

## RUSSELL SOCIETY NEWS

No. 50

May 1986

- (1) Highlights: June 21st Annual Meeting arrangements (2). BRS Award to People For the American Way (15), (39). Warnke on Reagan and arms control (16). Proxmire on Star Wars (18). BR on China (6), on comets (7), on romantic love (11). "Bertrand Russell on God and Religion", Al Seckel's new book (8), reviewed (37). Linus Pauling on God the Creator (19). "An Appeal to Agnostics and Atheists" (20). Director nominations wanted (35). A member runs for Congress (21.5). An asterisk in left margin = a request. The Index is on the last page.

## (2) ANNUAL MEETING (1986)

June 21st, NYC. This year's meeting is shorter and simpler than usual. And we're going to have something we've never had before: the winner of this year's Bertrand Russell Society Award accepting the Award in person. Something else is also new and different: the winner this year is not an individual but an organization -- People for the American Way -- founded a few years ago to oppose right wing fundamentalists, such as the Moral Majority, who are threatening our constitutionally guaranteed liberties. (More about that elsewhere in this issue. See Item 15.) Its President, Anthony T. Podesta, will accept the Award, and will give the evening's major address.

We meet for one day only, Saturday, June 21st. The meeting-place is the headquarters of the New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 West 64th Street, at the corner of 64th Street and Central Park West. There'll be an afternoon session, from 1 to 5 and an evening session from 7 to 11. Nothing is scheduled between 5 and 7, giving people free time to have dinner in the neighborhood, which is close to Lincoln Center and its many restaurants. Or for simpler fare and economy: the YMCA at 5 West 63rd Street, quite nearby.

The Program.

AFTERNOON SESSION, in the Adler Study:

- 1:00 Doors open. Informal greetings.
- 1:30 Call to Order. Welcome. Announcements.
- 1:45 Society business meeting.
- 2:15 Film: "Bertrand Russell Discusses Happiness"
- 2:30 Marvin Kohl's paper, "Russell and the Attainability of Happiness", is reproduced in this issue ( ). An open discussion will be moderated by Professors Kohl and Hugh Moorhead.
- 4:00 Red Hackle Hour (New members: Red Hackle was BR's brand of Scotch Whisky.)
- 5:00 End of afternoon session.

Two hours free time -- from 5 to 7 -- for dinner in the neighborhood.

EVENING SESSION, in Ceremonial Hall:

- 7:00 Doors open.
- 7:30 Call to Order. Welcome. Announcements.
- 7:45 BBC-TV Film, "Bertie and the Bomb". (1984) Not seen in America.  
NBC-TV FILM. "Bertrand Russell" (1950).
- 9:00 Break. (S-t-r-e-t-c-h)
- 9:15 Presentation of Special Award to Corliss Lamont
- 9:30 Presentation of Bertrand Russell Society Award to People for the American Way, represented by its President, Anthony T. Podesta. Mr. Podesta's talk will follow.
- 11:00 End of session.

Costs. There are none...except for your own personal expenses (lodging and meals.) There is no registration fee.

To reserve lodging. New York is full of hotels, and most of them are expensive. You must make your own arrangements, by writing or phoning in advance. Here are 3 places to stay, within easy walking distance of our meeting.

The Mayflower Hotel, 61st St. and Central Park West, NY NY 10023. 800-223-4164; 212-265-0060. Full service hotel. Single, \$107-137. Double, \$122-157. Suite, \$190-205. Courage! Keep reading.

Hotel Empire, Broadway & 63rd St., NY NY 10023. 800-221-6509; 212-265-7400. Full service hotel. Single, \$70-95. Double, \$85-110. Each additional person, \$15. Family room (up to 4), \$90-110. Suite, \$300. Read on.

Side YMCA, 5 West 63rd St., NY NY 10023. 212-787-4400. Economy accommodations with recreational privileges. (We remember a gymnasium & a swimming pool.) Single sans bath, \$26; with bath, \$38. Double sans bath, \$36, with bath, \$44.

Rates shown are per day, and do not include taxes and possibly other fees; best to inquire. For other lodging

\*Russell Society News, a quarterly (Lee Eisler, Editor): RD 1, Box 409, Coopersburg, PA 18036

BRS Library: Tom Stanley, Librarian, Box 434, Wilder, VT 05088

suggestions, and NY tourism information, ask the New York Convention and Visitors Bureau, 2 Columbus Circle, NY NY 10019. 212-397-8200.

How to get there. If you are on the East Side of Manhattan, say Grand Central Station, take the 42nd Street Crosstown subway shuttle; it takes you to 7th Avenue and 42nd St. Do not exit from the subway system. Take IRT West Side Subway (local) up to "66th Street/ Lincoln Center" station, and walk to Central Park West and 64th Street.

If you are on the West Side, in the Port Authority Bus Terminal (42nd St. & 8th Avenue), take the Independent (8th Avenue) Subway to "Columbus Circle" station (Broadway at 59th St.) and walk 5 blocks to 64th St. Or take the bus on 8th Avenue, up to 64th St. and Broadway. (Some buses go up Central Park West, which starts at 59th St. Ask.)

Or take a taxi.

But no matter how you get there, GET THERE. And bring a friend (or several!)

- (3) Marvin Kohl's article, "Russell and the Attainability of Happiness," as it appeared in *International Studies in Philosophy* 16:3 (1984), is reproduced here. We have omitted the 32 footnotes, and will lend on request. The article will be the subject of an open discussion, moderated by the author and Hugh Moorhead, at the June 21st meeting.

## RUSSELL AND THE ATTAINABILITY OF HAPPINESS

MARVIN KOHL

In this paper I propose first to bring together the central aspects of Russell's theory and examine his notion that happiness depends upon having and appreciating reasonably continuous success at satisfying one's basic needs and correlate interests. Secondly, I wish to examine the pessimist charge that happiness is not attainable largely because of man's unavoidable fear of death. Here I shall suggest that Russell's meliorism successfully parries this and related objections. Thirdly, I shall look at the problems involved in determining exactly what happiness is, in particular, whether or not Russell's characterization, if it is an accurate one, increases the probability of the inattainability of happiness. The answer to be arrived at here is relevant to his claim that, "an occurrence is 'good' when it satisfies desire."<sup>1</sup> My thesis is that, while Russell's rich but loose characterization does raise difficulties, it is a vital part of what may be called an emerging process satisfaction utilitarian social ethic.<sup>2</sup>

### I

Let us begin with his distinction between two sorts of happiness, plain and fancy. The first is open to any human being, the other is not. Plain happiness requires the having of a central purpose which guides one's life. It also requires that this purpose be end-specific, that it permit progressively increasing success, and that the individual find both joy and worth in this central task.<sup>3</sup> In other words, plain happiness (perhaps best called "having a meaningful life") is, according to Russell, the result of having a certain kind of purposeful life. Fancy happiness, on the other hand, is a mixed mode caused by a more complex set of conditions and, as a rule, is defeated by the existence of contrary conditions. Russell does not explain the relationship between plain and fancy happiness, taking it for granted that the former is easily obtainable and an almost necessary condition for the latter. More often than not, he simply refers to "fancy happiness" as "happiness."<sup>4</sup>

Aside from changes in the social system required to promote happiness<sup>5</sup> or personal catastrophe, ordinary day-to-day unhappiness is largely caused by mistaken views of the world, mistaken ethics, and mistaken habits of life. On the other hand, ordinary men and women

can achieve happiness, with only a small amount of external prosperity, if they have good health, a cheerful disposition and a sound philosophy of life. . . .<sup>6</sup>

Omitting saints, lunatics, and men of genius, ordinary people need, for their happiness, certain fairly simple conditions, which with a little wisdom in economics and politics, could be fulfilled for almost everyone. I put first purely physical conditions—food and shelter and health. Only when these have been secured is it worth while to consider psychological requisites.<sup>7</sup>

In *The Conquest of Happiness* Russell provides what is perhaps his most complete single description of the requisite general conditions.

Happiness . . . depends partly upon external circumstances and partly upon oneself. . . . Certain things are indispensable to the happiness of most men, but these are simple things: food and shelter, health, love, successful work and the respect of one's own herd. To some

people parenthood also is essential. Where these things are lacking, only the exceptional man can achieve happiness. . . .<sup>8</sup>

In short, happiness depends on a combination of internal and external causes. It depends upon having and appreciating reasonably continuous success at satisfying one's basic needs and correlate interests.

Notice that Russell also maintains that what is at issue is not universal happiness but the happiness of most persons. Thus, he insists that he is not talking about the happiness of exceptional individuals but only about most ordinary men and women. "Our problem," he writes, "is to preserve instinctive happiness for the many, not only for a privileged few."<sup>9</sup>

### II

Three of the more interesting charges against Russell are: first, he assumes that because happiness seems desirable, it must also be obtainable; second, that since man's consciousness and fear of death are unavoidable for all who minimally think about life, that they are, in particular, the most serious threat to human happiness; third, that since Russell is an "apostate pessimist," he passes too lightly over the problem of pessimism.<sup>10</sup> Let us consider Schiller's charges, starting with the last point.

It is difficult to say whether or not "apostate pessimist" is an accurate label. I am inclined to believe it is not. If Schiller's criticism is based upon Russell's position in *A Free Man's Worship*, as I suspect it is, then he is in error because that work is not so much the expression of pessimism as it is the rejection of optimism. And it does not follow that the rejection of optimism entails pessimism. Apparently Schiller believes, as perhaps many do, that optimism and pessimism are logical complements. But this is not the case.

Pessimism, according to Russell, is the philosophy of life which holds that the world is essentially evil and that, because of this, life is ultimately not worthwhile. Non-pessimism is roughly that class of beliefs which, for a variety of reasons, deny that the world is essentially evil. Thus, a non-pessimist may be an optimist or a meliorist. An optimist is someone who generally holds that the world is essentially good. A meliorist, on the other hand, is someone who maintains that neither the evil nor the goodness of the world appear to be ultimately determined and, most important, that man therefore has both the freedom and the power of aiding in the world's betterment. The meliorist generally holds that it is possible, if man chooses to make the effort, to make the world a better place to live. Given this frame of reference, Russell emerges as the great prophet of melioristic humanism and *A Free Man's Worship*, I suggest, is best *intellectually* interpreted as an attempt to determine the rational limits of that meliorism.

Another possible source of confusion is the distinction between being intellectually and being temperamentally a pessimist. One can, I think, make a reasonable case for Russell being a temperamental pessimist during much of his early adulthood. His relative isolation from other children, his social isolation due to his mathematics study, his alleged unrequited love for Mrs. Whitehead, and his "natural" shyness—all may have contributed to his tendency to emphasize the negative, and to prehend the world with an attitude of relative despair. In this sense, there is some truth to Schiller's charge. However, it is important to realize that there is little evidence to show that this mode of

emotional response was intellectually grounded or was the result of the kind of dispassionate rational scrutiny typical of Russell—and much evidence that it was not. Even though Russell may have been a temperamental pessimist during the early adult season of his life, he did not (even at that time) confuse that disposition (which resulted from poor education and a largely unhappy social environment) with the truth about the external world. I have already suggested that *A Free Man's Worship*, when scrutinized from an intellectual point of view, is definitely melioristic, or at least ends upon that note.

In the *Conquest of Happiness*, he stresses the point that "reason lays no embargo upon happiness" and that the pessimists are "unhappy for some reason of which they are not aware, and this unhappiness leads them to dwell upon the less agreeable characteristics of the world in which they live."<sup>11</sup> And in *The History of Western Philosophy*, he maintains that "from a scientific point of view, optimism and pessimism are alike objectionable" and that "belief in either pessimism or optimism is a matter of temperament, not of reason."<sup>12</sup> Meliorism, on the other hand, is not predominantly a matter of temperament. It rests, or at least Russell's particular version appears to rest, on the following claims:

- (1) Judgments that there are certain states of affairs are judgments of fact.
- (2) Whether or not certain states of affairs—the inevitability of death, the shortness of certain lives, our relative lack of power over external nature, etc.—are evils is a matter of value judgment.
- (3) Even if we conclude on the basis of correct valuation that there is a long list of evils that are (almost as a rule) beyond our power, it does not follow that life is not worthwhile.
- (4) The reason is that we create our own values. And it is because we create our own values that, whatever plight the world may be in, we can decide, rationally decide, to accept what cannot be changed, change what we can and should, and enjoy both our limited powers and the sheer experience of being alive.

In a sense we have replied to the "terror of death" argument. According to Russell, "the wise man will be as happy as circumstances permit, and if he finds the contemplation of the universe painful beyond a point, he will contemplate something else instead."<sup>13</sup> Similarly, the wise man is not motivated by irrational fears, and it is as irrational to fear death as it is to fear the realities of life. Fear is the great enemy. It "should not be overcome not only in action, but in feeling; and not only in conscious feeling, but in the unconscious as well."<sup>14</sup> It is possible "to educate ordinary men and women that they should be able to live without fear."<sup>15</sup> And once fear is eliminated and rational courage is substituted, personal death will appear a trivial matter.<sup>16</sup> "The secret of happiness is to face the fact that the world is horrible, horrible, *horrible* . . . . You must feel it deeply, and not brush it aside . . . . You must feel it right in here"—(Russell said) hitting his breast—and then you can start being happy again."<sup>17</sup>

The basic question is whether Russell is right in holding that it is possible to educate ordinary men and women that they should be able to live without fear at least of death. Pessimists, like Tolstoy and Schiller, seem to be claiming that it is impossible to do so, that death, so to speak, is a natural, if not ontological, terror. Common sense and the evidence indicates the contrary to be true. Attitudes toward dying and death are malleable.<sup>18</sup> And while it is probably an exaggeration to say that we can come to view personal death as a trivial matter, Russell seems to be correct in holding that the terror of death and irrational fear can be eliminated.

