the acts before specified should stand, these conclusions would flow from them—that the general government may place any act they think proper on the list of crimes, and

punish it themselves, whether enumerated or not enumerated by the Constitution as cognizable by them; that they may transfer its cognizance to the President, or any other person, who may himself be the accuser, counsel, judge, and jury, whose suspicions may be the evidence, his order the sentence, his officer the executioner, and his breast the sole record of the transaction; that a very numerous and valuable description of the inhabitants of these states, being, by this precedent, reduced, as outlaws, to absolute dominion of one man, and the barriers of the Constitution thus swept from us all, no rampart now remains against the passions and the power of a majority of Congress, to protect from a like exportation, or other grievous punishment, the minority of the same body, the legislatures, judges, governors, and counsellors of the states, nor their other peaceable inhabitants, who may venture to reclaim the constitutional rights and liberties of the states and people, or who, for other causes, good or bad, may be obnoxious to the view, or marked by the suspicions, of the President, or be thought dangerous to his or their elections, or other interests, public or personal; that the friendless alien has been selected as the safest subject of the first experiment; but the citizen will soon follow, or rather has already followed; for already has a Sedition Act marked him as a prey: That these and successive acts of the same character, unless arrested on the threshold, may tend to drive these states into revolution and blood, and will furnish new calumnies against republican governments, and new pretexts for those who wish it to be believed that man cannot be governed but by a rod of iron; that it would be a dangerous delusion were a confidence in the men of our choice to silence our fears for the safety of our rights; that confidence is every where the parent of despotism; free government is founded in jealousy, and not in confidence; it is jealousy, and not confidence, which prescribes limited constitutions to bind down those whom we are obliged to trust with power; that our Constitution has accordingly fixed the limits to which, and no farther, our confidence may go; and let the honest advocate of confidence read the Alien and Sedition Acts, and say if the Constitution has not been wise in fixing limits to the government it created, and whether we should be wise in destroying those limits; let him say what the government is, if it be not a tyranny, which the men of our choice have conferred on the President, and the President of

our choice has assented to and accepted, over the friendly strangers, to whom the mild spirit of our country and its laws had pledged hospitality and protection; that the men of our choice have more respected the bare suspicions of the President than the solid rights of innocence, the claims of justification, the sacred force of truth, and the forms and substance of law and justice.

In questions of power, then, let no more be said of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution. That this commonwealth does therefore call on its co-states for an expression of their sentiments on the acts concerning aliens, and for the punishment of certain crimes herein before specified, plainly declaring whether these acts are or are not authorized by the federal compact. And it doubts not that their sense will be so announced as to prove their attachment to limited government, whether general or particular, and that the rights and liberties of their co-states will be exposed to no dangers by remaining embarked on a common bottom with their own; but they will concur with this commonwealth in considering the said acts as so palpably against the Constitution as to amount to an undisguised declaration, that the compact is not meant to be the measure of the powers of the general government, but that it will proceed in the exercise over these states of all powers whatsoever. That they will view this as seizing the rights of the states, and consolidating them in the hands of the general government, with a power assumed to bind the states, not merely in cases made federal, but in all cases whatsoever, by the laws made, not with their consent, but by others against their consent; that this would be to surrender the form of government we have chosen, and live under one deriving its powers from its own will, and not from our authority; and that the co-states, recurring to their natural rights not made federal, will concur in declaring these void and of no force, and will each unite with this commonwealth in requesting their repeal at the next session of Congress.

Approved, November 19, 1798.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Thursday, Nov. 14, 1799

The house, according to the standing order of the day,

resolved itself into a committee of the whole house, on the state of the commonwealth, (Mr. Desha in the chair,) and, after some time spent therein, the speaker resumed the chair, and Mr. Desha reported, that the committee had taken under consideration sundry resolutions passed by several state legislatures, on the subject of Alien and Sedition Laws, and had come to a resolution thereupon, which he delivered in at the clerk's table, where it was read and *unanimously* agreed to by the house, as follows:—

The representatives of the good people of this commonwealth, in General Assembly convened, having maturely considered the answers of sundry states in the Union to their resolutions, passed the last session, respecting certain unconstitutional laws of Congress, commonly called the Alien and Sedition Laws, would be faithless, indeed, to themselves, and to those they represent, were they silently to acquiesce in the principles and doctrines attempted to be maintained in all those answers, that of Virginia only excepted. To again enter the field of argument, and attempt more fully or forcibly to expose the unconstitutionality of those obnoxious laws, would, it is apprehended, be as unnecessary as unavailing. We cannot, however, but lament that, in the discussion of those interesting subjects by sundry of the legislatures of our sister states, unfounded suggestions and uncandid insinuations, derogatory to the true character and principles of this commonwealth, have been substituted in place of fair reasoning and sound argument. Our opinions of these alarming measures of the general government, together with our reasons for those opinions, were detailed with decency and with temper, and submitted to the discussion and judgment of our fellow-citizen throughout the Union. Whether the like decency and temper have been observed in the answers of most of those states who have denied, or attempted to obviate, the great truths contained in those resolutions, we have now only to submit to a candid world. Faithful to the true principles of the federal Union, unconscious of any designs to disturb the harmony of that Union, and anxious only to escape the fangs of despotism, the good people of this commonwealth are regardless of censure or calumny. Lest however, the silence of this commonwealth should be construed into an acquiescence in the doctrines and principles advanced, and attempted to be maintained, by the said answers;

or at least those of our fellow-citizens, throughout the Union, who so widely differ from us on those important subjects, should be deluded by the expectation that we shall be deterred from what we conceive our duty, or shrink from the principles contained in those resolutions, — therefore,

*Resolved*, That this commonwealth considers the federal Union, upon the terms and for the purposes specified in the late compact, conducive to the liberty and happiness of the several states: That it does now unequivocally declare its attachment to the Union, and to that compact, agreeably to its obvious and real intention, and will be among the last to seek its dissolution: That, if those who administer the general government be permitted to transgress the limits fixed by that compact, by a total disregard to the special delegations of power therein contained, an annihilation of the state governments, and the creation, upon their ruins, of a general consolidated government, will be the inevitable consequence: That the principle and construction, contended for by sundry of the state legislature, that the general government is the exclusive judge of the extent of the powers delegated to it, stop not short of *despotism* — since the discretion of those who administer the government, and not the *Constitution*, would be the measure of their powers: That the several states who formed that instrument, being sovereign and independent, have the unquestionable right to judge of the infraction: and, *That a nullification, by those sovereignties, of all unauthorized acts done under color of that instrument, is the rightful remedy*: That this commonwealth does, under the most deliberate reconsideration, declare, that the said Alien and Sedition Laws are, in their opinion, palpable violations of the said Constitution; and, however cheerfully it may be disposed to surrender its opinion to a majority of its sister states, in matters of ordinary or doubtful policy, yet, in momentous regulations like the present which so vitally wound the best rights of the citizen, it would consider a silent acquiescence as highly criminal: That, although this commonwealth, as a party to the federal compact, will bow to the laws of the Union, yet it does, at the same time, declare, that it will not now, or ever hereafter, cease to oppose, in a constitutional manner, every attempt, at what quarter soever offered, to violate that compact: And finally, in order that no pretext or arguments may be drawn from a supposed acquiescence, on the part of this common-

wealth, in the constitutionality of those laws, and be thereby used as precedents for similar future violations of the federal compact, this commonwealth does now enter against them in its solemn PROTEST.

## ON RECONSTRUCTION AND THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC

Tom Rose<sup>1</sup>

IF it can be said that Americans ever had a national dream, their dream can be summarized like this: America, as a republic, was established and dedicated to the proposition of protecting and enhancing man's individual freedom and self-responsibility before God, with the emphasis of civil government being local self-determination.

Note that *the idea of civil government is essentially theological in nature, because it presupposes a transcendent rule of law which serves as a norm for both the rulers and those who are ruled.* It is thus law which makes and establishes the civil authority, and not the reverse. But note in addition the two main points of civil government in America which make American civil government unique:

(1) Man, as a free and self-responsible individual, stands *directly* and *personally* before God.

(2) The nature and source of power of the civil authority are primarily *local* and *self-determined*. (That is, it is widely dispersed geographically and federal in character, as contrasted with a centralized unitary authority in which authority and power flow from the top down.)

It was with these objects in mind that the Articles of Confederation of 1777 (ratified in 1781) and the new Constitution of 1787 (ratified in 1789) were drafted and ratified by the individual states as separate and independent political entities. Anyone who does not understand these objects does not understand the Christian character of American civil government. The central government that was established by the Articles of Confederation and continued by the Constitution

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1. Copyright Tom Rose, 1978. Published originally in *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction* (Summer, 1978).

of 1787 was *not* established by the people acting directly either at the individual state level or as a homogeneous mass throughout the original thirteen states. Rather, our general government (the national government) was the product or offspring of the compacting parties, the states, which acted as sovereign political entities and who derived their political sovereignty from their citizens. In effect and reality, the American national government is the *creature*, and the compacting states are its *creators*. It is extremely important that Americans keep this important fact of history always in mind. That the above cited goals and structure of American civil government are solidly biblical only emphasizes the historical fact that the American Republic was indeed founded as a self-governing Christian nation.

The extent to which the whole federal structure of American civil government, from the local to the national level, was influenced by the Bible is little understood, and even less appreciated, in this day and age. But it is an undeniable fact that the early settlers at Jamestown and Plymouth (and especially at Plymouth) patterned their civil polity according to biblical precepts as comprehended and understood by the Protestant churches of the Reformation.

When Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, observed that Moses was spending too much time and energy handling petty disputes (Ex. 18:13), he admonished Moses:

Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to Godward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves (Ex. 18:19-26).



Here we see a clear biblical pattern for a federal structure of government rather than a centralized one. It is obvious when we consider that the Israelites, even at this time, numbered from 1.5 to 2.5 million, that Moses could not have personally selected the rulers of thousands, fifties, and tens. Rather, he simply confirmed and formalized the *already-existing hierarchy* of the local leadership of tribes and clans that the people themselves had set up. In short, Moses' action simply endorsed formally the two governmental concepts of *local self-rule* and *federalization*. Here we also see the concept of higher law—that the civil authority is simply a *distributor* of God's law rather than a *source* of law in and of itself, for the local rulers were to be men “such as fear God.”

Our colonial forefathers were astute students of the Bible, for they used God's holy word as their guide and rule in establishing every aspect of society; especially civil government, for they had suffered under the perversion of biblical teaching called “the divine right of kings.”

The concept of local self-government is solidly New Testament also, for Paul advised Titus to ordain elders in every city (Titus 1:5), and he advised Timothy that the elders who rule well should be counted worthy of double honor (I Tim. 5:17).

The biblical flow-of-power concept that our colonial forefathers set up, in both their churches and their civil governments, is this: *power flows directly from God to the individual*, who in turn voluntarily compacts with other God-responsible individuals at the local level in establishing both church and civil polity. In the church authority is vested in a local body (the elders), who are *ordained of God but elected by the people*. Thus, self-government arises from following biblical precepts.

The concept of federalism is applied in a practical way when local churches voluntarily band together in mutual Christ-centered fellowship to establish higher courts: 1st, local churches establish presbyteries, then presbyteries group into synods, and synods combine to form general assemblies. While the higher church courts rule on matters referred to them, according to the Reformed understanding of biblical federalism, the flow-of-power is *not* from God to the higher courts, to the local church elders, and then to the people. (This would be a form of centralism.) But, rather, the power at higher court levels is *delegated* from the local body of elders. Thus, the biblical flow of governmental power is from God to

individuals, to the locally elected board of elders ("men such as fear God"), who then seek a consensus of thinking from *other* men "such as fear God" at the higher courts they themselves established. Thus the higher courts hold only a *delegated* and *advisory* position. So, if the men in the higher courts err and stray from God's Constitution (i.e., the Bible), then the local elders are free—nay, they are *bound* by their personal allegiance to God and by their governmental responsibility to the *local church members* who elected them—to continue true to God's Constitution. God's law is higher and must be followed, regardless of what men say.

If necessary to maintain the purity of church doctrine and practice, the local board of elders must even be willing to lead their local congregation out of the apostasy (anti-constitution-ism) they find at the higher-level courts: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (II Cor. 6:17). Note that such a leading out would not be a lawless rebellion, but the true lawful practice of biblical Christianity at a *governmental* level, by the *duly elected body of elders* who constitute the *local church's lawfully constituted government*.

In civil law, this type of governmental action by an intermediate body is known as *interposition*. This same governmental concept of lawful representatives interposing themselves between the people and a higher level of government which they consider in error is also applicable in civil government. It has implications that are especially important to Americans today, as we shall soon see.

This biblical flow-of-power concept, from God to the individual and thence to locally elected representatives, was recognized by all the churches that came out of the Reformation. Thomas Witherow, professor of church history in London-derry, in his 1856 book entitled *The Apostolic Church*, wrote:

The first chapter of Acts supplies us with an instance of the assembled men and brethren appointing to office one who was both an apostle and a minister. The fourteenth chapter shows that the elders of the congregation were chosen by popular suffrage. The sixth chapter furnishes an example of the whole multitude of the disciples choosing seven men to be deacons. On these three facts, clear and irresistible, we found the principle of

POPULAR ELECTION. The conclusion that follows from this evidence, we find it absolutely impossible to evade, namely — that in the Apostolic Church the *officer-bearers were chosen by the people* (p. 38 — issued by the Publications Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, 1967).

The Act of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland (held at Edinburgh, Feb. 19, 1645) reads thus concerning the establishment of local church government:

As there were in the Jewish church elders of the people joined with the priests and Levites in the government of the church; so Christ, who hath instituted government, and governors ecclesiastical in the church, hath furnished some in his church, besides the ministers of the word, with gifts for government, and with commission to execute the same when called thereunto, who are to join with the minister in government of the church. Which officers reformed churches commonly call Elders (pp. 571-572).

The famous Westminster Confession of Faith, which was reported finished with full Scripture proofs of each separate point on April 29, 1647, specifically pointed out that higher courts are subject to error:

All synods or councils since the apostles' times, whether general or particular, may err, and many have erred; therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice, but to be used as a help in both (ch. XXXI:IV).

But perhaps the Christian Reformed Church is most explicit in illuminating the fact that governmental power flows from Christ to the individual, to the local elders, and thence to the higher courts. Articles 26 and 27 of the Church Order state:

The assemblies of the church are the consistory, the classis, and the synod. Each assembly exercises, in keeping with its own character and domain, the ecclesiastical authority entrusted to the church by Christ: *the authority of consistories being original, that of major assemblies being delegated* (p. 6, italics added).

