

THE



ETHICAL

RECORD

5p

Vol. 79, No. 3

MARCH 1974

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Published by

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY

Conway Hall Humanist Centre

Red Lion Square, London, WC1R 4RL

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Coming at Conway Hall

Sunday, March 3

- 11.00 a.m.—**Sunday Meeting PROF. ANTONY FLEW** on *The Profit Motive*. Soprano solos: Jean Aird
6.00 p.m.—**Bridge practice** in the library
6.30 p.m.—**Concert:** Richards Piano Quartet. Kenneth Leighton Op 63, Mozart Gmi, K478, Efl K493

Tuesday, March 5

- 7.00 p.m.—**Discussion** introduced by Susan Wilson: *Mind and Reality*

Sunday, March 10

- 11.00 a.m.—**Sunday Meeting: JOHN SHOTTER** on *Between Man and Within Man, Objectivity and Subjectivity*. French Horn and Piano: Frank Hawkins and Mary Nash
3.00 p.m.—**Forum: A Programme for Survival** with Margaret Laws Smith
6.00 p.m.—**Bridge practice**
6.30 p.m.—**Concert:** Edinburgh String Quartet. Mozart D K575, Bartok No 3, Dvorak G Op 106

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CURRENT SPES PUBLICATIONS

THE SECULAR RESPONSIBILITY

Marghanita Laski 10p.

THE ALTERNATIVE SOCIETY

James Hemming 10p.

THE BREAKDOWN OF GREAT BRITAIN

Leopold Kohr 10p.

MAN AND THE SHADOW

Laurens van der Post 10p.

WHAT ARE EUROPEANS?

G. K. Young, CB, CMG, MBE 10p.

THE ORIGINS OF CHRISTIANITY FROM PAGAN AND JEWISH BACKGROUNDS

G. A. Wells 20p.

HUMANITY AND ANIMALITY

Edmund Leach 10p.

3p postage for one — 6p for two or more

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The views expressed in this journal are not necessarily those of the Society

EDITORIAL

Local Issues

WHAT HAS HAPPENED to the local humanist groups? Can their virtual disappearance be at the root of the declining membership of the humanist movement as a whole?

Till only a few years ago, the humanist movement boasted numerous local groups, many of them flourishing and lively bodies. Platt Fields in Manchester, for example, was for many years the scene of regular outdoor meetings on Sunday afternoons, and the group is still in existence. Leicester has a busy secular society with its own hall, but nationwide there is little other than local discussion groups.

There are signs, though, that the local group may be making a comeback. In London, several groups have been formed in recent years, and at least one has started this year.

At South Place, the formation of local groups has been discussed, though the handicap is the London-orientation of the Society. But there is nothing to stop members in other centres forming their own discussion, meeting, social and working groups, and this should be encouraged.

What can local groups achieve? An important function is the social one, that of likeminded people of all shades of opinion being able to meet and discuss their attitudes. Ways of making humanist beliefs known more widely can be discussed. Local radio stations are useful here. More tangible signs of the group's existence could be shown by such activities as hospital visiting and so forth.

Groups can be kept in financial balance by having a small subscription, and local halls can be hired for larger meetings, perhaps where speakers are invited, and where the public at large can freely enter and hear the humanist viewpoint.

At South Place we have a unique combination of a national society which is also, in itself, a local group. The social life at Conway Hall provides opportunities for good conversation, and the discussions and question sessions give the opportunity of more formal contributions.

However, outside London and indeed in the suburbs and London boroughs, there is a clear need for humanists to get together on a regular and informal basis, and it is to be hoped that such groups will be supported, and that local groups being formed will be encouraged.

Myth, Tradition and Credulity in History

BY

PROF. C. E. CARRINGTON

THE majority of the human race enjoys stories about marvellous and unusual events, hears them with delight, and accepts them without question if they come from a respectable source. That is, they begin with a Will to Believe. Yet in every society there is a minority of sceptics, well-represented, I suppose, at this meeting, who turn a suspicious eye on all deviations from the normal; they begin with a Will to Disbelieve. It would be an error to suppose that the minority have a monopoly of rationalism. While the majority easily believe what they want to believe, the others may be stubbornly resistant to evidence that might oblige them to re-examine the validity of their own hypotheses. Was it Huxley who said that nothing is more distressing than a theory killed by a fact? As a simple example of rigid disbelief, I take the popular tale that there is in Loch Ness a large marine animal unknown to the zoologists. At one time I was disposed to believe that "there must be something in it". Now, after watching the growth of the myth over many years, I think the phenomenon unlikely to be real, but I still keep an open mind. Not so some of my expert friends who have declared against it and snatch at every straw of evidence to prove a negative, always a difficult thing to do.

History begins with *Sagas* or ballads about demi-gods and heroes, in verse, which in every culture is anterior to prose as an art-form. It is handed down orally and, since it can be memorised, errors are detected by ear. Similarly, laws, rules of conduct and title-deeds are memorised as jingles, like the genealogy of the West Saxon kings, perhaps the oldest specimen of English poetry. Thus we inherit *Annals*: lists of kings and victories stiffened with legal maxims, and illustrated with heroic verses. All is memorised, and accordingly is preserved in an unvarying text. People often ask why History should be all about kings and battles; the simple answer being that these are often the only topics about which narratives have drifted down to us.

New Authorship

Prose literature is a sophisticated art-form that comes into existence only when a cursive script has been introduced. It enables a new sort of author to select what he needs from the traditional poems, to reject what he thinks spurious, to re-arrange, to expand, or to contract his material, a process that implies aesthetic choice as well as scholastic study. Long passages of prose cannot be memorised and before the common use of printing, there was nothing to prevent copyists from altering prose texts and interpolating what they supposed to be improvements. The only way in which the content of a manuscript became fixed was by acquiring the status of a literary masterpiece with an inimitable style. Tacitus, for example, is generally regarded as one of the greatest historians, but he was forgotten for a thousand years, and his works survive in a single, almost illegible, misspelt, manuscript of the eleventh century, which has been patiently reconstructed by modern scholars. How can we tell what changes were made by copyists between the first and the eleventh centuries; what guesses at elucidation by scholars were wrong. But the works of Tacitus have been revived for their literary merit. How do we know that he is speaking the truth when he gives us the only account we have of some picturesque scene or personality?

