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EDITORIAL

Socrates spurned the invitation to write, saying that he preferred the living, spoken word.

As noble as that may sound and as good as Socrates may have been with his lively dialogue, the truth remains unchanged: Had someone not written to us of what Socrates taught, it would not live for us today.

Another reason why this platitude of Socrates cannot go unchallenged is that we are not forced to choose between the two. We who are obliged in virtue of our profession always to use in some measure the format of the spoken word as we instruct, need not restrict ourselves to that method of communication. We can also exploit the written word and the printed page in our urge to communicate.

Perhaps the passion in some of us for writing is one manifestation of the drive for immortality. To capture in writing some essence of who we are and what we think and to preserve it is to build a barricade against what death can do. It can never completely extinguish that flame which we call life nor can it isolate the renewal of life to some celestial realm as long as we have written. It does not matter that the written page be relegated to some musty archive. The thought even of the possibility that sometime, somewhere, someone in some future generation shall take it up to read, give us a chance yet to speak, and think again our thoughts after us shall make the prospects of our death less painful.

This and the joyful anticipation of communicating with some of our contemporaries with whom we may not otherwise communicate are reason enough for such undertakings as the Journal of Union's Faculty Forum (JUFF). This tradition was begun nine years ago and has resulted in the publication to date of six issues. (One volume had two numbers!) With pleasure, the seventh issue--volume six--is now presented.

The first three articles of this issue are critical essays. They critique classical works from a previous century, the first from a political perspective and the second and third from a literary perspective.

The fourth article is interdisciplinary. In it a historian is endeavoring to relate his discipline and its subject matter to a Christian faith perspective.

Articles five and six seek to provide a social commentary upon the most menacing social problem known to man, the nuclear threat. One is a theological contribution and appeared earlier in Baptist Peacemaker. The second is a historical contribution prepared especially for this journal.
The seventh article is analytic research coming from the Business Department and addresses the matter of consumer protection in our own geographic area.

The remaining entries are creative works by the faculty: an essay, a one-act play, three poems, and five drawings.

Special thanks go to the College Services personnel who absorbed much of the tedium in the preparation of this journal.
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POLITICAL PROTOTYPES IN IBSEN'S AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

by James Alex Baggett

Apart from its fascinating, if unflattering, portrayal of small town folk, Henrik Ibsen's AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE is a simple play about a local issue, the pollution of a town's thriving health bath business. Although written over a century ago, at a time when spas were especially popular because of their supposed curing power, this "most militant" of Ibsen's dramas mirrors many contemporary environmental controversies. His idea for the plot probably came from a widely reported incident of a German physician's warning to visitors at a resort spa of a cholera outbreak. That warning immediately caused the loss of community business, then the stoning of the physician's house, and his eventual exile.¹

Critics almost universally agree that the play's protagonist, Dr. Thomas Stockmann, is really the author's ideological spokesman. His long speech in Act IV, the play's philosophical core as well as dramatic climax, expresses thoughts long mentioned in Ibsen's letters. Two of Stockmann's most memorable lines, "the minority is always right" and "the strongest man in the world is the man who stands alone," appeared in an 1872 letter, nine years before the finished play.² More importantly, Ibsen admitted his identity with the Doctor. Writing to his publisher months after the play's production, he states:

Doctor Stockmann and I get on excellently together, we agree on so many subjects. But the Doctor is a more muddle-headed person than I am, and he has... other characteristics for... which people will stand hearing a good many things from him which they might perhaps not... had they been said by me.³

In AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE almost overnight a sleepy little seashore town in the south of Norway prospers from its recently-developed therapeutic springs, causing its citizens, including Stockmann, the spa's originator and Medical Officer, to become dependent upon the bath business. While enjoying his good fortune of becoming for the first time "comfortably off"—formerly a poor rural physician—being able, his wife says to "earn almost as much as we spend," the Doctor soon faces a crisis. Having treated several visitors exhibiting typhoid symptoms, he suspects that the mineral water piped to the bathhouses is polluted by drainage from tanneries owned by his wealthy father-in-law, Morten Kiil. His pollution theory is confirmed by an out-of-town University laboratory report; its chemical analysis of the water proves it "absolutely dangerous to use, either internally or externally." Already he has drawn plans (in keeping with ones he originally proposed, but had rejected, when the baths were built) to remedy the pollution by rerouting the water away from the tanneries.

Now he naively considers himself a community hero. "It is a splendid thing," he boasts, "for a man to be able to feel that he has done a service to his native town and to his fellow-citizens." He informs his brother Peter Stockmann, the town's mayor, whom he likes to best, of his discovery. But the mayor, believing his brother by nature combative and
prone to exaggeration, reacts negatively. "After making further investigations," he tells him, "you will come to the conclusion that the matter is not by any means as dangerous or as critical as you imagined in the first instance." Also he warns that not only will the doctor's dismal report devastate the town's bath business, if made public, but that according to the town's engineer, Stockmann's plan to reroute the water would cost thousands of pounds and require two years to complete. So he tells his brother to release the information to no one; but after Stockmann responds that he has already mentioned it to newspaper friends, the mayor threatens his dismissal, telling him that "as an officer under the Bath Committee," he had "no right to any individual opinion."

Dr. Stockmann, a frequent letter-to-the-editor writer, desiring immediate action as well as public praise, early decided, if necessary, to go public through the local newspaper. The editor and the publisher had eagerly agreed, when given his go-ahead, to publish an article by the doctor, exposing the source of pollution and explaining his proposed rerouting. They reconsider, however, after being warned by the Mayor that the cost will be "about twenty thousand pounds," that "the proprietors of the Baths were not in a position to incur any further expense," and that it would "be necessary to raise a municipal loan." So fearing a tax hike to finance the recommended improvements might cause resentment toward the newspaper, resulting in a loss of subscribers, they decline to publish the doctor's signed article.

Subsequently Dr. Stockmann, denied an appeal to the populace through the press, tries to hire a hall. Unsuccessful in his effort, he gets a friend, Captain Horster, commander of a merchant ship, to provide a large room in his home. Even then he is out-maneuvered by his politician brother, who harangues the crowd into forbidding the Medical Officer from speaking on his "unreliable and exaggerated accounts of the sanitary condition of the Baths and the town." Prohibited from speaking of the baths and having quickly lost all faith in the people, whom he calls the "compact majority," he speaks to his fellow citizens on their own stupidity, inferiority, ignorance, and backwardness. They then promptly pass a resolution declaring him "an enemy of the people." And following the meeting's adjournment, they mock him in the streets. After he seeks refuge in his residence, they stone his house, smashing the windows.

Despite what seems like total defeat, there are those, for a variety of reasons, seeking the physician's repudiation of his scientific findings. Morten Kjell tempts his son-in-law to reconsider his report by investing Mrs. Stockmann's share of his estate in the bathing company, thereby appealing to the Doctor's self-interest, to protect the baths. The Mayor promises, if his brother recants, to improve gradually the supposed pollution, and he hints that the Doctor might even be rehired. Further, Mr. Hovstad, editor of the town's People's Messenger, seeks to shame him into a confession of conspiracy in what Hovstad believes to be a plot between Stockmann and his father-in-law to take over the baths cheaply. But the Doctor resists all efforts to budge him.

At the play's end, after considering departing for America, "or a small island in the Pacific," he changes his mind. Although appalled by
his society's sickness, finding himself invigorated by persecution he resolves to remain and fight—to change his community by educating his own children and any others he is permitted to teach. His final words in the play are its most memorable: "The strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone."

Almost all, if not all, of the play's dozen or so personalities are political prototypes, illustrations of the disgust that Ibsen feels for Norwegian democratic politics, "what he thought of their governing classes, their political party life, their press, the catch words of the multitude and the march of progress in general."4 Dr. Stockmann, supposedly Ibsen's hero, is a reformer turned radical who really loves truth more than people; Mayor Peter Stockmann is a conservative turned reactionary, protecting his turf and authority at all costs; Editor Hovstad is of that specie of radical who sells out for his own self-interest—like many members of the intelligentsia he lacks the will to be radical in the work-a-day world; Publisher Aslaksen, a moderate out of fear of change rather than conviction, opposes any change in the local power structure; tannery owner Morten Kiil is a fallen officeholder desiring revenge; and Mrs. Stockmann, unlike other members of her family, disdains ideology and simply practices the politics of family solidarity.

As elsewhere, in AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE, Ibsen has questions rather than answers. Of one matter, however, there is no doubt: the water is polluted. But the responses to that fact are almost totally subjective, and all the figures are flawed, if we, as does Hermann J. Weigand, "spice our objectivity with a pinch of skepticism."5

Even Dr. Stockmann (or perhaps especially Dr. Stockmann) who views himself as a community hero and an objective scientist, has feet of clay. He seems willing to suffer all for truth. Still he desires adulation for his discovery and appears indifferent concerning the feelings of his friends, other than that they agree with him; his brother, whom he unkindly, if accurately, describes as "slow witted and hide-bound in prejudice"; his family, other than that they suffer with him; and the town folk, whom he calls fools. As with many intellectuals, the Doctor is determined to sweep aside the myths by which people live. Among other attacks, in his address to the angry crowd, he attacks the myth of the "compact majority," i.e., that the uninformed and unthinking masses have some sort of collective wisdom in determining policy; the myth of eternal truths, which, on the whole, he purports is completely disproven by history, which instead demonstrates the evolution of truth forged by a minority, whose ideas are initially rejected by society; the the myth of equality, which he claims is completely contrary to the most elementary laws of nature. "The majority never has right on its side. . . . The majority has might on its side—unfortunately; but right it has not," he says.

Yet his remarks, to a considerable extent, grow out of the Doctor's own disillusionment. At the beginning of the play he is prosperous, hospitable, gregarious, a believer in the "compact majority," and a supporter of what he supposes to be the independent liberal press. But, as others have seen, Stockmann is robbed of one illusion after another, including "his illusions about the free press, the property owners, and the mass of citizens."6
Experiencing what Alexis de Tocqueville called "the tyranny of the majority," shortly thereafter Stockmann becomes a radical of the far left, resembling that individual whom Eric Hoffer was later to dub a "True Believer," a complete ideologue; seeking more than needed environmental improvements, his new desire is to remake, or destroy, his community. Stockmann declares, "What does the destruction of a community matter, if it lives on lies! ... All who live by lies ought to be exterminated like vermin! You will end by infecting the whole country. ..." In the end, Dr. Stockmann is left with little else than his own honor and honesty. He can live with himself but hardly anyone else can.

Mayor Peter Stockmann is a typical self-serving, short-sighted officeholder concerned almost completely with protecting his own position. For it he would deny the truth, endanger the health of other people, and sacrifice his own brother. Reflecting his frame of mind are a series of questions he poses to his brother upon learning of the pollution:

Have you taken the trouble to consider what your proposed alterations would cost?

Was it necessary to make all these investigations behind my back?

Have you given no thought to the consequences this may have for yourself? ... For you and yours ... ?