That the character of local self-rule and federalized structure of the Reformation churches greatly influenced American civil government cannot be denied.

While it is true, under our *presently* existing state and general constitutions, that the flow of governmental power goes from the individual citizen to the state, and thence to

local subdivisions and the national government, it is important for Americans to recognize the *original priority* of *local* government in our federalized structure. This fact is too often overlooked by historians and political scientists, who tend to present American government from a false unitary perspective (unitary government being the situation in which governmental power flows from the central government at the national level to the various subdivisions).

R. J. Rushdoony correctly emphasizes the *local* character of self-government in America:

The states . . . had their independent existence as Christian republics prior to the Revolution. They retained their prerogative without diminution, sharing *none* of it with the federal government. They did, however, in varying degrees, share that prerogative with their constituent units, *the counties*. The counties, very often, adapted the law to their specific requirements. The reason for this was an obvious one: America represented a series of settlements by religious and ethnic groups, so that each area had and has its specific religious and ethnic orientation. . . . America was *colonized* by various groups who congregated in sections of cities and specific rural areas *out of choice*. This fact re-enforced the basic localism of the American civil structure.

The Revolution was actually a defensive war waged by the colonists against parliamentary troops.

To understand the significance of that invasion, it is necessary to recognize that the American civil structure was, almost from its inception, a *Protestant restoration of feudalism*. To the colonists, as to the barons who wrested the Magna Carta from King John, English liberty meant feudalism in essence, *localism as against centralism, contractual government as against absolutism*. Almost at once, the colonies gravitated to localism and contractualism. . . . A large degree of *autonomy* was accorded each town in Massachusetts as early as the General Court of 1636 because of the steady insistence of local self-government. Local officers became locally elected. . . . The thirteen colonies were free and independent States under their feudal lord, George III. They were not under parliament but had their own legislative bodies and their internally independent structures. The colonies had the right and power to issue their own money, a right which parliament sought to destroy. . . . A state empowered to control and coin its own money is an independent state.<sup>2</sup>

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2. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Nature of the American System* (Nutley: N. J.: The Craig Press, 1965), pp. 5-7.

Just how far America has strayed from our original Christian principle of a decentralized and self-governing republic can be seen in a recent incident: A state official of Oklahoma recently advised the people of Tulsa that the Environmental Protection Agency of the U.S. Government was not pleased with that city's failure to submit a suitable plan for air pollution control. And if a suitable plan was not submitted within a year, the official warned, the EPA would impose "sanctions" to bring the recalcitrant city into line. One threat made was to block the city's industrial development; another was to withdraw federal funds for highways and water construction projects.

Note the ironic switch: The political *creature* now has the temerity to dictate to its *creators*! Thus is the federal character of the American Republic destroyed in the same way that some apostate church denominations work to assume primary rather than *delegated* authority in their higher courts!

This switch—the shift in power from the local and state levels to the national level—is plainly evident in all 50 States and in innumerable communities. It has been made possible by the *unlimited taxing authority* which the states unwisely granted the national government via the 16th Amendment in 1913. It was further enhanced by ratification, in the same year, of the 17th Amendment, which changed the *election of senators* from by the various state legislatures to by the people directly. This Amendment radically altered the original structure of the American Republic and practically eliminated the influence of the states as independent political entities in the national Congress. And, finally, the shift in power has been further solidified by passage of the *Federal Reserve Act*, which created a central bank (the Federal Reserve System). This Act made it possible for the politicians and bureaucrats at the national level to engage in massive and continued deficit spending, thus insidiously transferring the control of privately created wealth from citizens into the hands of government rulers.

That these three radical political changes took place in 1913 makes that fateful year one of the blackest in the history of our Republic. The 16th and 17th Amendments and the Federal Reserve Act combined (we can almost say colluded) in 1913 practically to assure the future growth of a highly centralized and absolutist civil power in what was once a Christian republic.

And with the passing of this almost unlimited taxing and money-creating power into the hands of people at the central government, the American people have been subsequently conditioned financially to look to the national government as their Great Provider. They now turn to Washington for the meeting of all their material needs and to solve all their problems. In short, the American people have eschewed Jesus' instructions to pray to our heavenly Father for our daily bread (Matt. 6:11), and they have allowed the national government to become their god. In fleeing self-responsibility, they have set up the national State as their secular god. As a people Americans have become idolatrous! When the Old Testament Israelites turned idolatrous, judgment was never long in coming. Can we likewise hope to escape God's retributive judgment?

The burning question which now faces concerned Americans, especially *Christian* Americans, is this: What can be done about the disturbing unbiblical growth of absolutist and tyrannical civil government in America? What can be done to reclaim the original American Christian dream of individual freedom and self-responsibility before God, which is the underlying principle upon which our American Republic was founded?

Faithful preaching of the saving gospel of Christ is, of course, part of the answer. But it is not the whole answer, for it is only too evident that many truly born-again Christians blindly and ignorantly support the aggressive growth of humanistic civil government that we have been witnessing during this century. And why do they lend such support? Because they fail to see at least two things:

- (1) the anti-Christian, pro-humanist thrust which underlies the present trend toward absolutist unitary government in its aggressive attempts to manipulate and control citizens with the goal of ushering in an earthly utopia, and

- (2) the fact that the civil authority, as well as individuals, can and does break God's immutable commandments, "Thou shalt not steal," and "Thou shalt not covet."

The English Puritan, William Perkins (1558-1602), was well aware of this second point when he wrote:

If it should fall out that men's law be made of things evil, and forbidden by God, then there is no bond of conscience at all; but contrariwise men are bound in conscience not to obey.

The two failures cited above focus on both a great lack and a great challenge which devolve on the organized church and on those charged with its pastoral care. Not only is there a need to *preach* salvation by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, but carefully and systematically to *edify* the saints in the *practical outworking of such faith in every aspect of life and culture, including the institution of civil government*.

America needs in the worst way stalwart preachers and expounders of the faith who will carefully and systematically instruct the people in the biblical principles of civil government and who will fearlessly oppose as *anti-biblical* the current growth of despotic and tyrannical civil government at *any* level, but especially at the *national* level, where it is now concentrating into a Babel-like power. As colonial America was prepared and conditioned for freedom over 200 years ago by faithful and courageous Christian preachers who carefully and systematically related the gospel of Christ to civil liberty, so a similar challenge and opportunity now face church pastors today. Will they rise to the challenge? The high and holy calling of showing men the way of eternal salvation must, if it is to be a practical theology, include the logical outworking of that faith and salvation in society. And an essential part of such biblical instruction should be devoted to *bringing the institution of civil government into conformity with God's holy law*. Louis Berkhof wrote:

The civil law is simply the application of the moral law to the social and civil life of the people in all its ramifications (*Systematic Theology*, p. 298).

Our founding fathers clearly saw the inescapable relationship between biblical theology and civil government. They would have been shocked to see our modern trend of secularizing the state. In his Farewell Address, George Washington advised his fellow countrymen:

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert the great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obliga-

tion desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigations in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge in the supposition that morality be maintained without religion. Whatever be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle (Farewell Address, Sept. 17, 1796).

A grass-roots rebellion against the federal income tax is now sweeping across America. Are the rebellors subversive rebels, or are they as yet unrecognized patriots? Regardless of how one answers, the people in tax rebellion are reacting against the blatant immorality of a government which has long been engaging in the sins of coveting another's property and indulging in massive legal theft by taxing and redistributing citizens' hard-earned wealth via statist-controlled handouts and subsidy programs.

Tax rebellion by individuals may perhaps prove to be the most direct and effective manner of denying an aggressively totalitarian State the funds which supply its very life blood. But there is a clear biblical principle which Americans have not yet used to restore the American Republic. This biblical principle is the afore-mentioned principle of *interposition* or *nullification*—the very practical step of having an intermediate level of government *interpose* itself between an oppressing ruler and the oppressed people.

Perhaps the clearest application of this biblical principle is found in I Kings 12:1-24, where the elders of Israel appealed on behalf of the people to King Rehoboam to reduce the burdensome taxes his father Solomon had imposed on the populace. When he unwisely refused, the cry of the elders was, "To your tents, O Israel!" Their interposition and the negative response of the king to rule in accordance to God's higher law led to a God-ordained tax rebellion, that is, a *legal* rebellion.

The principle of governmental interposition is inherent in the biblical principle of local self-government. It is a feudal (contractual) principle. This same principle of interposition was used by the colonial legislatures in America to seek redress from King George III of England. When the legal interposition of the colonial legislatures failed, the colonies declared their independence: "To your tents, O Americans!" Thus the American Revolution was a *legal* and an *orderly* resistance against tyranny.



The sentiment, "Rebellion against tyrants is obedience to God!" is certainly biblical. It is clearly taught in I Kings 12:1-24, and this biblical principle speaks clearly to Christians today who are concerned about the growth of an anti-Christian absolutist State in Washington, D.C.

Is there not in these States United of America (*sic*) even one State Assembly, not even one board of county commissioners, not even one city council who will interpose themselves, as did the elders of ancient Israel with Rehoboam, between the growing tyranny of our national government and the long-suffering, overtaxed American people? This route of government interposition should still be tried before Americans individually "go to their tents" in tax rebellion.

Now, the principle of governmental interposition, in addition to being *scriptural*, is also decidedly *constitutional*. It is inherent in the very concept of local self-determination, a solid American governmental principle.

American history is rich with practical applications of governmental interposition. It was first invoked, since we became an independent republic, in 1798 by Kentucky and Virginia (the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions) to oppose the Alien and Sedition Laws that were passed by Congress that year. It was also used by the Hartford Convention during the War of 1812, and with success by South Carolina in 1832 to oppose a higher tariff law that Congress had imposed. Massachusetts and some other New England States applied the principle in the 1850's to negate the more stringent Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. And it was only the breakdown of the biblical principle of governmental interposition which produced the tragedy of the Civil War in 1861. And since that time the way toward the growth of a highly centralized, absolutist State in America has been all too evident.

Let us look more closely at the rich heritage of governmental interposition provided by American history and what happened when this important governmental principle finally failed to be applied.

(1) *The Declaration of Independence* (1776):

The American Revolution, as I stated above, was *not* a lawless rebellion against authority, as some historians claim. Rather, it was a *legal interposition* of one lawfully elected level of government (the colonial legislatures) against a king who

insisted in obdurately breaking his feudal contract with the colonies.

Even a cursory reading of the Declaration of Independence shows 27 specific points which the colonies claimed King George III broke in his feudal contract with them, thus negating his right of rule. Just before listing these specific points, the Declaration states:

The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States.

(2) *The Constitutional Power of Impeachment* (1787):

The giving to the House of Representatives the sole power of impeachment, as the duly elected representatives of the people, is a constitutional application of the biblical principle of government interposition. (See Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution of the United States of America.)

(3) *The Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions* (1798):

When the national Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, many loyal Americans felt that Congress had overstepped the powers that the States had so very carefully delegated to Congress in the Constitution of 1787. The State Legislatures of Kentucky and Virginia carefully deliberated the issue and passed what are known as the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions:

(a) On November 10, 1798, the Kentucky Legislature declared:

Resolved, that the several States composing the United States of America, are not united on the principles of unlimited submission to their General Government; but that by compact under the style and title of a Constitution for the United States and amendments thereto, they constituted a General Government for special purposes, delegated to that Government certain definite powers, reserving each State to itself, the residuary mass of right to their own self-Government; and that wheresoever the General Government assumes undelegated powers, its acts are unauthoritative, void, and of no force: That to this compact each State acceded as a State, and is an integral party, its co-States forming as to itself, the other party: That the Government created by this compact was not made the exclusive or final judge of the extent of the powers delegated to itself; since that would have made its discretion, and not the Constitution, the measure of its

powers; but that as in all other cases of compact among parties having no common Judge, each party has an equal right to judge for itself, as well of infractions as of the mode and measure of redress.

(b) And on December 21, 1798, the Virginia Assembly passed a similar resolution (and later clarified and re-emphasized it in a subsequent resolution passed on January 7, 1800). In the December 21 Resolution the Virginia Assembly declared:

. . . and that in the case of a deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of other powers, not granted by the said compact, the States who are parties thereto, have the right, and are in duty bound, to *interpose* for arresting the progress of evil, and for maintaining within their respective limits, the authorities, rights and liberties appertaining to them (*italics added*).

In short, what the States of Kentucky and Virginia did was to interpose themselves as political entities between the general government and their respective citizens to protect them against what the legislatures regarded as an unconstitutional arrogation of power. This was the first example of governmental interposition since the new constitution of 1787 was ratified by the states. Kentucky and Virginia both declared the Alien and Sedition Acts as unconstitutional and, therefore, null and void in their states. The legal interposition of one governmental level between a higher level of government and the people can thus lead to *nullification* of an act of tyranny, which is defined as the application of unlawful force or the unlawful application of lawful force. In a self-governing republic like these United States of America, tyranny is equivalent to the arrogation of unconstitutional powers by the ruling authorities at any level of government.

In *Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos: a Defense of Liberty Against Tyrants*, which first appeared under the pseudonym of Stephanous Junius Brutus in 1579, a tyrant is defined thus:

We have shewed that he is a king who lawfully governs a kingdom, either derived to him by succession, or committed to him by election. It follows, therefore, that he is a reputed tyrant, which either gains a kingdom by violence of indirect means, or, being invested therewith by lawful election or succession, governs it not according to law and equity, or neglects those contracts and agreements, to the observation of which he was strictly obliged at his reception. All of which may well occur in one and

the same person. The first is called a tyrant without title: the second a tyrant by practice.<sup>3</sup>

The writer of *Vindiciae* gave advice that modern-day Americans might well heed. He warned that "a tyrant the more he is tolerated, the more he becomes intolerable," and that "tyranny may be properly resembled to a fever hectic, the which at first is easy to be cured, but with much difficulty to be known; but after it is sufficiently known, it becomes incurable. Therefore small beginnings are to be carefully observed, and by those whom it concerns diligently prevented" (p. 196).

(4) *The Hartford Convention* (1814-15):

Early in 1814 many local governments (towns) in Massachusetts presented memorials to the state legislature setting forth the dangers that the War of 1812 exposed them to. They suggested the appointment of delegates to meet with delegates of other states for the purpose of developing a united effort to protect the mutual interests of the New England states. Accordingly, delegates from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Vermont, representing local conventions in their respective states, met at Hartford, Connecticut, from December 15, 1814, to January 5, 1815.