For my part I have grave doubts about his celebrated pen-portrait of the Emperor Tiberius, which reads more like historical fiction. Whatever it may be, Tacitus has created a new myth, a work of art.

If I had been addressing the SPES a hundred years ago, we should all have assumed that the legends of Troy, Mycenae and Jericho were fairy-tales that had been, or soon would be, replaced by scientific history. The great Lord Acton went so far as to say that some phases of English history had been so thoroughly investigated that the account was closed; there was nothing more to learn. "Yet", he admitted, "the best teacher will be surpassed by the better pupil". He did not foresee that the Marxians, the Freudians, and above all the Archaeologists, would throw so much new light on history as to re-open every question. By digging up Troy, Mycenae, and Jericho, even our own Camelot, they have given the old myths a basis of fact.

A distinction must be drawn between the historian's task, before and after the general use of printing. In Ancient History the main difficulty is scarcity of documentation. Archaeology can fill gaps and can even correct chronology. It cannot supply a continuous narrative; for which we must turn to the literary historian, whose point-of-view is personal and accordingly mytho-poetic. In modern times, the converse problem appears. The historian is smothered by the mass of printed paper and spends his days searching for a few useful needles in haystacks of rubbish. Here again his task is selective.

Whodunnit?

As an example of credulity and incredulity, of myth-making, and of generalising from scanty information, I offer a favourite mystery: Who murdered the Princes in the Tower? We have only one contemporary account written by an eminent lawyer, Sir Thomas More. It is an advocate's case for the prosecution and is accordingly one-sided. Three hundred years ago a *Life of Richard III*, by Sir George Buck, was printed pointing out many weaknesses in More's case for the prosecution, and denouncing the playwrights for presenting Richard as a Demon-King (obviously a hit at Shakespeare). The attempt to whitewash Richard has been many times renewed, but no one has discovered a valid case for the defence. Though Richard had the means of propaganda, including the printing-press, at his disposal, his supporters put forward no counterblast, so that until a case for the defence is produced the case for the prosecution must stand. It is still the best information we have.

What interests me is the passion aroused for or against Richard after nearly 500 years. It is sustained by people who suppose that History is something that already exists, and lies hidden, waiting to be uncovered. We shall never know what happened within the walls of the Tower in August 1483. This is not unique; we know as much and as little about this murder as about any other in that blood-stained century.

Go farther back into history and the gaps are wider. It came as a shock to me to discover that the documentary evidence for the life of Jesus Christ is far better than for the life of Julius Caesar. I have found no other instance in Ancient History of three contemporary narratives, different in style and presentation though drawing from the same sources, of the life of some great public figure, let alone, of an obscure teacher in a remote colony. The hostile contemporary references by Suetonius, Tacitus and Josephus serve to guarantee the actual existence of Jesus; his life is fact not fiction. We have no full biography of Julius Caesar earlier than Plutarch, born about a century after Caesar's death, who cannot have spoken with anyone who remembered him. I do not, of course, reject the Julius Caesar Myth, backed-up as it is by a wealth of allusions in contem-

porary writers, but the only authentic memoir is in his own accounts of his military successes, a somewhat prejudiced source.

The great historians are of two kinds: contemporaries like Thucydides, Tacitus, Clarendon, and literary compilers like Herodotus, Plutarch, Gibbon, who surveyed vast areas of time and space with which they could be acquainted only in part. What advantage had the contemporaries, and what does contemporary mean? To answer these questions, I can quote my own experience as an old man who has lived through a critical period of history, sometimes near the vortex of the storm. At my age I can well remember what middle-class life in London was like, in the crucial summer of 1914. Not only that, I can remember my parents and their friends talking familiarly about the 1880's with a wealth of social detail that no research worker could ever amass by the study of documents. I *know* about the Edwardian Age, and need not look it up in books; I even know a great deal about the late Victorian Age, and if I have been in doubt, it was a survivor I consulted, not one of my juniors. So also with Sir Thomas More and the Princes in the Tower. So also with Matthew, Mark and Luke. We do not expect them to be accurate in every particular or free from prejudice, but what they understood, and we do not, was the climate of opinion which, for an old man, makes the events of 50 years ago more vivid than the events of last week. What are my memories of the First World War worth, and what am I to think when I observe young historians busy at creating a new myth about it?

(Summary of a Lecture given on October 28)

The Sad Case of Wilhelm Reich

BY

HECTOR HAWTON

WAS Wilhelm Reich mad or a genius? Did he make a serious contribution to science, or are his theories as bogus as Scientology? I believe he was all of these things. He had a streak of genius; he went mad. Some of his work was original and illuminating and some of it was science fiction.

He was born in Galicia in 1897. He studied medicine in Vienna and became one of Freud's most brilliant assistants. For six years he directed a seminar for training psycho-analysts. He transformed psycho-analysis, says Dr Charles Ryecroft, from what appeared to be an amateurish activity into a professional technique that can be taught formally.

However, even at this early stage there were seeds of disagreement with the strict orthodoxy which Freud tried to impose. In order to reach a working-class public he founded a number of Sex Hygiene Clinics. He joined the Communist Party in the hope that it would be possible to reconcile Freud and Marx. He believed that Marxists were too exclusively concerned with economic hardship, and that psycho-analysts underestimated the significance of social factors.