Although by nature a conservative, frugal man, with modest appetites, as much as any radical the mayor is capable of demagoguery, as is shown in the crowd scene when he prevents his brother from addressing the issue at hand, the pollution of the water. His authoritarian attitude surfaces in his remark, "The individual ought undoubtedly to acquiesce in subordinating himself to the community—or, to speak more accurately, to the authorities who have the care of the community's welfare." And his rigid conservatism reveals itself when he tells his brother, "The public doesn't require any new ideas. The public is best served by the good, old-established ideas it already has."

Perhaps, however, there should even be second thoughts about the Mayor. His brother could have acted a little more discreetly, and science and truth are not all that matter; the economic consequences of a policy—in this case upon the entire community—should be considered. However we may regard his go-slow policy in correcting any supposed—that is, in his own mind—supposed-pollution problems, he was accurate in saying "the matter in hand is not simply a scientific one. It is a complicated matter, and has its economic as well as its technical side." Of such are many of the dilemmas of our nation's environmental problems today, causing us perhaps to think the unthinkable, of weighing lives and health against jobs and prosperity. Do we really want an immediate clean up of all our environmental pollution, whatever the cost?

Hovstad, the local newspaper editor, is an example of a liberal turned moderate when his own self-interest becomes apparent. Earlier he is the one suggesting to Dr. Stockmann that the polluted baths are a symbol of the town's civil corruption. "The whole of the town's interests have, little by little," he says, "got into the hands of a pack of
officials... officials' friends and adherents; it is the wealthy folk, the old families in the town, they have got us entirely in their hands." He divulges to the doctor that his ambition when he became editor of the People's Messenger was "to break up this ring of self-opinioned old fossils who had got hold of all the influence." Hovstad is an opportunist more interested in destroying the powers that be than he is in resolving the problem of pollution. "The idol of Authority must be shattered in this town," he states, "and we have now a prospect of getting the municipal authority into the hands where it should lie." While he is talking about the common folk, perhaps he is really thinking of their champions, like himself. But when it is pointed out to him by the mayor that if his press publishes Dr. Stockmann's report the newspaper would sell fewer instead of more copies, he soon resorts to accusing Dr. Stockmann of having ulterior motives, that is, scheming with his father-in-law to buy up bath stock inexpensively.

Hovstad's associate editor, Billing (a Norwegian word meaning cheap), is of the same stripe, if not worse. A superficial liberal, he is really more preoccupied with the hospitality of others, free food and drinks, and in obtaining a secure civil service position that with anything else.

The newspaper's publisher and printer, Aslakesen, is a moderate of the most timid type, a real "sheep in sheep's clothing" (as Winston Churchill said of his political opponent Clement Attlee). As one critic observes, Aslakesen's "moderation is not a principle for him, but rather an evasion of principle." Although continually using the word moderation: "Moderation is always my aim; it is the greatest virtue in a citizen... I am a quiet and peaceable man, who believes in discreet moderation, and--in moderate discretion--he is found nonetheless as the chairman of the crowd condemning Dr. Stockmann as "An Enemy of the People." He seems to be saying extremism is a virtue in defense of moderation, i.e., in being used against those who are immoderate, such as Dr. Stockmann.

The actions of the editors and publisher to a large extent merely call attention to the fact that in a capitalistic society, "the liberal press," as it is referred to in this play, is not primarily the guardian of truth or justice or reform, although on occasion it can be, or even first and foremost an educator of the public, it is principally a business and most generally caters to its readers, however progressive its editor. Often a newspaper attacks individual evils, but it very seldom criticizes the social and political structure, and it almost never questions the myths by which men live.

An incident in the play demonstrates this issue. The Doctor's daughter, Petra, returns a book in English she had promised to translate for editor Hovstad. Refusing to translate it, she gives as her reason the story's simplistic moral, "that there is a super-natural power that looks after the so-called good people in this world and makes everything happen for the best in their case--while all the so-called bad people are punished." Editor Hovstad tells Petra, whom he admires, or at least is eager to have her admire him, that "an editor cannot always act as he would prefer" and that "he is often obliged to bow to the wishes of the public in unimportant matters." Besides, he says, such stories make the people "feel more secure."
Morten Kiil, Mrs. Stockmann's father, like many small town folk, is most concerned about personal revenge and family reputation. Uninformed about scientific matters, he ignores the issue. Initially he seeks to use the Doctor's report to his own advantage by gaining revenge. Referring to the community leaders he protests, "They think themselves so much cleverer than we old fellows. They hounded me out of the council; they did, I tell you--they hounded me out. Now they shall pay for it." Then, as it becomes clear to him that his tanneries are being blamed for the pollution, he seeks only to protect his reputation, declaring to Dr. Stockmann:

You said yesterday that the worst of this pollution came from my tannery. If that is true, then my grandfather and my father before me, and I myself, for many years past, have been poisoning the town like three destroying angels. Do you think I am going to sit quiet under that reproach? . . . No, thank you, I am jealous of my name and reputation.

It is at this point that he reveals his purchase of the bath stock, tempting Dr. Stockmann, hoping he will recant his pollution charge.

Finally, we have Mrs. Stockmann, anxious only for her own family. At first she cautions Dr. Stockmann:

You carry the war into their camp, and you get your dismissal--that is what you will do . . .

But towards your family, Thomas? Towards your own home! Do you think that is doing your duty towards those you have to provide for? . . .

But finding she cannot sway him, she joins him in his martyrdom, never looking back. Her support of her husband is "a support based on love rather than on principle," says Richard Hornby, she "never having uttered a word on the social issues involved." 8

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE first seems simply a morality play, a mere melodrama, differing only in that evil appears to triumph. But upon a closer look, one finds the play infinitely more complicated. Even Ibsen had difficulty deciding whether it was comedy or tragedy. Whereas some critics agree with Weigand that "the essential attitude of comedy is sustained," it may be, as George Bernard Shaw has contended, that "only those who take an active part in politics can appreciate the grim fun of the situation." 9 Since the issues and characters involved are far more complicated that they initially appear, almost all of the play's critics admit having changed their minds about Ibsen's meaning upon further reflection. This complexity, of course, is reminiscent of the ironies and ambiguities of life.
Notes


2Clurman, p. 127.


5Weigand, p. 102.

6Hurt, p. 119.


8Hornby, p. 166.


An earlier and longer version of this paper was addressed to the Joseph E. Martin Shakespeare Circle, Jackson, Tennessee, October 18, 1984.
TURGENEV, DOSTOEVSKY) AND SYMPATHY

by Patricia Pinson

Russian novelists of the 19th century are among the most panoramic of commentators on Russian politics, society and psychology, and certainly are the most accessible. Unlike the British 19th century novelists, they give serious consideration to nihilism and revolution, and sympathies lie as often with the new as they do with that which was tradition. In fact, protagonists of many novels are reactionaries in themselves, but they are complex and multi-faceted human beings who invite our concern and admiration on one hand and our disagreement and occasional revulsion on the other. Thus although change in the very fabric of Russian life was explored openly, sympathy was not automatically placed either with change or against it. To examine the placement of sympathy in major Russian works, let us consider two novels which deal directly with nihilistic protagonists, Fathers and Sons the best known work of Ivan Turgenev, and The Possessed (or The Devils as it is known in Europe) a lesser known novel by the towering author Fyodor Dostoevsky.

Sympathies in these two novels lie on several levels. The initial impulse is to sort out the characters and see which ones the author presents in the kindest light. However, that task is more complicated than it first appears since both authors, being masters at their craft, present their characters as well rounded and complex human beings who have both strengths and weaknesses. We feel sympathetic on some occasions and disappointment on others in our consideration of the same character. Secondly, since both novels deal with a society which is divided by classes, judgements and sympathies are stated broadly across whole levels of the system. Finally, we find that sympathy is felt in the consideration of tradition itself. Is the "new" better than the "old" simply because it is new? Is it better to adhere to the old morality? Is it preferable or even possible to negate the past totally? Both authors present their canvas of characters and action from a particular point of view or bias, and the meaning of the work and the position of the author can be determined then by the sympathetic light that each uses in his painting.

First of all, in looking at the individual characters of the novels we are immediately faced with personalities of the authors themselves. Dostoevsky's cynicism permeates the whole novel and to some extent, all of the characters within it. While in the process of reading the novel, it seems that there is, indeed, no character who is presented sympathetically. Yet, the sympathy seems to develop as a by product after living through the struggles and crises of the character. Turgenev, however, is a gentler man and less intense then Dostoevsky. The characters in Fathers and Sons are generally more acceptable and sympathy seems to be more strongly developed and defined. For instance, look at the central character of both novels, Bazarov in Fathers and Sons and Stavrogin in The Possessed. Both are nihilists, and neither author condones this philosophy. But Bazarov is a more positive character than Stavrogin, and he is also less complex. Both men are defeated, both are
drawn against their will into life threatening situations through traditions of honor which they do not believe in, and both die untimely deaths. Yet, Bazarov's surly exterior covers a man capable of love—a man who loved his parents, who felt affection for his younger friend, and who fell in love with Mme Odintsova. This last love—the romantic one—especially showed the chinks in his armor of nihilism, but we believe that he would have worked the incongruencies out and live a "productive" life. He becomes a sympathetic character in a full sense.

Stavrogin, on the other hand, is a "center which cannot hold"—a compelling force, "Prince Harry," "Ivan the Tsarevitch"—from whom many of the characters take their impetus. Ironically, it seems that he has not sought this position nor will he fulfill it. In fact, he is present in only about half of the novel (which also happens to be the central section) and laments at one point that "everyone for some inexplicable reason keeps foisting a flag upon me." A few pages later Shatov asks "why am I condemned to believe in you through all eternity?. . . I can't tear you out of my heart, Nikolay Stavrogin!" (Part II, Chap I Section VII) Stavrogin is often callous, is aloof and cold, has apparently been evil, and has done absurd things, yet he does these things in order to test and prove the strength of his will over his pride, his aesthetic sensibility, his emotions, and to ferret out sham. Certainly all is not noble though, and he is intensely aware of his own emptiness. Total control of self leaves a void in his soul and fittingly, that void occurs structurally as well through his absence throughout the last third of the novel. The aloofness and passivity in Stavrogin's character removes him from society even though he moves within it. Yet on reflection, he is not a part of that social-political-moral system, he is not playing in the same game. He is outside the system and is seeking a suitable replacement for it. He exists in a sunless, grey world where there is no relief provided by day followed by night—he spends his energy and intellect proving that he can exist there. Even though haunted by phantoms, he finds the goalless and purposeless life worth nothing.

Actually, Nicholas Stavrogin is the double of Pyotr Verkhovensky, the only character in The Possessed for whom there is absolutely no sympathy at all. Pyotr is the political activist who has no scruples in using people in any way that will accomplish his political ambition. Both men are concerned with attaining something—but neither knows what is is. Pyotr does this in a very active and emotional way—Nicholas in an intellectual one. Pyotr is constantly changing but Nicholas is stable. Pyotr controls people in order to control a political system, whereas Nicholas controls people to test his own will in gaining control over himself. The way that they control is also different—Pyotr works at it with a passion, and Nicholas works only passively and tries to escape it. Neither seems to care about good or evil, but that knowledge doesn't bother Pyotr and it does Nicholas. Nicholas seems to study himself and the effect of moral actions upon him, where Pyotr simply does whatever will expedite his plans.