Russell believes that a combination of meliorism and a long view of things provide a sufficient antidote to thwart the paralysis of utter despair. Man can be educated and is capable of growth. Man not only can improve his lot in life but, even after very bad times, he resumes his movement towards progress. Two of Russell's most revealing statements occur in the context of an evaluation of Spinoza's philosophy. I shall quote them at length.

The problem [of the wicked having power] for Spinoza is easier than it is for one who has no belief in the ultimate goodness of the universe. Spinoza thinks that if you see your misfortunes as they are in reality, as part of the concatenation of causes stretching from the beginning of time to the end, you will see that they are only misfortunes to you, not to the universe, to which they are merely passing discords heightening an ultimate harmony. I cannot accept this; I think that particular events are what they are and do not become different by absorption into a whole. Each act of cruelty is eternally a part of the universe; nothing that happens later can make that act good rather than bad, or can confer perfection on the whole of which it is a part.

Nevertheless, when it is your lot to have to endure something that is (or seems to you) worse than the ordinary lot of mankind, Spinoza's principle of thinking about the whole, or at any rate about larger matters than your own grief, is a useful one. There are even times when it is comforting to reflect that human life, with all that it contains of evil and suffering, is an infinitesimal part of the life of the universe. Such reflections may not suffice to constitute a religion, but in a painful world they are a help toward sanity and an antidote to the paralysis of utter despair.<sup>19</sup>

In a similar vein, he writes:

If bad times lie ahead of us we should remember while they last the slow march of man, checkered in the past by devastation and retrogressions, but always resuming the movement towards progress. Spinoza, who was one of the wisest of men and who lived consistently in accordance with his own wisdom, advised men to view passing events "under the aspect of eternity." . . . The child lives in the minute, the boy in the day, the instinctive man in the year. The man imbued with history lives in the epoch. Spinoza would have us live not in the minute, the day, the year or the epoch, but in eternity. Those who learn to do this will find that it takes away the frantic quality and misfortune and prevents the trend towards madness that comes with overwhelming disaster. Spinoza spent the last day of his life telling cheerful anecdotes to his host. He had written: 'A free man thinks of death least of all things, and his wisdom is a meditation not of death but of life.' And he carried out his precept when it came to his own death.<sup>20</sup>

To sum up: Russell did not think death was an obstacle to happiness. Because, like the stoics, he saw little point in fearing what cannot be conquered. He was, by nature and intellectual conviction opposed to fear. And he held a melioristic and long view of things, which allowed him to view passing events under the aspect of eternity and to view man, in general, as instinctively driven toward growth, always resuming the movement toward progress.

### III

Even the most casual reading of Russell reveals the importance of happiness. Not only does the intelligent and vigorous individual desire happiness but the protection and nurturing of this end is a major purpose, if not the most important purpose, of the major institutions in a properly run society. The basic aspects of social life—education, politics, the good life itself—requires an intimate understanding of the nature of life satisfaction. The general aim of education is to provide a solid basis for happiness. "Happiness in childhood is absolutely necessary to the production of the best type of human being."<sup>21</sup> The same is true of politics. "The most important purpose that political institutions can achieve is to keep alive in individuals creativeness, vigour, vitality, and the joy of life."<sup>22</sup> Again Russell writes that "a wise humanity, in politics as elsewhere, comes only of remembering that even the largest groups are composed of individuals, that individuals can be happy or sad, and that every individual in the world who is suffering represents a failure of human wisdom and of common humanity."<sup>23</sup> More important perhaps, happiness contributes to goodness and not vice versa. The good life is a happy life. "I do not mean," he explains, "that if you are good you will be happy; I mean that if you are happy you will be good."<sup>24</sup> Thus, unlike thinkers who hold that morality is a (or the condition) for happiness, Russell maintains that happiness, though not identical with morality, is, as a rule, a necessary condition.

The difficulty is that if happiness is a general ideal and necessary condition for morality, and if it is not some clear and distinct idea, then the situation is problematic. For it is one thing to offer the reader recipes for happiness, and to purport that all that is claimed for them is that they have increased one's own happiness.<sup>25</sup> It is another to maintain that happiness is one of the major human ends as well as a necessary general condition for morality, and then proceed to offer seemingly different and unclear recipes. Thus, we have the charge that Russell's characterization is too rich, too loose. And the more complex argument that because of this looseness, because the nature of the goal is unclear, happiness is generally less attainable.

What I wish to suggest is that this characterization is deliberate in that Russell believed that the available evidence indicated that his conception of happiness allows for the maximum of growth and the achievement of happiness for the greatest number of persons. This point, I think, had best be elaborated.

One of the most striking features of Russell's account of happiness is his belief that the word "happiness" can be correctly used to denote almost any kind or level of satisfaction and that "the great practical importance of psychology will come in giving ordinary men and women a *more just conception* of what constitutes human happiness."<sup>26</sup> For Russell, the central meta-question is: What is a more just way of conceiving of the kind of life satisfactions we wish to subsume under the name of happiness if we wish to minimize suffering and maximize the major modes of life satisfaction?

Russell's answer, in bold outline, is as follows: First, it must be a goal that enables men to fully taste what ordinary men might generally be expected to achieve in life—health, love, interesting work, perhaps parenthood. Second, the goal must be such as to provide for zest and the sense of accomplishment, two features that generally accompany earned success. This means that the task must be neither too difficult nor too easy. The price of aiming too high, of having unrealistic expectations, is necessary defeat and pointless frustrations. The price of aiming too low is boredom and the emasculation of vigor and zest.<sup>27</sup> Hence, a just conception of happiness requires that man aim high

enough to allow for continual growth and the tasting of the fullness of life, yet low enough to avoid a general sense of futility.

To be more specific: When happiness is properly understood and is the end that actually motivates men, men will desire the things heretofore mentioned. This does not imply a general standard for happiness.<sup>9</sup> Nor does it imply a fixed standard.

All Utopias that have hitherto been constructed are intolerably dull. Any man with any force in him would rather live in this world with all its ghastly horrors, than in Plato's Republic or among Swift's Houyhnhnms. The men who make Utopias proceed upon a radically false assumption as to what constitutes a good life. They conceive that it is possible to imagine a certain state of society and a certain way of life which would be once and for all recognized as good, and should then continue for ever and ever. They do not realize that much of the greater part of a man's happiness depends upon activity, and only a very small remnant consist in passive enjoyment. Even the pleasures which do consist in enjoyment are only satisfactory, to most men, when they come in the intervals of activity. Social reformers, like inventors of Utopias, are apt to forget this very obvious fact of human nature. . . . Every vigorous man needs some kind of context, some sense of resistance overcome, in order to feel that he is exercising his faculties.<sup>10</sup>

Not only does happiness require activity, not only is it probably an indispensable part of happiness to be without something one wants, but "happiness, if it is to have any depth and solidarity, demands a life built round some central purpose of a kind demanding continuous activity and permitting of progressively increasing success."<sup>10</sup>

An important illustration of this point occurs in his discussion of having a so-called ideal income. Russell writes:

it is not the amount of your income that makes you happy, but its rate of increase. The man who enjoys life is the man who, with habits adjusted to one standard of life, finds himself continually in a position to adopt a slightly higher standard. That is why, on the whole, England was happy under Queen Elizabeth, and America is happy at the present time.<sup>11</sup>

Again:

The important question, in regard to happiness . . . is not the absolute amount of one's income, but its augmentation or diminution.

Perhaps a very rapid increase, by altering one's habits and one's social milieu, may not be altogether a source of contentment, but a continual rise of (say) ten percent, every year is likely to bring the nearest possible approach to perfect bliss. . . . Above all, he has the feeling of being a successful man, since circumstances adapt themselves to his wishes, he acquires an illusion of omnipotence, than which nothing is more delightful.<sup>12</sup>

As the passages which I have just cited show, Russell's treatment of the question concerning the attainability of happiness is subtle and differs significantly from those who hold that happiness consists in having prospered. Russell concludes that felicity consists not in having prospered, but in prospering. That the best way to "attain" happiness is not to attempt to capture it, not to be completely successful, but to have a variety of ends, preferably ones rooted in instinct which permit progressively increasing success. Since continuous growth is an indispensable condition for happiness and since the happiness of each of us depends upon the well-being of the whole of mankind, a conception of happiness that protects against remediable suffering and allows for maximum continuous growth and the achievement of life satisfactions for the greatest number is the most just and nearly correct view.

#### TREASURER DENNIS DARLAND'S REPORT

#### (4) For the quarter ending 3/31/86

Bank balance on hand (12/31/85).....	226.38	
Income: 12 New members.....	222.50	
148 Renewals.....	4158.37	
	total dues.....	4380.87
Contributions.....	117.00	
Library sales and rentals.....	54.75	
Misc.....	19.00	
	total income.....	4571.62
		4798.00
Expenditures: Membership and Information Committees.....	1190.39	
Library expense.....	3.59	
Subscriptions to "Russell".....	000.00	
Misc.....	16.69	
	total spent.....	1210.67
		3587.33
Less: last quarter's liability paid off.....	- 373.21	
Bank balance on hand 3/31/86.....	3214.12	
	=====	

#### BRS COMMITTEES

- (5) New Science Committee Chairman has been appointed by Chairman Harry Ruja. He is William K. Fielding, who can be reached at PO Box 218, Ware, MA 01082, or 413-967-4479. This is what we said about him as a candidate for Director last year. During WWII he was a shipyard layout man, job-instructor, and shipfitter; after WWII, a draftsman, engineering aide, and land-surveyor. Studied electronics, became Master Technician, ran own sales and repair business for 20 years. Retired in 1980. Now taking college courses. Mensa member. He'd like to hear what your scientific interests are.

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

- (6) BR on China, 1951, in Saturday Review (8/4/51) and Saturday Review Reader (NY: Bantam Books, 1953), pp. 119-121, with thanks to TOM STANLEY:

## BERTRAND RUSSELL

*Russell feels confident that an ancient, venerable, and wise civilization will soon be sane again.*

THERE is a pattern that runs through the history of China from the foundation of the Chinese Empire to the present day. The man who was called the "First Emperor," Shih Huang Ti, was not unlike a modern Communist. He abolished the feudal system, a thing which had to be done again by various subsequent emperors; he established a sort of military autocracy; he profoundly disapproved of the traditional culture of China, which, though it lasted until 1911, appeared moribund when he ascended the throne in 221 B.C.; he persecuted the literati, who were the apostles of this ancient culture, and he burned the books with the exception of such that dealt with medicine or agriculture; he built the eastern part of the Great Wall and attempted to transform his country into a rough militaristic state, instead of the urbane and cultured society produced by the Confucians. Nothing of his work survived except the political unification of China.

When he died the literati crept out of their retreats and established themselves at the court of his son, whom they persuaded to abdicate by various ingenious maneuvers. On a great state occasion when all the ministers were expected to appear on prancing chargers one of them instead appeared on a camel. The young Emperor turned to the men around him and said, "Why is he on a camel?" "Camel, your majesty?" they replied in pretended bewilderment. "We see no camel." The more he protested the more they shook their heads. At last they tapped their foreheads and looked at each other with significant glances. After a few such incidents he became persuaded of his own insanity. The books were brought from their hiding places, and the reign of traditional scholarship was restored, to last for over 2,000 years.

The subsequent history of China has consisted of a series of dynasties, each founded by a strong man who put an end to a period of anarchy, each gradually becoming degenerate and giving place to a new time of disorder. Exactly the same pattern is being repeated in our own day. The Manchu dynasty after a glorious beginning fell gradually lower and lower and was overthrown in 1911. From that time onward there was the usual period of anarchy. But now the new strong man, Mao Tse-tung, is founding the new dynasty. Insofar as he resembles the First Emperor it is likely that his successor will suffer a fate similar to that

of the First Emperor's son. I find it quite impossible to believe that so skeptical and rational a race as the Chinese will long continue to submit to a foreign dogmatic orthodoxy. In fact their submission to the Russian ideology is to be regarded as a temporary measure in pursuit of the age-long resistance to foreign influences which has been characteristic of China. It may also be regarded as the renewal of the Boxer rebellion in 1900, which was a movement of protest against the "foreign devils," as white men were called. For the moment the Chinese feel that in alliance with Russia they can hold their own against the West. But if Russia makes any serious attempt to treat China as a satellite the anti-foreign passions of the Chinese will be very quickly aroused, and their Communism will be seen to be nothing but a veneer.

The Chinese have, it is true, twice submitted to alien conquerors: once in the time of the Mongols in the thirteenth century, and once again when the Manchus conquered China in the seventeenth century. But in each case the conquerors very quickly became assimilated and soon were more Chinese than the Chinese themselves. I find no difficulty in imagining a dour Russian coming from his dismal steppes into the lovely land of China and gradually having the hardness melted out of him, discovering at first with horror, but at last with acquiescent pleasure, that there is something to be said for civilization and tradition, and that possibly there is more in the ancient wisdom than the Chinese have accumulated through the ages than in the raw shrillness of an ill-tempered German exile. The Chinese are persuasive and insinuating to a quite extraordinary degree. They have their fierce moods: they are having a fierce mood at this moment. But their fierce moods pass, as they did when the First Emperor died. For my part, I loved the Chinese when I lived among them, and I cannot bring myself to believe that all these wonderful qualities that they derive from a tradition of civilization far longer than any known in Europe will disappear forever in obedience to the brutal doctrines of Moscow.