He was a pioneer of what we now call the Permissive Society. His views were so shocking that he had to leave Austria. He went to Berlin and founded the German Association for Proletarian Sex-Politics. Its programme does not seem very startling to us today, but he was far in advance of his time. The aims of the Association were better housing for the masses, abolition of laws on abortion and homosexuality, reform of marriage and divorce laws, free birth-control advice and con-

traceptives, health protection for mothers and children, nurseries in factories, abolition of laws against sex education, and home leave for prisoners.

Communists condemned his attitude as "bourgeois and counter-revolutionary" once the liberalism that followed the Revolution spent its force and Stalinism was allied to puritanism. Reich was expelled from the Communist Party. He was also virtually excommunicated by the International Psycho-analytical Association. The attempt to reconcile Freud and Marx had failed.

Freudian Rejection

Freud rejected Reich's theory that all neuroses were due to sexual repressions. This has been largely misunderstood. What Reich was trying to establish was a definition of health. He held that the test was the capacity for the maximum possible sexual satisfaction. This involved a theory of orgasm which differs from that of Freud, as also from the later conceptions of Kinsey and of Masters and Johnson. It entailed both a sociological theory and an educational programme. It did not, as his enemies alleged, give the green light for promiscuity. On the contrary, it was a serious attempt to construct a new morality.

"The healthy individual", he wrote, "had no compulsive morality because he has no impulses which call for moral inhibition. Intercourse with a prostitute becomes impossible. Sadistic fantasies disappear. To expect love as a right, or even to rape the sexual partner becomes inconceivable, as do the ideas of seducing children. Anal, exhibitionist or other perversions disappear, and with these the social anxiety and guilt feelings. The incestuous fixation to parents and siblings loses its interest; this liberates the energy which was bound up in such fixations. In brief, all these phenomena point to the fact that the organism is capable of self-regulation". (*The Sexual Revolution* pp 6-7.)

With the rise of Hitler, Reich took refuge in Denmark, but he found no permanent haven. He moved to Oslo and for a time he worked happily in the University. Once more he was subjected to vicious persecution. He left for America, but this proved to be a disastrous choice.

Psychosomatic Pioneer

It is impossible to do more than briefly indicate the broad lines of his contribution to psychiatry. He was a pioneer of the psychosomatic approach. He believed that neurotic symptoms had a physical basis in the musculature. Whereas psycho-analysis treats by *talking*, Reich devised a technique of attacking the tensions in the muscles of the neck, abdomen, pelvis etc, directly. These tensions contain, as it were, a frozen history of a patient's neurosis. They are defence mechanisms to protect the equilibrium which has been wrongly sought in the neurosis. Thus Reich advanced a purely materialistic theory in place of the body-mind dualism, which infects the language even of Freud. Muscular tension, in this view, is not the result of a psychic conflict—it is an expression of the conflict.

In America Reich turned from psychiatry to biophysics. There can be little doubt that at this stage he turned more and more paranoid. He believed he had discovered a new type of energy unknown to orthodox science, which he named orgone. It was the primal stuff of the cosmos which condensed into bions, the units of life. It could be utilised creatively or destructively. He was invited by farmers during a drought to make rain and surprisingly the rains came.

He had a number of cabinets constructed in which patients could sit and be saturated with orgone. Many did so in the hope that it could cure cancer, many more in the belief that it would restore their sexual potency. The Food and Drug Administration regarded this as dangerous hocus pocus and obtained a court injunction to prevent the use of the cabinets.

Reich refused to obey the order and was sentenced to two years imprisonment. The cabinets and all his books and papers dealing with orgone energy were destroyed.

This last period saw Reich's paranoia get progressively worse. He believed he had been in touch with Flying Saucers and that men from outer space were planning an attack on the world. He urged the Defence Department to repel the invasion by using orgone. He even toyed with the idea that he himself was the child of a spaceman and earth woman. He died in prison on November 3, 1957.

The tragic end of a career that began with such brilliant promise should not blind us to the valuable insights scattered among the wreck of much that is admittedly bizarre.

(Summary of a Lecture given on January 6)

For the Record

BY

THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I COULD be wrong but it seems to me that there are signs that the English log-jam (in the mind) is beginning to break up at last. We have been in that jam for about six years since the great protest movement of the 'sixties ran into the ground. The tendency since then has been for everyone to paddle his own canoe, despite widespread concern newly expressed over environmental problems and the rise of various "alternative society" ideas and projects. There has been no single guiding idea to inspire any general movement common to all ages and both sexes. Remember how the idea of nuclear disarmament inspired the early 'sixties?

South Place meetings over the years constitute a pretty good barometer, the more so as the speakers have not heard each other. If a single idea tends to recur and comes simultaneously from various unrelated sources then we may be on to something.

It was significant the way we were packed to the walls to hear Hector Hawton on Wilhelm Reich, James Blish on SF and Conscience, and Kit Pedler on SF and Futures. They all brought us firmly back to the importance of individual experience and judgement and attacked the dehumanising effect of ideologies and high technology gone mad. "Small is beautiful" is not an injunction that elevates the petty and the trivial. It puts down size in order to direct attention to the depth and quality of things on the human scale. *South Place* has itself embodied this doctrine for all its 181 years so it is hardly news to us, but it is good to see the thing made explicit. When Colin Barralet talked to the Sunday Social in January about *South Place* and the family, the same message came across. I took his talk down on tape so we have it for the archives.

Just before writing this I was listening to an Open University broadcast in which the speaker instanced the vast influence early nineteenth century Unitarians had, out of all proportion to their numbers. *South Place* was in the forefront of that phenomeon. It could be that we might do it again. If we can deliver the goods we don't have to go to people, they will come to us; that is what happens under the conditions of ideas-starvation.

Instant Counter-Inflation?