The difference then lies somewhere in being consciously human or having a code of honor. At this point, then, we find Nicholas Stavrogin becoming sympathetic. Pyotr has no conscience or even consciousness about whatever he has to do to accomplish his ends. He worries about his acts only insofar as they hinder his progress in his personal revolution. He is quick to protect himself whatever the case, and he lives
to go on with his insane plans as the book ends. Stavrogin, however, is rather reckless in his actions and invites society's censure as well as risking his life as he goes through a senseless duel. He appears to have a genuine warmth for Lisa, who loves him to the point of self-sacrifice. But loving would have broken his removal from morality in that he would then protect her from evil—he should have to admit that evil existed. Yet the desire to love was there.

The tragedy in his character is that there is a basic humanity which he cannot escape. When he reaches the point of complete control of his will, he finds life so empty that it is worthless. Pyotr, too, has no moral qualms but he doesn't care so it doesn't bother him. However, there is something basic to Stavrogin's character that makes him seek, analyze, and question—to be cognizant of what he is doing. He never loses his capacity to feel, and that then is his undoing. He has moved into a "no man's land"—beyond cold and hot and lukewarm—where the air of godlessness or ideallessness is so searing that it evaporates the soul. He has some distant kinship to the Byronic hero who hurls himself from one experience to another seeking sensation, and Heathcliff in Wuthering Heights who lives beyond the casual good and evil of society and is instead more akin to the elemental forces of creation. Stavrogin is colder, but he is also tragic. He is intense and compelling, passive yet a positive force, one who has undertaken to live a code which demands total inhumanity. He fails—because he is human. In so doing, he touches the humanity in us and becomes sympathetic.

Bazarov's death fits in with his nihilism in life. One discharges beauty, values, morality and sees life in scientific unfeeling terms. At least, this is what he taught. So why shouldn't death overtake him as well as anyone else merely as a statistic in the cholera epidemic—unrelenting, unfeeling, objective nature moves on. Why him? Why not. Yet, is his death so arbitrary as that? On the surface, it would appear so. However, he died working as a medical doctor in that epidemic—cool, scientific—yet determined to find a cure to stop death among the serfs. Stavrogin, on the other hand, wills to determine his own time and way of death. He refused to give in to the unpredictable whims of fate. The chinks discovered in Stavrogin's armor were less apparent, yet they were more debilitating and frightening. He could not have recovered from the incongruity that he saw in himself. His intensity and singleness of purpose necessitated his suicide. Both Bazarov and Stavrogin have become sympathetic characters in spite of their beliefs. Neither author condones nihilism in itself, yet both present its rebellion against ineffectiveness and sham as positive and necessary.

On a broader level, Dostoevsky is deeply critical of the aristocracy who are engulfed in meaningless gestures, of politicians because they are totally ineffectual, of atheists because they fall into a trap just as rigid as religion, of the intelligentsia because they only fantasize on theories and don't put anything into practice which makes any difference in life, and of the revolutionaries who move blindly to destroy without rebuilding anything.

Turgenev also shows the ineffectual government run by incapable men, aristocracy who can't lead nor manage and who are often consumed by superstition and meaningless religion, and serfs who are degenerate and slothful. The sympathy is directed toward Anna Sergyevna Odintsov as an
enlightened aristocrat, but then we see the flaws in her personality. Yet it seems to be the enlightened aristocrat—those who are up with the times, who reason and are organized, and who have money and power enough to lead effectively—who is to be the logical salvation of Russia. Bazarov’s young companion, Arkady, becomes such at the end of the novel when his land becomes productive again. Turgenev parodies the enlightened revolutionaries and shows them to be even more ineffectual than the old elite aristocracy.

Class structure is treated in a more generalized way by Turgenev than by Dostoevsky. We have already seen that he finds the greatest hope in the enlightened aristocracy and that his view of the serfs was very unsympathetic. He presents a very damaging picture of them in Chapter XXII as being ungrateful, slothful, uncouth, and thieving. They are not considered individually at all and the sweeping statements about them tend to be most memorable. All of the major characters are from the aristocratic class—even Bazarov’s parents are landed gentry even though their house had only six rooms and they had only fifteen serfs on their "estate." The parents of both Arkady and Bazarov had already changed to the rental system in keeping up with the more progressive times.

Dostoevsky is somewhat more democratic in his treatment of class. Of his five most sympathetic characters, two of them are nobility, one is a somewhat impoverished professor, one is the son of a former servant in the Stavrogin household, and one is a civil engineer. Fewer generalizations about class are made by Dostoevsky, and the aristocracy is seen to be as full of inherent weaknesses as any other group of people. Here, the two authors differ in their sympathies. Dostoevsky seems to place the responsibility with the individual regardless of his station in life, whereas Turgenev places responsibility with the enlightened gentry. Dostoevsky measures success and, therefore, sympathy with the ability of the individual to achieve humanity through struggle and disillusionment; the victories are personal ones. Whereas Turgenev sees hope for society in the enlightenment of a social class.

Finally there is great tension between the older system of tradition and the newer ideologies embodying nihilism. Neither author advocates one to the exclusion of the other since both contain weaknesses. On the one hand, aristocratic Uncle Pavel Bazarov is regarded as useless anachronism of the past making no contribution to and being a liability upon society. Mother Bazarov is also an example of the past and Turgenev observes that "Such women are not common nowadays. God knows whether we ought to rejoice." On the other hand, the new ideologies which are more explicit in Dostoevsky are shown to be destructive and sterile unless modified with a belief in God and in love and care for one another. The new philosophies seem to be advocated by both men, but both also preached moderation.

Russia in the 19th century was a cauldron which had been simmering on the fires of discontent for hundreds of years. These two Russian sons understood the soul of the people and sought for answers in their own way. Dostoevsky perhaps more than any other writer shows the psychic complexity of a people who were victims of their own struggles. He is a fitting contemporary of Freud. And Turgenev gives us the last flicker of hope for an aristocratic class in a world that was becoming
more democratic for better or for worse. Dostoevsky's intense world is perhaps too modern to be comfortable, too full of fanaticism, trauma, and depression to give us the distance we need to feel safe. Even though Turgenev is the lesser novelist, his world retains the stability of the system though it be stagnating, and thus his sympathies are painted on a broader scale and there is some safety and enjoyment there. However, it is Dostoevsky who opens the doors to all of us and offers us the pleasure and the pain of the responsibility of choice.
CRITICAL ESSAY: "HARMONIE DU SOIR" CHARLES BAUDELAIRE (1857)
by Beverly Hearn

"Harmonie du Soir" (Evening Song) by Baudelaire is classic in form, rhyme, and meter. It is a pantoum, an eastern form which is more closely welded than the sonnet. It consists of only ten original lines; the second and fourth lines become the first and third lines of each succeeding stanza. The interwoven lines reflect the mingling of impressions and the relatedness of strong emotions—love and religion—which are treated in the poem. The lines are alexandrines, the twelve-syllable line of classic French poetry. Baudelaire follows the classic form even in the meter. The line is divided into two parts (hemitiches). They are marked by a caesura after the sixth syllable. Each hemistich of six syllables has two accents for a total of four accents per line. The rhyme scheme is abba, then baab, and is repeated in the last eight lines. There are only two rhymes: the feminine (ending in e) ige and the masculine oir. Both rhymes are rare in French and thus contribute to the mysterious tone. The repetition of lines and all the restrictions of the form intensify the minor note of the poem. The exclamation marks seem to prolong and increase the desperation of the emotions expressed.

Into this classical mold the poet pours romantic sentiments and symbolist correspondences. Half of the images are from nature, half from Catholic liturgy. They combine to form a musical, sensuous evocation of sorrow in lost love. The title suggests evening melancholy that will be expressed with correspondences of nature and music. In stanza one each flower is offering up its perfumes like incense, a religious image. The sounds and perfumes of the night mingle together, swirling into a melancholy waltz and sorrowful, sensual vertigo which envelops the poet's heart.

The swirling vertigo turns the poet's attention inward towards his own emotions in the second stanza. The music of the violin, produced by trembling strings repeatedly stroked by the bow, reminds him of his suffering heart which has been repeatedly beaten down in the sorrows of tragic love experiences. In the melancholy of his emotions, he turns to the heavens for spiritual solace. They are sad and beautiful, reminding him of a reposoir, an altar strewn with flowers used in religious processions on church holidays.

In the third stanza, the poet's fear of the nothingness of death is evoked as he sees the sun drown itself (set) in its own sacrificial blood. This reminds us of Christ's sacrifice for us, his death, and his saving blood. The final quatrain shows the poet's anguished heart finding solace from death's anticipated void, not in Christ, but in the luminous memory of his beloved. His memory of her lightens his gloom, illuminating life again just as the monstrance (ostensoir) holds the glowing bread of the Eucharist, transubstantiated into the illuminating presence of Christ.
"Harmonie du Soir" is a perfect representation of Baudelaire's theory of beauty. He believed that true beauty was found in revelations of the spiritual world discovered through correspondences in the tangible world. Harmony is exemplified throughout the poem. The sounds are heavy and weigh down upon the listener just as the emotions of the poet weigh upon him. The repetition of the sound v cuts through the poem like a knife and evokes the poet's pain in sound. The repetition of the an sound reminds us of sighs of melancholy. The musical repetition of sounds and lines, the use of religious imagery, and the intensity of the classic form transforms "Harmonie du Soir" almost into a sensual litany.

Baudelaire has been called the father of modern poetry. Although he lived a life of depravity, debauchery, and dependency, his poems evoke a melancholy, mystical purity seldom found elsewhere, earning his reputation as the greatest poet of nineteenth century France and, some say, the world. Whatever labels we assign Baudelaire, the melancholy of his life, the musicality of his tone, and the correspondences from which he drew his subject matter, prophesy the impressionist and symbolist movements which were to follow him, and for which he provided inspiration.
Harmonie Du Soir

Voici venir les temps où vibrant sure sa tige
Chaque fleur s'evapore ainsi qu'un encensoir;
Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir,
Valse melancholique et langoureux vestige!

Chaque fleur s'evapore ainsi qu'un encensoir;
Le violon frémit comme un coeur qu'on affilige;
Valse melancholique et langoreux vestige!
Le ciel est triste et beau comme un grand reposoir.

Le violon frémit comme un coeur qu'on affilige,
Un coeur tendre, qui hait le néant vaste et noir!
Le ciel est triste et beau comme un grand reposoir;
Le soleil s'est noyé dans son sang qui se fige.

Un coeur tendre, qui hait le néant vaste et noir,
Du passé lumineux recueille tout vestige!
Le soleil s'est noyé dans son sang qui se fige...
Ton souvenir en moi luit comme un ostensorio!