Great nations do not remain mad forever—except indeed the Russians, who were already mad under Ivan the Terrible and have remained so.

But the Chinese are not like this. At most times they are sane and wise, and I think there is every reason to hope that their present mood will not last. It is of course necessary to take account of it so long as it persists. But I feel sure the day will come when they will disappoint the Russians by their sanity. And I think we ought to keep our minds open for signs of this change of mood.

- (7) BR on Comets, with praise for Halley, from In Praise of Idleness (NY: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1962). Our thanks to HARRY RUJA:

If I were a comet, I should consider the men of our present age a degenerate breed.

In former times, the respect for comets was universal and profound. One of them foreshadowed the death of Caesar; another was regarded as indicating the approaching death of the Emperor Vespasian. He himself was a strong-minded man, and maintained that the comet must have some other significance, since it was hairy and he was bald; but there were few who shared this extreme of rationalism. The Venerable Bede said that 'comets portend revolutions of kingdoms, pestilence, war, winds, or heat'. John Knox regarded comets as evidences of divine anger, and other Scottish Protestants thought them 'a warning to the King to extirpate the Papists'.

America, and especially New England, came in for a due share of cometary attention. In 1652 a comet appeared just at the moment when the eminent Mr Cotton fell ill, and disappeared at his death. Only ten years later, the wicked inhabitants of Boston were warned by a new comet to abstain from 'voluptuousness and

abuse of the good creatures of God by licentiousness in drinking and fashions in apparel'. Increase Mather, the eminent divine, considered that comets and eclipses had portended the deaths of Presidents of Harvard and Colonial Governors, and instructed his flock to pray to the Lord that he would not 'take away stars and send comets to succeed them'.

All this superstition was gradually dispelled by Halley's discovery that one comet, at least, went round the sun in an orderly ellipse, just like a sensible planet, and by Newton's proof that comets obey the law of gravitation. For some time, Professors in the more old-fashioned universities were forbidden to mention these discoveries, but in the long run the truth could not be concealed.

In our day, it is difficult to imagine a world in which everybody, high and low, educated and uneducated, was preoccupied with comets, and filled with terror whenever one appeared. Most of us have never seen a comet. I have seen two, but they were far less impressive than I had expected them to be. The cause of the

change in our attitude is not merely rationalism, but artificial lighting. In the streets of a modern city the night sky is invisible; in rural districts, we move in cars with bright headlights. We have blotted out the heavens, and only a few scientists remain aware of stars and planets, meteorites and comets. The world of our daily life

is more man-made than at any previous epoch. In this there is loss as well as gain: Man, in the security of his dominion, is becoming trivial, arrogant, and a little mad. But I do not think a comet would now produce the wholesome moral effect which it produced in Boston in 1662; a stronger medicine would now be needed.

(8) Al Seckel's new book, as described here----->

# Bertrand Russell On God and Religion

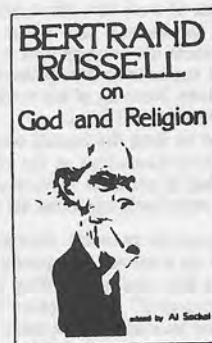
edited by Al Seckel

Bertrand Russell was without doubt one of the most productive and brilliant thinkers and writers of the twentieth century. The range of his critical inquiry is without parallel in contemporary Western culture. During his long lifetime (1872-1970) he was the recipient of countless awards for excellence, including the Nobel Prize for literature, which he won in 1950.

From the outset of his career, Russell struggled to uproot and expose the remnants of Puritanism's emphasis upon guilt, sin and moral condemnation.

*Bertrand Russell On God and Religion* is an exhaustive compilation of Russell's best essays on religion, freethought, and rationalism. Al Seckel has rescued many of Russell's writings from obscure pamphlets, chapters buried in books, and from out-of-print periodicals. The essays in this book demonstrate the full range of Russell's thinking on the subject of religion, which he defined as "a set of beliefs held as dogmas, dominating the conduct of life, going beyond or contrary to evidence, and inculcated by methods which are emotional or authoritarian, not intellectual."

Table of Contents: "The Life and Wisdom of Bertrand Russell" by Al Seckel; (Part I) "My Religious Reminiscences," "First Efforts," "Why I am Not a Christian," "What is an Agnostic?" "Am I an Atheist or an Agnostic?" "The Faith of a Rationalist." (Part II) "The Essence of Religion," "Religion and the Churches," "A Debate on the Existence of God," "What is the Soul?" "Mind and Matter in Modern Science." (Part III) "Science and Religion," "Cosmic Purpose." (Part IV) "An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish," "The Value of Freethought," "Sin," "Are the World's Troubles Due to Decay of Faith?" "Ideas that Have Harmed Mankind," "Ideas that Have Helped Mankind." (Part V) "Mahatma Gandhi," "The Theologian's Nightmare." Name and Subject Index.



345 pages  
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Please send check or money order to Al Seckel P.O. Box 7000-39, Redondo Beach, CA 90277. Author will personally autograph copies.

### ABOUT BR'S WRITINGS

(9) Aldous Huxley, on "The Relevance of Style", a chapter in "Bertrand Russell: Philosopher of the Century", ed. Schoenman (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967 pp. 91-94):

### *The Relevance of Style*

There are three kinds of censorship—political, economic and stylistic. Political censorship is a prohibition to communicate unorthodox

ideas, and it is enforced (in the name, needless to say, of Truth, Justice and Morality) by policemen. Economic censorship is a reluctance to communicate unpopular ideas evoked in the minds of writers, editors, publishers, producers of plays and films, by the exorbitantly high and rising costs of communication. Stylistic

censorship is the inability to communicate anything adequately, and is due to the communicator's misuse of his native language.

About economic censorship there is nothing much that any single individual can do. That no serious periodical can now be printed and circulated without the assistance of an 'angel', that the publishers of books cannot break even on a sale of less than six or seven thousand copies, that to put on a play now calls for a massive investment of capital—these are facts which the philosopher can only deplore, not hope to change. But in regard to political and stylistic censorship the case is different. If he has had the luck to be born into a democratic society, he is free to argue the case for yet greater freedom. And even under a totalitarian dictatorship he retains a measure of stylistic freedom, and can say whatever he is permitted to say with precision and clarity.

By precept and in luminous practice, Bertrand Russell has fought unwearingly against political and stylistic censorship. 'I should make it my object', he says in his 'Essay on Education in Early Childhood', 'to teach thinking, not orthodoxy, or even heterodoxy. And I should absolutely never sacrifice intellect to the fancied interest of morals.' And here is what he has to say about one of those orthodoxies, which the censors impose and which any honest philosopher must refuse to teach—the twentieth-century orthodoxy of Communism. 'In relation to any political doctrine there are two questions to be asked: (1) Are its theoretical tenets true? (2) Is its practical policy likely to increase human happiness? For my part, I think the theoretical tenets of Communism are false, and I think its practical maxims are such as to produce an immeasurable increase of human misery.'

These clear, plain sentences are doubly liberating. They state the case for humane and realistic thinking against political censorship, and at the same time they are the denial of stylistic censorship.

Rationality and the common decencies have many enemies, and among those enemies must be counted, alas, all those would-be friends whose studied ineptitude imposes a stylistic censorship on the communication of their often excellent ideas. For those who care for the art of literature, and even for those who merely desire to be instructed, there are few experiences more depressing than the perusal of a learned journal. Natural scientists, social scientists, psychologists and even philosophers—how rarely do we find in their ranks a competent writer! Most of them censor their own productions by a style so abominable that they can hardly be read. Their grammar is bad, their syntax even worse than their grammar. To a wretchedly poor vocabulary they add, along with the indispensable technical terms of which every specialist feels the need, a heavy infusion of jargon and entirely superfluous neologisms. Jargon and neologisms obscure the sense of what is being said; but for the learned men who indulge in them, this does not matter. What matters, so far as they are concerned, is that jargon and neologisms constitute a private, esoteric language that sets them apart from the common herd of those who merely speak English. Better still, jargon and neologisms may foster, in the bewildered reader's mind, the illusion that some thought of exceptional profundity and importance is being expressed.

Eighty years ago my grandfather was lamenting the fact that students of literature were being made to spend less time on the great eighteenth century masters of style than on earlier authors whose sole merit was the merely historical one of having written in Middle English. More familiar with Hoccleve than with Swift or Hume or Berkeley, these students of Middle English were capable of writing only middling English. Today the middling English of last century's learned writing has become the abysmal English of the text books and the specialists' journals. The decline cannot be

attributed to an excess of medieval scholarship. The neologists and the jargon-mongers have not been bemused by too much learning in an irrelevant field; they are merely following a bad convention, merely imitating and hideously improving upon earlier neologists and jargon-mongers. Other models exist, of course; but the wish to seem profounder than they really are, the desire to be looked upon as the possessors of esoteric knowledge not available to the rest of us and expressible only in a private language known to a few initiates, overrides any desire for literary excellence or even plain comprehensibility. They continue to model themselves, not on Swift or Hume or that great continuator and enricher of the eighteenth-century tradition of clear and precise communication, Bertrand Russell, but on Professor X's monumental Introduction to Social Sociology, on Dr Y's latest paper in contribution to the Journal of Something-or-Other.

After an enforced diet of Introduction to Clinical Economics, Dr Y's latest Contribution to the Journal of Animal Metaphysics, after an enforced diet of Textbook, sociology and psychological abstracts, what a blessed relief it is to read what Bertrand Russell has to say about politics, or psychology, or the conduct of life, or Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech! No jargon, not a single neologism. Nothing but plain English. There is no hiding behind obscurities, no pretending that the subject is understandable only by specialists and can be talked about only in a private language. Everything is perfectly clear and above-board. Of German scholars Bentley used to say that they dived deeper and came up muddier than any others. Bertrand Russell dives deep, but comes up every time as clear as a whistle. Here, for example, is a passage from his Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech:

'If men were actuated by self-interest, which they are not except in the case of a few saints—the whole human race would co-operate. There would be no more wars, no more armies, no more navies, no more atom bombs. There would be no armies of propagandists employed in poisoning the minds of Nation A against Nation B, and reciprocally of Nation B against Nation A. There would not be armies of officials at frontiers to prevent the entry of foreign books and foreign ideas, however excellent in themselves. . . . All this would happen very quickly if men desired their own happiness as ardently as they desire the misery of their neighbours. But, you will tell me, what is the use of these Utopian dreams? Moralists will see to it that we do not become wholly selfish, and until we do, the millennium will be impossible.

'I do not wish to end upon a note of cynicism. I do not deny that there are better things than selfishness, and that some people achieve these things. I maintain, however, on the one hand that there are few occasions upon which large bodies of men, such as politics is concerned with, can rise above selfishness, while, on the other hand, there are a great many circumstances in which populations will fall below selfishness, if selfishness is interpreted as enlightened self-interest. And among the occasions on which people fall below self-interest are most of the occasions on which they are convinced that they are acting from idealistic motives. Much that passes for idealism is disguised hatred and disguised love of power.'

It would be easy, fatally easy, to express these ideas in words and whole phrases borrowed from Freud and Pavlov, from Skinner, Sorokin, the Cyberneticists, and worked up, with a few neologisms, into a notable passage of learned jargon, a darkling hodge-podge, repellent and almost incomprehensible. But in this case the man who made the analysis and had the ideas was never tempted to become their stylistic censor. The philosopher is also a writer, the humanistic psychologist and social scientist knows English. How fortunate for us!

#### ABOUT BERTRAND RUSSELL

(10) The you-name-it. We had the radio on, late one evening, during the 1984 Presidential Campaign, and a man was talking but we weren't listening.

He caught our attention when we heard him say "...the most evil man of the Twentieth Century was Bertrand Russell."

We turned on our tape recorder. Later on we learned that we had been listening to Lyndon LaRouche. Here is a bit of it:

...it's been a policy which Russell published in the October 1946 issue of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists. In that article, Russell made 2 points. First, Russell insisted that the nations, including the United States, must give up their national sovereignty. He demanded that a world government agency, with a monopoly of possession and use of nuclear arsenals, be established. Second, Russell proposed that if the Soviet Union refused to submit to the agreements to establish such a world government agency, that the United States and Britain must conduct preventive nuclear war against Russia. This war should begin as soon as the Anglo-Americans have sufficient arsenals of nuclear weapons to destroy the Soviet non-nuclear forces, and should occur before the Russians began to develop nuclear arsenals of their own. This preventive nuclear war policy of Russell's was adopted by the United States and Britain and remained in effect till the middle or late 1950s.

Russell began developing a second version of this strategic doctrine shortly after the death of Joseph Stalin, at the point the Russians were already building up an arsenal of fission weapons and had constructed a prototype of an H-bomb. Russell communicated messages to the new leaders in Moscow offering to cooperate with Moscow in setting up a world-wide empire, of which the Eastern part would be ruled by the Russian Empire, and the Western part some sort of World Federalists Dictatorship ruled over by the wealthy financial families of such places as New York, Boston, London and Switzerland.