Without joining either the prophets of doom or the food fanatics it does occur to me that it may be timely to experiment with a modest help-

yourself exercise at South Place. Galloping inflation is making life difficult for all of us and the signs are it will get much worse. There are certain basic foods that we could buy in bulk and put up in five or ten pound bags in such a way that members would have to pay only about half the price charged by the shops. I am thinking about rice, corn (grind your own flour and make your own bread), lentils, red beans and anything else we can get hold of under very advantageous conditions. I have checked on the law about this and it appears that if the service is limited to members and it is not undertaken for profit we would have no problems. What do you think of the idea? Distribution could be after meetings on Sunday and possible also on Tuesday. Supplies would *not* be available from the office. We have more than enough to do without becoming a shop! We would need a group of interested volunteers to run the thing and I would help with transport. If you want to see for yourself something of the possibilities you could do yourself a bit of good by doing a little shopping at *Community Supplies* in Prince of Wales Crescent in Kentish Town.

Coming in March

The comparative evaluation of people's work in cash terms and our social judgement of it is "top of the bill" at the moment. It is appropriate that Professor Anthony Flew will talk about the profit motive on Sunday, 3rd March. John Shotter, a brilliant philosopher from the University of Leicester, and who made a big impression on us a couple of years ago, returns on the 10th to take on the ever-recurring problem of objectivity and subjectivity. I know he is putting a lot of work into this lecture; it could be something of a key-note occasion for *South Place*. Harold Blackham will be with us on the 17th to consider ritual in society and I gather that he is going to range over a very wide field indeed. Ray Helmick is the American Jesuit who went down so well some months ago when he introduced the subject of torture at a Forum. Like those other Americans of his dispensation, Ivan Illich and Dan Berrigan, he is right on the frontier of new thinking. The 24th should be a very interesting morning on the subject of the ethical impossibility of war today. Then following the great success of his January lecture on Wilhelm Reich, Hector Hawton will treat sex and mysticism on the last day of March.

The theme for Tuesdays in March is *Mind and Body*. Our psychological series is always very popular and very good. We keep right up to date on the latest developments in psychotherapy. Susan Wilson, of the Open University, who opens the series on the 5th, will however speak from the point of view of a philosopher and since we are always concerned about the apparently indefinable frontier between the two disciplines this might be as well. Michael Barnett who speaks on the 12th is the director of *Communications* the therapeutic centre that uses many of the new techniques. Dr. Glyn Seaborn Jones will introduce the subject of Janov's primal scream theory and practice. I have begun to read Dr. Janov's book and it is remarkable stuff. David Boadella (on the 26th) is the author of the latest book on Reich.

At the Forums Margaret Laws Smith will take on "a programme for survival" on the 10th, and two of our own members Stan and Margaret Chisman the evergreen subject of what is right and wrong with the family, on the 24th.

AROUND THE SOCIETY

□ The AGM will be on the last Wednesday in May, the 29th. Printing schedules for the Annual Report are such that we are right on the spot over deadlines. Will any member who has a resolution for the AGM please send it in *immediately*.

□ Clive Challis's last two posters, on SF and Education, have been quite brilliant. We always have a number left over and they do no good rolled up behind my desk. If you can use one (even to put up in your own house) please collect one.

□ We are doing something about the grimy exterior of Conway Hall—painting the pebble dash part of the walls. One day we shall have the whole building washed but that will cost the earth and several other things have higher priority.

□ If anyone is interested in buying a flat or maisonette in N16 one of our members may have something of interest to him. Contact me.

□ The February issue of the *New Humanist* publishes four out of five of the lectures given to us last year on inflation. They are well worth reading.

□ Five young artists spent several days in January painting the corridor white. They did it for love (and lunch); their own exhibition will be hung there and elsewhere in April after they have given the walls a third and final coat.

□ Jonathan Miller's Conway Memorial Lecture is still in the pipeline. There was a delay at our end over getting the answers to questions transcribed from tape. You will get it.

PETER CADOGAN

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HUMANIST FORUMS

The Vatican Billions

AVRO MANHATTAN began by saying that he was not concerned with the money in the Vatican as such, but with the assets owned by the churches.

At first, he said, the churches accumulated funds for charitable purposes. After Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire with the coming to power of Constantine, the church began accumulating

wealth. In the 4th-6th centuries a cult of St. Peter grew up, pilgrims started going to Rome and two Anglo-Saxon kinglets founded St. Peter's Pence.

Pepin, Charlemagne's father, donated the Papal States to the church, while a forged "Donation of Constantine" purported to give the church the entire Western Empire.

The year 1000 AD was proclaimed a jubilee year and pilgrims flocked to Rome, so bringing the papacy great wealth. Another jubilee was proclaimed in 1300 AD. In addition, the church took a third of the estates of people who died. The church in some parts of Europe acquired over 50 per cent of the land and in Latin America as much as 75 per cent.

Another source of the church's wealth was the Indulgence. This helped to precipitate the Reformation, while, later, the wealth of the church was one of the causes of the French and Spanish revolutions.

After the Russian revolution, the Vatican negotiated secretly with Lenin in the hope of gaining a position in the Soviet Union in return for food from Catholic charities. These negotiations were unsuccessful, but under the Lateran Treaty with Fascist Italy the church received 1,000 million lire, which was invested in Italian industry.

Golden Opportunity

In the second world war the Vatican was officially neutral and, as such, was able to transfer gold to Fort Knox. It also had investments in every major American company. Cardinal Spellman was an astute businessman who brought the Pope a cheque for 1m. dollars every time he saw the Pope.

By 1960 the Catholic church in America had an income of 3,250m. dollars a year while the Protestants had an income of 2,950m. dollars a year. In 1965 it was 3,200m. dollars for the Protestants and 3,600m. dollars for the Catholic Church.

In America today there are 125 orders of monks and 414 of nuns. The Order of St. Joseph has assets of 790m. dollars and the Sisters of the Poor assets of 2,000m. dollars. The Orders engage in business but do not pay any income tax. The United States Treasury sold gold to the Vatican at 34 dollars per oz. instead of the official price of 35 dollars per oz.