My Translation

Evening is the time when trembling on its stem
Each flower offers up its essence like incense;
Sounds and perfumes swirl in the evening air;
A melancholoy waltz and a langorous vertigo!

Each flower offers up its essence like incense;
The violin trembles like a trembling, afflicted heart;
Melancholoy waltz and langorous vertigo!
The heavens are sad and beautiful like a great bier.

The violin trembles like a trembling, afflicted heart,
A tender heart that hates dark, empty nothingness!
The heavens are sad and beautiful like a great bier;
The sun drowns itself in its own congealing blood...

A tender heart that hates dark, empty nothingness.
Recovers shining moments from the past!
The sun drowns in its own congealing blood...
But your memory in me provides a sacred light!
"INTEGRATING FAITH AND HISTORY"

by Dr. Stephen D. Carls

Many people, including Christians, have a misconception about what history is and can do. They see it as a series of names, dates, and facts arranged in a chronological order providing us with some insight into ourselves but not very relevant to our contemporary world. Others may go a step further and look for some kind of key in history that will unlock the future of mankind and show them the fate of their own society. In fact, history is more than just combining events in a chronological fashion, but it is less than the crystal ball which some people hope to find in studying it. For me, history is an interpretive account of past events involving mankind, the forces that have affected man's development, and the element of chance which is a factor in the historical process that is at times ignored even by historians. One of the key words in this definition is "interpretive," for it is often overlooked by the layman who believes that history can be viewed in an absolute way. The task of the historian would be simplified if that were the case, but unfortunately there is a wide variety of factors that prevent the historian from presenting history as absolute truth. These factors include intellectual predilections, environment, the availability of documents, educational training, the historian's world view, and the period in which the historian writes. In other words, history as seen through the eyes of the historian is relative. His interpretation of a particular period of time or individual is not definitive or complete in any way, for there are a large number of factors involved in his studies that he cannot possibly know. He is forced to reconstruct the past based on a limited amount of knowledge and therefore he will be subject to interpretive error.

Some historians have tried to rescue history from its factual quagmire by providing history with fixed laws and patterns. They look at history in a global sense and distill from the mass of evidence certain kinds of factors which seem to determine the rise and fall of societies and civilizations. Karl Marx, for example, argued that everything in history is ultimately related to economics; in other words, for him it was economic factors that determined the historical process, that made history move toward a final goal which was to be the creation of a workers' paradise. Unfortunately, these men, in weaving patterns together, are forced to be selective in what they choose to support their basic assumptions, for history contains too many happenings which defy any kind of global systematizing by the historian or philosopher. Their philosophies of history break down in the face of a subject that is too complex to be dealt with in terms of fixed laws and grandiose generalities. C. S. Lewis, while not an historian, did bring some insight to the subject when he wrote:

On such a small chance selection from the total past as we have, it seems to me a waste of time to play the Historicist. The philosophy of history is a discipline for which we mortal men lack the necessary data. Nor is the attempt always a mere waste of time: it may be positively mischievous. It encourages a Mussolini to say that "History
took him by the throat" when what really took him by the
throat was desire. Drivel about superior races or immanent
dialectic may be used to strengthen the hand and ease the
conscience of cruelty and greed. And what quack or traitor
will not now woo adherents or intimidate resistance with the
assurance that his scheme is inevitable, "bound to come,"
and in the direction which the world is already taking?¹

That such philosophies of history are efforts in futility is also
the view of Arthur Link, Professor of History at Princeton University,
who adds that they are attempts on the part of man's ego to reduce to a
comprehensible level a subject that is ultimately knowable in a complete
way only to God Himself.²

This leads us to a very important question. Is there any such
thing as absolute truth in history? This question is critical, for if
historical relativity is carried to an extreme, it can lead one to de-
spair. In dealing with it, I once again wish to refer to professor Link
who, in treating the question from a Christian standpoint, has in my
view satisfactorily come to grips with the problem. His approach is
also what I consider to be a meaningful integration of faith and disci-
pline which can be applied both to the classroom and to one's research.
Link's argument is essentially platonic in nature, for he states that
absolute truth in history does exist and is to be found in the person of
God. Historians, as finite beings, are able to reconstruct the past,
but only in an imperfect way subject to such influences as time, place,
and the historian's own limitations. Therefore, history is relative no
matter how thorough the historian's research or rigorous his methods; it
is too complex a subject for any historian to master completely, even
for a small time frame or for a single individual.³

In spite of the problem of historical relativity, the Christian
historian can take comfort in knowing that absolute truth in history
does exist and that he can pursue his efforts to discover a fragment of
this truth with the aid of the Holy Spirit. According to Link,
historians who are truly transformed by their acceptance of Christ as
redeemer will no longer seek to fulfill the demands of ego and try to
dominate history through theories or other means, but will allow them-
seves to become the servants of God as they attempt to fulfill the
obligations of their profession. The Christian historian can approach
his subject with the knowledge that God is at his side:

God stands with us in the classroom as we seek to relate the
coming of the French Revolution or the American Civil War.
His Spirit works with us in the library as we search through
newspapers and magazines, and in the study as we struggle to
reconstruct the evidence of past events. Do we go off on
our own tangents? Do we seek to fit the evidence into our
own molds? Then the Spirit can, if he will, correct and
guide us back to faithful chronicling. Perhaps he will not
so use us; perhaps he will use our willfulness for our-
larger training as historians. Even so, he gives us the
ability to live with our mistakes and to learn from them,
and to go on in our daily work in trust that He will turn
all our imperfect work to good purposes.⁴
Yet the integration of faith and history concerns more than this, for history helps provide Christians with answers to the question of who man is, where he comes from, and where he is going. History records the greatest event of all time which was God's entry into the historical process in the person of Christ; Christ changed the course of history by giving man the hope of eternal life. History also shows that, in contrast to the eighteenth-century philosophes who believed that man was improving, man's moral nature has not changed through the centuries, but has remained essentially the same, that he is in essence sinful by nature. Just as important is that history provides the Christian with a sense of the past that allows him to deal more effectively with the present and future, and as active participants in the historical process, we should be creative agents in the service of God.

In short, while God alone completely comprehends history, Christian historians have an obligation to seek historical truth even though they can never arrive at a perfect kind of historical knowledge, however restricted their subject. In their search for truth, Christian historians reflect the process of any Christian life which consists of trying to live in accordance with the teachings of Christ; in both cases the effort is made with an awareness that man will ultimately fall far short of perfection. But the important thing for the Christian is that the effort be made.

FOOTNOTES

1Lewis defines an Historicist as someone who believes that by means of his natural powers, he can discover an inner meaning in the historical process.


5Ibid., p. 384.
BELIEVING THE BIBLE IN AN AGE OF NUCLEAR MADNESS

by W. Clyde Tilley

One of the greatest ironies of twentieth-century American Christianity is the resistance by the Fundamentalist wing of that faith to the contemporary peace movement. Christian Fundamentalism pays uninhibited lip-service to the Bible. Yet the Bible—especially with Jesus, its main character—is untiring in its call to peace and its appeals to the life of non-violence. With a strangeness that almost defies explanation these ardent admirers of the Holy Scriptures not only ignore this basic Biblical theme but often are found at the vanguard of those who resist its advocacy and implementation. That Biblical inerrantists almost inevitably assume a staunch pro-defense posture has an aura of strangeness about it that is mind-boggling to many readers of the Bible.

How are we to understand this affinity that Biblical inerranism and rabid militarism often have for one another despite the inescapable presence of the peacemaking imperative of the Bible? To provide an exhaustive answer to this question would perhaps be too ambitious an undertaking for this paper. However, a more modest contribution is intended in which some light shall be shed on this enigma. I propose to do three things: (1) to give a brief synopsis of the Biblical message on peacemaking; (2) to portray a larger escapist complex of which our present enigma is only a part, and (3) to conclude with a focus on particular distortions of the peace emphasis of the Bible.

The Biblical Message on Peacemaking

The best place to begin our synopsis of the Biblical message on peacemaking is with the prophetic vision of peace. The background for this is of course a fallen and warring world. But as early as the eighth century B.C. the literary prophets of the Old Testament envision a time when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks" (Isaiah 2:4a; Micah 4:1-3). This destruction of military weapons shall also be marked by a permanent treaty between nations and a discontinuance of military science (Isaiah 2:4b).

The age of peace is also described as a time when

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
and the calf and the lion and the fatling together
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall feed;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp
And the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.
They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters that cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:6-9)
The Biblical ideal of peace is something much more positive than the mere absence of war or the cessation of hostility. It is noteworthy that the passage cited above about beating swords into plowshares is not only a vision about the demolition of weapons but of recycling them into agricultural implements that the land may yield its increase. Indeed, this passage is followed in Micah with a description of the fulfilling wholeness that shall characterize life in that age:

But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken. (Micah 4:4; see also I Kings 4:25)

It is sometimes contended by those who assume hawkish positions on military preparedness that they do so in the interest of peace. The rationale is that "the best defense is a good offense" or that "we can bargain best from a position of military strength." However, the prophets specifically denounced that approach to peacemaking:

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horses because they are strong and do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the Lord!

The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses are flesh, and not spirit. (Isaiah 31:1, 3a)

Reliance for peace is upon God himself and particularly through the coming Messianic figure who fulfills the pledge of the Davidic covenant (Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-5, 10).

The New Testament era is inaugurated with the recognition on the part of many that Jesus of Nazareth is this Davidic Messiah. In addition, he was also the suffering Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 40-55 (Matthew 16:20-21; Acts 8:32-35 et al), effecting a combination of these two roles which seems unprecedented in earlier Jewish expectation. Jesus lives and dies in the tension of his dual identity as both a king-ly figure who will rule the nations and as a meek person who will give "my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard" (Isaiah 50:6; Cf 53:3-9).

He managed this tension by his unswerving commitment to the comprehensive faith that "whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." (Matthew 16:25). The paradigm expression of this principle is the promise of his own resurrection which was to follow his crucifixion, the supreme act of his self-giving (Matthew 16:21).

Not only did Jesus insist upon this option for the living of his own life but also for the lives of his followers: they must take up the cross too (Matthew 16:24), the symbol of renunciation of worldly power and retaliatory violence or even violent resistance. He taught that
violence is self-defeating (Matthew 26:52), that we should love and bless our enemies (Matthew 5:43-48), and that evil should not be resisted with evil (Matthew 5:38-42). He wept when he foresaw the evils that would befall God's chosen nation due to the violent course they espoused, and he lamented because they did not know the things that made for peace (Luke 19:41-44).

Jesus' followers, in proclaiming that Jesus is now risen from the dead, were declaring their faith in the efficacy of this cross-principle that life is found through its renunciation and surrender. This is the meaning of Christian baptism, the ritual through which one is initiated into the faith, that dying to self has issued in a newness of life (Romans 6:3ff). It is this embracing truth that provides the Christian faith with its true character (Philippians 2:5-11; 3:7-11). The Christian is called to a life of suffering (I Peter 2:21; 3:9; Philippians 1:29-30), a calling which the Christian is to discharge in joy (I Peter 4:13), following Christ's example in doing so.