....

McGeorge Bundy, Robert MacNamara, Maxwell Taylor, and Bundy's nasty-tempered National Security Counsellor, Henry Kissinger, among others, slipped Russell's agreements with Krushchev into the Kennedy Administrations's policies.

Since the late 1950s, for more than 25 years, Henry Kissinger has been one of the leading Soviet moles, working inside the policy-making processes of our government, working to help Moscow in keeping the United States in submission to those Pugwash agreements announced by Szilard in 1958.

....

To understand fully the policies of Kissinger and his kind, we must look at a second feature of the policies of such evil men as Bertrand Russell, H.G. Wells, and the [undecipherable] leader, Alastair Crowley, three men who did more to destroy the United States from within, with the help of the late Robert M. Hutchins, than perhaps anyone else. To understand the motives behind Russell's proposals to Khrushchev, one must know the bare facts about Russell's long-term utopian policies.

....

The essence of Bertrand Russell's purpose for the entire extent of his satanic adult life was the destruction of modern civilization and the creation of a miserable condition of feudalistic society to be ruled by the Anglo-Saxon race. Russell intended this to be a form of Utopia which was to be established by massive genocide against the darker skinned populations of the world, including such sections of humanity as those of Arab, Turkish, Greek, Italian and Spanish ethnic origins.

The preceding program was paid for by the LaRouche Campaign.

Like it?

BR's article in The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (October 1946), referred to above, can be found in its entirety in RSN45-5. It's worth re-reading.

BR QUOTED

- (11) Romantic Love. A chapter titled "Love and Romance," in the book, "Intimate Relationships, Marriage, and Family", by James C. Coleman and others (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing), starts off with the following quotation:

I believe myself that romantic love is the source of the most intense delights that life has to offer. In the relation of a man and a woman who love each other with passion and imagination and tenderness, there is something of inestimable value, to be ignorant of which is a great misfortune to any human being.

Our thanks to JIM MCWILLIAMS.

- (12) On thinking. From the Los Angeles Times Book Review (2/2/86,p.14):

Most people would die sooner than think -- in fact, they do.

Thank you, BOB DAVIS.



BR ASSESSED

- (13) Obituary in the Hindustani Times, 4 Feb 70, with thanks to HARRY RUJA:

## 'Advocate of Indian freedom'

New Delhi, Feb. 3 (UNI, PTD)—India today joined the world in mourning for Bertrand Russell, the British philosopher.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, in a message from Lucknow, recalled that Russell was "a friend of Indian independence" and said: "The death has taken away one of the greatest philosophers and rebels of history."

The West Bengal Assembly, in a rare gesture, adjourned early in homage to Russell. The adjournment, sought by a Marxist member, was supported by "new" Congress leader Siddhartha Sankar Ray.

Former President Radhakrishnan described Russell as a genius who fought oppression and war.

Samyukta Socialist Party general secretary George Fernandes, in mourning him as "one of the greatest champions of individual liberty," said he had erred in his understanding of the Sino-Indian conflict.

The proceedings of the international seminar on Gandhi in New Delhi began today with a two-minute silence to pay homage to Bertrand Russell.

Mr Noel Baker, winner of the Nobel Prize for peace, began his address with a tribute to Earl Russell.

The All-India Peace Council and the Indian Association for Afro-Asian Solidarity paid homage to the memory of Bertrand Russell.

Mr C. Rajagopalachari said: "It is a matter for world grief that Bertrand Russell has passed out of the world of living great men. In many matters, there was no equal to him."

- (14) Obituary in the Daily Mail, Freetown, Sierra Leone (4 Feb 1970, p. 12), again thanks to HARRY RUJA:

### Philosopher Bertrand Russell dies

Left wingers, pacifists, and intellectuals around the world yesterday mourned Lord Bertrand Russell, the British philosopher, mathematician and peace campaigner who died at his North Wales home aged 97

In New York, Ralph Schoenman, Bertrand Russell's former secretary, described the late Nobel Prize winner as "a good, kindly, generous and sweet man." Schoenman, who worked with Russell from 1960 until the American was banned from Britain in 1967, said in a statement from his home in Pennington, New Jersey:

I have been devoted to Bertrand Russell and for seven years had the most intimate and trusted relationship possible between two people. He was a good, kindly, generous and sweet man and his loss is for me intensely personal.

Schoenman, 34, is now director of the American Foundation for Social Justice and is connected with a group called Studies in the Third World.

In Tokyo, Japanese civil liberties lawyer, Kouji Morikawa, said Lord Russell was a man "who fought for peace and justice with energy which had no equal even in a youth."

In Melbourne, Mr. Robert Hawke, President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, said: "Bertrand Russell has been a massive figure in the affairs of mankind this century. He will be remembered not only for his contributions in the wide range of intellectual disciplines but also for what he brought to the practical issues confronting his fellow men, including the overwhelmingly important question of international peace..."

In Canberra, Professor J. A. Passmore, Head of the Department of Philosophy in the Australian National University's Research School of Social Sciences, said Bertrand Russell had substantially created the new subject of mathematical logic.

### THE BRS AWARD

- (15) People for the American Way has been chosen for the 1986 Bertrand Russell Society Award. The 2-page press release (next page) provides some details.

This is the first time that an organization rather than an individual has been the recipient.

People for the American Way will be represented at the June 21st BRS meeting (evening session) by its President, Anthony T. Podesta, who will receive the Award plaque and give an address.

Lee Eisler, VP/Information  
The Bertrand Russell Society, Inc.  
RD 1, Box 409  
Coopersburg, PA 18036  
215-346-7687

For release  
June 7, 1986

"PEOPLE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY" RECEIVES THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY AWARD

The 1986 Bertrand Russell Society Award has gone to People for the American Way — the organization founded by TV Producer Norman Lear to combat the efforts of right wing religious fundamentalists to chip away at constitutionally guaranteed American liberties. Bertrand Russell would have approved.

The Award plaque reads: "For exposing and opposing the current crop of self-appointed guardians of American morality and culture ...who wish to impose their views on the rest of us who do not share them."

People for the American Way (PAW) has been active in a number of areas, all related to basic American freedoms. Only a few of its many activities can be mentioned here.

PAW led the opposition to Herbert E. Ellingwood, who was slated to screen federal judicial candidates. Ellingwood's Christian fundamentalist speeches showed that he did not understand what is meant by separation of church and state. The Reagan Administration abandoned plans to nominate Ellingwood.

PAW helped create the climate in which California's Board of Education rejected 24 science textbooks for grossly inadequate treatment of evolution. And to show how far book censorship has gone, PAW named a score of books in ordinary circulation that — in particular communities — have been removed from schools, from libraries, or publicly burned. Today no school anthology of literature contains the original uncensored version of "Romeo and Juliet".

PAW succeeded in getting airtime on 48 TV stations — invoking the Fairness Doctrine — in order to reply to Falwell's so-called "religious" broadcasts in support of South Africa.

PAW has been called "the scourge of the censors" (Washington Post), and "the only group that is taking the evangelists to task" (New York Times). It is not against Christianity; it is for the liberties guaranteed by the American Constitution. A 200,000-member organization, its Chairman, John Buchanan, is an ordained Southern Baptist minister and former Republican Congressman from Alabama; its President, Anthony T. Podesta, is a former Justice Department prosecutor, political science teacher, and Director of Admissions at Barat College of the Sacred Heart (Lake Forest, IL).

The Bertrand Russell Society is a company of admirers of Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), logician/philosopher, social reformer, Nobel Laureate, and possessor of one of the seminal minds of this century. A number of Society members are professional philosophers, but most members are not. Membership is open to anyone interested in Russell. For information, write PAW, RD 1, Box 409, Coopersburg, PA 18036.

ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

- (16) Warnke tells it like it is. The Committee for National Security held a meeting in Washington, DC, on February 19, 1986. The proceedings were televised by C-Span, and we stumbled onto it by chance. Paul Warnke, Chairman of the Committee, explained why we do not have a Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB).

There are reported reasons for not going for a Comprehensive Test Ban but they are not adequate to explain our reluctance to kick the habit. I think basically it is an addiction.

We've come near the brink of giving it up a couple of times but have always backed off. We came fairly close actually in 1963-64. We came very close in the early part of the Carter Administration, and the reason basically for not going ahead with it had nothing to do with verification, had nothing to do with the question of confidence in the reliability of the [weapons].

It's really a question of your security theory. As Dr. Sykes has pointed out, there is a school of thought that says we're better off going it alone, and that is the prevailing doctrine in the Reagan Administration. It always has been. It is expressed most articulately by Secretary of Defense Weinberger, who said in a recent speech, "We ought to abandon the previous reliance on arms control deterrence and secure our freedom from mutual vulnerability regardless of Soviet activities." So if you feel that you can, in fact, go it alone, then obviously you are not going to forego nuclear weapons tests.

But as I say, we have come fairly close in the past. It is quite clear that we can get a Comprehensive Test Ban if we want it. When we renewed the negotiations in June of 1977, I had 4 basic points that I was directed to include in any treaty:

One was, there would be no exceptions for peaceful nuclear explosions. The second was, the on-site inspection of suspicious seismic events. The third was, we wanted to have American seismic equipment on Soviet territory, and of course would accept Soviet seismic equipment on our territory; and the British would do the same. And the fourth one was, that the treaty would be one of indefinite duration. We did not want to have a guillotine clause. The Soviets wanted to have a treaty of quite a

fixed and fairly narrow limit because they wanted to bring in the Chinese and the French as well as the British and the United States.

By the end of 1977 the Soviet Union had agreed to all 4 of these points. We had agreed that the treaty would be of an indefinite duration. There would not be an exception for peaceful nuclear explosion, unless both sides agreed on some sort of a protocol that would permit it. They would accept American seismic equipment in "black boxes" on their territory. And they would give us on-site inspection.

We looked at that. We figured we were on the brink of getting a Comprehensive Test Ban, and we backed off. We backed off first of all with regard to indefinite duration. I had to go back to the Soviets and say, "Although you've now agreed to our position on indefinite duration, I now want it limited to 5 years." They accepted 5 years. I came back a couple of weeks later and said, "We could accept 3." And they began to wonder whether we were serious, and I began to wonder whether we were serious too.

Well, what were the reasons? They were basically political, certainly not scientific. Politically, it was thought in the Carter Administration that we could not overload the circuits; that if we pushed ahead and completed a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1978, that that might make it more difficult to get the Salt II Treaty through the Congress. And that therefore let us slow down the negotiations. And slow them down we did. They slowed to a crawl and then of course disappeared entirely at the beginning of the Reagan Administration.

The Reagan Administration has been entirely consistent in their position. In almost a paraphrase of St. Augustine's statement, which Dr. Garwin quoted earlier ["Dear God, make me chaste, but not now."] Gene Rostow very early in the Administration went to the Multinational Disarmament Conference and said that conditions were not now propitious for this worthy project, and that therefore we had decided not to pursue a Comprehensive Test Ban at that point. It was pointed out by some of the other countries that this was inconsistent with our commitment in the Limited Test Ban Treaty, under which we undertook to pursue a total end to all nuclear explosions for all time, and a similar commitment in Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. But nonetheless, we have abandoned this commitment, and the Reagan Administration now says we need to test as long as we need nuclear weapons for deterrence. Well, since we will need nuclear weapons for deterrence during my lifetime, and the lifetime of everybody in this room, what that means is, no Comprehensive Test Ban. I think it's a mistake, but I think it's quite clear that this is the position of the Administration.

The question is, whether there is enough popular sentiment in favor of the Comprehensive Test Ban to change that position. [That will be] extraordinarily difficult to do. There is the feeling on the part of certainly the civilians in the Defense Department that arms control is a very, very weak reed in deed, and that we are much better off going ahead with our various offensive and defensive weapons.

We can't have it both ways. We'll either have arms control or we have an unrestricted nuclear arms race. The theory of some is that we would win an unrestricted nuclear arms race because of our superior resources and superior technology, that somehow we could spend the Soviets into submission. It's a nice theory. I don't know anybody who knows anything about the Soviet Union or about its leadership that believes it has any plausibility at all. If we go ahead, they'll go ahead. And the question is, will we be better off or worse off. I know where I come out. It's not where the Reagan Administration does.

\* \* \* \* \*

Paul Warnke was formerly Chief Negotiator on the Tri-Lateral Commission on a Comprehensive Test Ban, and is now Chairman of the Committee for National Security (2000 P Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036), which offers information on CTB.

(17) The Switch, according to Flora Lewis in the New York Times Review of the Week (2/23/86,E21). Here is the gist of what she said:

According to Flora Lewis, the Reagan people first resisted a ban on nuclear testing because, they said, they could not -- without on-site inspection -- verify that the Russians were not cheating. They ignored the fact that the Russians had agreed to on-site inspection as long ago as 1977, according to Warnke.

When Gorbachev told the 40-Nation Disarmament Conference in Geneva that Russia is agreeable to on-site inspection, the Reagan people switched their story. Now they say we must continue testing as long as we have to rely on nuclear deterrence, meaning until Star Wars provides an impenetrable shield against nuclear weapons. [Ha! Ha!]

Q: But why continue testing?

A: Because we have to know if the weapons are still reliable, say the Reagan people.