The Hartford Convention resolved:

That it be and hereby is recommended to the legislatures of the several states represented in this Convention, to adopt all such measures as may be necessary effectually to protect the citizens of said states from the operation and effects of all acts which have been or may be passed by the Congress of the United States, which shall contain provisions, subjecting the militia or other citizens to forcible drafts, conscriptions, or impressments, not authorized by the Constitution of the United States.<sup>4</sup>

The legislatures of Massachusetts and Connecticut sent commissioners to Washington to urge submission of amendments to the Constitution, but the war had ended before they arrived, and the whole matter was ignored. But the Hartford Convention is important in at least two respects:

First, it shows the principle of governmental interposition

3. *Vindiciae, Part III* (London: Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1924), pp. 181-2. Reprinted by Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass., 1963.

4. William MacDonald, ed. *Select Documents Illustrative of the History of the United States, 1776-1861* (London: The Macmillan Co., 1901), p. 205.

applied at both the *local* and the *state* levels.

Second, it shows that the northeast (as well as the southern and western) states accepted the legality and the constitutionality of a governmental concept that was forcefully wrenched from American civil policy in the Civil War.

We see here, and will see below, that the principle of *interposition* or *nullification* was widely accepted by all sections of these United States up to the Civil War. In the era of statist centralism which has resulted from the forceful overthrow of this biblical and legal principle, the concept has come to be considered only a quaint historical oddity. But, the question is *not* whether the Civil War has once-for-all forcefully buried the concept; rather, the question is: *Is the principle of governmental interposition biblical?* And if the answer is yes, as I believe it is, *then the principle holds for all times and all places*, and Christians should recognize its validity.

(5) *The Protest of South Carolina and Georgia (1828):*

When the U.S. Congress passed a high tariff in 1828, known as the "tariff of abominations," to protect New England from foreign competition, Governor Taylor of South Carolina denounced the tariff and urged the legislature to declare it unconstitutional and to provide for testing its validity in the courts. The Protest of South Carolina declared:

The Senate and House of Representatives of South Carolina, now met and sitting in General Assembly . . . in the name and on behalf of the good people of the said Commonwealth, solemnly protest against the system of protecting duties, lately adopted by the Federal Government, for the following reasons:

6) Because, whilst the power to protect manufacturers is nowhere expressly granted Congress, nor can be considered as necessary and proper to carry into effect any specified power, it seems to be expressly reserved to the States, by the tenth section of the first article of the constitution.

7) Because, even admitting Congress to have a constitutional right to protect manufacturers, by the imposition of duties, or by regulations of commerce, designed principally for that purpose, yet a tariff, of which the operation is grossly unequal and oppressive, is such an abuse of power, as is incompatible with the principles of a free government, and the great ends of civil society, justice, and equality of rights and protection. . . .

Deeply impressed with these considerations, the Representatives of the good people of this Commonwealth . . . claim to enter

upon the journals of the Senate, their protest against it, as unconstitutional, oppressive, and unjust.<sup>5</sup>

Note here an interesting fact: This interposition was specifically for entry "upon the journals of the Senate." Until the 17th Amendment radically changed the national/state federal structure, the States were *formally* represented in the U.S. Senate as independent political entities. That is, the senators did *not* represent the people, but the States. The direct election of senators since 1913 has worked to destroy this important principle of formal State representation in Congress, thereby seriously *weakening* the carefully devised federal structure of the Union of States. Before 1913 it was common for the various state legislatures to *petition* U.S. Representatives (who represent the *people* of the States) to cast their vote in such and such a way, while they commonly *instructed* U.S. Senators (whom the state legislatures appointed to represent the States) how to vote. The direct election of senators has thus weakened the federal structure of our Constitution and has intensified and speeded up the tendency of governmental power to be centralized in America.

The Legislature of Georgia, in its opposition to the "tariff of abominations," focused on the fact that the national government is a *creature of the various sovereign States* and that it is a government of only *expressly delegated and limited powers*:

The committee to whom was referred the resolutions from the States of South Carolina and Ohio have had the same under consideration. . . .

They [i.e., the Georgia committee] entertain no doubt but that the Constitution of the United States is a federal compact, formed and adopted by the States as sovereign and independent communities.

The Convention which formed and adopted the Constitution was composed of members elected and delegated by, and deriving immediate power and authority from, the Legislatures of their respective States. Its ratification depended upon the Legislatures of the States—each reserving the right of assent or dissent, without regard to population. . . .

In the Constitution of 1787, the powers delegated are clearly defined and particularly enumerated. The amendment to the Constitution is more explicit. It declares that the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution are reserved to

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5. *Ibid.*, pp. 231-34.

the States, respectively, or to the People. . . .

The States, in forming the Constitution, treated with each other as sovereign and independent Governments, expressly acknowledging their rights of sovereignty; and inasmuch as they divested themselves of those rights only which were expressly delegated, it follows, as a legitimate consequence, that they are still sovereign and independent as to all the powers not granted.

The States respectively, therefore, have, in the opinion of your committee, the unquestionable right, in case of any infraction of the general compact, or want of good faith in the performance of its obligations, to complain, remonstrate, and even to refuse obedience to any measure of the General Government manifestly against, and in violation of, the Constitution; and in short, to seek redress of their wrongs by all the means rightfully exercised by a sovereign and independent Government. Otherwise, the Constitution might be violated with impunity and without redress, as often as the majority might think proper to transcend their powers, and the party injured bound to yield a submissive obedience to the measure, however unconstitutional. This would tend to annihilate all the sovereignty and independence of the States, and to consolidate *all power* in the General Government, which never was designed nor intended by the framers of the Constitution. . . .

For the same reason, Congress has not the right to appropriate the moneys of the United States for the improvement or benefit of a particular section of the country, in which all the States would not have a common interest and equal benefit.<sup>6</sup>

This lucid statement of the federal character of the Union and the sovereignty of the States as compacting parties, as well as what is proper when the creature (the U.S. Government) oversteps the bounds of its creation, should be carefully studied by Americans today.

(6) *South Carolina's Ordinance of Nullification* (1832):

The national Congress passed another tariff law on July 13, 1832, which slightly reduced the tariff and which removed some other objectional features of the 1828 tariff, but it did *not* show any indication of abandoning the protective policy being followed by the general government. Accordingly, the South Carolina Legislature called a special convention, which passed its famous Act of Nullification on November 24, 1832:

Whereas the Congress of the United States, by various acts, purporting to be acts laying duties and imposts on foreign imports,

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6. *Ibid.*, pp. 234-36.

but in reality intended for the protection of domestic manufactures, and the giving of bounties to classes and individuals engaged in particular employments, at the expense and to the injury and oppression of other classes and individuals, and by wholly exempting from taxation certain foreign commodities, such as are not produced or manufactured in the United States, to afford a pretext for imposing higher and excessive duties on articles similar to those intended to be protected, hath exceeded its just powers under the Constitution, which confers on it no authority to afford such protection, and hath violated the true meaning and intent of the Constitution. . . .

We, therefore, the people of the State of South Carolina in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain, and it is hereby declared and ordained, that the several acts and parts of acts of the Congress of the United States, purporting to be laws for the imposing of duties and imposts . . . are unauthorized by the Constitution of the United States, and violate the true meaning and intent thereof, and are null, void, and no law, nor binding upon this State, its officers or citizens. . . .

And we, the people of South Carolina, to the end that it may be fully understood by the Government of the United States, and the people of the co-States, that we are determined to maintain this, our ordinance and declaration, at every hazard, do further declare that we will not submit to the application of force, on the part of the Federal Government, to reduce this State to obedience. . . .<sup>7</sup>

This Act is instructive because (1) it shows the high degree of constitutional awareness that used to exist in America (an example which modern-day Americans might well emulate), and (2) the practice of governmental interposition in this instance culminated in a direct action by a specifically established representative body, a convention of the people themselves. The duly elected legislature, instead of acting on behalf of the people as they might have done (except that the recently held State election hinged on the promise of calling a special convention), turned the problem back to the people for their *direct* participation and handling. In church policy this would be akin to the elected body of church elders turning an especially critical issue back to the congregation for a direct vote.

Now, President Andrew Jackson did *not* agree with the action taken by the people of South Carolina. So he issued a *counter* proclamation on December 10, 1832. In it he admitted

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7. *Ibid.*, pp. 268-71.



that there is an "indefeasible right of resisting acts which are plainly unconstitutional, and too oppressive to be endured. . . ," and that "It is true . . . that to justify this abrogation of law, it must be palpably contrary to the Constitution."<sup>8</sup>

Thus, Jackson *agreed with the principle* of governmental interposition, while he *disagreed with the specific manner* in which the courageous people of South Carolina *applied* it.

Both Jackson and the Governor of South Carolina had prepared for military action, which appeared imminent, but the national congress reconsidered and narrowly passed a compromise tariff bill which promised to reduce the protective tariff over a period of years.

South Carolina's clear intent was to secede from the Union if the national Congress insisted on pursuing its sectional protective tariff policy. Thus South Carolina's 1832 Act of Nullification must be regarded as an example of successfully applying the principle of governmental interposition. The action of interposition, as serious as it is admitted to be, provides a "safety valve" for redressing wrongs and for preventing the still more drastic action of secession, which is the ultimate alternative open to an abused people who claim the right of self-determination. Failure to apply the principle of interposition successfully a generation later *did* convulse our nation of "free and independent States" in the most tragic war of American history.

(7) *South Carolina's Ordinance of Secession (1860):*

When radical abolitionists in the North were successful in electing a minority president (Lincoln), the South Carolina Legislature called for a state convention of the people. The convention met and unanimously adopted the following ordinance:

We, the people of the State of South Carolina in convention assembled, do declare and ordain, and it is hereby declared and ordained, that the ordinance adopted by us in convention on the twenty-third day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight, whereby the Constitution of the United States of America was ratified, and also all acts and parts of acts of the general assembly of this State ratifying amendments

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8. *Ibid.*, pp. 274-75.

of the said constitution, are hereby repealed; and that the union now subsisting between South Carolina and the other States, under the name of the "United States of America," is hereby dissolved.<sup>9</sup>

This Ordinance of Secession resulted from the *failure* of successfully applying the principle of governmental interposition. Clearly South Carolina expected that the other states would recognize and respect her right to withdraw from a Union of which she had been a voluntarily compacting party, but such was not to be the case. When President Lincoln embarked on a number of unconstitutional steps in an attempt to preserve the Union by force, he evoked a number of *additional* acts of governmental interposition which have all but been lost to history. Some of these acts were taken by *individual office holders*, some by *states*, and some even by *counties*.

(8) *Governmental Interposition by Individual Office Holders:*

Article 4, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution guarantees that the general government will protect each State from domestic violence *upon application of the state legislature* or upon application of the governor when the legislature can't be convened. Without such formal application, no federal troops were ever allowed to be sent into a state, for to do so without a specific invitation would constitute an aggressive military action—the military invasion of an independent and sovereign state. Thus, when President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to invade South Carolina and the other states which had followed her lead, the reaction of some state governors whose states had not seceded was swift and firm. The following replies are examples of what John Calvin termed appropriate action by magistrates to protect the people from tyrannical acts:

Governor Magoffin of Kentucky replied:

Your dispatch is received. In answer, I say emphatically, Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern States.

Governor Harris of Tennessee replied:

Tennessee will not furnish a single man for coercion, but fifty

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9. *Ibid.*, p. 442.

thousand, if necessary, for the defense of our rights, or those of our Southern brothers.

Governor Jackson of Missouri replied:

Requisition is illegal, unconstitutional, revolutionary, inhuman, diabolical, and can not be complied with.

Governor Ellis of North Carolina replied:

Your dispatch is received, and, if genuine—which its extraordinary character leads me to doubt—I have to say, in reply, that I regard the levy of troops made by the Administration, for the purpose of subjugating the States of the South, as in violation of the Constitution, and a usurpation of power. I can be no party to this wicked violation of the laws of the country, and to this war upon the liberties of a free people. You can get no troops from North Carolina.<sup>10</sup>

Lincoln's unconstitutional action to raise an army and the sending of troops across a state line to reinforce Fort Sumter stopped short efforts by the state of Virginia to mediate between the general government and the seceded States. Virginia leaders were of the opinion that the seceded States would have voluntarily re-entered the Union after a time if left alone.

As both the North and the South prepared for impending military conflict—forcible invasion by the North, and an equally forcible attempt to repel invasion by the South—other incidents of governmental interposition, not generally known today, occurred:

(9) *Interposition by Counties:*

(a) The western counties of Virginia refused to follow the state in secession, thus establishing a new state, West Virginia.

(b) The County of Winston, Alabama, which was 98 percent white, Scot-Irish, refused to go with the South, but it did not join the North either. It remained independent. No legal steps were actually taken, and Alabama did not send troops to invade the County.

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10. All quotes from Jefferson Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, vol. I (Thos. Yoseloff, pub., reprint of 1958, orig. publication date 1881) pp. 412-13.

(10) *Interposition by a State and a County:*

The border State of Missouri was divided in sympathy. She, like her sister border State of Kentucky, sought to remain neutral in the impending war. Both states offered guarantees of peace and order within their respective territories if left free to control their own affairs as sovereign political States. But since neither state agreed to supply troops for invading the South, they came under suspicion and were subsequently invaded by Union troops.

In the spring of 1861, Union troops suddenly appeared and surrounded a peaceful encampment of Missouri State Guard at Camp Jackson near St. Louis. Captain Nathaniel Lyon was in command of the Union troops in the absence of General W. S. Harney. Sadly, after the Missouri State Guard handed over their arms, the Union troops opened fire, killing some of the State militia and also killing 10 and wounding 20 women and children who were bystanders. Upon his return to the Union command, General Harney negotiated a treaty with General Sterling Price of the Missouri State Guard (who was known up to that time as a pro-Union man). The treaty, signed on May 21, 1861, guaranteed the territorial integrity of Missouri as a neutral State. In part, the treaty read:

General Price, having by commission full authority over the militia of the State of Missouri, undertakes with the sanction of the Governor of the State, already declared, to direct the whole power of the State officers to maintaining order within the State among the people thereof. General Harney declares that, this object being assured, he can have no occasion, as he has no wish, to make military movements that might otherwise create excitement and jealousy, which he most earnestly desires to avoid.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, the military invasion of Missouri did not stop, so General Price led the poorly equipped Missouri State Guard in a series of desperate (and successful) efforts to eject the invaders from the state. But though the Guard, through superior leadership and dedication of the poorly equipped men, won every battle, the sheer number of 70,000 invading Union troops forced General Price to lead his men, who never numbered more than 3,500, out of the state southward, where they joined the Confederate troops.

This unsuccessful military interposition by State officers

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11. *Ibid.*, p. 417.

still leaves an interesting story to be told about Missouri at the *county* level.