It is this truth that the cross came to symbolize among earlier believers. This was the power of the cross which the Jews stumbled over and the wisdom of the cross which was but folly to the Greeks (I Corinthians 1:21-25). To espouse this meaning in the cross is a part of what is involved in the preaching of the gospel (I Corinthians 1:17) and of Christ and him crucified. (I Corinthians 2:2). To glory in the cross involved the renunciation of worldly power (Galatians 6:14) and is not inconsistent with glorying in our weaknesses (II Corinthians 12:9-10).

The life of peacemaking and the life of suffering are integral to each other (Matthew 5:9-12). It is not that there is any natural nexus between our renunciation of worldly power in deference to non-violence and the new order of peace which even now the new person in Christ is beginning to enter. It is true that such demonstrations of love in the face of brutality are sometimes disarming and that evil is sometimes overcome with good (Romans 12:19-21). But its incidence is much more infrequent than the regularity of a natural law. The emphasis is rather that our weakness is simply the occasion for the working of God's power (II Corinthians 12:9-10), just as in the crucifixion of Jesus, it was God who raised him from the dead (e.g. Acts 2:24). The good news is not that our faithfulness to Christ puts us beyond the power of violent death; we are everywhere warned of its possibility if not its likelihood (II Timothy 3:12; John 15:20). The good news instead is that as is the case in the apocalyptic vision, our destiny is not confined to the present scheme of things (Revelation 7:9-17; 17:3-6, 13-14). God who raised Jesus from the dead shall also raise his faithful ones from death. (I Corinthians 15:20-23).

This is the good news and we are thus made confident as warriors of peace that in the good fight of faith death no longer has dominion over us (Romans 6:9, 14). There is no evidence that this taking up the non-violent cross is intended as a program of public policy for the nations of the world. Yet the dominant understanding that the early church had of its role in this violent scheme of things was that it as a redemptive and sometimes apocalyptic minority (Matthew 7:13-14) could not bear arms but was free only to bear witness as salt and light "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" (Philippians 2:15).
Escapist Theology and the Offense of the Cross

It is obvious that according to our worldly wisdom, our common sense, such an approach to peace will not "work." It is, by the most merciful critique, impractical and, by a fairer judgment, impossible. It continues to be a stumblingblock and foolishness just as it was in the first century.

How much do we believe the Bible? This is the query to which we are constantly being subjected by fundamentalism. It is fashionable to respond to that query that one would believe the Bible even if it taught the inconsistent, the contradictory. "If the Bible taught that two plus two equals five, I would believe it," one famous evangelist is reported to have boasted.

I want to suggest a nobler test for the staunchness of our belief in the Bible: "I would follow the Bible even if it taught the impractical." Several considerations underscore the higher merit of this test: (1) It is a more honest test of one's belief of something to follow it than it is to believe something about it. How would one show that he believed the contradictory unless perhaps he did it by acting frustrated, paralyzed, or deranged? Or he may "believe" that two plus two equals five but act as though two plus two equals four. (2) It seems more in keeping with the nature of the Biblical witness to itself that its primary function is to direct our conduct and not just to provide material for intellectual assent (II Timothy 3:16). (3) The first test (believing the contradictory) involves a risk of the loss of nothing important to us--unless, of course, it would be our integrity--while the second test (following the impractical) may involve the risk of much that is important, including our lives. (4) A test that may involve the loss of life is much more in line with what the scriptures indicate that Christ's followers may realistically expect.

Commitment to the Christian faith as outlined in the previous section of this article will doubtlessly be costly, actional, and, in the light of a worldly wisdom that despises the cross, impractical. I am thus opting for the second test for how much one believes the Bible--following the Bible when it is impractical--as preferable to the first one--believing the Bible when it is inconsistent.

We return now to an earlier query: How can one claim belief in the inerrancy of the Bible and yet, at the same time, disregard and even reject so much that it teaches about peacemaking and the life of non-violence? The answer to this question must be found in the offensiveness of the cross. Because humankind still finds the cross offensive, we have developed an escapist theology that allows us to pay lip-service to the Bible while ignoring its costlier teachings, to pay lip-service to the cross while stripping it of its offense.

Let me outline in a sketchy manner some of the broad features of this escapist theology. (1) Grace has become a cop-out for the rigorous demands of the Christian life. The gospel has become victimized by what Dietrich Bonhoeffer has called a "cheap grace" in contrast to the "costly grace" of the New Testament. An exclusive emphasis upon a substitutionary doctrine of the atonement--that Christ bore the cross in my place--has caused us to lose sight of the fact that Christ's
followers are also called upon to bear a cross. This one-sided emphasis has relieved the cross of its offense--and of much of its power. In this view grace is understood only as pardon from our sins but not as power to enable us to attain God's righteous demands. We ignore the truth that God in grace accepts us as we are (justification) in order that by grace he may make us what he wills that we become (sanctification).

(2) Revelation has become a cop-out for Christian thinking. It is less demanding upon us to identify God's revelation as certain propositions he has bequeathed to us and incorporated in a book rather than as a personal self-disclosure of One who encounters us in both gift and demand. Accordingly, these revealed propositions have only to be believed in the sense of our intellectually assenting to them. One of the problems with this view of propositional revelation is that many of the sentences of the Bible are not propositions requiring assent but imperatives requiring obedience.

A blind assent to the letter of Scripture gives rise to a certain anti-intellectualism: "You don't have to understand the Bible; you only have to believe it." "God said it; I believe it; that settles it." "If the Bible said that two plus two equals five, I would believe it." Somehow our thinking apparatus can be shifted into neutral and we can just idle along believing the Bible. It is easy with this view to regard the Bible as a set of tinker-toys from which we can construct our own doctrines and systems in a selective manner without any honest regard for how may pieces are left over after our systems are completed.

(3) Individualism is a cop-out for Christian community. The emphasis in salvation is upon what God is doing for isolated individuals (me-ism) rather than upon the people of God He is gathering. Jesus comes into my heart rather than incorporating me into His body along with other believers whom He is also saying. The church is viewed as a structural conglomerate, a loose institution of individuals, rather than as a redemptive fellowship, the Body of Christ. The emphasis in service is upon what I am doing for God rather than upon what He is doing through us. It is more convenient to be saved individually rather than to be bound to a body of redeemed persons.

(4) Eschatology is a cop-out for Christian activism. Eschatology is the doctrine of last things. Nowhere is the "tinker toy" approach more in evidence than in building end-time schemes by selecting highly imaginative passages while ignoring others. These symbolic and obscure proof-text passages are from prophetic and apocalyptic books of both the Old and New Testaments. Interpretation of these passages is done with a total disregard for historical and literary contexts. The peace age is usually regarded as an era (millennium) at the end of history in which Christ will personally reign on earth. It is totally discontinuous with what is happening in history now except for the fervid evangelism that takes place trying to get people prepared for it. By focusing upon the future and what Jesus will do then, we can ignore the present injustices of our world and what Jesus has already done and said that impinges upon the here and now.

The above outline is sketchy, as I promised, but it will serve to show how aloofness from contemporary peace initiatives on the part of
"Bible believers" is integral to a larger theological conspiracy. Not everyone who espouses this simplistic theology is consciously a co-conspirator. Perhaps most are not. It is simply an "in vogue" theology, but the dynamism of it seems largely escapistic in the manner just described.

Distortions of the Peace Imperative

What we need to do here is to focus upon some specific distortions that relate to the Christian's peace calling. This focus will relate primarily to the eschatological aspect of escapistic theology since it is futuristic eschatologies that are most directly involved in undermining the church's ministry of peacemaking. These distortions will also be viewed from the perspective of our nuclear age.

Biblical eschatology can be primarily viewed either as predictive or as ethical. If predictive, then the prophetic and apocalyptic portions of the Bible become material for us to use in constructing charts and time-tables for the end-time. These contribute to a historical-determinism that renders us helpless in the face of our world's ills and injustices.

But in order to do this, we have to ignore, or at least to minimize, the prophet's ethical call to justice and repentance. In this Biblical call there is nothing but historical determinism and there is no catastrophe but which perchance may not be averted if God's people will cease their iniquities and promote justice in the land. In the Bible the predictive element of the prophet and, to some extent, the apocalyptic, is set within a framework of dated history and of moral pleading. To make the predictive element predominate over the ethical is to tear the prophet's message from these roots in order to appropriate it for our own escapistic ends.

This of course is what is happening on the contemporary scene in all fundamentalistic and much evangelical theology. Tom Sine in a recent article, "Bringing Down the Final Curtain," (Sojourners, June-July, 1984, pp. 10-14) treats the historical rise of our current predictive orientation. The evangelicals of the first half of the nineteenth century, sparked by the great awakening under Charles Finney, understood the kingdom of God in an ethical sense. They thus sought and prayed for the kingdom here and now, leading major social reforms in our country in the areas of slave abolition, temperance, women's rights, and peace. They believed they could make a difference in the world and endeavored to do so in response to the mandate of the gospel.

At the close of the Civil War, however, evangelicals began to develop a historical pessimism about the amelioration of social conditions. One of the major contributing factors was the rise of premillennialism which charted a progressively degenerative world into which a reign of peace would cataclysmically break, totally divorced from all human efforts. Not only would our efforts to promote justice fail to bring about this peace but, according to some brands of this eschatology, may actually delay it. This reign of peace would be accompanied by a fearful destruction of the wicked.
Sidetracked as we are by this deterministic eschatology from much of the moral and social imperative of Jesus and the prophets, I want now to zero in upon some accompanying irresponsible attitudes toward the nuclear threat that endangers civilization as we know it today. I shall label these postures as (1) nuclear immunity, (2) nuclear inevitability, and (3) nuclear indifference.

By nuclear immunity I am referring to the attitude that God will never let nuclear holocaust occur. Implicit in this assertion of immunity is often the idea that God has his own scheme for drawing history to a close, and a nuclear devastation is simply not a part of that scheme. There is a guaranteed reign of peace upon the earth and not mass destruction of all civilized life which would render the earth unfit for human occupancy. If there is nuclear war, it certainly could not reach the vast proportions often threatened.

Even a more likely element in this claim of immunity is the notion that we are the people of God and God would not let it happen to us. More often than not, this "we" refers to America as "the Christian nation." This theological/eschatological position has become intertwined with a brand of Americanism that boasts a sense of "manifest destiny" and an implicit relationship to God not greatly different from that which Israel had in the Old Testament.

In response to this it might be noted that there is a total dearth of objective evidence concerning any covenant relationship between God and America. The "Christian" account of America's origin and development is highly glamorized if not fictionalized. This account goes back to Plymouth (1620) rather than to Jamestown (1607) for a more convincing beginning and ignores the many Deists, Unitarians, and atheists among our founding fathers. If America appears to be a Christian nation, it is more because Christianity has been Americanized rather than because America has been Christianized. The whole notion is an ethnocentric myth of our civil religion.