That question was asked in the Question and Answer period of the February 19th proceedings ( ). The correct answer: nuclear warheads do not need to be tested. They remain reliable because they are passive; they have no moving parts. However, if you wish to test them, you do so by taking them apart and examining them, not by exploding them. What may indeed need to be tested are the missiles which carry the nuclear warheads; but that does not require a nuclear explosion.

It all reinforces Warnke's assessment of the situation: the Reagan people do not want a test ban. They want to go it alone.

#### ON NUCLEAR STRATEGY

- (18) Star Wars thinking. Star Wars gives the U.S. a great advantage over the Soviets, even if it is never used -- so goes the argument -- because it forces the Russians to expend their limited resources on ways to cope with Star Wars...and since we are far richer in resources, it seems clear that this is a race we are bound to win. Right?

Wrong! says Senator Proxmire, and he tells why. This is how it appears in the Congressional Record of March 24, 1986:

Some will argue the United States cannot lose this race. After all do we not have the far stronger economy? Our gross national product is nearly twice that of the Soviet Union. And do we not have an overwhelming advantage over Russia in technology, especially in relevant military technology? We do. And does the United States not have a special advantage estimated as at 30 years or more over the Soviet Union in computer technology? Yes. That is true. And is it not true that the computer technology is at the very heart of star wars? It is. So does this mean that if the Soviets choose to run this race against this country, we can surely expect to win? The answer is a resounding "no."

The reason the answer is "no" was documented in spades at the time of the debate over ratification of the antiballistic missile treaty in 1972. It is the same today. This body—the U.S. Senate—agreed by an 89 to 2 vote in 1972 that a star wars system would not serve the interests of our country. Why? And why was the vote so decisive? After all, the antiballistic missile treaty had the single and simple purpose of preventing a race to produce a star wars antimissile defense by either superpower. That ABM vote was so decisive because Senators reached the overwhelming conclusion that an antimissile defense would cost \$10 or more to produce and deploy the star wars defense for every \$1 it would cost to overcome it. Is that principle still true? Will it still cost far, far more to defend against a nuclear attack than to instigate an attack against that defense? Absolutely. The principle still holds. It is even more true in 1986 than it was in 1972, and the advantage for the offense will be even greater 20 years from now and on into the future.

That means that the United States is engaging in exactly the wrong kind of race with the Soviet Union. We do

have the superior economy. We do have the decisive technological advantage. But because the Soviet Union will rely on defeating star wars by building a far less costly offensive nuclear system, it will need far less in economic resources and far less in technology to overcome whatever star wars system we deploy. To date the overall arms race between the Soviet Union and the United States has hurt the economies of both countries, but it has had a far more severe effect on the less productive and less technologically advanced Soviet economy.

To date that has been the case. How about the future? As the star wars program continues in this country, as the United States begins its heavy spending for the production of the hardware and the deployment and maintenance of the system, the burden on the American economy from this trillion dollar plus military increase will become far greater than the much lighter burden the Russians will bear to build the offensive nuclear arsenal to overcome our star wars defense. After all, much of that Russian nuclear offense is in place right now.

Some of the refinements to penetrate star wars are already underway in the Soviet Union with the Soviet's greatly stepped up cruise missile and submarine program. That program would underfly star wars with missiles launched from right off American shores. The missiles hug the ground, carry a map in their brain to fly around objects on land, have a range of 1,500 miles and fire warheads, each of which has an explosive force of up to 200,000 tons of TNT. If the arms race is massively stepped up by our star wars project, the Soviet Union will for the first time gain economic advantage from the arms race as well as military advantage from the easy superiority their nuclear offense can achieve over the star wars defense.

#### FREE-THINKERS

- (19) Linus Pauling on Donahue, 3/3/86. Excerpt:

[DONAHUE]: DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD?

No.

THAT DISAPPOINTS THE AUDIENCE.

Yes. You know, I'm interested in ethics, morality. And so I derived a basic ethical principle in a scientific way. I can't take time to derive it now, theorem after theorem. It's essentially the principle of minimizing human suffering. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. That's what I came out with.

THE GOLDEN RULE.

Yes, the Golden Rule.

AREN'T YOU IMPRESSED WITH THIS UNIVERSE NOW?

I surely am.

SO ISN'T IT JUST... THIS IS HARDLY THE TIME AND PLACE...IT SEEMS ALMOST INTELLECTUALLY LAZY NOT TO BELIEVE IN A PRIME MOVER.

Well, the universe is so wonderful, so intricate, so marvelous, that it's very hard for me to believe that it could exist, but to believe that there would be an intellect, it would have to be even more intricate, more marvelous, more complex.

AND THIS AUDIENCE THINKS THAT IT IS.

Yes, but that's harder to believe. Moreover I can't see any scientific evidence, or any evidence of any sort, credible evidence, that requires me to accept this idea. And of course it troubles me that so much suffering has been caused by religion. The wars, how many of the wars were religious wars. In this present time, the Catholics and the Protestants in North Ireland, half a dozen sects fighting each other in Lebanon. We need to have more respect for the Golden Rule, more confidence in Man's rationality. He behaves irrationally when violence and dogma operate.

- (20) "An Appeal to Agnostics and Atheists" asks them to come out of the closet, to forget their differences, to close ranks, and to speak up. This will enable others who share their views but are reluctant to let them be known, for fear of reprisals, to discover that they are not alone. And it will strengthen the position of all atheists and agnostics, in these days of militant fundamentalism.

Here are excerpts from the printed Appeal, considerably revised, edited, and shortened:

There are many atheists and agnostics who are not involved in supporting the views that they hold, and it is to them that this appeal is directed. If this should happen to apply to you, consider and reflect for a few minutes what a world of good it could do if you made it simpler and easier for others to hold the same views that you do. The world needs these ideas.

From stories told and read, it has generally been a difficult and painful religious experience to reach your beliefs. It is a shame that so many have to go through that experience. If it cannot be avoided, there should at least be helping hands; and there will not be enough helping hands until many more atheists and agnostics become active.

There are organizations that support your position, and that you, in turn, can support by joining. Some of them offer compatible society. So far there has been no easy way to find the names and addresses of these organizations, each one being more or less concerned with its own welfare and positions rather than having the general aim of furthering agnostic and atheistic aspirations. These organizations are listed at the end of this appeal. Some have a highly intellectual approach, appealing to the scientific and philosophical; others have a more emotional approach.

A hundred years ago, Robert Ingersoll made atheism or agnosticism powerfully appealing. Unfortunately today there is no such compelling voice speaking for atheists and agnostics.

What is there, then, to maintain atheistic and agnostic beliefs? Just the facts.

Western civilization has been plagued by a myth -- the myth of Jesus. Acceptance of Jesus as a historical character is an error.

[A number of paragraphs follow, that argue against the existence of Jesus and the existence of God or gods. We skip them.]

Atheists and agnostics do not agree with each other in all matters. The atheists feel that their approach to thinking about religion is superior to the agnostic's; and the agnostics feel just the opposite. That is most unfortunate! The atheists need the agnostics, and the agnostics need the atheists, if the environment is to be made safe for free-thinkers. It is more important that there be atheists and agnostics than that they agree. They should at least agree on that!

Here are the societies and organizations that support agnostics and atheists. You may wish to inquire about them.

American Atheists, PO Box 2117, Austin, TX 78768-2117

American Ethical Culture Societies, Dept. CF, 2 West 64th St., NY NY 10023

American Humanist Association, 7 Harwood Drive, Amherst, NY 14226.

Atheists United, PO Box 65706, Los Angeles, CA 90065

Bertrand Russell Society, Inc., RD 1, Box 409, Coopersburg, PA 18036

The Fellowship of Religious Humanists, Yellow Springs, OH 45387

Free Inquiry, Box 5, Central Park Station, Buffalo, NY 14215 (a publication, not an organization)

Freedom from Religion Foundation, Box 750, Madison, WI 53701

Freethinkers, Box 30544, Santa Barbara, CA 93105

Friends of Robert Ingersoll, PO Box 5082, Peoria, IL 61601

Rationalist Association, Inc. PO Box 994, St. Louis, MO 63188

The Society of Evangelical Agnostics, Box 515, Auberry, CA 93602

The Society of Separationists, Inc., Box 2117, Austin, TX 78768

With thanks to Robert W. Summers (POB 3336, U.P.B., Las Cruces, NM 88003), who wrote the original Appeal, and to Dan Pezze (1525 Canterbury Road, Lakewood, NJ 08701), who printed it.

#### NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

##### Some Viewpoints That May Be of Interest to You

The American Rationalist. Bi-monthly. \$6.00 yearly.  
P.O. Box 994, St. Louis, MO. 63188.

Freethought brought up to date. Concise and timely book reviews.

Free Inquiry. Published quarterly. \$16.50 yearly.  
Box 5, Central Park Station, Buffalo, N.Y. 14215

Provides a forum for scholars and philosophers to present, in layman's language, the background information needed to understand the past and present controversies that have shaped and are shaping humanist thought and activities.

The Skeptical Inquirer, the official journal for The Committee for the scientific investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. Published quarterly. \$16.50 yearly.  
Box 229 Central Station, Buffalo, N.Y. 14215

Explores the edges of science, giving much attention to parapsychology with stress on new ways of looking at our scientific research and methods.

The Bertrand Russell Society News. Published quarterly. \$25.00 yearly

R.D. 1, Box 409, Coopersburg, PA 18036  
Deals with all facets of the life philosophy and very public activities of one of the great men of this century. There is a constant stream of articles published about Russell and his views. All are summarized by the experts reporting in the News. The Society holds an annual meeting and is represented at philosophical conferences held each year.

The SEA Journal. Published occasionally by the Society of Evangelical Agnostics.

"Advocating the application of the principles of agnosticism to all aspects of life," SEA is guided by the teachings of Thomas Huxley. An expression of interest and a contribution of \$1.00 or more sent to SEA, Box 515, Auberry, CA 93602 will put you in touch with a lively group of letter writers. William Young, a professional librarian, is administrator.

The Hemlock Quarterly. Published quarterly by the Hemlock Society.  
P.O. Box 66218, Los Angeles, CA. 90066

The Quarterly supports active voluntary euthanasia for the terminally ill. The exutive director, Derek Humphry, has appeared on "60 Minutes," "The Donahue Show," "Good Morning America" and many other programs. Yearly membership, including The Quarterly, is \$20.00 (Seniors \$15.00)

Should you wish to see a copy of any of the above materials before investing, please write to:

Hugh McVeigh  
311 State Street  
Albany, N.Y. 12210

If convenient, please enclose \$.66 in stamps.

(21) Hugh McVeigh spreads the word----->

(21.5) Neil Abercrombie, now a Senator in the Hawaiian legislature, is running for U.S. Congress this Fall. Wouldn't you like to see a BRS member in Congress? Well, then, help him out. There are big bucks against him. Send your tax-deductible contribution, made out to "Abercrombie for Congress" to Abercrombie for Congress, 2721-A Puuhonua St., Honolulu, Hawaii 96822. Good luck, Neil!

(22) Al Seckel's book, "Bertrand Russell on God and Religion" has just been published by Prometheus Press. If you order it directly from him, he will autograph it. See ( ).

(23) Warren Allen Smith has won a \$7,500 Leavey Award from the Freedom Foundation of Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

The Award recognizes Mr. Smith's concept that an effective time and place to teach about government and business is on the secondary school level and through an extracurricular Adam Smith Club.

He has been sponsor of such a club at New Canaan (Connecticut) High School for over twenty years, during which time students are given \$5,000 in scrip, are divided into different societies (one with a unicameral, others with parliamentary, dictatorial, and Marxist governing bodies, and one which is entirely anarchistic.) The students are allowed to use their capital any way they choose, thereby learning about The Establishment as well as how to invest in anything for which Wall Street supplies daily figures. Teachers as well as students are members, and upon occasion a student will sue a teacher in the club's court. Members who do not appreciate their money during a semester are expelled and must be repatriated if they choose to return. Recently the school's principal was expelled by the student Governor of the club. Those in Marxist societies may not invest as individuals, only as one of a total group. Those with a parliamentary government often choose as ruler a Queen or a Prince, who rules with the aid of a Prime Minister and Privy Council. Without specific instruction, the students soon learn about partnerships and corporations, puts and calls, marks and yen, point-and-figure charts. Ironically, the club never meets, but members may transact business throughout the school day, including long-term investing made over the summer.

Asked how he will spend the \$7,500, Mr. Smith responded much as the club's namesake, the 18th Century Scottish economist, might have: "I won't." Instead he is researching whether to invest the money in bonds, certificates of deposit, stocks, or mutual funds.

\* \* \* \* \*

Warren says he is about to retire from teaching. "My plans are rather mixed at the moment. I'll probably be at my recording studio full time starting in summer, although I'd like to live 3 months in Sri Lanka, then move to Kuching, then to somewhere else until I get the feel of different societies...It's possible I'll become more active in BRS and other groups..."

(24) Ramon Suzara. Excerpts from his letter of 3/21/86, which might be titled "A Filipino-American speaks":

...what an ignominy it is for the beautiful State of Hawaii to grant asylum to a bunch of ugly culprits from the Philippines.

I'm quite elated, of course, that Marcos has finally been ousted and that Cory Aquino is now the new President of the Philippines... I hope she will be able to overpower the odds that will be playing against her leadership...

I cannot but feel, vicariously, the joys and hopes of a lot of my friends and relatives there. But as a student of Russell, I have my misgivings about the future of the Philippines.