Callaway County, a farming community in mid-Missouri just north of the Missouri River, was strongly Southern in sympathy. Its citizens took action at the county level when Callaway was invaded by Union troops. The first military skirmish took place on the morning of July 17, 1861, when some 200 Callaway County citizens fired upon and turned back several hundred Union troops who attempted to enter the County from the direction of Jefferson City, which by now was under Union control.

In October, 1861, another body of Union troops approached the eastern border of Callaway County. Colonel Jefferson F. Jones quickly moved to oppose the Union troops, who were headed by General John B. Henderson. Here is what happened:

Colonel Jones then moved his troops east and within a few miles of the Montgomery line. General Henderson had meanwhile halted his command a few miles east of the line. Each army could plainly see the smoke from the campfires of the other. After a few days of negotiation between Colonel Jones and General Henderson, a treaty was made and signed, the terms of which were that General Henderson, purporting to speak for the United States of America, agreed not to invade Callaway County, and Colonel Jones, acting for Callaway County, agreed not to invade the United States of America. After this treaty, General Henderson retired with his troops. Callaway County, having thus dealt as an absolute equal with a sovereign power, became known as the Kingdom of Callaway, a designation which it has proudly borne and doubtless will for all time to come. The treaty between the United States and Callaway County was signed on October 27, which naturally is a national holiday in the Kingdom of Callaway.<sup>12</sup>

The Callaway County incident may seem like a very unimportant event in the grander sweep of events in the tragedy called the Civil War, but the *principle* involved is extremely important: the principle of local self-determination and, therefore, the concomitant principle of governmental interposition. These two principles are extremely important to the liberty of a freedom-loving people.

John Calvin in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book

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12. Hugh P. Williams, *The Kingdom of Callaway*, p. 33.

IV, admonishes us that wicked rulers are a judgment of God upon a people (par. 25), and that obedience to bad rulers is required in Scripture (par. 26), and that it isn't the role of *individual* citizens to vindicate right, but that it is God's role to do so (par. 29). But Calvin just as clearly points out (in pars. 30 and 31) that *constitutional* magistrates ought *indeed* check the tyranny of rulers:

Here are revealed his [God's] goodness, his power, and his providence. For sometimes he raises up open avengers from his servants, and arms them with his command to punish the wicked government and deliver his people, oppressed in unjust ways, from miserable calamity (par. 30).

For if there are now any magistrates of the people, appointed to restrain the willfulness of kings (as in ancient times the ephors were set against the Spartan Kings, or the tribunes of the people against the Roman consuls, or the demarchs against the senate of the Athenians; and perhaps, as things now are, such power as the three estates exercise in every realm when they hold their chief assemblies), I am so far from forbidding them to withstand, in accordance with their duty, the fierce licentiousness of kings, that, if they wink at kings who violently fall upon and assault the lowly common folk, I declare that their dissimulation involves nefarious perfidy, because they dishonestly betray the freedom of the people, of which they know that they have been appointed protectors by God's ordinance.<sup>13</sup>

There is no doubt that Calvin saw the principle of governmental interposition as solidly biblical. The principle is, if anything, even more applicable in modern America than in Calvin's age, for the system of American constitutional government is certainly feudal (i.e., contractual). Thus, any deviation of the ruling authorities from their governing contractual agreement with the people (the state and U.S. constitutions) amounts to a breach of contract, thus obligating the intermediate "magistrates of the people" to rise to the people's defense, lest they be guilty of "nefarious perfidy" and responsible for betraying the freedom of the citizens they are to protect.

This brings us to a final point concerning Calvin, his feeling about when men should obey or disobey civil government, and how it relates to our present situation in America.

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13. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), pp. 1518-19.

While it is true that Calvin taught a high degree of submission to rulers, even tyrannical rulers, there is one situation in which he felt that even *individual* rebellion is justified. This is where the civil government attacks God. Calvin's attitude is that the *individual* citizen (but *not* the intermediate magistrate who is properly a protector of the citizens' freedom) can well sacrifice his own honor by submitting to tyrants. (Note, this is *his* attitude, not necessarily the *biblical* attitude.) But when civil governments attack *God*, everything changes. Thus, when King Darius issued a decree forbidding anyone from praying to any god for thirty days, except to him, and Daniel disobeyed by continuing his usual daily practice of prayer, Calvin writes in his *Commentary on Daniel*:

For earthy princes lay aside their power when they rise up against God, and are unworthy to be reckoned among the number of mankind. We ought, rather, utterly to defie them (*conspuere in ipsorum capita*—i.e., literally, "to spit on their heads") than to obey them (Lecture 30, on Dan. 6:22).

How does Calvin's advice apply to Christian Americans today? In this way: Our once Christian-based civil government has become idolatrous by arrogating to itself the God-like power of permeating every aspect and sphere of citizens' lives. But *only God* has the right to rule over every sphere of the people's lives!

Our once carefully limited and restricted civil government now claims the unbiblical right of "playing God" by invading our homes, our schools, our churches, and our business, financial, and personal lives. *It has become a secular god to whom all must bow.* No sphere, not even one small niche, is sacred any more from the strong hand of civil government as the humanistic state attempts to care for people from the cradle to the grave. Truly the humanistic state has thus become a false god just as Nebuchadnezzar did when he built his golden image and ordered everyone to worship it.

Is it not time for God-loving Christians, perhaps even as individuals, to start defying this secular idol we call the State when it arrogates to itself God-like powers? How many Christians today have been guilty of encouraging, instead of resisting, the growth of an anti-biblical humanistic State? But the point of this essay is not to encourage Christians to individual resistance, but to emphasize the clear-cut *biblical*

principle of *governmental interposition* by intermediate magistrates and levels of government.

Today the biblical principle of governmental interposition, its firm constitutional basis, and its rich historical application in America to offset the growth of tyrannical power has been all but forgotten. Sadly, many years of tax-supported statist education have subverted our Christian foundations and have conditioned Americans to acquiesce meekly in accepting a decidedly unbiblical view of civil government and its rightful sphere of activity. This principle of interposition may well be the very answer Christians need to reconstruct the American Republic constitutionally and to help rebuild the spiritual foundation for a Christian America.



## THE STRUGGLE FOR THE HEART OF THE DUTCH NATION

Pieter Jongeling  
Translated by T. J. Schaafsma

### *Translator's Introduction*

MR. Pieter Jongeling was born on March 31, 1909, in Brock, a small village in the North of Holland. For a short period, he followed a career as an elementary school teacher. During this time, his talents as a story writer became apparent, in particular when he entered journalism in 1937, joining the editorial staff of an influential Christian newspaper. At the outbreak of World War II, he became engaged in political and press activities against the Nazis, who had overpowered Holland. His resistance was deeply rooted in the Christian faith and the Reformed doctrines to which he adhered. He was one of the first few who recognized the demonic attempt of the Nazis to bring the Dutch nation into anti-Christian bondage.

Arrested in 1942 by the Germans, he was imprisoned in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp until the end of the war. During his imprisonment, he met several fellow prisoners who later would be political and cultural leaders in post-war Holland.

Freed in 1945, he became the editor-in-chief of the same newspaper which he had served before. In 1948 he founded an independent Reformed newspaper, inspired by the Spiritual revival in the Reformed church to which he belonged, initiated by the well-known and courageous theologian Dr. Klaas Schilder.

Mr. Jongeling published widely: short stories, numerous children's books, a few political and ethical studies, and poetry.

On the political scene, he was instrumental in founding a

Christian political party of Calvinist background and true to Biblical teachings. In 1969 he was elected to represent this party, the Reformed Political League, in the Dutch Parliament (House of Commons) and held a seat until a few years ago. Because of his clear and outspoken Biblical views on national and foreign policies, he was regularly interviewed on national radio and television networks. The public's appreciation for his work is witnessed by a popular recent biography.

Mr. Jongeling now enjoys his retirement from an active life with his family, visiting his three sons and six daughters with his wife and life-long companion.

Mr. Jongeling has a monthly column, "Reflections" in the Christian family magazine *Reformed Perspective*, available from Box 12, Transcona Postal Station, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2C 2Z5.

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### *The Christian Nation of Holland before 1940*

During the last part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Holland saw a great development of Christian organizations. In part, this was a result of two preceding reformations of the church and inspired by the genius of Dr. Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), a theologian and statesman at the same time, who put his stamp on the Reformed people in Holland by his influential and productive writings.

For many years, a fierce political battle had been waged to gain equal rights for Christian education in basic schools with respect to state-supported education. In principle, this battle was won in 1920 and Christian schools were rapidly growing in number. Christians of Calvinist tradition established their own Free University, which turned out to be very successful.

A whole network of daily newspapers and periodicals, owned and managed by Christians, covered the nation, the most well-known being "De Standaard" ("The Standard").

On the political scene, two political parties emerged, both of Protestant origin, the Anti-Revolutionary<sup>1</sup> Party (A.R.P.)

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1. Translator's note: "Anti" should be taken in the sense of "instead of" and not as "counter." The motto of this party was "Instead of Revolution, the Gospel."

and the Christian-Historic Union (C.H.U.). Soon, these parties sought cooperation with the Roman Catholic State Party, resulting in an alliance, strong enough to break the liberal<sup>2</sup> supremacy and to form cabinets with Christian programs and wide parliamentary support.

Society was shaped by an entire phalanx of clubs, federations, and leagues, all of strong Christian conviction.

The Calvinist part of the nation, which so far had been only of little influence, had awaked, and grown considerably, both intellectually and socially. It now co-ruled the nation.

Yet, not all that glittered was gold. Self-complacency, spiritual slackening, and a decay of the church were revealing their first ominous signs.

The great financial crisis, originating in the U.S.A. at the end of the 1920s, spread like a brush-fire over almost the entire world; it also got Holland under its control. Neighbouring Germany had always been the main buyer of our export products, and was a valuable trade market for our biggest transit-harbor, Rotterdam.

Because the crisis hit Germany worse than any other European nation, causing an army of three million unemployed, the German government limited the import of Dutch goods to almost nothing. The unemployment in Holland increased dramatically.

In Germany, the enormous economic crisis was one of the factors favoring the growth of Nazism, finally bringing its false prophet Hitler to power. But also in Holland the Nazi doctrine found a not infertile soil, although it did not find as much support as in Germany. Being part of the many Fascist and National Socialist groups, coming to life in the '20s and '30s, only the National Socialist Movement (N.S.B.) had any attractive power for the Dutch people. During 1935, this movement succeeded in getting an 8% vote in provincial elections, boosted by favourable electoral conditions. Afterwards its support diminished. The German re-armament program, Hitler's aggressive foreign policy, and the persecution of the Jewish population evoked concern and disgust in Holland. Most of the Dutch people did not realize the full impact of these evils, also for their own country, however. Yet, there

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2. Liberal to be taken in the sense of a political movement, like in the U.K.

was a beginning of awakening, in particular due to publishing activities of the Anti-Revolutionary Party, evaluating and criticizing the Nazi doctrine as of essentially pagan origin.

*Overpowered by Nazi Germany*

Armed conflict broke out in September, 1939, which eventually resulted in World War II. Initially, Holland stayed out of the conflict. It had mobilized, but hoped to be able to stay neutral, as in World War I.

This turned out to be illusory thinking. On May 10, 1940, when Germany started its great European offensive, Holland was raided by German war troops at night.

Airborne German forces dropped from the sky and took major military airfields by surprise. Soon a ring of steel surrounded the government center, the Hague. The Germans had intended to arrest Her Majesty the Queen and her ministers, but did not succeed. Dutch military forces regained all airfields and captured most of the German troops.

This, however, only meant a delay of defeat. A big German army proceeded through the midpart of Holland and was temporarily halted by fierce resistance at the Grebbe hills. Although the Germans did not outnumber the Dutch, they were armed more than three times as heavy and were better trained. The pre-war Dutch pacifism had earned its sour fruits. The end came when the defending troops had to withdraw from their strongholds. Also in the south, the Germans made fast progress at the weakest spot of the Dutch defense lines. The attacking forces gained access to Rotterdam, where they got hold of some important bridges in the Rhine delta. Heavy fighting erupted to gain control of the bridges over the river Meuse, the main artery of Rotterdam.

The German general staff sent an ultimatum: either immediate national surrender, or bombing of Rotterdam—an open city! Even before the answer of the Dutch had arrived at the German headquarters, German bombers took off and made Rotterdam a burning heap of rubble.

After only five days of fighting, Holland was faced with an impossible military situation. The Queen and her cabinet evaded arrest by taking refuge in England. The army surrendered, after a short period of skirmishing in the southern sea province of Zeeland.

Five days of fighting cost Holland about 3000 dead. The five years of occupation, following its surrender, took a toll of 300,000 lives, among them 110,000 Jews.

*Numbed by the Shock*

The rapid and total defeat had numbed the Dutch population beyond comprehension. Initially, many were filled with indignation because the Queen and her cabinet had "fled" to England, but in the long run it dawned on many that she had acted wisely.

Spiritually, the first months of the occupation were the most dangerous. The occupational forces went out of their way to obtain the populations' cooperation, if not its sympathy. Our military were not kept in Germany as P.O.W.s for a long time, but freed rather soon. Hitler appointed the Austrian Nazi Dr. Seyss-Inquart as his "governor." At the occasion of his inauguration in the historic Knight's Hall in The Hague, he addressed the nation with the reassurance, "We have not come to corner the national Dutch character, to destroy or to take your freedom. . . . We do not want to curb this country or its population by imperialism, nor force it to share our political conviction."

Many Dutchmen took these beautiful-sounding words as a sign of hope. Perhaps, everything would not be as bad as it looked at first. In particular, many influential people at the financial and executive level became convinced that Germany could not lose this war anymore, after the dazzling and sensational course of military successes. Poland had been destroyed, Belgium had surrendered, France defeated, and the British expeditionary army had just escaped the German destruction at Dunkirk, suffering heavy casualties. England remained the sole free (non-neutral) country in Europe. For Holland, there seemed no other alternative than to conform to a permanent cooperation with the Third Reich. At the same time, many thought we should attempt to retain as much of our own national identity as possible, and guard the old national rights and freedom.

The train of thought can be easily understood, but at the same time it was highly dangerous, because *it hoped to profit from compromise* and did not take into account the fact that Holland had been taken into demonic Nazi custody after it

had surrendered. Nazism, from the outset, was determined to poison the spirit of our nation using all available means. In fact, no compromise was ever less realistic. *Resistance was the only answer.*

Common people, in particular Christians, expected to be guided spiritually and to be informed about their duty according to Biblical standards. They were looking to those leaders who had been so outspoken in the past, and expected them to act accordingly. Many of those leaders were silent, however, or only added to the confusion.