Even if it were granted that America had some special "inside connection" with God, to maintain that we have nuclear immunity would not be very convincing from a Biblical standpoint. Ancient Israel often made such appeals to immunity from catastrophic judgment only to be reminded by their prophets:

Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!
Why would you have the day of the Lord?
It is darkness, and not light;

Is not the day of the Lord darkness and not light,
and gloom with no brightness in it?
(Amos 5:18, 20)

If the problem the nuclear immunist has is that nuclear holocaust cannot be fit into the end-time scheme, it is worth noting that some of the Biblical descriptions of the final conflagration sound much like such a holocaust (e.g., II Peter 3:7, 10).

A second irresponsible stance on nuclear proliferation which has rootage in this escapistic form of eschatology is nuclear inevitability.
Strangely enough this rationale for nuclear build-up uses exactly the opposite tack. The idea here is that it is futile to resist nuclear holocaust because this is the final conflagration spoken of in the Bible. The melting of the elements, the burning of the earth, and the loud noise of its passing away (II Peter 3:10), as well as the "fire and brimstone" of Revelation, according to this view, is a nuclear blast precisely. It is God's ordained means for ending the world, and to resist it is to fight against God.

Ed McAteer of the Religious Roundtable says, "Developing nuclear weapons was a part of God's plan. Nuclear war may be the fulfillment of prophecy. Before we go, they go. I can do that in all good Christian conscience."

However much the letter of these verses may sound like a nuclear holocaust, any Christian infant who has ever read the moral teachings of Jesus and heard his prayer of forgiveness for his murderers must know deep in the heart that this gloating callousness is an offense to the spirit of the Christ. Just as the nuclear immunists need to be cautioned in their dogmatism that there can be no nuclear holocaust, the dogmatism of the nuclear inevitabilists must be countered by the reverse caution: they cannot know that these passages describe a nuclear holocaust.

On the other hand, if such certainty were attainable, any inevitability of nuclear devastation could not justify such fervid and gleeful participation in nuclear escalation. One would surely be assuming a self-righteous posture for one's own side that violates all standards of objective judgment. Even in the case of nuclear inevitability, it would be much more likely and consistent to believe that this event is covered by a kind of principle that applies to some other tragic but inevitable happenings. Concerning temptations to sin and Judas' betrayal of Jesus, Jesus said, "It is necessary that the offense comes, but woe to those by whom the offense comes" (Matthew 18:7; Mark 14:21).

Finally, there is the position of nuclear indifferentism. Some believers may feel that "since I'm saved, if God wants to end the world with nuclear war, it is no concern of mine; they had their warning." This position suffers from the obviously unchristian vices of lovelessness and powerlessness. It suffers from powerlessness because it is historically deterministic, ignoring the Biblical mandates of peace and justice. These mandates are ignored because a rigid end-time scheme renders their achievement impossible on the one hand and unnecessary on the other. It infuses this human helplessness into an interim of history that has droned on for two thousand years. It suffers from lovelessness because it takes delight in my personal salvation which is accentuated all the more by the destruction of my fellow human creatures, forgetting that we are our brother's and sister's keeper.

Let us not be glib when it comes to believing the Bible. Those of us who have a high regard for Biblical authority, whether or not we choose to express it in terms of inerrancy, have a weighty responsibility for hearing "the whole counsel of God" and implementing every dimension of its truth.
Otherwise Jesus' words to the Pharisees of his day may have an appropriate application to us: "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains" (John 9:41).

No simple Pythagorean this one, but a whole complex of angles and sides and lines, of acutes and obtuses and equilaterals, The shades and shines of light catch our sight. Geese in flight are not just geese, they are miracles of physics, emperors of the air "scorners of the ground."
This honking chorus of feathers, this straining neck, this form of one cocked wing and one rudder in the wind, this god of Form, this restrained grace -- true. But, oh. the freedom of it all!

Ernie Pinson
May 10, 1955: The Day the Arms Race Ended
A Story With a Bizarre Ending

by Jimmy H. Davis

A Happy Ending

After many rejections of Western Nations' disarmament proposals, the Soviet Union on May 10, 1955 finally accepted the following:

(i) Military personnel ceilings of between 1 and 1.5 million for USA, USSR, China, and other countries at less than 1% of their population.

(ii) Conventional armaments would be reduced accordingly.

(iii) New production of atomic and hydrogen weapons would cease when 50 percent of the conventional reductions had been made.

(iv) When 75 percent of the conventional reduction had been made, a complete prohibition of use of atomic and hydrogen weapons and simultaneously the elimination of these weapons.

(v) Creation of an International Control Agency that would have inspectors permanently stationed in each country.

At the time USA had an armed force total of about 3 million, USSR 5 million, and China 5 million. In 1960 the USA had about 2000 nuclear weapons and the USSR 70. (1960 is the earliest date I could find information about numbers of nuclear weapons.)

Of course, the arms race ended at this time: armies were reduced, nuclear weapons eliminated, and Eastern Europe freed (1.5 million Soviet soldiers is not enough to control the Eastern European satellites). For a more "realistic" ending, read on.

The Beginning

In 1945 the United States successfully tested the first atomic bomb at Alamogordo, NM. On August 6, 1946 Hiroshima was destroyed by an A-bomb. In November, the leaders of USA, Canada, and Britain issued a declaration calling for the peaceful use of atomic energy and the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

On January 24, 1946 a UN Commission on Disarmament was established. On June 14, 1946 Mr. Bernard Baruch, the USA delegate, presented the USA plan before the UN Commission. Among the proposals that he presented were the establishment of an International Atomic Development Authority. The USA would turn over to this Authority all of its nuclear assets worth over $4 billion. The Authority would control the mining and processing of nuclear material, and it would distribute nuclear power to the world. The USA would give up its monopoly of atomic weapons by giving them to the Authority.
On June 19, Mr. Gromyko gave the Soviet response: ban the bomb with each nation overseeing its own destruction. He rejected the USA plan as "the notorious Baruch Plan" that would give the US monopolistic control of all the world's atomic industry. At this time the USSR was not interested in arms control. It wanted to have its own A-bomb and to develop atomic energy without outside interference.

The Cold War began, as proposal and counterproposal were traded at the UN. Relations between USA and USSR worsened: The Truman Doctrine against Communist aggression--1947; Czechoslovakia falls to Communism--1948; Berlin Airlift--1948; Soviet atomic bomb--1949; Korean War begins--1950; USA hydrogen bomb--1952; Stalin dies--1953; Khrushchev becomes secretary of Communist Party--1953; Korean War ends--1953; Soviet H-bomb--1953; Eisenhower's Atoms-for-Peace Speech--1953.

The Middle

In 1952 the UN Disarmament Commission was reorganized to deal with all armaments (conventional and nuclear) and all armed forces. On May 28, 1952 the USA, Britain, and France submitted the manpower ceilings discussed in "the happy ending" section. The Committee did not meet again until 1954. In April the French and British delegates proposed the coupling of manpower reductions with the destruction of nuclear weapons (the 50 percent and 75 percent proposals of "the happy ending" section). On May 10, 1955 the Soviets accepted the Western nations' proposals. Khrushchev's belief that all nations would be destroyed in a nuclear war appeared to have been accepted by the Soviets. Previously they said only capitalist countries would be destroyed.

The Weird Ending

The Western delegates requested a recess to consult with their governments about the Soviet acceptance of the Western Nations' proposals. During the recess, President Eisenhower at the Summit meeting in Geneva in July proposed his Open Skies policy to prevent surprise attacks: unlimited aerial observation of all defense preparations. Khrushchev rejected the proposal. On August 29 the Disarmament Committee reconvened. The Soviet delegates tried to take up the proposals of May 10, 1955. The USA delegate made repeated speeches about "open skies" and stated that the manpower ceilings, 50% of 75% arrangements were all withdrawn.

Why this change in policy? Western policy makers had seen British and American arms keep the peace since 1945. The dominant thinking after the Korean war was that national safety and world freedom depend upon very powerful American armaments for the Soviets. They now believed that arm reductions reflect weakness and lead to war, not peace.

Time has shown the terrible mistake in the rejection of the Soviet offer of May 10, 1955. There are now 30,000 American and 20,000 Soviet nuclear weapons compared to 2000 American and 70 Soviet nuclear weapons in the early 1960's. Fifty times the average is spent on armies than on education. Twice as much is invested on military programs as for all
civilian needs. There appears to be no end in sight: New generations of missiles and nuclear weapons are constantly being proposed.

Eisenhower's great propaganda victory of "Open Skies" is still remembered. It is too bad that the May 10, 1955 proposals are not also remembered.

For further information see
WHO WILL PROTECT THE RURAL MID-SOUTH CONSUMER?:
A CHALLENGE TO CONSUMER EDUCATORS

by Barney T. Raffield, III

INTRODUCTION

The mid-south region of the United States has experienced unprecedented growth during the decade of the seventies and the first few years of the eighties. The sun-belt climate, lower cost-of-living, ample natural resources, availability of relatively inexpensive real estate, and assertive chambers of commerce have attracted large numbers of industries and people to the region. Because such growth has occurred so quickly, community organizations have not been able to keep pace in providing necessary services. Among the most severe service shortages is the area of consumer assistance. The purpose of this paper is to detail the seriousness of this problem and to suggest possible remedies through the efforts of consumer educators.

NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Although they number almost two million, inhabit seventy counties in a four-state area, and account for nearly eight billion dollars annually in retail sales, rural mid-south consumers are virtually unprotected by consumer-assistance agencies and organizations. For purposes of this paper, the rural mid-south is interpreted to include northeast Arkansas, northern Mississippi, the boot heel of Missouri, and west Tennessee. The Memphis standard metropolitan statistical area, which includes the counties of Crittenden (Arkansas), DeSoto (Mississippi), and Shelby and Tipton (Tennessee), has been excluded because of its urban nature and need to serve its own population of nearly one million.

The nine counties representing the northeastern Arkansas area of the rural mid-south have a combined population of over one-quarter of a million, annual retail sales volume of over one and one-quarter billion dollars, and currently provide very few consumer-assistance services (see Table 1). They are served by both Arkansas Public Utilities Commission and the Arkansas toll-free consumer hotline in Little Rock which handles consumer complaints and provides information and referral services to Arkansas' 2.3+ million residents. The "Action Line" of the Blytheville Courier News provides consumer referral assistance to its subscribers, but there are not state or local consumer assistance agencies, no Better Business Bureau chapters, no private voluntary consumer organizations, and no Homeowner's Warranty (HOW) Councils in the area. At present, Arkansas does not have a state-wide Automobile Consumer Action Panel (AUTOCAP) approved by the national Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA).