...as soon as I see the Aquino Government begin to restructure the thousands of cathedrals and church buildings into housing tenements for the poor, it will not only change my life completely, but I will begin to believe, one more time, that God is indeed a Catholic. Moreover I will throw all my Bertrand Russell books out the window.

Cardinal Sin is now the spiritual advisor of the Aquino Government -- the same Cardinal Sin who was the spiritual advisor of the Marcos Government -- indeed the same Cardinal Sin whose main concern is not, certainly, the power of ideas and its free market, but the power of the Catholic Church over the minds and hearts of the majority, subjugated under a theocracy since the 15th Century. I ask: how is it possible for a true democracy to flourish in the Philippines in the 20th Century?

I am hoping that Cardinal Sin's power of prayer does not overwhelm "people power". If it does, the practice of praying will militate against the Filipino people's self-reliance and independence.

As for the Marcos crimes, it is simplistic to think that he alone is guilty of the horrors of recent years. He alone did not put himself into power; the system did. A great part of that system, commonly referred to as "U.S. interests" in the Western Pacific, are the military bases...which are considered vitally important for defending and advancing, not freedom and democracy, but US economic domination in the region. U.S. multi-national corporations have profited much from dirt-cheap Filipino labor. And when the workers and impoverished peasants protest, to advance their own interests, the threat of communism is readily invoked. As the U. S. Government supports whatever dictator, whatever repression, whatever brutality will best enhance U.S. interests, all that Marcos had to do was to insist to Washington that the alternative to his rule was communism...and billions of dollars poured into the Philippines.

[We hope that Ramon is unduly pessimistic about Cardinal Sin. When the crunch came, in the Philippines, the Cardinal sided, not with Marcos, but with Aquino.]

- (25) Mike Taint and his wife, Cheryl Den Broeder, have provided a baby brother, Alden, for their 2-year old son, Russell (who is named for BR). The 4 Taints will move to L.A., where Mike (Captain Michael Taint) will be Deputy Chief of Computer Systems, USAF Space Division.
- (26) Herb Vogt and Betty left for Budapest on April 29th, to visit old friends. Herb had spent a delightful year there in 1935-36. They sent us a cartoon, showing a minister delivering a sermon, which starts off this way: "I take as my text this morning line 34b of Form 1040, which deals with charitable contributions."

#### BOOK REVIEWS

- (27) "The Spinozistic Ethics of Bertrand Russell" by Kenneth Blackwell has been published by George Allen and Unwin (London, 1985). This review of it by Nicholas Griffin appeared in McMaster University's *The Courier* (1/21/86, p.9)... with our thanks to HERB LANSDELL.

## McMaster archivist examines Spinoza's influence on Russell

The Spinozistic Ethics of Bertrand Russell  
By Kenneth Blackwell  
GEORGE ALLEN AND UNWIN, LONDON 1985

REVIEWED BY:  
NICHOLAS GRIFFIN,  
Associate Professor, Department  
of Philosophy

Bertrand Russell, whose Nachlass forms one of the principal glories of the Mills Library, wrote voluminously over a period of more than seventy years on every topic under the sun.

Within this prolonged avalanche of words are several books and several score of articles on what might be termed 'philosophy of life'. These range from parenthetical disquisitions in more technical works, through somewhat theoretical musings and essays (in the etymological sense of the word), to newspaper journalism of practical advice.

An important question raised by Russell's corpus is whether this body of material forms any sort of coherent whole. Those of us who would like to argue that it does are hampered by the sheer size of Russell's output, by its scattered and often fragmentary nature, and by the fact that Russell himself never tried to present a comprehensive, coherent account of his position (or, at least, abandoned unfinished such attempts as he made).

The prevailing view, unsurprisingly, has been that there is no coherent underlying world-view to hold the multifarious published record

together, that Russell is more like a consortium of journalists than a thinker with a single philosophy of life to advocate. Both sides, however, have been hampered hitherto by the fact that the necessary scholarship had not been done. And the scholarship had not been done because, in the first place, it was arduous and time-consuming, and, secondly, because the value of its outcome was doubtful.

If, indeed, it turned out that there was no underlying coherent position, then Russell's writings on the philosophy of life would not be worth the sort of detailed attention which alone could establish that fact.

#### Admiration

This situation changes a good deal with the publication of Kenneth Blackwell's study of Russell and Spinoza. A number of writers have commented on Russell's admiration for Spinoza, but none have hitherto had the fortitude seriously to pursue the question of whether this admiration had any intellectual foundation.

Blackwell, who is Russell Archivist at McMaster, has tackled this question and produced what is without doubt the definitive study of Russell's knowledge of, and debt to, Spinoza.

Future writers may doubt Blackwell's conclusions and challenge his assumptions, but they will remain indebted to his scholarship. Using the full range of archival resources, including private letters and published papers

as well as books, interviews and journalism, Blackwell compiles an exhaustive inventory of Russell's writings on Spinoza's.

#### Ethical position

I know of not a single reference by Russell to Spinoza which he does not consider, nor even where I would look for one. Russell first came to know and admire Spinoza's work as a student in 1894, and his admiration continued into his nineties. As Blackwell points out, no other philosopher except J.S. Mill had as long as positive influence on Russell as Spinoza.

The first part of Blackwell's book is taken up with assembling the necessary documentation. Part B is concerned with the interpretation and evaluation of the evidence. Blackwell shows that, starting in about 1910, Russell drew from Spinoza's work an ethical position which informed much of his moral writing until the end of his life.

The centre-piece of Russell's debt to Spinoza is Spinoza's concept of the intellectual love of God, a phrase which recurs again and again in Russell's writings.

Russell understood by it a contemplative reverence toward the universe, at once both mystical and intellectual, which brings one into harmony with the universe itself and with others who have the same emotion. Russell's understanding of the concept owes something to

the idealist philosopher H.H. Joachim's *Study of the Ethics of Spinoza* (1901).

It is significant, also, that among subsequent interpretations of Spinoza Russell's comes closest to that of another idealist philosopher, E.E. Harris's *Salvation from Despair* (1973). Although Russell's own idealist period was behind him when he incorporated Spinoza into his ethics, he saw Spinoza very much through the eyes of the British neo-Hegelian movement.

The intellectual love of God formed the basis for another important concept in Russell's ethics, that of self-enlargement. It was through the same contemplation of the wider world that the self, according to Russell, was able to transcend its concern with transitory and mundane matters and learned to harmonize its desires with those of others.

On the one hand, desires for those goods which could only be realized by the exclusion of others are transcended, weakened or eliminated. On the other, contemplation enables such desires which are not eliminated to be seen impartially, with the claims of others to the same or similar goods admitted on an equal basis with our own.

In recognizing the necessity of the natural order the self is able to overcome anxiety and anger and achieve a philosophic calm. This, for Russell, was the beginning of wisdom.

Blackwell traces this ethic

of self-enlargement to its roots in Spinoza and outlines the uses to which Russell put it throughout the remainder of his life. The task is as thoroughly and definitively done as one could hope for.

#### Certain problems

There remain, however, certain problems which warrant further discussion. They concern the relation of the ethic to Russell's higher-order views in theoretical ethics, on the one hand, and to his lower-level moral and political views, on the other.

Russell's theoretical ethics denies that there is such a thing as moral knowledge and asserts what Russell, perhaps too swiftly, took to be a corollary of this, that fundamental ethical principles were incapable of rational support. Thus, the status of his ethic of self-enlargement is left in doubt.

On the other side, a fairly natural question can be raised as to how an ethic of contemplation and philosophic calm can be accommodated to a life of moral engagement and political action, such as Russell's. Moreover, there are, it would seem, occasions on which anger was not just all right, but morally required.

Blackwell broaches these questions in his final chapter. He is to be congratulated on giving us in such detail a rich and hitherto large unsuspected of Russell's life and thought.



(28)

Volume 12 of "The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell", titled "Contemplation and Action", is reviewed by Sylvana Tomaselli in Books and Bookmen (Jan 1986)...with thanks to HARRY RUJA.

## Occasional pieces

Sylvana Tomaselli

**The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell, volume 12: Contemplation and Action, 1902-14**  
 edited by Richard A. Rempel, Andrew Brink and Margaret Moran  
 George Allen & Unwin, 612 pp; £48.00  
 ISBN 0 04920 078 x

'Every man,' wrote Coleridge, 'is born an Aristotelian, or a Platonist. I do not think it possible that any one born an Aristotelian can become a Platonist; and I am sure no born Platonist can ever change into an Aristotelian.' As a variation on this theme, Jonathan Miller told a Cambridge audience last year that theirs was the Platonist's haven, while Oxford fostered the Aristotelian. Cambridge, he boldly claimed, praised the contemplative life above all. Oxford, on the contrary, fixed its gaze, not on the heavens, but on London, alert to the possibility of participation and valuing the life of action.

Bertrand Russell gives the lie to both men's pronouncements. A Cambridge undergraduate and later a fellow of Trinity College, Russell did undoubtedly distinguish himself in the disciplines most extolled by Plato, philosophy and mathematics, but it scarcely needs reminding that he was a leading and active member of the Liberal circles which flourished in the Edwardian years. Born into the Whig aristocracy, his family's position and his friends would alone have ensured that reality was never kept at bay, had not the very frame of his character and the nature of his convictions constantly led him to engage directly in politics. The writings gathered in this book show him no less active than contemplative.

No apter title could therefore have been chosen for this 12th volume of

Russell's collected papers. Nor could one wish for these to be better edited, as not only does the general introduction provide a sense of context for what is a rather odd assortment of pieces - anything from letters to editors to short reviews - but each of these, in turn, are individually carefully introduced and most meticulously well-annotated. Indeed, everything from the print and format of the book to the appendices make it a pleasure to use.

Containing his non-technical writings over the period 1902-1914, it offers nine hitherto unpublished papers, including a 'Journal' covering the years 1902 to 1905, the 21 fragments of 'The Pilgrimage of Life', 'The Education of the Emotions', 'Dramatic and Utilitarian Ethics' as well as 'On the Democratic Ideal', 'The Status of Women', 'The Present Situation' and 'Address to the Bedford Liberal Association'. Amongst the published works, 24, including his writings on free-trade and a number of reviews haven't until now been easily accessible. But by no means all the texts are in any sense obscure, as the volume also contains such well-known essays as 'The Free Man's Worship' and 'Mysticism and Logic'.

What is assembled together thus ranges from revelations of Russell's intimate reflections on the nature of his feelings for his first wife Alys - for this is in the aftermath of the cycle ride during which he suddenly realised he no longer loved her - to his views on the proposed change in the Ordination Service of 1913. Russell is 30 in 1902 and this volume gives us so many snap-shots of his life up to the First World War. We see him successively unhappily married, seeking the meaning of life, finding a temporary refuge in mysticism, with Lady Ottoline Morrell, reading Spinoza, advocating the study of history, of mathematics, trying his hand at novel writing - *The Perplexities of John Fortice* (1912) - and making a case for a 'scientific philosophy' which would eliminate ethical considerations and thereby achieve objectivity. Russell must have failed to convince even himself of the viability of this project, unless he thought the case didn't apply to economics, for we find next a number of short

reviews which reveal him the disciple of the neo-classical economist, Alfred Marshall, defending free trade on moral as well as economic grounds and speaking of trusts as 'destroying liberty and corrupting our public life'. Then come the pieces devoted to the issues of equality, liberty and the status of women. Here, Russell is perhaps at his most admirable. This isn't so much because he took up the suffragists' cause, running in the Wimbledon by-election in 1907, the first person to run as a candidate for the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. Nor even because his arguments were particularly original on this subject. For just as his economics derived from Marshall's, so his politics and his views on the status of women were clearly inspired by those of John Stuart Mill. No, what warrants respect is his attempt not to divorce the issue of women's right to vote from that of adult suffrage, while being sensitive nonetheless to the tactical interests of the suffragettes. 'It is not,' he wrote, 'women as women that I want enfranchised, but women as human beings. And even poor women are human beings' (to Lucy Donnelly, 17 Nov 1909). Dividing women along the lines of the inequalities existing amongst men wasn't, in his view, any manner of progress.

Laudable as his efforts in relation to these concerns may have been, the Russell we meet in these pages isn't at his most intellectually impressive. This is perhaps his greatest period: *The Principles of Mathematics* (1903), 'On Denoting' (in *Mind*, 1905), *Principia Mathematica* (1910-13). But that is not the level of contemplation we are entitled to in this volume. The truth of the matter is that these papers are of some interest only because we know them to be the products of an otherwise splendid mind. The issues are still very much alive, but Russell's treatment of them, unlike Mill's, hasn't endured the passage of time. To be fair, however, few occasional pieces can be expected to make captivating reading 80 years after their publication. Perhaps it is unkind of us not to leave them in the shadow of Russell's more substantial works.

### THE RUSSELL SOCIETY LIBRARY

(29)

Books to lend. When no author is named, the work is by Bertrand Russell. The Donor's name appears at the end.

1. History of Western Philosophy. Jack Ragsdale.
2. Mysticism and Logic.
3. Bertrand Russell's Best. Ramon Suzara.
4. An Outline of Philosophy. Ramon Suzara.
5. Autobiography of Bertrand Russell, Vol.1. Ramon Suzara.
6. Let Me Die Before I Wake. by Derek Humphery.
7. Essay on Bertrand Russell. edited by E. D. Klemke. Bob Davis.
8. Morals Without Mystery. by Lee Eisler. Author.
9. Authority and The Individual. Don Jackanicz.
10. Autobiography of Bertrand Russell (in 1 Vol.). Don Jackanicz.
11. Bertrand Russell 1872-1970. Don Jackanicz.
12. Bertrand Russell - A Life. by Herbert Gottschalk. Don Jackanicz.
13. Education and the Social Order. Don Jackanicz.
14. Effects and Dangers of Nuclear War. Don Jackanicz.