The Catholic Church owns an immense fortune in art treasures. In France, Spain and Italy there are from 500 to 600 churches which each have over 1m. dollars in art treasures. The Vatican owns immensely valuable manuscripts and still receives money from Indulgences, while the 300,000 priests in the world earn large sums from hearing Masses. Some Catholic priests have to act as policemen to prevent clerics fighting over the church's wealth.

It is difficult to see how the church can reconcile this wealth with the teachings of Jesus Christ. Many, it is clear, do not bother and live not only wealthily but also cynically. The church has immense power from its wealth.

A vigorous discussion followed. More cynicism shown by clerics was mentioned. It was also pointed out that statements about monks and nuns being penniless, though perhaps literally true, were misleading since the Orders gave their members a good standard of living. The way to have a sumptuous free meal was to be a guest in a convent!

There are, of course, individual Catholics and groups of Catholics who today, as in the past, practise some of the original precepts of the Church concerned with the renunciation of material things, service to fellow men and sharing, one with another. This qualifies the overall picture without altering it basically.

RICHARD HALL

(Report of a Forum held on October 28)

The Survival of the Brazilian Indians

BRAZIL is booming—its Gross National Product is growing faster than any other country except Japan. With stability apparently ensured by the strong military regime, the United States and Japan are pouring capital into the country with the prospects of rapid returns. Of the 27 companies in Brazil worth more than \$100 million, 14 are foreign owned and five have large foreign share-holdings. Sao Paulo—now both the largest city in South America and probably the most polluted city in the world—is growing at a phenomenal rate.

All of this is occurring at the same time that 40 per cent of the population earn 8 per cent of the Per Capita Income—2 per cent less than they even did ten years ago.

The big boom has now hit Amazonia, where the fever of development is almost a national psychosis. Nothing must slow down the rape of the interior, least of all the Indians. To quote Costa Caval Canti, Minister for Internal Affairs, "The Indians are not able to obstruct the road to progress".

The history of the Indians of Brazil is an unhappy one. Approximately 5,000,000 were living in Brazil when the Portuguese arrived. By 1963 this had fallen to 200,000 and by 1968 to 80,000. Rubber planters, coffee growers, cattle ranchers and prospectors either used the Indians as a source of cheap labour, or just killed them if they lived on land which they wanted to appropriate. Measles, influenza and tuberculosis were fatal to the non-immune Indians, and spread of these diseases was not always accidental. Venereal disease is another gift of the Brazilian, which rapidly spread among the uncomprehending Indians.

The Indians are now presented with their last, and perhaps final challenge from our civilisation—the fervent activity of roads being driven across their land and the formation of huge ranches and mines on their tribal homes.

Progress Beyond Tradition

The Indian cannot survive this sudden contact with the 20th century. Once they have been enticed by a desire for guns and transistor radios, they leave their cultural heritage behind them. By the time they discover that their only use in our society is on the lowest level, as semi-slaves or prostitutes, their tribal society has broken down and they become quasi-human, with no interest in life and no will to live. No sight can be sadder than the faces of groups of Indians for whom life no longer has any meaning.

The history of Indian protection in Brazil is one of ups and downs. There was no interest at all in the Indians until early this century, when the part-Indian General Candido Rondon, formed the Indian Protection Service (IPS). His motto was "Die if you must, but never kill (Indians)". Initially the IPS performed an extremely active and successful role in Indian protection. However, there was a gradual fall off in interest and the funds decreased. Six years ago there was a great scandal with revelations of Indian massacres, together with massive corruption and land speculation in the IPS. The IPS was dissolved and The National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) was formed in its place.

FUNAI is not independent, but comes under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the same ministry that deals with internal development. It is run by generals who have little knowledge and even less interest in Indian affairs. This causes a great deal of frustration and despair among the better and more interested field workers, many of whom have resigned in disgust. Antonio Cotrim, for example, who resigned after twelve years

dedicated to the Indians, said he was fed up with working for FUNAI as "a grave digger of Indians".

In addition the Brazilian constitution has recently been changed to the detriment of the Indians. No longer do the Indians own their own land, and in addition they now have no rights to the minerals under their land. Worst of all, any tribe may now be moved off its land for reasons of national security or regional development. A very broad interpretation is both possible and applied.

It is not patronising to talk about protecting Brazil's Indians, since the only way to allow them to decide their future is to prevent the *fait accompli* which is rapidly being achieved. Once we impose the 20th century on them there is no going back. Thus the decision must be ours as well as theirs. Their free choice can only be achieved by the patient protection and gradual education which is so superbly demonstrated in the Xingu National Park of the Villas-Boas brothers. The alternative of rapid acculturation has not succeeded in a single Indian tribe in the 450 years of Brazil's existence. In spite of this funds for Xingu have actually been decreased, and a road has been built through it releasing almost 50 per cent of its land for sale to ranchers and mining companies.

The South American Indians that remain have lived on their land for centuries. They have provided us with important foods, such as casava, peanuts and cocoa; important drugs, cocaine, reserpine, quinine and curare; and hallucinogens such as bufotenine. There is much knowledge that has already died in the bodies of countless Indians, but more is left in those that remain. Surely these people have as much right to live on their land, in equilibrium with their environment, as have the colonialists who only want the land for a quick profit—and to hell with the consequences, both human and ecological. S.L.

(This summary of a Forum held on November 11 was written by Dr. Stafford Lightman, who presented the forum. A film was also shown.—Ed.)

BOOK REVIEW

Questions of Censorship by David Tribe. George Allen and Unwin, £4.75.

ANYONE concerned with what might be termed the freedom movement will recognise censorship *per se* as one of the biggest menaces of our time. I venture to suggest, however, that only a minority of such people realise to what extent censorship encroaches upon all our lives, or appreciates in how many forms it is practised.

David Tribe's latest book will change that for any reader, since it is crammed with case histories, a fairly comprehensive history of censorship and a resume of the situation pertaining today.