With a combined population of nearly one million and annual retail sales of over three billion dollars, the forty counties representing the northern Mississippi area of the rural mid-south region also provide very few consumer-assistance services (see Table 1). They are nominally served by both the State Consumer Protection Division in Jackson, and the Mississippi Public Service Commission which provide complaint-
handling services and information and referral service to the state's 2.5+ million residents. The Cleveland area is served by the Mississippi Consumer Association, but there are no other state or local consumer-assistance agencies in northern Mississippi. The "Bo" column of the Greenwood Commonwealth offers consumer-related information to its subscribers, but there are no other such local newspaper columns and no "call-for-action" affiliated broadcasting stations in rural northern Mississippi. The state is served by the Mississippi Automobile Dealers Association, which lacks consumer representation, and is therefore not OCA approved. There are no Better Business Bureau chapters, no voluntary private consumer organizations, and no HOW councils in the northern Mississippi region. At this time, there is also no state-wide toll-free hot-line to assist consumers with their marketplace grievances.

Three counties comprise the Missouri bootheel district of the rural mid-south. This area has a population of over eighty thousand, annual retail sales of almost three hundred and fifty million dollars, and delivers little in the way of consumer services (See Table 1). These counties are technically served by the state Consumer Protection Division in Jefferson City and the Missouri Public Service commission which are responsible for assisting the state of Missouri's nearly five million residents. The "Action Line" column of the Kennett Daily Dunklin Democrat assists its subscribers in consumer-related matters, but there are no other such local newspaper columns and no "call-for-action" affiliated broadcasting stations in the Missouri bootheel area. There are also no Better Business Bureau chapters, no state or local consumer-assistance agencies, no private voluntary consumer organizations, and no HOW Councils in this area of the rural mid-south. No OCA-approved AUTOCAP serves the bootheel area, and there is currently no state-wide, toll-free consumer hotline to assist state residents with consumer-related problems.

West Tennessee's eighteen counties of the rural mid-south are made up of almost one-half million people who account for over one and one-half billion dollars annually in retail sales.

Yet once again, very few consumer services are offered to residents within this area (see Table 1). Rural west Tennessee consumers, as part of the state's four and three-quarter million residents, are served by the Consumer Affairs Division in Nashville, the Tennessee Public Service Commission, and a state-wide toll-free consumer hotline. Jackson/Madison County area subscribers to the Jackson Sun are served by the "Sun Line" consumer-information column, but there are no other such newspaper columns and no "call-for-action" affiliated broadcasting stations in the west Tennessee area. Additionally, there are no Better Business Bureau chapters, no state or local consumer-assistance agencies, no private voluntary consumer organizations, and no HOW Councils in this area of the rural mid-south. Tennessee also does not have an AUTOCAP recognized by the OCA.

In summary, the rural mid-south, comprised of more than one and three-quarters million people who account for more than seven and three-quarters billion dollars of retail sales annually provides almost no consumer-assistance services for its population. Though there are some public consumer-assistance agencies and activities serving the rural mid-south, these are primarily state-wide in nature and provide most of
their services to urban consumers. There are only a few isolated examples of media consumer-action services, and private consumer-assistance agencies such as Better Business Bureau chapters, are virtually nonexistent. Who then will protect the rural mid-south consumer?

SUGGESTED REMEDIES

Mid-south consumer educators can and should provide the leadership in bringing consumer-assistance services to the seventy counties of the rural mid-south. The following areas are suggested priorities for consumer-educator action in achieving this goal: establishment of local grass-roots consumer-assistance agencies in the rural mid-south, dissemination of consumer-education materials throughout the region, involvement of the local private sector in providing consumer information and sincere complaint-handling efforts, lobbying at the local and state levels for increased consumer-assistance services in the rural mid-south region, placement of emphasis on consumer-education issues and the offering of consumer-related information in local media, and the creation of public-interest research groups in rurally located colleges and universities of the mid-south.

Consumer educators need to provide the critically important leadership necessary to organize and operate county-level consumer-assistance and consumer-education agencies and organizations in the rural mid-south. Whether such agencies take the form of public institutions, such as branch offices of state consumer protection offices, or private institutions, such as local Better Business Bureau chapters, the need for them is both major and urgent. Local consumer protection in the United States has been historically poor, and local consumer-assistance agencies are needed to place a priority on the collection and dissemination of local consumer information (9;10). Rural mid-south consumers, like all others across the nation, are often faced with negative marketplace experiences which they are unable to deal with on their own. Currently, many such consumers do not pursue rectification of their marketplace problems because they quickly become frustrated by the absence of localized consumer-assistance agencies. The national Office of Consumer Affairs has long recognized that consumer protection should be handled at the local level, wherever possible (15); and city and county administrators throughout the rural mid-south, as well as chamber-of-commerce officers and community service providers can be of great assistance to consumer educators in bringing consumer-assistance agencies and organizations to the region. Additionally, many civic-minded local citizens will offer their time and energy in organizing and operating consumer-assistance organizations within their own communities.

The dissemination of consumer education literature throughout the rural mid-south area should also be an important goal of consumer educators. Both secondary-school and college and university-level consumer educators, with assistance from community social services personnel, could compile brochures on consumer tips and directories of national, state, and local consumer-assistance services. Such literature could be distributed through its inclusion with telephone directory delivery, driver's license renewals, federal income tax instruction mailings, and traveling rural libraries; and could be made available in supermarkets,
banks, post offices, shopping centers, public libraries, churches, synagogues, and public-assistance agencies. The cost of such undertakings could be largely or even totally underwritten by socially conscious business organizations. Consumer-education program planners must learn what consumers need to know and the best way to communicate that information (2;7), must learn to speak to the real causes of consumer problems rather than merely to the symptoms of them (12), and must include information about available private and public consumer redress mechanisms as a major focus (6;7;12;16).

Rural mid-south consumer educators must make a concentrated effort to involve the local private sector of the region in consumer-assistance and in consumer-education programs. Such private sector involvement throughout the rural mid-south would encourage otherwise reluctant consumers to express their dissatisfaction with certain products and services to the retailers who sold the products or provided the services to them and improve the general attitude of consumers toward their local business community. A continuing, open dialogue between business and consumers is more likely to lead to improved understanding, growing cooperation, constructive solutions, and long-term benefits for both (13). Technological progress will continue to require that marketing provide more guidance to the consumer (17), and the private sector is in an excellent position to provide both consumer complaint-handling assistance and consumer-education programs. (1;5;11;17).

Lobbying by consumer educators at the local and state levels for increased public consumer-assistance services in the rural mid-south is yet another opportunity for them to serve the region's consumers more effectively. The real problems of consumers in general have been discovered to be the high cost of food, booming medical costs and inadequacies of present private medical insurance, the high costs of housing and household maintenance to include utilities, the widespread effects of high interest rates, the minimal quality of many product standards, and the increasing costs of automobile ownership (8). These problem areas provide fertile ground for consumer educators to cover in their lobbying activities in behalf of the rural mid-south consumer. Most consumers throughout the rural mid-south, as well as the nation as a whole, have remained relatively silent on these issues either because they felt somewhat helpless in individually combating such broad problem areas, and/or because they have not known where to turn for assistance in dealing with concerns of such magnitude and importance.

Junior-high and senior-high economics teachers in the rural mid-south need to include consumer education as a major segment of their curricula. Excellent consumer-oriented film strips and lectures are locally available through state-related Centers for Economic Education. National and state "Consumer Education Weeks/Months" can provide excellent opportunities for rural mid-south students to study consumer issues intensively, and both financial and non-financial incentives can be offered to students who submit the best papers on consumer-related topics or who suggest the most feasible and productive consumer-assistance ideas for their local communities. Students need to be given practical exercises to complete involving both routine and more complex consumer issues. They need to know how and where to acquire consumer assistance on problems which they will likely encounter in the marketplace. Educational levels among mid-south consumers (see Table 1) are among the
lowest in the United States, and consumer education must be provided prior to students' high school graduation. If students are trained as young men and women to be thoughtful, vigilant, and careful consumers, they will spend their retail dollars more wisely and more productively (3:14).

Consumer educators must also enlist local media in consumer-action programs throughout the mid-south. If consumers are to avail themselves of consumer- assistance programs and activities, they must know both where such programs and activities are and what they do (16). A number of years ago, consumer activists realized that the media were very important in national consumer education (4), and the same recognition needs to be given on the local level. Local newspapers, radio stations, and television stations need to be approached and their aid solicited. Newspaper consumer columns, radio talk shows and consumer "call-for-action" lines, and television "consumer corners" can be very useful, as the rural mid-south consumer, like consumers in the rest of the country, utilize the mass media as their communications link with both their own local communities and the rest of the world. Such efforts would also assist consumer educators in making consumer-education and consumer-assistance matters of local interest and local action.

Finally, allied with consumer-assistance and consumer-education efforts in the rural mid-south is the creation of public interest research groups (PIRG) in its colleges and universities. Such groups were initiated at colleges and universities nation-wide by consumer activists during the 1960s to research consumer problems, publish the findings, and educate the American consumer. College and university-level educators in the rural mid-south, with assistance from state councils and local centers for economic education, could originate and operate such research groups in their own institutions. Colleges and universities currently having PIRG organizations, in concert with national and state organizations, could provide valuable assistance in this endeavor.

CONCLUSION

Consumer educators in the rural mid-south are currently faced with a major challenge: how to assist and to protect consumers within their local communities. Very little consumer assistance and education, through either private or public means, currently exists in the rural mid-south, though both the population and annual retail sales of this region are quite sizeable. In an area characterized by rapid sunbelt growth and growing consumer frustration with the absence of consumer education and third-party consumer assistance, this challenge to consumer educators is greater that ever before.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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ONCE "OVER NORTON"

by Ernest Pinson

High and deep in the central hills of old Brittany near a small wayside village called Over Norton lies a circle of twenty-four hard, rust-colored stones some five feet in height and two feet in circumference. Some of the stones are still standing, some are toppled, others are broken, all are pock marked and scarred by rain and wind. The village perched on a cliff appears to be watching over the stones in a tense though expectant manner. The stone group, known locally as the Little Roll Right Stones, resides in an area rich in fertile land and equally rich in history. Once the center for sheep farming, woolen mills, and country manor estates, it has passed those days of glory and subsides now among a series of quiet villages which, for some strange reason, seem to be dominated by hundreds of elderberry bushes unperturbed by human activity.

Before its present occupants, the land had been controlled by the Normans of 1066, before that by the Viking-Saxon tribes that plundered and lived there in 600-900 AD, and before that by the Romans in 55 BC. This story, predating even that ancient era, rises out of the earliest of Celtic times, somewhere around 1500 BC—a time when young warriors yearned to be chiefs, and young chiefs yearned to be kings, and kings talked of becoming gods.

One certain chief of the Cotswold tribe had risen to power at a youthful age and, being ambitious and idyllic, longed to rule the whole of Brittany. He had learned from the old timers of his tribe a legend, still untested, which proclaimed that whoever climbed the region's highest hill would command all the land beneath it, and if he ruled justly, he would be lifted up from the hill to rule with the gods of the wind and sky. There was just one problem. A witch with the power to transform any passerby into sheep, goats, and cattle lived in a cave atop the hill. But the chieftain was not dismayed and set out to claim his rule. He encircled the hill with twenty-four of his men, set it on fire, and waited that night for the screams and gasps he knew would come from the witch's cave.