15. Essays on Socialist Humanism. Don Jackanicz.
16. German Social Democracy. Don Jackanicz.
17. Icarus or The Future of Science. Don Jackanicz.
18. The Impact of Science on Society. Don Jackanicz.
19. An Inquiry into the Meaning of Truth. Don Jackanicz.
20. In Praise of Idleness. Don Jackanicz.
21. Has Man a Future. Don Jackanicz.
22. Justice in Wartime. Don Jackanicz.
23. National Frontiers and International Cooperation. by Zhores Medvedev.  
Don Jackanicz.
24. My Philosophical Development. Don Jackanicz.
25. Political Ideals. Don Jackanicz.
26. Principles of Social Reconstruction. Don Jackanicz.
27. The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism. Don Jackanicz.
28. Roads of Freedom. Don Jackanicz.
29. Sceptical Essays. Don Jackanicz.
30. Secrecy of Correspondence Is Guaranteed By Law. by Zhores Medvedev.  
Don Jackanicz.
31. The Tamarish Tree. by D. Russell. Don Jackanicz.
32. Mr. Wilson Speaks "frankly..." Don Jackanicz.
33. Marriage and Morals. Don Jackanicz.
34. Dear Bertrand Russell. Jack Ragsdale.
35. Education and The Good Life. Jack Ragsdale and Lee Eisler.
36. Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits. Jack Ragsdale.
37. Why I Am Not A Christian. Jack Ragsdale.
38. The Evolution of Conscience. Ralph Newman. Jack Ragsdale.
39. The Conquest of Happiness. Lee Eisler.
40. The ABC of Relativity. Lee Eisler.
41. Bertrand Russell, The Passionate Sceptic. by Alan Wood. Don Jackanicz.
42. Mortals and Others. Don Jackanicz.
43. Unarmed Victory. Don Jackanicz.
44. The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation its aims and its work.
45. Yes to Life. by Corliss Lamont. The Author.
46. Russell. by A.J. Ayer. Ramon Suzara.
47. The Will to Doubt. Ramon Suzara.
48. The Life of Bertrand Russell. by Ronald Clark. Ramon Suzara.
49. The Problems of Philosophy. Ramon Suzara.
50. Unpopular Essays. Ramon Suzara.
51. Human Society in Ethics and Politics. Don Jackanicz.
52. Principles and Perplexities: Studies of Dualism in Selected Essays  
and Fiction of Bertrand Russell. by Gladys Leithauser.
53. Photos, 1983 BRS Annual Meeting at McMaster University, June 24-26,  
1983. Jim Mc Williams.
54. The Art of Fund Raising. by Irving Warner. Bob Davis
55. The Grass Roots Fundraising Book. by Joan Flanagan. Bob Davis
56. Dear Russell-Dear Jourdain. by I. Grattan-Guinness. Bob Davis
57. Why Men Fight. Bob Davis
58. Grants. by Virginia White. Bob Davis
59. Fund Raising for the Small Organization. by Philip Sheriden. Bob Davis.
60. The Grantsmanship Center Training Program. Bob Davis
61. Nonprofit Organization Handbook. by P.V. and D.M. Gaby. Bob Davis
62. Successful Fundraising Techniques. by Daniel Conrad. Bob Davis
63. The Foundation Directory. Bob Davis.
64. Great Americans Examine Religion. by Ralph de Sola. Jack Ragsdale.
65. But For The Grace of God. by Peter Cranford. Jack Ragsdale.
66. Godel, Escher, Bach. by Douglas Hofstadter. Lee Eisler.
67. The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell, Vol. I. Cambridge Essays,  
1888-99. Edited by Blackwell, et al. Allen & Unwin.
68. The Right to Be Happy. by Mrs. Bertrand Russell. Al Seckel.
69. Power, A New Social Analysis. Al Seckel.
70. Bertrand Russell, A Bibliography of his Writings, 1895-1976  
Compiled by Werner Martin. Al Seckel.
71. Satan in the Suburbs. Al Seckel.
72. My Father, Bertrand Russell. by Katharine Tait. Al Seckel.
73. A Matter of Life. Edited by Clara Urquhart. Al Seckel.
74. Essays In Skepticism. Al Seckel.
75. The Problem of China. Al Seckel.
76. Russell On General Facts by Ausonio Marras and Russell, Frege, and  
The " Meaning " of The Theory of Descriptions. Papers read at  
the 1976 Meeting of the A.P.A.

77. Acquaintance and Naming: A Russellian Theme in Epistemology by Augustin Biska and Russell on the Essence of Desire by Raymond Frey. Papers read at the 1977 Meeting of the A.P.A.
78. On Russellian Clusters by Eugene Schlossberger and Repression in Bertrand Russell's "On Education" by Howard Woodhouse. Papers read at the 1978 Meeting of the A.P.A.
79. Definition and Description in Russell, 1900-1910 by Thomas Barron and Russell and Ontological Excess by D.A. Griffiths. Papers read at the 1979 Meeting of the A.P.A.
80. Russell On Logical Truth, by Nicholas Griffin. The Author
81. Bertrand Russell and the Origin of the Set-Theoretic Paradoxes by Alejandro Ricardo Garciadiego Dantan. The Author.
82. Bertrand Russell, America, and the Idea of Social Justice by Roland Stromberg. The Author.
83. The Relevance of Bertrand Russell To Psychology and Bertrand Russell's Conception of the Meaning of Life by Peter Cranford. The Author.
84. Dictionary of the Mind, Matter, and Morals. Edited by Lester Dennon. Tom Stanley.
85. Bertrand Russell Speaks His Mind. Tom Stanley
86. The Bertrand Russell Library of Lester Dennon. Tom Stanley
87. The Analysis of Mind. Tom Stanley
88. Religion and Science. Tom Stanley
89. Portraits From Memory. Tom Stanley.
90. The Scientific Outlook. Tom Stanley.
91. Wisdom of the West. Tom Stanley.
92. The Principles of Mathematics. Tom Stanley.
93. Bertrand Russell: Philosopher and Humanist, by John Lewis. Tom Stanley
94. The Good Citizen's Alphabet. Whitfield Cobb
95. War Crimes in Vietnam. Whitfield Cobb.
96. Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy. Whitfield Cobb.
97. The Prospects of Industrial Civilization. Whitfield Cobb.
98. Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. by Wittgenstein. Introduction by Bertrand Russell. Whitfield Cobb.
99. Freedom Versus Organization. Whitfield Cobb.
100. Bertrand Russell and His World, by Ronald Clark. W.W. Norton.
101. The Final Epidemic: Physicians and Scientists on Nuclear War. Edited by Ruth Adams and Susan Cullen. Physicians for Social Responsibility.
102. Photos, Kalinga Prize Award Ceremony. Paris, January 28, 1957. UNESCO.
103. Theory of Knowledge: The 1913 Manuscript, Volume VII of the Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell. Allen & Unwin.
104. Common Sense And Nuclear Warfare. Philip LeCompte.
105. Late Night Thoughts On Listening To Mahler's Ninth Symphony. Lewis Thomas
106. Six Men. Craig McGee.
107. Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War by Jo Vellacott. St Martin's Press.
108. Russell by C.W. Kilmister. St Martin's Press.
109. Contemplation And Action, Volume XII of the Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell. Allen & Unwin.
110. Bertrand Russell's America 1945-1970 by Feinburg and Kasrils The South End Press.
111. Dewey and Russell: An Exchange edited by Samuel Meyer. The Philosophical Library.
112. Philosophical Essays. Ramon Suzara.
113. Bertrand Russell: A Classified Bibliography by Harry Ruja. The Author.
114. Principles of Polemic in Russell by Harry Ruja. The Author.
115. Bertrand Russell edited by Ann Redpath. Creative Education, Inc.

There is no charge for borrowing books. The borrower pays postage both ways. Please note the one-way postage shown below, and remit twice that amount when returning the books.

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 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89,  
 90, 92, 96, 97, 98, 100, 101, 102, 104, 105, 111, 112, 115  
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 103, 106, 107, 108, 110  
 \$1.19 #1, 48, 52, 62, 81, 91  
 \$1.62 #60, 61, 109

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**Audio cassettes:**

The Library has acquired these additions to our collection of tapes available for loan:

225 Man's Peril. Russell's December 23, 1954 BBC broadcast. 14 Minutes. Donated by the NBC Radio News Department.

226 On Nuclear Morality. October, 1962.32 Minutes. The exact date and the name of the interviewer is unknown. Pacifica Radio No. BB0597

227 Appeal To The American Conscience. June, 1966. 29 Minutes. This tape is entitled " Bertrand Russell's War Crimes Tribunal " in the Pacifica catalog. Pacifica Radio No. BB4013

228 CBC Interview On Vietnam. February 14, 1965. 10 Minutes. This is the soundtrack of a television interview by Roger Graef. Donated by the CBC and Public Archives Canada.

Bertrand Russell Speaking, which was noted as being out-of-print in RSN 48, may be purchased on cassette from Caedmon. Catalog No.SWC 1149 \$12.95

**New and forthcoming books:**

Slater, John G., ed. The Philosophy of Logical Atomism and Other Essays, 1914-1919. Volume Eight of " The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell ". London: Allen & Unwin.May, 1986 418 pp. \$60.00

Hendley, Brian. Dewey, Russell, Whitehead: Philosophers as Educators. Southern Illinois University Press. 1986 pb \$9.95. Contains chapter on the Beacon Hill School.

Seckel, Al, ed. Bertrand Russell on God and Religion. N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1986 345 pp. pb \$10.95

(30) Little Blue Books, first published by Haldeman-Julius 50 years or so ago, are again available, from Michael E. Coughlin, 1985 Selby Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104. Add 50¢ postage for 1 - 5 books; for 6 or more books, add \$1.00.

**BERTRAND RUSSELL COLLECTION**

<b>By The Author</b>	
Am I An Atheist or Agnostic .....	\$1
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The Faith of a Rationalist .....	\$1
What Can a Free Man Worship .....	\$1
Total .....	\$10
Complete Set .....	\$8

**CONTRIBUTIONS**

(31) We are grateful to these members for their recent contribution to the BRS Treasury: LOU ACHESON, WHITFIELD & POLLY COBB, JIM CURTIS, ANGELO D'ALESSIO, BILL FIELDING, DAVID GOLDMAN, GLADYS LEITHAUSER, THEO MEIJER, HUGH MOORHEAD, FRANK PAGE, SANDRA PERRY, TIMOTHY ST. VINCENT, RAMON SUZARA, JAMES TERRY and VINCENT WILLIAMS.

(32) "Refunds can enable us to make modest contributions to the BRS Treasury," says VINCENT DUFAUX WILLIAMS, and he enclosed a \$3 refund check from Prestone. "Even though it's just small change,it's still worth doing. I hope members will be willing to take the trouble of mailing the refund checks to the BRS." We thank him for the good suggestion.

## NEW MEMBERS

(33) We welcome these new members:

MS. ULLA ANDREAS/86/TRANSTIGAN 10/MALMO///SWEDEN/S-216 19  
 MR. J. WARREN ARRINGTON/86/ROUTE 4, BOX 220/HILLSBORO/OR/97123//  
 MS. BEVERLEY EARLES/86/6110 BREEZEWOOD DR. #103/GREENBELT/MD/20770//  
 MR. MICHAEL FREED/86/523 FIELD DORM; UMASS/AMHERST/MA/01003//  
 MR. NEIL H. GLYNN/86/3151 BAYOU SOUND/LONGBOAT KEY/FL/33548//  
 MR. HENRY B. MANGRAVITE/86/311 "B" STREET/ASHLAND/OR/97520//  
 MR. UKALI MWENDO/86/PO BOX 3088/NEW ORLEANS/LA/70177 3088//  
 DR. CHANDRAKALA PADIA/86/SHREE R.P. GINODIA/C.26/35 A-1 B./RAMKATORA ROAD///INDIA (VARANESI)/221001  
 MR. ROBERT L. SMITH, JR./86/223 W. ORLANDO ST./ORLANDO/FL/32804//

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## NEW ADDRESSES

(34) LCDR JOSEPH F. BOETCHER/81/240 MACALLA ROAD 4B/SAN FRANCISCO/CA/94130 5000//  
 MR. MICHAL J. BONINO/83/435 TAYLOR ST./PITTSBURGH/PA/15224 1823//  
 MR. MARK E. FARLEY/81/13015 AUDELIA RD. #8107/DALLAS/TX/75243//  
 DR. STEPHEN HAMBY/76/153 POTTER DR./MOBILE/AL/36606 2360//  
 MR. TING-FU HUNG/85/ADELHEIDSTR 17 ZI 008/MUENCHEN///WEST GERMANY/8000 40  
 PROF. DAVID E. JOHNSON/83/150 PORTER DRIVE/ANNAPOLIS/MD/21401//  
 MR. HENRY KRAUS/74/1191 TIVOLI LANE #68/SIMI VALLEY/CA/93065//  
 MR. JAMES E. MCWILLIAMS/74/S.S. BOX 5519/HATTIESBURG/MS/39406//  
 MR. RALPH A. MILL/84/534 23RD ST NE/SALEM/OR/97301 2182//  
 PROF. PAUL ARTHUR SCHILPP/80/9 HILLCREST DRIVE/CARBONDALE/IL/62901//  
 MR. LUDWIG SLUSKY/83/BOX 7045/ALHAMBRA/CA/91802 7045//  
 CAPT. MICHAEL H. TAINT/82/PO BOX 698/HAWTHORNE/CA/90251 0698//  
 MR. JAMES V. TERRY/81/BOX 18153/WASHINGTON/DC/20036//

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## ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

(35) Nominations for Directors, please. We wish to elect 11 Directors this year, for 3-year terms starting 1/1/87, which will give us a total of 24 elected Directors. The August newsletter will provide a ballot for voting. In this (May) newsletter we seek candidates who will be on the ballot.