### *The Man Who Did Not Keep Silent*

There was at least one man who did not keep silent: Dr. Klaas Schilder, professor of dogmatics at the Kampen Theological Seminary and main editor of the weekly periodical "De Reformatie" ("The Reformation"). He confessed to the Christian faith calling in particular to the Christian leaders to resist the pagan Nazism by taking the shield of faith (Eph. 6:16).

The issue of June 21, 1940, contained his sharp warning against the danger of spiritual surrender in an essay titled: "Leave Your Shelter; Put on Your Battle Dress." He wrote: "The greatest danger is the gradual disarmament of our spirit, getting accustomed to the idea that now we can leave the shelters which protect us from shrapnel. We would be wise to take a subscription for an undetermined period to a spiritual shelter, in view of uncertain political weather, til the time—who knows?—the thunderstorm has drifted away. The danger is the gradual transition from physical to spiritual disarmament. . . .

"Oh, Christian, come out of your shelter! Put on your battle-dress! Keep in mind that well-known Bible phrase, so often used for celebrations: because of Zion I will not be silent. And start now to believe that the occupation power is serious about it when it tells us that Dutch law remains in force, and that we therefore do not recognize a clan of privileged citizens. If we do not dare to speak out on what is right, we will lose our people forever." Thus wrote Dr. Schilder week after week, until the Germans arrested him in mid-August, 1940, and did not allow further publication of his weekly. The effect of his writing could not be undone any-

more, however, for those thousands who awoke from their attitude of fear and numbing resignation.

Dr. Seyss-Inquart and his coworkers continued in their efforts to mobilize all Dutch economic resources for the German war machine, and at the same time to gain the nation's sympathy for the German cause, by combining promises and force. The indications that they failed were ever increasing, however. When the Germans gradually curbed the press and gained complete control over the radio networks, the public turned to the "London Radio" and its Dutch programs.

### *The Dawn of Resistance*

The first spontaneous expression of the mood of the Dutch people came on June 20, 1940. On this day, Prince Bernhard's birthday, many people took the courage to fly the national flag, and others carried the dynasty's orange color. Some carried a dandelion in their buttonhole, the favorite flower of the Prince of Orange. Masses of flowers were laid down at the royal palaces and at the statue of Prince William of Orange, the founder of the nation. At the Noordeinde Palace in The Hague, a congratulatory register was signed by thousands of people.

In some cases the Germans took counter-actions. They booked those who carried orange-colored decorations in some cities. The former chief of Staff, General Winkelman, who had also signed the register under loud cheers of the onwatching public, was taken to Germany as a P.O.W.

Yet, Seyss-Inquart did not lose his hope that he would get the Dutch people under full control: a "Labor Force" ("Arbeidsdienst") was built up following the German model, the "Winter-Aid" ("Winterhulp") would start in the fall of 1940, and the "purification" of reading and study material for public schools was taking a headstart. With German thoroughness, a complete brain washing program was underway, backed up by continuous official actions. The result, however, was one which disappointed the planners.

The first eruption of massive resistance came in February 1941. In many ways, it had to do with the persecution of the Jews, which had slowly but systematically started.

First of all, it was announced that Jewish government employees were not to be promoted to higher ranks. Two

months later, all Jewish officials were fired. The beginning of January saw the commencement of the registering of all Jewish inhabitants of Holland. Fights between Jews and Dutch Nazis broke out in Amsterdam. On Saturday the 8th and Sunday the 9th, the German military aided by Dutch Nazi supporters took revenge. Several hundred Jews were arrested in the Amsterdam Jewish section, beaten up, and transported to the Buchenwald concentration camp. They were the first of more than 100,000 to come, who were deported to be destroyed. . . . Later in February new raids followed, and these horrible actions infuriated the Amsterdam population. The illegal Dutch Communist Party (D.P.N.) made use of this public mood by publishing a manifesto on February 24th, calling for a general strike. This appeal was obeyed on the following day by large groups of workmen, both communists and non-communists. Streetcars, wharfs, many offices and shops . . . half of the city closed down.

On Tuesday the Germans jumped into action. The Waffen-SS crushed all resistance. There was a lot of machinegun shooting, and many were imprisoned. A few weeks later, 18 Dutchmen were executed, among them 15 of the resistance group, "The Partisans" ("De Geuzen"<sup>3</sup>), and three Amsterdam strike leaders.

By brute force the Germans tried to break the resistance's backbone. Initially it seemed that they would have success, but Seyss-Inquart realized that his victory was only apparent. His main goal, assigned to him by Hitler himself, to gain the Dutch people for Germany, had utterly failed.

Very soon after the surrender of Holland in the days of May, 1940, many Dutch people were confronted with the need to hide people from the Germans. The very first were British soldiers, who had lost contact with their battalions when they withdrew from Dunkirk, and who wandered through Belgian Flanders until they reached the Zeeland seaprovence. They were offered a welcome and hideout. Mostly they were smuggled to France, shortly after that.

It did not take long until an increasing number of Dutchmen needed a safe shelter from the Germans. During March 1941, the "Labor Force" ("Arbeidsdienst") was established,

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3. Virtually untranslatable. The name refers to 16th century freedom-fighters loyal to William of Orange, and mostly pirates.



pretending to be neutral and voluntary. Already in July 1941, however, Seyss-Inquart declared this force to be National Socialist, and soon after that, serving in this force was made compulsory for certain groups. On September 24, 1942, the German High Command declared the service to be compulsory for every Dutch young man aged 18.

The churches reacted with a statement that everyone should decide according to his own conscience. Many judged this far too obedient and "took leave" for a little while. Most of them returned home pretty soon when it became apparent that sharp control was not enforced.

### *Who was the Government?*

In the meantime, it became very clear that the conflict between the Christian faith and pagan Nazism was going to escalate. The orthodox Christians were the first to realize this, among them many reformed Christians, and they were faced with the question of how they should act with respect to the German authorities. Should it be considered as the official, ordained government, to be obeyed in all matters, except those which were obviously not in accordance with the Lord's commandments? Were Romans 13 and similar parts of the Bible relevant to the German power? Many had a difficult time arriving at a clear position, but most Christians gradually came to a definite conclusion.

Often, one could hear a quotation from the 19th-century Christian statesman, that *one has to obey the legitimate government, but not the crowned pirate who has taken the country by force.*

The war between Holland and Germany continued. Our legitimate government had its seat in London. By international law, the prerogatives of the occupational forces were regulated in the "Regulations for territorial war" ("Landoorlogreglement"), signed by the Dutch and German government before WW II, which had never been repealed. These regulations gave certain authority to the occupying administration, in view of the actual situation, since life goes on, even in wartime, and when the legitimate government is unable to enforce the law; but the same regulations provided for many guarantees, ensuring the rights and identity of the occupied nation, and strongly limiting the powers of the occupying administration.

The Germans had immediately violated the war regulations, by attacking Holland without any declaration of war in advance. Later they demonstrated a total lack of respect for the treaty's many stipulations and prohibitions. On the contrary, they made an increasing attempt to force a pagan political doctrine upon the people's conscience. All this worked to convince most Christians that resisting the enemy was perfectly allowed, insofar as this resistance served the purpose of breaking the usurper's power and of preventing him from being successful in his essentially pagan assassination of the Dutch nation.

Immediately a second question came up: Was it allowed to make use of lies and deception in the struggle with the Germans? Suppose a search was made, resulting in questioning whether or not suspects had been hiding downed British pilots, Jews, etc. Confirming such questions delivered the hunted persons into the enemy's hands. Refusing an answer virtually equalled acknowledging that the questioner had guessed right, and therefore did not offer an acceptable solution. Something similar occurred in many other situations. The Bible was scrutinized in search of answers. Some pointed out that Rahab hid the spies of Israel and deceived Jericho's king by misleading his soldiers (Joshua, Chapter 2). Other examples were quoted, e.g., the farmer's wife at Bahurim, doing a similar thing (2 Samuel 17), and many other cases. The final conclusion could only be that *the enemy lost his right to a true answer*; we are at war, and are allowed to make use of stratagems.

### *Cruel Orders*

The Germans closed the net around our people and made it tighter every day. Immediately following the February strike, which had been quenched by bloody force, the persecution of the Jews as enforced by rough orders. All Jews were forced to wear the yellow Davidic star, marking them in public. The summer was the scene of many mass arrests, and the first groups of Jews were transferred to the Westerbork transition camp, waiting to be transported to the destruction camps and gas chambers in Poland.

Of the 140,000 Jewish population in Holland, 110,000 were murdered. Only 6000 survivors returned from Auschwitz

and Theresienstadt. Another 20,000 managed to survive by going into hiding in time.

In the meantime, forced labor was tightened up. Whereas in 1940 it was the unemployed who were the first to be sent to Nazi Germany—which even received some understanding among the Dutch—this changed radically in the beginning of 1942. Now companies were gone over with a fine comb to catch workers for the German war industry. Job centers were forced to cooperate, but these actions did not bring the expected result. By all kinds of tricks the German policies were sabotaged and delayed. Many who took the warnings to their heart went into a timely hiding. Only a few thousand were caught.

### *The Underground Press*

Very soon after 1940s May days, all press media were “coordinated.” Teleprinters at editorial offices spewed out orders time after time, prescribing embargos on news release. Reporters who were too bold in their writings were ordered to come to the “Presserferent” (“press reference officer”) of the SD, the Security Service, and got a severe warning, were threatened, or even arrested. In the fall of 1941 a large number of periodicals had to close their offices, officially because of “general lack of paper.” Those newspapers which continued to appear were gradually transformed into instruments for German war propaganda. But Freedom’s voice could not be silenced. There came “*illegal*” bulletins, initially not more than stencilled leaflets. They carried the news which the official press was not allowed to print anymore, and they called for resistance against the Germans and the Nazi doctrine. In this way, they reanimated the nation’s spirit and courage, which had been so cruelly beaten down.

After the war was over it was calculated that during 1940, 62 different illegal bulletins came off the press, with a total of 57,000 copies. Many of these publications disappeared in the course of time, because they fused with others, or because the people behind them were caught by the German counter-intelligence.

The only common feature of all this press activity was its shared opposition to the occupational administration. It goes without explaining that their motives sometimes were vastly

different. Some larger periodicals became very well known. "Het Parool" ("The Password") had a social-democratic orientation and remained faithful to its origin during the entire war. "Vry Nederland" ("The Free Netherlands") was founded by Protestants and members of the Anti-Revolutionary Party. Most of its initiators were arrested rather quickly. During the month of October, 1941, a leading figure in the editorial board of this newspaper emerged, H. M. van Randwijk, a talented author and a man of strong character. He adhered to Christian socialism, however, and had very radical ideas. The older Christian political parties acquired his dislike. Holland had to become a socialist country. Now surprisingly, he admired Soviet Russia greatly, because of its all-out struggle with Germany. It did not take very long for this new editor to become engaged in a deep-seated conflict with his coworkers, most of whom were of anti-revolutionary background. Many broke ties with the newspaper; others remained and tried to halt the process. Inevitably, however, "Vry Nederland" became a socialist illegal newspaper.

Following these events, a new resistance-supporting magazine was founded by the Anti-Revolutionaries, named "Trouw" ("Fidelity"). It soon enjoyed a large readership and became quite well known.

Maintaining an underground press has required much sacrifice. Many printers, editors, and distributors were caught by the enemy, and a large percentage paid with their lives. The Germans were fiercely hunting down anybody resisting their deceptive propaganda, and tried everything possible to smother the free press; but they failed. The illegal press turned out to have provided a powerful antidote against the Nazi propaganda, and kept the hope for liberation alive.

### *The Struggle for the Free Christian School*

One of the most precious privileges of Christian Holland of the pre-war period was its free, Christian schools, which were not run by the State but by parent-controlled private boards. Financially, these schools had been given equal rights with the so-called neutral state-schools.

Almost 80 years of heavy political battle had been needed to obtain these equal rights for Christian schools. Everybody of

Christian background highly appreciated their independence and specific character.

The Germans had of course their own, anti-Christian strategy ready for these schools. They wanted a uniform school-type for all Dutch children, completely dependent on the State, not only for its funding, but also for its teaching program. This school should have a National Socialist character! The entire young generation was planned to be subjected to the Nazi brainwashing, to be prepared for total fraternization with the German state and Party. In the beginning, this goal was somewhat camouflaged. The intention was to pursue this goal as stealthily as possible.

A German, Dr. Heinrich Schwarz, was appointed as the Head of the Department of Education, Arts, and Sciences. His Secretary General—the main executive of the plans—was a Dutchman, Dr. J. van Dam. He had already acted on behalf of the German authorities as the chairman of a committee for censoring the books of public libraries. Also, he established the first black list of books, forbidden for use in public schools. This committee prohibited the use of 400 books and “improved” thousands more by deleting or changing particular paragraphs.

During the first year of the occupation, Seyss-Inquart tried—mostly rather soft-handed—to obtain the support of schools and school teachers for his policies. When he obviously failed to be successful, he changed to the tough line during the second year. The first signal for this change was his address to the nation on March 12, 1941, when he said, among other things: “Holland is a Germanic outpost. The high inner values possessed by the Dutch people, are welcomed by the Germans as the characteristic of their Germanic blood. Presently, Holland is put before the choice: with us or against us! A third alternative does not exist. The occupying power is fully determined to realize her goals. We stand on this soil with a historic duty, given to us by Adolf Hitler himself. And we are truly filled with a religious zeal. Here we stand, lined up. Heil dem Führer!”

A short time later, the Department annexed the right to appoint school teachers, also at private schools. Their school boards were only entitled to propose certain candidates for appointment. The Department decided whether the proposed person would be appointed.

This order was widely sabotaged by the Protestant private schools, often with active cooperation of school inspectors, and despite the substantial risk to those schools which refused to cooperate with the German regulations, of losing their financial support.

In August 1941, all school boards were ordered to submit a list of Jewish and half-Jewish children attending Christian schools. These children would be collected in special schools in due time. Following the advice of the National School council for Schools-with-the-Bible, the large majority of schools ignored this order, which actually implied that Jewish children were prevented from receiving a Christian education.

Of course, fierce conflict arose about the authority to appoint the school's teaching staff. In a number of cases the Germans fired teachers who had sharply criticized the Nazism. It also came about that school boards felt that it was necessary to fire those teachers who preached Nazi ideologies, clearly in direct conflict with the Christian faith. Then, the Department undid the school board's decisions. In a few instances, the conflict rose to such a height that the school was shut down because the parents refused to send their children to a school under Nazi dominance.

Total Nazification of the Christian schools failed, however, due to the resistance of most teaching personnel, school boards, and parents. If the war had lasted much longer, or if it had ended in total German victory, then the Germans would certainly have carried out their plans, if necessary with the toughest measures.