The next morning, instead of a camp where the chief and his men had slept, there was only a mysterious circle of twenty-four man-sized stones plus a larger one now called the "king" stone placed in the center. Some say the witch swooped down in the night and transformed the human forms into rocks. Indeed, so powerful was her vengeance, say they, that her wicked magic had turned her into an elderberry bush. To this day none of the Cotswold folk dare cut or burn any elderberry bush for fear of releasing the witch from her self-imposed prison, and so the bushes are free to grow at will, wild and undisturbed.

If you ask the local people how they know this story, they will simply say that all you have to do is go down to the great stone circle and listen. In time you will hear the stones begin to whisper, and if you stay long enough, the stones will recite the complete story.
Oh yes, today interspersed among the stones are twenty-four elderberry shrubs that give the impression, at least, of beginning to grow over the ring of stones. The villagers will have it that the struggle between chieftain and witch is not yet over, that even now she is trying to subdue the warriors. I can only say that the villagers watch the ring expectantly by day and in fear by night.
OUT OF THE DARKNESS

by W. Wayne Alford

The scene is in the office suite of Captain Miles Ruskin, Chief Medical Officer of the U.S. Naval Hospital, in San Diego, California.

Ruskin, a big, gray-haired man of fifty, sits behind his desk in the inner office. He wears working khakis, with rows of battle ribbons neatly aligned over his left coat pocket. Across the desk, he faces another officer, who leans on a cane, supporting himself in a stilted, upright position before his superior. Ensign Bill Rogers, a handsome young man of 25, wears a single row of battle ribbons and the Purple Heart on the tunic of his dress blues. A Marine orderly works at the desk in the outer office.

RUSKIN. (Gently, but firmly.) Which will it be, Bill? Do you want to tell her . . . or will I have to?

ROGERS. (Nervously) Please, Captain, I'm not ready yet; I don't think I'm ready to tell her . . . .

RUSKIN. (Becoming impatient, stands, facing Rogers squarely.) You should have told her long ago. You've been here nearly a month now. She doesn't even know you're in a hospital, let alone that you're . . .

ROGERS. (Somewhat desperately.) Look, Captain: Mom thinks I'm in Korea. She'd die if she knew--don't you understand? She'd never take it the way you think . . . she's old, and . . . .

RUSKIN. (Relaxes a little.) We're here to help you guys get on your feet--to get straightened out; we want to help you, but we can't do that if you won't cooperate. You've got to acknowledge that your condition is ten times worse that losing an arm or leg, Bill. Once that's done, then we're on the road to a speedy adaptation. The very first step, however, is to tell your folks (more formally, as he sits)--and the quicker they get used to it, the better for all concerned.

ROGERS. (Feels around for a chair, sits, holding cane between his knees. Drops his head, runs fingers tensely through his hair, silent a moment.) War is hell, Captain--great hell . . . . We were the number two minesweeper in the pattern, cutting mines like ripe wheat off Seoul--then exploding them with M-1 rifles. The Gyrines had cleared most of the Reds out of the hills around the harbor, but there were still a few isolated batteries taking potshots at us from the mountains. My outfit was doing a swell job with those mines--clearing them so the transports could get through--when one of those damned guns scored a direct hit on us . . . tore our little wooden-hulled 120-footer to bits. They told me later I was the only survivor, and I was mighty thankful--until they took a lot of bandages off my face and told me something else (begins to cry)--that I'd never see again!

(RUSKIN, moved, shakes his head.)
ROGERS. God, Captain, don't you see, sir, I might as well be down under the sea with the rest of those poor devils (losing composure entirely, cries more freely)--I wish I were. How I wish I were! (Gathers himself slightly, faces Ruskin stiffly, with determination, but not losing the plea inflection.) I can't tell her, Captain . . . I . . . I just can't.

RUSKIN. (waits a moment as Rogers' weeping diminishes to sniffles; then assumes a posture and demeanor strictly military.) I've placed a call to your home in New Orleans; it should come through any minute. You've got to tell her . . . or, I must. (Rogers faces up sharply, stands abruptly in a motion of protest, as telephone rings. Lifting the receiver, RUSKIN speaks evenly into the phone.) Captain Ruskin . . . Oh, yes, thank you . . . Mrs. Rogers?--this is Captain Ruskin, Medical Officer at the Naval Hospital in San Diego, California . . . Yes, Bill is here, but . . . No, no Mrs. Riggers, it's nothing like that . . . (finds it difficult to sound natural.) . . . Well, I . . .

ROGERS. (Angrily, tearfully darts in the direction of the sound, snatches the telephone from Ruskin's hand, choking a bit.) Mom . . . I . . . (courage failing at last, he shouts into phone) Mom, I'm blind! . . . do you hear me, Mom, I'm blind! (Face flushing with tears of rage, he clumsily slams phone back into cradle.) Are you satisfied, Captain? I hope you're satisfied!

RUSKIN. (Reaches across desk to take hold of Roger's arm.) I know how you feel, son . . .

ROGERS. (Slaps his hand away.) You don't know how I feel! . . . not you, with your soft stateside job--with nothing to do but torture old ladies and . . . (sobs).

(RUSKIN pauses, as if about to say something else to Rogers, but thinks better of it. Presses a button on his desk. Flavin, the Marine orderly, enters and salutes smartly.)

FLAVIN. Yes sir.

RUSKIN. (Defeated) Take Mr. Rogers back to his ward, Flavin.

FLAVIN. Yes sir. (Takes Rogers by arm, leads him into outer office, closes door behind them.)

FLAVIN. (Clearing his throat) Couldn't help overhearing, sir, but you shouldn't go too hard on the Captain--he's as blind as your are.

ROGERS. (Stops dead in his tracks) What?

FLAVIN. Yes sir. Iwo Jima, 1945, sir.

(ROGERS turns, faces Ruskin's office door, stands silently as though reviewing his conversation with the Captain. Bites his lip, rushes toward door, finds it without assistance, then barges in unannounced.)

RUSKIN. (Hoarsely) Yes . . . Who's there? . . .
ROGERS. (As Flavin stares through door after him.) I'd ... I'd like to talk to my Mom again, sir ... I didn't quite finish ... .

RUSKIN. (Smiling faintly.) Come on in, Son.

CURTAIN
SMALL TOWN COWBOY

by Catherine Carls

I

He parks his white 69 Chevy.
One hand supporting his back
he unbends carefully—Whoops, the ten-gallon hat.
Why, a car, what a miserable place to wear
such apparel! He locks the car,
sets his hat straight with a shaky finger,
carefully climbs up the sidewalk.

Having looked around with a bleached-blue gaze
he wipes his brand new, spurless boots
on the "Welcome" mat of black rubber.
Slowly, he turns the door knob of the cafe.
Neon lights on formica, dead paneling,
dusty chrome, muffled benches.
He'll sit the afternoon over.
Alone.

His engine shall overheat.
There will be a large oil stain under the car and
problems with the starter.

II

He has the proud look of a vet,
beveled cowboy heels, rolled up baggy jeans;
a plain belt beaten by rainy workdays,
a beautiful checkered shirt (8 1/2 dollars at Penney's) and
don't forget the ten-gallon hat.
Superb.
Superstarched, waterproof.
Ivory-grey.

He warms his body in the afternoon sun.
His hat tilted on Marlborough-blue eyes,
the white cord dangles on tired flesh.
A very proper bench indeed he reclines on:
with publicity on the back for
Silo Engineering and Co.

He passes time without killing it.
He has left his guns at Gary Cooper's.
III

Only a few come to town on weekdays,  
They are the true and the tough.  
Their shirts soiled and their boots worn out,  
they look down and walk silently by.

Why not, they are the wealthy local farmers.

IV

There are dozens, there could be legions  
to charge on the county seat's sidewalks  
on Saturday mornings.  
With their ten-gallon hats and sparkling boots,  
they are genuine from head to toe.  
Sorry, between head and pigeon toes are  
pendulous lips, office-white cheeks and  
flabby paunches.

They are the young and the restless.  
They have a date at the Chic cafe  
where white-aproned, flashy waitresses  
glide between miniature marbletop tables.  
They wear new suits and bulgy rings,  
an excited red on their cheeks and ready-made smiles.

Alas, their elbows stick out for they must  
Watch out! for the narrow screen door.

10/27/77
GOD'S OWN

by W. Clyde Tilley

Of all that dwell upon the earth,
God has a people of His own.
For He from out the human race
A remnant for Himself has won.

How can we know which ones are His?
Are they the ones who say, "Lord, Lord"
But, hastening on their selfish way,
Ignore the doing of His word?

To own His name will not suffice
If, trampling on His lordly will,
We go our self-directed path
And call ourselves His people still.

Are they the ones who flaunt their good
When in the midst of life's parade;
But easing off in solitude
Betray the stuff of which they're made?

It is not meet that crowds should view
The paltry muster of public strain.
It is the closet door that shields
What God hath wrought. All else is vain.

Are they the ones who proudly hold
In hands spread wide the glut of wealth,
Or in the poise of chiseled frame
Depict in flesh unpaining health?

It is no test of God's own bliss
That His should always prosper so;
For in the bane of want or ill
He oft has deigned true wealth to show.

The burning bush from which He speaks
Is often not the gilded stage
Or those who do heroic deeds
In distant lands where heathen rage.

But in the drought of fragile reed
He oft ignites that holy flame,
In patient suffering of the weak
He puts more robust ones to shame.

How eloquent is His word of strength
He voices through His humble child.
No message, save His suffering Son,
Was from such truth and beauty styled.
If we could speak as well as she
To show our love and gratitude,
'Twould ease the burden of her pain
With soothing grace and strength renewed.

But scarce have men to angels spoke,
God chooses they should speak to men.
Yet, faltering thus, I cannot quell
My stammering tongue and awkward pen.

For, true, angel she is to us—
Yet oft an angel unaware.
It means so much for us that she
Should simply know how much we cared.

Dedicated to Tami Hamilton, 4/9/84
Partially read at her funeral 5/3/84
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W. Wayne Alford serves Union as Professor of Education. He received B.A. and M.A. degrees from Mississippi College and his Ph.D. was conferred by George Peabody College for Teachers (1965). He taught and held administrative posts at William Carey College and Wayland College before coming to Union in 1973.

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Barney T. Raffield III joined the faculty at Union a year ago as Associate Professor of Business Administration. He came to us from neighboring Lambuth College. He holds two degrees from Southern Methodist University (B.B.A.; M.B.A). He also earned his Ph.D. from Union Graduate School and did additional study at University of Maryland.

Grove Robinson has been Chairman of the Art Department since he came to Union in 1971. His degrees are from Mars Hill College (A.A.) and Columbia University (B.F.A.; M.F.A.). He has also studied as a Fulbright Fellow in Paris. He taught at Meredith College before coming to Union.

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