Typical of the author's work, it is exhaustively researched, entertaining to a large degree and rather an eye-opener. David Tribe's writing can usually be relied upon to be outspoken, and certainly this book pulls no punches. Typically, also, it has a rather heavy style, and I wish David would use sentences with fewer subordinate clauses. But there can be no criticism of the way the book is put together, or any question that it achieves its objects, that of exposing the way exposure itself is often prevented.

From modern times, the trials of *Oz*, *Fanny Hill*, *Little Red Schoolbook* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* are recounted, and from the past we are told how Paine's *Age of Reason* was banned, and right back through history how Protagoras was banished for blasphemy in Periclean Athens.

However, there is rightly more emphasis on the situation today, and the message which seems to come through is that modern censorship relies less on the process of law than on the activities of prudish busybodies.

Much of the persecution resulting from the latter is disturbing, not only in the case of the written word. It seems that Mary Whitehouse's organisation was largely responsible for the demise of *Swizzlewick*, *Not So Much a Programme* and *That Was the Week* on TV, though Lady Birdwood's attempts to prosecute the West End production *Council of Love* met with less success.

The list of case histories given in this book is enormous. Not only "obscenity", but religious censorship, political censorship and the Official Secrets Act come under scrutiny, and there are chapters on the scene in Paris, the Communist bloc, India and Australia and New Zealand. Why, though, no chapter on Scandinavia, to show how life goes on largely without censorship? This is a sad omission, in my view.

Taken as a whole, however, the book is a major contribution to modern thinking. Everyone in the progressive movement should read it, if only to be made aware of the insidious, as well as blatant, crimes against freedom of expression and individual choice which are being carried out in the names of decency, security and the protection of children.

The book is illustrated with three insets of photographs and drawings, and liberally interspersed with quotes from things adjudged, "obscene", "lewd" or "indecent". All the notorious names are here: Tynan, Warhol, Lawrence, Giroudias, Kubrick, Miller, *Private Eye*, Straker, etc, etc, and on the other side, they are all there too—Longford, Whitehouse, Birdwood, Muggeridge, etc, etc.

At £4.75 the book is neither cheap nor light, but deals with a subject so serious as to be at the root of many of today's injustices.

ERIC WILLOUGHBY

Is Religious Education Destroying British Churches?

BY

JAMES D. HUNT

THE AMERICAN visitor to Britain who is interested in churches immediately observes signs that congregations are often small and perhaps elderly, and that church activity tends to be at a low level. America, too, has her share of empty churches, but by contrast they seem prosperous indeed.

Commentators have attempted to account for this difference. Some point out that secularization is far advanced throughout Europe, so that churches are neglected in both Protestant and Catholic countries. Sociologists may say that the American churches fill the need for a sense of community in the new agglomerations of suburbia, as once they did in the new towns of the frontier. Historians may point out that the evangelical churches, having originated as persecuted minorities, have always shown a talent for organization for the defence and extension of their faith, in marked contrast to the established state churches of European nations.

Surely the legal separation of church and state in the United States makes the churches stronger, for they must depend on their own organizational resources for survival. All these factors probably have their bearing on the matter, but during my residence in London with my family in the past year I have had the opportunity to observe still another mechanism

with a very powerful effect. My three children, attending ordinary London borough schools, were required to take part in worship and religious education classes. I accepted the local folkways and began to observe the effects of this requirement, which showed up, surprisingly, not so much in the schools as in the churches.

The concern for education has been a major factor in the strength of the American churches. It is now a commonplace among sociologists that the boom in church affiliation and construction since World War II (now beginning to show signs of recession) has taken place chiefly in the suburbs and has been closely related to parental concern for their children's religious education. The size of the Sunday School buildings attached to typical prosperous suburban churches, although used but a few hours per week, gives eloquent testimony of this interest in religious education. The high level of parental interest in their children's education is also revealed by community struggles over racial integration, bussing, curriculum innovations, and school bonds.

Parental Concern

British parents, too, are very much concerned with education, although the specific issues are different. The same hopes for equality and fears about quality that form the substance of American debates over bussing emerge in British debates over the introduction of new comprehensive high schools to replace the old two-tier system of "grammar" and "secondary modern" schools. And the highly innovative Infant Schools, much admired by American educators, have their vociferous traditionalist critics. Yet this concern for education is not reflected in large Sunday Schools. Why not?

In Britain, religious education is a function of the state schools. Under the Education Act of 1944, religious education is the only subject required to be taught in every school. Other subjects may come and go, as local authorities determine, but religion is a fixture. This is a consequence of the unique history of public education in Britain. Until well into the twentieth century, a great proportion of the schools were church schools, usually either Church of England or Roman Catholic, and the public authorities saw little need to provide additional secular schools. Gradually the church schools have been brought into the public education system by a series of small steps and typically British compromises. At times sharp controversies occurred. After the 1902 Education Act, for example, the Nonconformist churches so objected to the provision of state funds to Church of England schools that they undertook a "passive resistance" campaign of tax refusal, and suffered the imprisonment of many clergymen and lay leaders, and the confiscation of property to pay fines. The 1944 Act was one more stage in this process of compromise, by which the church schools received public funds and accepted state supervision but in return demanded that religious education be provided by law in all schools.

Consequently there has arisen a whole profession of religious educators in Britain, operating not in the churches but in the schools, and receiving their training in the Colleges of Education from clergy and other theologically-trained educators on the government payroll. In addition, many clergymen supplement their meagre salaries by teaching religious education classes on a part-time basis. Thus the clergy have received definite professional benefits from the compromise. But perhaps in another way they have lost more than they have gained, for the effort expended on religious education in the schools is not matched in the churches.

Is it not possible that since religious education is provided for in the schools, parents have little reason to exert themselves to provide it on a voluntary basis in the churches? If so, it has consequences far more serious than merely small Sunday School classes; it also results in small and ineffective churches.