#### *The Start of the "Landelijke Organisatie" ("National Organization")*

The decisive turning point in the war came in the beginning of 1943. Germany suffered a tremendous defeat at Stalingrad. Rumors about an invasion of allied forces in Europe became stronger every day. Hitler was forced to conscript more and more men for military service in order to turn the tide. Workers from occupied territory were transferred to Germany in large numbers to keep the production of industry in operation.

In Holland, those born in 1922-1924 were ordered to work in Germany, all young men aged 19-21. Additionally, the

German leaders decided that the Dutch military would again be treated as P.O.W.s and thus would be re-imprisoned. These tough measures caused a tremendous uproar in our country. Already in May 1943, strikes started in the eastern part of the country, rapidly spreading out in all directions, and hitting many industrial areas.

Only a few days later, the Germans hit back hard and bloody! Summary justice and a long series of death penalties were executed and published in the daily press. These murders broke the strikes, but they also shook the Dutch people to its roots. Many tens of thousands of laborers were deported to Germany, but there were also many thousands who managed to escape this trial and went into hiding from the enemy.

The chances to do so successfully had become much greater, because some important events had happened in Holland.

A few people had played a crucial role in these events. First of all, Rev. F. Slomp, Reformed minister in Heemse, a village in the Eastern province of Overijssel, close to the German border. This minister had been able to witness from a short distance the rise of National Socialism in Germany and he had clearly understood the pagan nature of this political doctrine. He had experienced the incessant undermining of the foundations of the Christian way of life by the Nazi doctrine and he felt he had a calling to fight this anti-Christian creed with all his might.

Rev. Slomp had an impulsive character. Whereas others — not everybody to be sure — remained silent from the pulpit or spoke about the Nazi ideology in subdued terms, he was very explicit about it, both in his sermons and addresses. It did not take long before an arrest order against him was issued, but the pastor escaped just in time, before the Germans arrived at his front door. He made a little "bike ride," as it was called in those days. For some time to come, he could not return to his home.

There was an increasing number of those who had been forced to leave their homes and families because they were hunted by the Germans. They found places to hide, but in a completely unorganized way. Slomp wondered if the care for and protection of these hunted and persecuted people should not be organized in a better way.

"Fritz the Wanderer"—the pseudonym for Rev. Slomp by which he would be known from then on—met a Mrs. Kuipers-Rietberg in the town of Winterswijk. She also was a woman driven by an invisible fire of love for the sake of God's kingdom and therefore determined to fight the doctrine and practice of the German Nazis with all means she had available. The happy encounter of Rev. Slomp and Mrs. Kuipers-Rietberg brought together two people united by a common spirit and faith.

After months of doing nothing, the Reverend was somewhat discouraged. In fact, he had already decided to return to his place. Maybe the Germans would leave him alone, and if not . . . he just could not stand to do nothing. But Mrs. Kuipers—later under her pseudonym Aunt Riek—strongly advised him against returning. There was a lot of work to do! Everywhere in the country, meetings should be organized for men, women, and young people to warn them against Nazism. There were boys who did not want to partake in the compulsory labor in Hitler's Germany, as well as men who had been sorted out to work in Germany and who should be warned to stay here. The Reverend had to find these people. Also he should—said she—preach on Sundays as much as possible, every time in a different congregation, where he was asked to do so, and then he should condemn the pagan National Socialism sharply.

But still this was not enough. People who refused to conform to the German orders needed help. They had to find good shelter, and their families needed help. For that purpose there had to be an organization, to be built up from scratch, and at a local basis. In addition, all this required money in large amounts.

Rev. Slomp was thrilled by his new task. He crossed the country, collecting small groups of reliable men, addressing them with zeal and compassion, and opening everyone's eyes. Wherever he came—for the time being under the name "elder van Zanten"—he formed small committees, which would set up local work. On Sundays the Reverend surfaced in various Reformed congregations, preaching as a visiting minister. Always he delivered a sermon, sharply exposing the antagonism between the Christian faith and National Socialism and calling his listeners to the choice whom they wanted to serve: Christ or anti-Christ. At the evening of such a day, a



meeting followed to set up a committee for the aid of those who went into hiding. (Those people in hiding were literally called "divers"; it soon became a very popular and well-known name.) His work having been done, the elder disappeared without leaving a trace, and surfaced at another place.

The work for the "divers" spread out like a bushfire and it settled from town to town, not only at those places where the "elder" lectured or preached, but also where people heard about his work.

The beginning was in the Eastern Overijssel province, and soon the entire Northern part of the country took part in the operation. At Utrecht, in the center of the country, the Christian Labor Union of shrineworkers became actively involved. Nowhere did the organization become rigid. Every local committee remained independent of the others and had its own responsibility. Cooperation rapidly increased, however, in order to cope with the needs of the ever-growing number of "divers"—Jews, those who refused to do forced labor in Germany, ex-soldiers avoiding becoming P.O.W.s, and those hunted by the Security Forces because of political reasons. "Exchange centers" were formed, bringing together in secrecy trusted men from many places, who tried to find hiding places for "their" divers. In turn, they would take others who needed shelter. Gradually the "exchange centers" also came into use for mutual consultations about all matters of common interest.

After the great strike of May 1943, which notably had a general character in large parts of the countryside and signalled the refusal of the people to be intimidated, the work of the exchange centers expanded tremendously. The German power desperately tried to break the organization by terror methods. Searchings of homes, arrests, and cruel sentences were everyday routine. Many more people left their homes and families. It now became clear that more cooperation and a more disciplined organization were needed to cope with this situation.

*The National Organization (L.O.) was born*

This organization had a distinct Christian character, as it originated in Reformed circles and soon spread out to orthodox Christian groups and other Christians.

Contacts were made with the Catholics, dominating the Southern provinces, especially in Limburg, finally ending in a merger of Catholics and Protestants in one organization. In the North, the L.O. was mainly Protestant, and the Catholics associated with them harmoniously. In the South, the Catholics were host, and Protestants guests. In some instances, non-Christians cooperated, leaving the L.O.'s character unchanged, however.

*The National Military Wing (L.K.P.)*

The rapid and large expansion of the work of the L.O. had immeasurable consequences. Tens of thousands of hiding people needed not only shelter, but also new "identity cards," allowing them to come out into the open if they needed to. In order to be able to buy food and other rationed products, they needed special rationing coupons, without which scarce goods could not be obtained. In some cases forged German permits were required to stay on the streets outside curfew hours. All these documents had to be forged—and they had to be quite good—or else snatched by raiding German-controlled rationing centers. Often these raids were very well organized and involved many people and large amounts of coupons, money, or blank identity cards.

Both methods were widely employed. The captured material was "traded" at the illegal exchange centers, mentioned previously—sometimes for free, later for a very low price because the illegal circuit required so much money.

In addition to the L.O., and initially without any relation to this organization, some raiding troupes originated, named "hit and run squads" (literally, "gangs of ruffians"). In the end they formed a nationwide organization, the "National Military Wing" (L.K.P.), which produced incredibly good forged papers after a difficult and painful start. A separate section specialized in forging identity cards. By law, these cards had to be carried by every Dutchman personally, at all times and places. The card contained a picture, fingerprints, name, Christian name, nationality, and other particulars.

Many raids were carried out by the LKP to catch coupons, stamps, seals, and documents. To transport these highly risky materials, shrewd methods were employed. Fishermen's wives, for example, of the island of Urk, carried the material under

the wide skirts of their traditional costume; a player of an accordion transported his precious booty within his instrument; and even disabled persons were used.

*The Central Intelligence Department (C.I.D.)*

Men and women in resistance knew they were surrounded by treason, betrayal, and spying. First of all, there was the German Sicherheitsdienst (S.D., Security Forces), stretching its tentacles everywhere, using the shrewdest and cruelest methods. Also, there was the N.S.B. (the National Socialist Movement), collaborating with the Germans, its members mainly acting as informers for the Germans. Furthermore, so-called "V-Manner," men devoted to the S.D., who infiltrated the resistance by special assignment, and who had to be unmasked in time and at all cost. Finally, there were weak and unreliable people within the resistance itself, sometimes cooperating at first, but becoming traitors later. To counteract these risks, the Central Intelligence Department (C.I.D.) was established, which was even authorized to carry out death sentences.

Soon it appeared that the CID could also do different, and very important work. It would be highly valuable for the resistance if data and information about all kinds of persons, German actions, plans of the S.D., etc., could be collected. This became possible when able telephone operators, employed by the state network, were successfully included in the CID work. Most officials of this network were good patriots. Previously, some preparations had been successfully made. Between local telephone networks secret links had been made, allowing automatic calling with all national districts. A separate dialing system permitted connections to be made throughout the whole country, which could not be tapped by the Germans.

This system was perfected more and more. New, secret cables were laid. The German occupation forces finally became aware of this clandestine network, but never guessed its extent, and the men of the State Telephone Service (P.T.T.) and the CID managed to keep it in shape right until the end of the war. Even more, they succeeded in tapping both the German forces and the office of General Rauter, the German military commander in Holland.

Through this underground network it was possible to communicate much faster than through couriers. Later the CID added its own teleprinter network. In the last year of the war, the CID telephone network had become a rich source of information, something like an illegally operated branch of AP. The underground press of course made extensive use of this source. At the end of the war, the first contact with the allied Forces was made through this network.

It was Dutch girls, who were assigned to handle the sometimes hectic illegal telephone traffic, who worked long and hard hours in camouflaged shelters. They were of invaluable service to the cause of the Dutch resistance.

### *Financing*

Most of the money needed was for the L.O. For those who were hiding, regular payments had to be made for food and clothing. In the countryside, many hidden people were receiving free boarding, but not everybody could afford it. It was usual that \$40 per month was needed and paid for, a very moderate price.

The families of those who were hiding required financial help also. It was fortunate that in the summer of 1943 the National Support Fund (N.S.F.) was founded, which raised very large sums to support the families remaining behind. Travel and lodging of those who participated directly in the resistance also required very large amounts, but the money came! In many churches there were regular money-gatherings for "special needs." The money went to the L.O. both from the churches and from rich industrial executives. Sometimes, if money became tight, the military wing raided German vaults, but generally this method was avoided.

In September 1944, a railway strike erupted all over the country, on the advice of the London government in exile. Thousands of railway workers went into hiding. It was considered to be highly important that the wages of these workers, who had taken such great risks, continue to be paid. Of course, tremendous sums and a complete financing apparatus were needed and delivered by the N.S.F. The L.O. took the responsibility for transport of money and distributing the money. Even though millions of dollars were going through the hands of resistance officials, and official records were

too dangerous or impossible to keep, frauds very rarely occurred.

### *Food Supply*

With increasing numbers of people in hide-outs, the food supply for them became more and more difficult. They needed rationing coupons, obtained in part by forgery or by raids on German-controlled rationing centers by the military wing. In most cases, the officials at these centers were fortunately willing to cooperate by applying bookkeeping tricks, channeling the required documents into the illegal circuit.

Things became very gloomy in the terrible winter of 1944-45, when hunger prevailed everywhere. The people in the big cities of the Western part of Holland, Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, were in danger of dying from hunger. In Rotterdam, hundreds of people died each day, whereas Amsterdam kept its death toll by hunger secret, no doubt because it was higher than several hundreds per day. A new phenomenon could be observed: hunger expeditions of the have-nots, equipped with old carts, bikes, and prams, to the east and north parts of the country. Not only hidden people, but the entire population of the large cities was in deadly danger of perishing. Actions taken to prevent a catastrophe were numerous and both legal as well as clandestine. Inland ship transport made use of the Zuyderzee to get food from the north to Amsterdam and the other cities of the west. This food frequently came from stolen German army supplies. In the last months of the war, the Allies commenced "dropping" food, supplying the starving population with Swedish white bread and other delicacies, which made an everlasting impression of appreciation to all those involved with what we now consider to be quite sober food.

### *Great Sacrifices*

The work of L.O., L.K.P., and related organizations took a great number of sacrifices. Again and again the German Security Forces hit hard, and only a few of the first hour survived the ordeal. Rev. Slomp was blessed to see the liberation, but his coworker Mrs. Kuipers-Rietberg—mentioned before—who really was the mother of the L.O., died in a German

KZ-Lager. The struggle of these organizations, however weak and imperfect it sometimes was, was of decisive influence in fencing the German attempt to bring the spirit of the Dutch people under their control. The L.O. hid and took care of more than 30,000 men and women, in a total population of less than 10 million. All these people had to comply with either forced labor in Germany, or death by the firing squad, if they did not hide.

The L.K.P. was the armed fist of the L.O. It was much smaller, probably never more than 750 in total, but its activity all over Holland was so intense and spectacular that both Germans and Dutch assumed their numbers to be much higher.

Not hatred against the occupying Germans was the main motive of men and women, venturing—and many times, also sacrificing—their lives in the battle against the anti-Christian forces which had overpowered our people. The memorial volume dedicated to L.O. and L.K.P. carries the title *The Great Commandment*, referring to Matthew, chapter 22, verses 37-39; “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

That very commandment was the deepest motive, even if every resistance fighter did not comply with this high standard.

That is why we will remember with deep gratitude this great work, which took such great sacrifice.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

John H. Yoder, *Nevertheless: The Varieties and Shortcomings of Religious Pacifism*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1972, 1976 (second edition). 144 pages. Indexed. Paperback. \$2.50. Reviewed by James B. Jordan.

The purpose of this brief but quite useful book is to identify and distinguish twenty-five different types of religious pacifism, some in more detail than others naturally. In each of the seventeen types dealt with in detail, Yoder raises objections to the arguments presented by the particular view of pacifism under inspection, and then counter arguments. Yoder has, helpfully, not created these types of pacifism out of any logical scheme or ethical system, trying to boil various systems down into several "consistent" types; rather, he has simply allowed each system to speak for itself. This makes the book a useful survey of existing options.

From the perspective of this reviewer, who does not believe the Bible teaches pacifism, Yoder's interactions are inadequate. Generally speaking, Yoder does not interact Biblically with the various positions, but makes very general kinds of comments, showing alleged logical inconsistencies, or giving *gestalt* criticisms. That is not to say that Biblical concerns, from Yoder's pacificistic perspective, never come into play; they do, but rather seldom.

Some of Yoder's points are quite well taken. One of the more frequent criticisms of pacifism as a political policy is that it does not reckon with the depravity of man sufficiently. (The original anabaptistic movement was almost to a man self-consciously Pelagian, and this includes Menno Simons, so that this criticism is not unjust in itself.) Yoder's point, however, is that "militarism as well as pacifism is humanistic and utopian; it places enormous trust in the wisdom of administrative bureaucracy, in the moral insight of persons who

have been hardened to think of other men as worthy of extermination. To entrust peace and freedom to the military establishment, to trust a person with powerful weapons to be morally self-critical, places greater and more unjustified confidence in human character than does any kind of pacifism" (p. 113). Yoder may overstate the case here, and we should certainly argue that militarism and pacifism are not the only two alternatives in this area, but we must grant that his point is well taken, especially in light of the push toward a renewed and largely uncritical nationalism in fundamentalistic circles today (as in the Accelerated Christian Education curriculum with its red, white, and blue school uniforms; and to a lesser extent the Foundation for Christian Self-Government).

Yoder also scores some points in defending appeasement as a political policy. The British and French appeasement of Hitler in 1938 is viewed with horror today, but as Yoder points out, "What were Franklin D. Roosevelt's agreements with Joseph Stalin if not 'appeasement' on the other side? In return for the support of a tyrant the U.S. not only did not stop him but in fact conceded to him control over nearly half of Europe. The allies, in order to win a war, gave away to totalitarianism far more territories and populations that didn't belong to them than Munich gave to Hitler" (p. 44).

Of course, running through the book are assumptions which we should challenge. We may select one to notice in this brief review. On pp. 48f.: "Now that the experience of Gandhi and Martin Luther King has demonstrated that in some kinds of situation [sic] nonviolent methods can effectively bring about social change in the desired direction. . . ." The question is this: Were Gandhi's and King's methods non-violent? Their method was to interfere and block the normal processes of society, to impede the flow. If a man is running a race, with his eyes on the tape, and another man sticks out his leg and trips him, who is guilty of the violence? The man in motion, or the man whose leg is standing still, but whose action is calculated to disrupt the expected, normal flow of things? Surely the latter; yet he may say, "Well, I didn't do anything but just stand there. The runner ran into my leg. I didn't hit him. If he chooses to run into my leg, that is his fault." Similarly, King and others argued that when they blocked automobile traffic, they were non-violent, and that any disorder was due to the traffic. Obviously, though, on close inspection we can see that both Gandhi and King were quite violent in their methods. The question then becomes simply one of who gets to wrap himself up in the righteous-sounding language of



non-violence, for this is nothing but a verbal game. (One point: the statement we have been interacting with may reflect Yoder's own view, or that of the position he is setting out—it is not clear. Yoder does not offer any criticism of it, however.)

Yoder's own position, apparently, is set out in Chapter 18: The Pacifism of the Messianic Community. Frankly, we found this position to be very vague, and full of hidden assumptions. Yoder seems to assume that Jesus taught political pacifism. (Of course, this position is defended elsewhere in Mennonite literature.) Moreover, Yoder seems to pit the New Testament against the Old: "the *telling* has come to us not on a tablet of stone chiseled by the finger of God alone on Sinai, or from the mouth of a prophet, but in the full humanity of a unique and yet complete human being" (p. 124). Do we really have to oppose these modes of revelation one to another?

Yoder's views come through at other places also. Yoder is concerned that any sound position be "humane" (cf. e.g., p. 32). On the face of it, what seems best for human beings is of more concern than the vindication of the honor and glory of God, which is what underlies the orthodox Christian doctrines of capital punishment and just war. Yoder fails to interact with this; he seems simply to assume that the maintenance of human life is of prime importance. On p. 61: "Now in the case of war it is the enemy (since it is with him I am asked to deal) who is the neighbor I am to love. My action must be such as to communicate or proclaim to him the nature of God's love for him. It might be possible to argue that this could be done with a certain kind of force, moral or social or even physical, but certainly it cannot be said by threatening or taking his life." True, but the Bible does not teach that in all situations this kind of love must be shown to all men. Yoder justly criticizes "situational ethics" on the ground that it does not do away with the need for moral standards (p. 121). The same is true of love. The same God who told Israel to love their neighbors and never take vengeance (Lev. 19:18), in virtually the same breath ordered a whole series of capital punishments (Lev. 20). The same Jesus who loved Israel for three years, after giving them forty years to repent, poured out destruction on them in 70 A.D. (Matt. 23, 24). God is longsuffering, but His love does "run out" for those who persist in rebellion, and He casts them into hell. The Bible tells us at what point men have gone too far, and must be put to death.

Finally, Yoder's remarks on just war theory might be noted. The reader will not find an extended pacifistic interaction with just war theory here, and Yoder's brief criticisms are not adequate to cause

the orthodox reader to reconsider his position. Yoder does make one exceptionally good point, however, and that is that just war theory generally tends to function as a defense of all war, while in theory it is a statement that all wars are *not* justified. In other words, theologians in orthodox churches tend to pull out the just war argument to defend nationalistic wars, when in fact the whole point of the just war theory is to provide criteria with which to critique unjust wars (wars of aggression rather than defense, for instance).

We highly recommend this volume to anyone studying Christianity and political theory.

Werner O. Packull, *Mysticism and the Early South German-Austrian Anabaptist Movement 1524-1531* (Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History, XIX). Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1977. 252 pp. \$17.95. Reviewed by James B. Jordan.

Despite its forbiddingly specialized title, this is a quite readable book, and an indispensable introduction to one of the significant wings of the Anabaptist movement. In his introduction, John S. Oyer states that it is the "special merit of Werner Packull's work . . . that he delineates more clearly than any previous scholar the theological and spiritual differences between South German and Swiss Anabaptists by a thorough examination of the dominant medieval mystical literature. . . . Indeed, Packull decides that South German Anabaptism derives more from medieval mysticism than from the reformation" (p. 13). The present reviewer would argue that the Swiss Anabaptists also partook to a large extent of this mystical tradition, and that mysticism is endemic and pandemic to all Baptist movements; but this point lies outside the parameters of Packull's study. (On this question, see the essays in *Christianity and Civilization No. 1: The Failure of the American Baptist Culture* [Geneva Divinity School Press, 1982]; and Willem Balke, *Calvin and the Anabaptist Radicals* [Eerdmans, 1981].)

The first chapter of Packull's study, "A Medieval Point of Departure," is an excellent survey of the medieval mystical tradition, which saw salvation as deification.

The second chapter, on Hans Denck, shows how this early Anabaptist was actually a self-conscious defender of these heresies against the Reformers. Denck made up collections of supposed contradictions in Scripture in order to decry the Biblicism of the Reformers, and to point to mysticism as the only route to salvation. At this point, as at others, Denck anticipated the teachings of Karl

Barth (himself an anabaptist) and his followers.

The next three chapters deal with Hans Hut and his influence. Packull draws on the as-yet-unpublished lifetime-labor of Dr. Gottfried Seebass on the life and thought of Hut, which makes Packull's discussions by far the most authoritative discussion of Hut in the English language. Hut had originally been involved in the revolutionary movements headed up by Thomas Müntzer, and only moved in a more pacifistic direction when that movement failed. Like Denck, he was a neoplatonic mystic who conceived of salvation as divinization, and he also produced lists of supposed Scriptural inconsistencies. Repeated predictions that the world was coming to an end, supported by purported visions and miracles, undermined Hut's credibility when they consistently failed to come true. [One of these days the same thing will happen to some members of our modern quasi-Anabaptist movements: dispensationalism and pentecostalism.]

The final two chapters deal with the collapse of this wing of anabaptism into isolationist communities, and the histories of two "homeless minds": Bänderlin and Entfelder.

The importance of Packull's study is severalfold. First, it is an indispensable contribution to the typology of the Reformation era, synthesizing the interpretations of Karl Holl and Ernst Troeltsch, and thus of major value to students of the Reformation era. Second, it is a valuable study of the contrast between orthodox Christianity and mysticism in its non-sacramental form. Packull is not blind to the issues: "The Reformation emphasis on total human depravity and the denial of any human merit (including merit derived from human volition) were logical consequences of Luther's rejection of any division of man's nature. Predestinarianism provided a theocentric corollary to this wholistic anthropology in the realm of theology proper. In contrast, the tradition focusing upon the *unio mystica* assumed the cooperation of man with the divine presence in him as part of the salvation process. The maintenance of the dualistic matter-spirit dichotomy in man was a necessary prerequisite for such a view" (p. 178).

Finally, although modern bipartite and tripartite views of the soul, modern apocalypticism, modern pentecostalism, and modern anti-paedobaptism are found in more evangelical garb, the reader of Packull's study is struck by the similarities in type between these heretics and modern American movements. The piety of pantheism is, after all, not that far removed from that of the American gospel refrain hymn tradition, which too often seeks the absorption of the human person in the rapture of God. The doctrine of justification

by faith, which presupposes a legal theology and a high view of Divine law as the standard of judgment, is virtually unknown in American evangelicalism. While the reader must be careful not to impute every heretical consistency of Denck and Hut to modern American evangelicalism, the resemblances are nonetheless there, and a reading of Packull's study will be of help to orthodox Christians as they try to reassert the Biblical faith in an ocean of subjectivism.

*The Christian and the Public Schools*, by George Van Alstine. Nashville: Abingdon, 1982. 144 pp., \$5.95. Reviewed by Lonn Oswalt.

For several years the publication scales of evangelical works on education have been tipped most dramatically in favor of those books advocating the establishment of separate, Biblically-based schools for the training of evangelical children. This position has been argued in opposition to a stance advocating evangelical claiming or reclaiming of the public school system. While much of the argumentation for the Christian school option has been overlapping and therefore superfluous, many evangelicals have nonetheless been persuaded that withdrawal from public education and subsequent establishment of Christian alternatives is the true educational corollary to evangelical profession.

Enter George Van Alstine with his *The Christian and the Public Schools*. Van Alstine states clearly that he is an evangelical (p. 10), yet states just as clearly that evangelicals who believe in a separate Christian school system are headed in the "wrong direction" (p. 10). His book disturbs me in two major ways. These major disturbances are, first, that evangelical book stores presumably will now be stocked with this visible reminder that Christian school advocates have not yet scored a total victory in their own camp. It appears that as a Christian school fan(atic) I must come to grips with the fact that not all evangelical resistance to Christian schools can be relegated to financial or geographical reasons; there are, in fact, ideological reasons for public school support. This bothers me because the case for Christian schools is, to me, as strong a case as exists in the theological world.

I am disturbed, secondly, because I am afraid the book is just attractive enough that people who are not committed to Christian schools will now have an official rack on which to hang their hats. It is not that the book is flawlessly argued (it is not), but rather that the

work does strike emotional chords which may ring true to the not-so-well-grounded evangelical.

### *Three Major Theses*

The thrust of Van Alstine's position revolves around the perceived sociological/spiritual function of schools in the American social order. It is only Christian, he contends, that those professing the name of Christ avoid a monastic or cloistering tendency and instead be salt and light to a fallen world. "No enterprise can be truly Christian if it cares only for its own and takes no responsibility for the rest of society" (p. 68). "When we try to hoard, preserve, protect spiritual gifts and resources, we end by losing them" (p. 76, see also pp. 49, 74). While supporters of Christian schools hear these kinds of statements on a regular basis, such frequency of assertion does not at all validate the line of thought which spawns them. It needs to be pointed out, first, that Van Alstine makes no distinction at all between the responsibilities of parents (or adults) to society and the responsibilities of children to society. It is of critical importance that we equip our children to be Christian before we demand of them that they change the world. It is a violation of both Deuteronomy 6:1-6 and Ephesians 6:4 to commit children to an ungodly structure. I must argue strongly against his question-contention that "public education is *the single most strategic point at which committed Christians in America can affect the world in which they live*" (italics his, p. 90). Education is obviously of great strategical importance in any culture, but only a foolish culture or a foolish leader would refuse to make strategical distinctions between children and adults. Van Alstine, I trust, would not be consistent with his own strategy if the school in question were philosophically and theologically dominated by Buddhists or avowed Communists. In the face of such an option I would look for him to "cloister" with other horrified evangelicals as he looked with dismay on such an educational scene. It seems that a continuing "need of the hour" is for evangelicals to realize that Secularism and Humanism start with capital letters; they have been identified clearly and labeled as ideological groups that are in fact alien to Christian faith!

The above leads to a second and related rebuttal to his "salt and light" appeal. Van Alstine holds to a view of unregenerate society that is Biblically untenable. He never mentions the inevitable antagonism of unbelievers, *including their children*, toward the things of God. He prefers to view the covenant-breaking segment of society

as merely "there to be won for Christ" without the corresponding truth that non-Christians are by the nature of the case proud and militant possessors of an antithetical faith (Rom. 1:18-23). A Biblical view of cultural antithesis demands much more isolation *for training purposes* than Van Alstine is comfortable with.

A second major thesis surfaces in the form of a tension. More accurately, Van Alstine argues simultaneously for two contradictory positions. He appeals on the one hand for the potentially *strong influence* Christians can have in public schools (pp. 19, 103ff.), while at the same time he endorses those teachers who purposely *subordinate their influence* in the interests either of the Golden Rule or of their commitment to pluralism in society and thus in education. It may not immediately be apparent that these positions are contradictory, but problems with this position come clearly into focus when Van Alstine's appeal is given its face value. He is telling Christians to mute their own trumpets. He is advocating self-imposed limits to witness-bearing. I am not aware of Scriptural support for muted trumpets. Is it not more Biblical to question the validity of service in an institution which says "you can speak for God but only AFTER you have endorsed the boundaries set by Caesar"? Perhaps I should let Van Alstine put this in his own words: "Therefore it is our *Christian duty* to make the public schools *less* (italics his) Christian" (p. 53). Evangelicals need not be opposed to sending missionaries into situations where there are governmentally imposed limits to their service. But to argue for the perpetuation of a structure which imposes limits on Christian witness is to argue for the continuation of conditions which should be identified as deplorable and in need of change!

It thus goes without saying that a third major thesis is wholehearted allegiance to a supposed educational neutrality. Believers who deny that education can be neutral have about run out of creative ways to make the point. It must be said again, however, that education, as long as it involves people and ideas, is inevitably religious. To suppose that the issue under discussion is an issue of "salt" versus "monasticism" is to show a total and inexcusable ignorance of the real issue. The real issue is consistent Christian training versus alien religious training.

#### *Additional Issues*

In addition to the three major lines of thought, Van Alstine's work includes discussion of numerous educational issues. Let me offer

comments on five of these other issues.