In the life-cycle of *Homo Americanus Suburbus*, church affiliation is highly correlated with the presence of school-age children in the family. American parents tend to become active in churches when their children are ready for school. They want them to begin religious education at the same time, and this brings the whole family into the church. They tend to remain active until the children cease attending Sunday School and the parents drop away from church. Note, however, that this process brings into the churches many parents in their thirties and forties. These young parents have vitality, wide-ranging competence and rising incomes. They are frequently ambitious to establish themselves in positions of community leadership and responsibility, and view the church as one among a number of channels for entry into positions of desirable status. Thus the Sunday School brings these parents into the church at a stage in their life cycle when they are able to make the maximum contribution to the strength of the church as a voluntary association. They can chair committees, run fund drives, organize recreational, educational and service programmes, staff the Sunday School and also supply it with pupils, and in all ways keep the church alive and functioning.

In Britain, this incentive functions weakly, if at all. Religious education being provided by law in the schools, voluntary organizational activity to provide it on Sundays seems far less urgent. Consequently parents are not attracted to the church at an early point in the life cycle, and congregations tend to be elderly.

If there is anything to this theory, it would suggest that compulsory religion in the schools is proving to be a very dubious benefit for the churches. Though the clergy may gain teaching posts and salary supplements from part-time teaching, they pay the price of small and elderly congregations. Compulsory religious education is perhaps the last stand of the state church tradition, but one which effectively severs from the local parishes precisely those young parents whose anxiety over religious education might provide the stimulus for stemming the tide of church decline. Religion has been established in an apparently secure and permanent place in British schools, but at the cost of diminishing the vitality of the religious institutions themselves.

(From *Church and State*, USA)

Dr. Hunt is professor of religion at Shaw University, Raleigh, NC.

Your Viewpoint

A Democratic Dilemma?

I write in response to your editorial at the start of 1974 and in particular to your question "Is there a better way of providing people as a whole with representation than present democratic methods?"

For readers who have not yet had a chance to look at the report of the Royal Commission on the Constitution (Kilbrandon report—published 1973) and the excellent minority report (or "Memorandum of Dissent" as it is so pedantically and amusingly entitled), may I warmly recommend them.

Perhaps Lord Crowther-Hunt (better known as Norman Hunt), the main author of the minority report, might be invited to speak at South Place to foster the kind of discussion which is sought in your editorial? Equally, perhaps we can each do something (a letter or a phone call for

instance) to stimulate the major medium of communication in our society—television—to give us an extended and lively series of debates on democracy in our society and our world? (What are BBC Governors and members of the IBA for if *not* to promote such long-overdue debates?)

Thank you Editor and thank you Peter Cadogan (with your note on “Non-violence as Ethics?”) for a splendid start to 1974 in personal and social morality and democracy.

PETER DRAPER

Oxted, Surrey

Religious View

With reference to recent correspondence about the use of the word “religious” in relation to SPES, I would like to express a view on this matter.

It seems that the abhorrence of the word arises from noxious personal experience of the writers, or else an image created by pseudo christianity.

What do they think of the humanists in Holland, and in the USA, who do not make a fuss about this word? I wonder whether the majority of British humanists would flatly refuse to be recognised as “religious” if the law could be made more tolerant and up-to-date here, as it is in those countries.

RAY LOVECY

London E.4

Homosexual Weddings

Mr. J. Stewart Cook’s letter (February E.R.), comparing homosexual wedding ceremonies with fantastic rituals to symbolise sexual perversions of various kinds, gave me a good laugh, and for that I am grateful. But I was also disturbed by the misunderstanding about homosexuality revealed in his letter.

Homosexuality is not, as Mr. Cook obviously supposes, the practice of a particular kind of sexual perversion. It is simply the tendency to be attracted by members of one’s own sex rather than the opposite sex, and it includes friendship of every degree of intensity, permanency, and physical expression. Certainly, some homosexuals do practice sexual perversions (however one may define them)—but no more than heterosexuals do. Love-play is much the same, whether homosexual or heterosexual. Or does Mr. Cook consider even kissing and cuddling to be unnatural when it happens to be adults of the same sex that kiss and cuddle?

It is a popular fallacy that most male homosexuals go in for buggery. The minority who do so rarely force this on unwilling partners, whereas many wives are very often unwilling partners to buggery—and not once, but throughout married life.

It does seem a little ironic that some homosexual pairs should want to have a ceremony to mark and publicise their bonding commitment, just when heterosexual marriage has become socially optional; but many of them will naturally hanker after social recognition and acceptance as long as they meet with the sort of prejudice betrayed in Mr. Cook’s letter.

BARBARA SMOKER

London, S.E.6

Readers’ letters are welcomed for inclusion in Your Viewpoint. Preferably, letters should be short, and make a specific point on something relevant to the society and its activities. Comments on articles, etc, in previous issues are also welcome, but letters specifically criticising individuals will be shown to the person under fire before publication—Ed.

South Place News

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members: Miss I. Mills, N4; Miss T. M. van de Burg, N4; Mr. N. Cavanagh, SE1; Mr. J. Drake, NW3; Miss E. Conn, SE15; Mrs. F. Gilbert, Ilford; Mr. J. E. Chaplin, Aldbury; Mrs. L. Rau, Aldbury; Mr. H. Gentry, Burnham; Mrs. B. Walsh, NW6; Mr. R. E. Shodipe, SW9; Miss J. Sullivan, NW8; Mr. M. de St Ouen, NW8; Mr. D. Gerassi, NW6; Mr. S. Abel, NW2 and Mr. J. L. Halcrow, Edinburgh.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 29, at 6.30 p.m. Tea will be served from 6.0 p.m. Because of printing problems under the three-day week, resolutions have to be in the office earlier than usual. At present the printing schedule looks impossible and is still being negotiated with the printers. *We have fixed the date for resolutions at Tuesday, March 19.* Will all those who have reports to be published in the Annual Report get them in some time in the first week in March?

To the Opera . . .

A group of South Place members is being gathered to see two operas, *La Canterina* by Haydn and *Portrait of Menon* by Massaret, at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Victoria Embankment, EC4, on Friday, March 8. The programme begins at 6.30 p.m. Tickets, which are free of charge, can be reserved with Mrs. Burns, tel: 01-242 2133.

. . . and to the Theatre

A season of Lerner and Loewe's *Brigadoon* is being staged at the Stage Theatre, Kilburn, and Miss Connie Davis is arranging a South Place visit to the theatre on Saturday, March 30, at 3.30 p.m. Our own Joyce Langley, is the pianist. Tickets cost 50p and 25p for OAP's for this production, which is by the Hornsey Operatic and Dramatic Society. Full details from Miss Davis, tel: 01-722 6139.

Bridge Drive

The March bridge drive is on the 21st, in the library at 6.30 p.m. New members are welcome.

Kindred Organisations

The Easter centre organised by **Humanist Holidays** has had to be changed from Eastbourne to Folkestone. A summer week in Hunstanton, Norfolk, is being planned for August 17 to 24. The cost will be about £26.50. Full details from Mrs. M. Mephram, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey. Tel: 01-642 8796.

The **National Secular Society's** annual dinner on March 30, will take place on Saturday, March 30, from 6.00 p.m. The speakers will not now include Arthur Davidson, M.P., as previously announced. His place will be taken by publisher John Calder. Full details and tickets from the secretary, 698 Holloway Road, London N.19. Tel: 01-272 1266.

A one-day Humanist Conference is being staged at Stirling University, Scotland, on March 30, by the **British Humanist Association**. The cost is £1.60, and the guest speaker will be Dr. Colin Campbell. Full details from the secretary, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, London W8 5PG. Tel: 01-937 2341.

Continued from page 2

Tuesday, March 12

7.00 p.m.—**Discussion** introduced by **Michael Barnett: Personal Communication**

Sunday, March 17

11.00 a.m.—**Sunday Meeting: H. J. BLACKHAM** on **Ritual in Society**.
Tenor solos: Derek Wilkes

3.00 p.m.—**Sunday social**

6.00 p.m.—**Bridge practice**

6.30 p.m.—**Concert:** Tilford Festival Ensemble. Mozart G K424, D K285, A K581, Roussel Serenade Op 30, Ravel Introduction and Allegro Gfl

Tuesday, March 19

7.00 p.m.—**Discussion** introduced by **Dr. G. Seaborn Jones: The Primal Scream**

Thursday, March 21

6.30 p.m.—**Bridge Drive**

Sunday, March 24

11.00 a.m.—**Sunday Meeting: RAY HELMICK** on **The Ethical Impossibility of War Today**. Cello and piano: Emma Ferland and Katharine Dubois

3.00 p.m.—**Forum: What is Right and Wrong With the Family?** with Stan and Margaret Chisman

6.00 p.m.—**Bridge practice**

6.30 p.m.—**Concert:** Georgian Quartet, Kenneth Essex. Haydn G Op 77, No 1 String Quartet, Mozart Cmi K406, Dvorak Efl Op 97 String Quintets

Tuesday, March 26

7.00 p.m.—**Discussion** introduced by **David Boadella: The Language of the Body**

Sunday, March 31

11.00 a.m.—**Sunday Meeting: HECTOR HAWTON** on **Sex and Mysticism**. Bass Baritone solos: Tony Crasner

6.00 p.m.—**Bridge practice**

6.00 p.m.—**Concert:** Hoffner String Quartet, Kenneth Essex, Alan Civil. Mozart D K499 String Quartet, C K515 String Quartet, Efl K 407 Horn Quintet

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South Place Ethical Society

FOUNDED in 1793, the Society is a progressive movement which today advocates an ethical humanism, the study and dissemination of ethical principles based on humanism, and the cultivation of a rational religious sentiment free from all theological dogma.

We invite to membership all those who reject supernatural creeds and find themselves in sympathy with our views.

At Conway Hall there are **opportunities for participation** in many kinds of cultural activities, including discussions, lectures, concerts, dances, rambles and socials. A comprehensive reference and lending library is available, and all Members and Associates receive the Society's journal, *The Ethical Record*, free. The Sunday Evening Chamber Music Concerts founded in 1887 have achieved international renown.

Services available to members include Naming Ceremony of Welcome to Children, the Solemnisation of Marriage, and Memorial and Funeral Services.

The Story of South Place, by S. K. Ratcliffe, is a history of the Society and its interesting development within liberal thought.

Minimum subscriptions are: Members, 75p p.a.; Life Members, £15.75p (Life membership is available only to members of at least one year's standing). It is of help to the Society's officers if members pay their subscriptions by Bankers' Order, and it is of further financial benefit to the Society if Deeds of Covenant are entered into. Members are urged to pay more than the minimum subscription whenever possible, as the present amount is not sufficient to cover the cost of this journal.

A suitable form of bequest for those wishing to benefit the Society by their wills is to be found in the Annual Report.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

TO THE HON. REGISTRAR, SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY,
CONWAY HALL HUMANIST CENTRE, RED LION SQUARE, LONDON, WC1R 4RL

Being in sympathy with the aims of South Place Ethical Society, I desire to become a Member and I enclose as my annual subscription the sum of £..... (minimum 75p) entitling me (according to the Rules of the Society) to membership for one year from the date of enrolment.

NAME
(BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE)

ADDRESS
.....

OCCUPATION (disclosure optional)

HOW DID YOU HEAR OF THE SOCIETY?

DATE SIGNATURE

The Ethical Record is posted free to members. The annual charge to subscribers is 75p. Matter for publication should reach the Editor, Eric Willoughby, 46 Springfield Road, London E17 8DD, by the 5th of the preceding month.