First, to his credit he faces the problem of what the "unifying vision" of public education should be, since he is quick to point out that the focus of public education cannot be "Christ, God or God's law" (p. 82). He answers: "Public education in America should *not* (italics his) try to have a single unifying vision of greatness. Rather, schools and educators should acknowledge that such an ideal is necessary for each individual, and then offer help and encouragement to children and families trying to articulate it for themselves" (p. 83). Such an assertion is fine . . . but only if one is an existentialist rather than a Christian. It appears to have been overlooked that the products of such an educational approach will be, in general, confused, yet at the same time will see one thing very clearly. The clearly-seen concept is a view of God in which He is perhaps important for me and my family, but He obviously is not important enough to make demands on those who have a prior commitment to an "alternate belief structure." The subsequent step in this digression of thought is that whoever God is, He must not be anywhere near as important as my parents may have said He is. This is because belief in Him is not so vital that we are obligated to disturb those who persist in their unbelief. What is really tragic is that Van Alstine leaves us with the distinct impression that we are to help unbelievers "articulate" their rebellious views "for themselves."

Second, the issue of the "messianic character" of American education is raised. Van Alstine attempts to disclaim a messianic attitude, stating "some idealistic promoters of public schools have believed that education is potentially the patent medicine cure-all for society's ills. History has taught us that this is not so" (p. 90). Yet from these same lips we hear an appeal for "socializing [after eleven years in the study and practice of education I am still not sure what that term means—L.O.] young people for life in a democracy" (p. 39). He speaks favorably when discussing the proponents of the earlier Common School Movement who "saw public schools as a means of control, as a way of civilizing, socializing and assimilating the children of these fringe people into the American way of life" (p. 39). My impression is that while Van Alstine desires to have a sensitivity to the negative aspects of liberal and utopian thought, he is nonetheless caught in the grasp of a blind vision of the "potential for good" supposedly existing in our "no-commitment" statist schools. In reality, an undiscerning focus on "potential for good" is a mere restatement of the utopian views of the former era.

A third issue faced by Van Alstine is the lack of quality in public

schools. Contrary to almost everyone, Van Alstine insists "illiteracy has been practically eliminated" (p. 42). I know of no one in the educational community making such claims. He proceeds further out on this limb of naïveté by stating "public schools in America not only impart knowledge to their students, but also instill in them a continuing thirst to take in more and more knowledge throughout their lives" (p. 43). But he still is not finished. He offers justification for the success of American public education by citing a statistic related to the use of materials from public libraries! The "health and vitality of America's public libraries," he contends, "is a barometer of how effective its public education has been" (p. 43). I must admit that I do not have a dogmatic opinion concerning library circulation statistics, but I suggest that such figures do not validate the educational quality of public schools. It is quite a jump from library circulation statistics to the effectiveness of public education. As for the "thirst for knowledge" instilled in public school students, I can say only that the public systems I have had first-hand acquaintance with have not produced large numbers of students who exhibited an impressive desire for knowledge. I do not hesitate to say that there is very little thirst for knowledge in our society and submit further that the problem is particularly and peculiarly acute in public schools. It does not take a great deal of defense of the quality of public education to jeopardize the quality of one's own reputation.

Fourth, the issue of the history and heritage of public education is dealt with, but in an undiscerning fashion. Van Alstine has so assimilated the public school mentality that he, in effect, "shelves" his faith in order to state his respect for Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, and others (pp. 36-41). This section has as one of its themes the contention that "freedom of choice" in early American educational history was grossly unfair to the poor. "The choice of the poor was only whether to attend or not" (p. 34). Rather than recognizing that financial inequality is a fact of human existence ("the poor you have with you always"), Van Alstine appeals to the increasingly popular "leveling" concept made popular by socialists and Siderites. According to this view the providentially blessed are somehow supposed to feel guilty for establishing and then participating in God-honoring educational opportunities. It is tragic beyond words that even evangelicals do not understand God's strategy for the poor. Biblical care for the poor—to include the care of the educationally disadvantaged—is not to be understood in terms of impersonal bureaucratic leveling but in terms of local and therefore personal contact and concern. The apathy and ineffectiveness of the contempo-



rary Christian community in this regard does not justify the wholesale compromise of Biblical strategy advocated by those who insist that all the "haves" must become "have nots" if they are to be truly Christian.

A final issue to be discussed is a supposed tension in the mind of some evangelicals between training and conversion. "But today's evangelicals seem to have lost their faith in the power of conversion and instead look to Christian education to insure the salvation of their young" (p. 49). "Do modern Baptists think it is possible to accomplish by education what their forebears believed came only from conversion?" (p. 50). This is another false issue. The issue, if it can be called such, is not education versus conversion. The question is simply the freedom to present the gospel verbally as opposed to the non-verbal witness Van Alstine endorses (p. 118). Rather than an education versus conversion mentality we should see it as a debate over *environment*, where one side is appealing for an environment which encourages and substantiates the claims of Christ, while the other side is calling for the continued support of an environment which encourages growth in a secular mindset. Evangelicals forfeit their right to the term *evangelical* if they fail to understand the doctrine of regeneration and "look to Christian education to insure the salvation of their young." Where such thinking exists it is wrong, but my suspicion, supported by specific experiences in the Christian school movement, is that this attack is a "straw man" attack.

Hats which are hung on Van Alstine's work are the hats of the undiscerning. This book notwithstanding, Christian schools are the true corollary to evangelical profession, just as schools in general are the true corollary to any profession. May we be spared the kind of "salt and light" our children are supposed to be in public schools. May we instead be busy giving consistent training to our covenant children with a vision for their subsequent *mature* witness-bearing to an apostate culture.

Clarence B. Carson, *The World in the Grip of an Idea* (Westport, Conn.; Arlington House, 1979), 562 pp., \$14.95. Reviewed by Tommy W. Rogers.

The book is a magnificent treatise on the idea which holds much of the world its sway. It is most commonly designated as socialism or by the more inclusive name of collectivism. Fabianism, democratic socialism, and gradualism are other carriers. The more virulent wing of the movement is communism. At a deeper level, the general

movement is described by the somewhat more obscure designation of the new humanism.<sup>1</sup>

The basic essence of this idea is that of achievement of human

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1. Whether intentionally or not, humanists sometimes attempt to confuse the humanism which is based on man's own determination of what is and is not evil, to be his own arbiter of the values by which he shall live (a dramatic example of such reasoning of considerable consequence is set forth in Genesis 3), with other definitions. Here, as in many other matters, it is not the label which is important except as it is a linguistic symbol for substantive content. Proponents of humanism sometimes caveat to expositions of humanist wisdom by pointing to something of entirely different substantive etiology, i.e., desirable aspects of humanitarian endeavor, or to human learning. The label "humanism" itself is nonsubstantive, and takes on meaning only with respect to the substantive content, method of reasoning, or source of judgement of which the term is proffered as a descriptive label. The humanism which is scripturally indicated (e.g., Ps. 2:1-3, Romans 1:18-32) is that of man's rejection of God and his word as the final authority. Thus, under humanist reasoning, rather than attempting to make application of Bible reasoning, principle, precept, and illumination in order to judge, arrange, and evaluate the various spheres of life and human endeavor accordingly, man seeks to make his own reasoning the final arbiter, and works out his pride and hubris in continuing rebellion. The consequence is descent and destruction. Such humanism may be adjectivally labelled as religious or secular humanism, for it is a religious philosophy, and it is, to a large degree, dominant in American culture, public policy, and contemporary moral, spiritual, and political malaise. It is a turning away from the application of scripture to the various parameters of life which resulted in the Reformational heritage of which Western liberty received its nourishment. With the rising dominance of humanism, there is a corresponding growth in the omnipotent state as the instrument through which rebellious man implements his rebellion.

The term humanism is also applied to, and should not be confused with, human learning, or the arts, literature, or the humanities. In such humanistic endeavors Christians are to be preserving salt. God himself is a God who surrounds himself with music, beauty, and Christians may rightfully work out their callings in explicit humanist endeavors as a distinctly religious enterprise for the glory of the living, redeeming father God. It is toward such excellence as a distinctly humanist enterprise that Christian education should be directed, with understanding that the reverence of the Lord and the delighting in his ways is the foundation of wisdom. In this sense, the Christian in science, culture and the arts, works not from a humanist base, philosophy, and etiology, but from a Christian one.

Additionally, the term humanism is sometimes employed as synonymous with humanitarian. Again, the contradiction is not between Christianity and humanitarianism, but between secular or religious humanism and humanitarianism.

felicity on this earth through concerted direction of efforts toward its realization. Accompanying prongs are the effort to root out, discredit, and discard all aspects of culture which cannot be altered so as to divest them of a role in inducing or supporting the individual's pursuit of his own self-interest, and the utilization of government as the instrument for this necessary destruction or alteration of culture and as the agent by which the realization of human felicity is to be achieved. Such is the distillation of the idea, Carson asserts, "that holds the world in its grip today . . . not only the idea underlying Soviet communism . . . but also the idea underlying the Fabianism of the British Labour Party, Swedish socialism, American liberalism, German Social Democracy. . . and the thrust of government into people's lives on a consistent scale everywhere in the world today."

Persons and movements seeking to implement the idea perceive the received culture as something to be either destroyed or altered, depending on the exigencies. All of them utilize government as the fulcrum and operative force in their quest. The idea tends to make everyone displaced because it fuels assault on culture, religion, morality, and civilization itself. In some lands, the displacement has been drastic and dramatic—the Kulaks driven from their farms by Stalin's collectivization of agriculture, the victims of Soviet aggression in Eastern Europe, the Chinese who were driven from their homeland to Taiwan, the Cambodians, Laotians, Vietnamese, Angolans, Letts, Finns, and many others victimized by communism—with refugees seeking to make places for themselves in other lands. In other places, the dispossession is more gradual and has not yet assumed the guise of direct brutality.<sup>2</sup>

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2. One need not necessarily be receptive to conspiracy theory—though it does seem that government and monopoly capital is an interlocking cartel to deprive the populace of independence from either—to recognize aspects of the displacement in the United States. Implementation of humanist policy through its divine expression in the state inevitably results in that regime/government's warring against its own citizenry through the Leviathan reach of its implementive structures. All potential pluralism must be marshalled into service of the idea. To be evil, from the perspective of the divine state, is not to violate God's law, but to seek independence from the secular divinity. Centralization and its accoutrement webs of dependency, confiscation, and distribution of favors, permissions, and entitlements, are both valued goals and heuristic devices. The war, even in its gentle form, is an assault against the Reformational heritage. E.g., in the United States war has been made on the states as potential centers of viable resistance through "cooperative federalism" in the intergovernmental realm. Economically, the war has pitted government against the middle class, what Gary

Part I of Dr. Carson's interpretation of twentieth-century history consists of three chapters which focus on the nature of the idea and which trace its two poles of revolutionary (Marxist) and evolutionary socialism. Part II, titled "The Bolshevization of Russia," has five chapters which examine the Russian Revolution and its consequence of an impotent populace in the massive state. In Part III Carson directs attention to the fascism of Nazi Germany, a revolutionary socialism closely akin to Marxism-Leninism. Carson traces the Nazi rise to power, and draws attention to Nazi-Soviet parallels. World War II is seen as a clash of the titans, with Soviet communism and National Socialist Germany in a center ring struggle for dominance of eastern and central Europe. Carson feels that the English-speaking peoples, confused alliances notwithstanding, were on the periphery of this contest.

The spread of communism was greatly accelerated in the wake of World War II. Not only was all of eastern Europe and most of central and southern Europe delivered to communism, but as colonies were cut loose from demoralized European countries, these too became prime targets for the spread of communism. At the same time, evolutionary socialism, the other face of socialism, also made headway.

Dr. Carson devotes Part IV to gradualism in England. He examines the rise of Fabian thought, its implementation in political action, and its failures. Parts V and VI look at the implementation of gradualism in a monarchical (Sweden) and in a republican (United States) frame.

Part VII, "The Cold War," begins with a consideration of revolutionary versus evolutionary socialism. The conflict between these two varieties of socialism is seen as a conflict of means and not of ends.<sup>3</sup> Carson shows how the Cold War provided occasion for the

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Allen has described as a "pincer movement" of elites and those with nothing to lose against the productive yeomanry.

3. Perception is frequently skewed by a misperception of the alignment of forces. Consequently, certifiably respectable interpretation is often grievous error. One example should be sufficiently illustrative. Since it is known that communism and capitalism are opposite philosophies/systems, it is frequently argued and analogized that whatever benefits communism would be opposed by persons/entities of great capital. Thus, for example, it may be argued that a socialist dictator may permit and indeed favor extensive banking activity, capital inflow, and industrialization, and, that being the case, his anti-Western virulence and promotion of communist "liberation" is irrelevant as to whether he should be given tribute from American taxpayers

spreading of socialist ideas even though it was ostensibly and allegedly designed to contain communism. The idea which has the world in its grip has been spread "both by international communism and from country to country as socialism, liberalism, the welfare state, social democracy, or whatever." Whereas communism is spread by the creation, penetration, and infiltration of organizations, and by the spread of terror, culminating in the establishment of a state of terror, gradualism spreads by continually promising more and more benefits and by ever extending the sway of government.

Gradualists believe that so long as more and more decisions are being collectively made, progress is being made. Pressure for collectivization, frequently advanced in terms of welfare, government planning, and distributionist schemes marked as alleged antidotes to communism and/or as substantive requirements of democracy, has been spread within an intellectual atmosphere nurtured by Western intelligensia and propagated as intellectual fashion. American foreign aid has been a primary strategic device for advancing socialism throughout the world. Carson observes in his chapter "Coexistence, Detente, and Convergence" that the "world conflicts of socialism are but a reflex on a grand scale of the determination imbedded in the idea to crush all independence."

Part VIII, "The Individual," has chapters titled "Victim of the Idea," "The Subjugation of the Individual," "The Restoration of the Individual," and "Establishing Individual Responsibility." Urgent primary tasks for our time set forth by Carson are (1) holding of government functionaries to Constitutionally intended limitations on their authority; and (2) a removal of the constraints by which individuals qua individuals are controlled.

Dr. Carson, in my judgement, has provided one of the most important works of its nature of this era. It is historic, factual, descriptive, explanative. It is high viscosity material, but interpretive strains are finely delineated. It is very important material for per-

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to ensure the loans by which he seeks to build socialism and thereby benefit the poor. In actuality, capitalists have built the Soviet Union as a formidable industrial entity. Monopoly capital may be as opposed to individual freedom and free enterprise as the most avowed revolutionary. Those who aggregate large sums of capital are not necessarily advocates of free enterprise. They may seek to utilize government in the interest of monopoly capital. Socialism, rather than a system in which distributive "justice" is obtained, is a system whereby the elite are more readily enabled to make servants of the populace through the machinery of government.

sons interested in the interface of ideology, the etiology of ideology, and the consequence of the application of ideas. It is the kind of material, in its recognition and analyses of problems, its delineation of root causes of results, its unmasking of B'rer Rabbit politics (wherein extensive political mobilization is achieved to accomplish results of which the mobilized effort is supposedly necessary in order to prevent), that should be pedagogically pursued. It is material for Timothy.