We are asking you to nominate candidates. Any member may nominate any other member to be a Director-candidate.

If you wish to be a candidate yourself, notify the Elections Committee and someone will probably nominate you.

The duties of a Director are not burdensome. Directors are occasionally asked their opinion about something, by mail, and they are expected to make a reasonable effort to attend annual meetings, though not at great expense. The cost of attending meetings is (federal) tax-deductible for Directors.

We would like to have more than 11 names on the ballot, so as to give members a choice.

A brief statement about the candidate should accompany a nomination. If you are volunteering, include a brief statement about yourself.

Directors whose terms expire in 1986 are JACK COWLES, DAVE GOLDMAN, STEVE MARAGIDES, FRANK PAGE, CHERIE RUPPE, PAUL SCHILPP, WARREN SMITH, and KATE TAIT. They are eligible for re-election.

We urge last year's candidates who were not elected to try again this year.

TO NOMINATE SOMEONE -- or to volunteer yourself -- write the Election Committee, c/o the newsletter, address on Page 1, bottom.

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## WANTED

- (36) Griffin Barry will be the subject of a book-length study by Leona Egan, Ph.D. She is interested in showing, among other things, his relation to the Provincetown Players, the celebrated theatrical group involved with Eugene O'Neill. Of more interest to us is the fact that Barry was an intimate friend of Dora Russell's, and father of her third child. There are many references to him in Dora's autobiography, "The Tamarisk Tree". Ms. Egan would appreciate hearing from anyone who knows anything about Barry. Her address, in spring and summer: 4471 MacArthur Blvd. (#103), Washington, DC 20007. 202-342-8332. At other times: PO Box 556, Provincetown, MA 02657.

## BOOK REVIEW

- (37) "Bertrand Russell on God and Religion," Al Seckel, ed. (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1986) is reviewed by BOB DAVIS:

This new collection of Russell's writings should appeal to most, maybe all, BRS members. Edited by Al Seckel, it contains 19 separate articles by BR on religious topics.

For the past eight years, the BRS has been wanting a book like this, and now Al Seckel has satisfied that desire, and done an admirable job. Al, a BRS member, lives in the Los Angeles area, where he has done a lot of lecturing on Russell (including a talk he gave at our 1980 annual meeting, in Los Angeles.) The Humanist publishing house, Prometheus Books, is the publisher, with the promise of more to come.

This book is a joy to read. Seckel has included a good brisk biography of Russell to initiate matters. Then come the 19 articles by BR. The many pleasures of reading Russell are here -- the clear, forceful writing, the humor, the intellectual power. We also have the fun of reacquainting ourselves with old favorites, such as "Why I Am Not A Christian", "What Is An Agnostic?" "Sin", etc. These and other essays will be familiar to most members, but it is rewarding to have them gathered together in one collection, and re-read them after many years.

There are also a number of essays that Seckel found in periodicals which will be new to almost everyone. I found "Religion and The Churches", from "Unpopular Review" (April 1916), to be of great interest. In my own graduate work I had studied Russell's social thought during World War I; imagine, then, my delight at finding an essay from the period which was new to me. I enjoyed seeing how well it fit in with BR's 1915 Principles of Social Reconstruction (American title: "Why Men Fight"). Concerning religion, it has a less implacable tone than his later writings. Here he states what a "good" religion would entail; later he would write, "All religions are not only wrong but harmful."

For those wanting a chuckle or two, I would recommend "The Theologian's Nightmare" (from "Fact and Fiction", 1961), one of Russell's "Nightmares of Eminent Persons".

I first became acquainted with Russell as a teen-ager in rural Iowa, when I read "Why I Am Not A Christian" and "Marriage and Morals". I found them enormously liberating, in the local stultifying fundamentalist environment. I also discovered that I was not alone in finding Russell liberating. But when I moved to more cosmopolitan areas, I found that this was not the case -- because the values that Russell represented had more or less become the norm. Now, with the resurgence of fundamentalism and repressive morality, I predict that Russell's writings on these topics will regain their relevance. If you know someone, especially a young person, who is confused on these questions, I would strongly recommend Seckel's book as a gift.

The book is apparently selling very well. Seckel and Prometheus Books are working on a second volume, on morality. BRS members who buy this book are helping to support a very worthy undertaking. To have it autographed by Al, buy it directly from him. See ( ).

DIRECTORS OF THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY, INC.  
elected for 3-year terms, as shown

- (38) 1984-86: JACK COWLES, DAVID GOLDMAN, DON JACKANICZ, STEVE MARAGIDES, FRANK PAGE, CHERIE RUPPE, PAUL SCHILPP, WARREN SMITH, KATE TAIT
- 1985-87: JACQUELINE BERTHON-PAYON, BOB DAVIS, ALEX DELY, ALI GHAEMI, HUGH MOORHEAD
- 1986-88: LOU ACHESON, KEN BLACKWELL, JOHN JACKANICZ, DAVID JOHNSON, JUSTIN LEIBER, GLADYS LEITHAUSER, STEVE REINHARDT, CARL SPADONI, TOM STANLEY.

## BRS AWARD (CONTINUED)

(39) People For the American Way, from a feature story in the Washington Post (2/3/86,p.A3):

# Norman Lear's Crusade Widens

## Fight Over Religious Liberty Challenges Falwell's Fundamentalism

By Howard Kurtz  
Washington Post Staff Writer

In 1980, Norman Lear experienced his first sustained exposure to the Rev. Jerry Falwell, and he did not like what he saw.

While doing research for a possible movie, Lear watched nearly 100 hours of Falwell's "Old Time Gospel Hour," the Rev. Pat Robertson's "700 Club" and other evangelical shows. He said he was so alarmed that he dropped the movie plan and made a 60-second commercial on religious intolerance. That led to the creation of People for the American Way.

Five years later, Lear's group has become a major force in the national debate on religious liberty, censorship, church-state relations and judicial independence. If yards of newsprint and hours of television time are any indication, People for the American Way has emerged as a preeminent spokesman on the left, fueled in part by a \$5 million budget that dwarfs those of most liberal advocacy groups.

While its publicity machine cuts a wide swath through Washington, the soul of Lear's organization remains its fervent opposition to Falwell's Moral Majority. This has produced a remarkably bitter and personal war of words between television producer and television preacher.

"Norman Lear is clearly anti-Christian," Falwell said. "I don't know of many Jewish people, who are anti-Christian. His whole vendetta is against everyone who is preaching the gospel . . . ."

"I see an anti-Christian, anti-Reagan fire raging in his soul that's caused him to lash out at the president and the Pat Robertsons and Jerry Falwells of the world.

"I've tried to get the name of his synagogue so I could call his rabbi and find out what's bugging him," said Falwell, 52. "Maybe he doesn't have one. He's just got Christians in his crew."

Lear, 62, creator of such television series as "All in the Family," "Maude" and "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman," responded in kind:

"There's nobody who knows me who thinks I'm either irreligious or antireligious. I have great concern anytime someone suggests that God smiles on him because he believes a certain way and doesn't smile on me.

"He would have to know, the way he talks about me, that . . . to an anti-Semite, a wealthy Jew is dif-

ferent from someone else who is wealthy. The Rev. Falwell trades in that in a consistent and smarmy fashion."

Lear's lieutenants declared a victory of sorts last month when Falwell announced that the Moral Majority was being submerged into a new lobby called the Liberty Federation. They expressed particular delight when Falwell told The Washington Times that he was "attempting to counter everything that People for the American Way . . . and other leftist organizations stand for."

How did this group quickly become the *bête noire* of the religious right? At a time when conservative think tanks are dominating the Washington scene with a more legalistic and academic approach to public policy, People for the American Way uses the media to amplify its message.

The 200,000-member group does some lobbying, but its major weapons are books, videotapes, op-ed page articles and speakers who ply the lecture circuit. Whether castigating Falwell for religious intolerance, Attorney General Edwin Meese III for promoting ultraconservative judges or Education Secretary William J. Bennett for acting like a "secretary of evangelism," Lear's troops know how to gain.

While other activists may churn out legal briefs or cultivate allies in the administration, People for the American Way strives to be the most well-thumbed card in reporters' Rolodex files.

Anthony T. Podesta, the executive director, said his approach is "to get an editorial in The Philadelphia Inquirer or The Baltimore Sun. We raise hell in the Chicago Tribune and on MacNeil/Lehrer. We send material to 300 radio talk shows. We're out there in the Edwardsville, Ill., Gazette."

Podesta's reasoning is simple: "If separation of church and state isn't going to sell in Edwardsville, Ill., Washington is not going to save us."

Last summer, while President Reagan was preparing to name Herbert E. Ellingwood to head the office that screens potential federal judges, Podesta's staff prepared radio advertisements that attacked Ellingwood's outspoken brand of Christian fundamentalism and his record as head of the Merit Systems Protection Board. The nomination was not made.

Such assaults have not endeared

the group to conservative activists. "I don't like their tactics at all," said Patrick B. McGuigan of the Free Congress Foundation. "They're feeding the mentality that you can't oppose people on the merits, that you have to pretend that they're moral lepers."

Loye Miller, a spokesman for Bennett, called the group "so shrill and predictably distorted that they deserve no credibility . . . . They are not taken seriously here."

Falwell describes the group as "an amazingly small organization" of closet Democrats. "If they could get 100 of their members in the same room, I'd like to see that," he said.

Falwell, whose Moral Majority claims 6.5 million members, said Lear's group frequently harasses him by writing to television stations that carry his program. People for the American Way said these are equal-time requests, but Falwell called it an attempt to force him off the air.

Other critics confess grudging admiration. "You have to concede their effectiveness," Justice Department spokesman Patrick Korten said. "They manage to get themselves quoted quite a lot."

Still, he said, "It's basically a PR operation" aimed at "creating the impression that there is some groundswell out there that would support their point of view. In fact, that groundswell is largely limited to the usual residues of liberal activists."

Ticking off names of Republican supporters, Lear rejects the notion that he has assembled a group of Democratic partisans. He said he took pains "to enlist mainline church leaders" in establishing the group after nearly 10,000 people dialed a toll-free number featured in his 1980 commercial.

"My credentials . . . were all wrong," Lear said. "I was a product of the Hollywood community; I was Jewish."

Lear points to such founders as the Rev. Charles Bergstrom, a leader of the Lutheran Council, and the group's chairman, former Baptist minister John Buchanan.

Buchanan, an eight-term Republican congressman from Alabama until the New Right helped defeat him in 1980, said he signed up because "most Americans don't like for preachers to tell them what is the Christian position on an issue."

Other directors range from Catholic University President William

Byron to actor Martin Sheen to National Education Association President Mary Hatwood Futrell. Lear's direct-mail specialist, Art Kropp, is a former fund-raiser for the Republican National Committee, and his latest appeal was signed by Sen. Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (R-Conn.).

Podesta, 42, admits to being a Democrat who did advance work for the 1980 presidential campaign of Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and for 1984 vice-presidential nominee Geraldine A. Ferraro.

Podesta also resists the liberal label, saying that "what we do is profoundly conservative. Conserving the First Amendment heritage in this country is not a liberal agenda . . . . The people on the loony right think we're left-wingers."

People for the American Way spent much time last year attacking the Reagan administration. It mounted a media campaign accusing Meese, Falwell and Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) of trying to stack the federal judiciary with extremists and impose a right-wing litmus test on potential judges.

It issued a scathing report on Bennett's first 100 days in office, called "A Department at Risk." It urged dismissal of a Treasury Department official who answered a citizen's post card by calling him an "amazing, pathetic creature" for questioning that America is "a Christian nation."

The group also helped defeat an amendment by Sen. Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah) that would have ended federal funding to school districts that teach "secular humanism." And it aired a documentary on book-burning, narrated by actor Burt Lancaster, that a Moral Majority official said "would make the propagandists of the Soviet Union and the Third Reich proud."

The anticensorship campaign is slowly moving the group's focus beyond the Beltway. In 1984, it helped persuade Texas, the nation's largest purchaser of school textbooks, to repeal a rule barring the use of books mentioning evolution. In recent weeks, staffers have been flying to tiny Church Hill, Tenn., to join a battle over school curriculum.

"You look for opportunities like that," Podesta said, "so that Newsweek then does a little blurb in 'Periscope' to show that the fight against secular humanism and evolution is not yet over."

## THE FUND-RAISING BATTLE

A LOOK AT EACH SIDE'S LETTERS

**People For The  
American Way**

**Y**ou may be aware that Jerry Falwell...and other ultra-fundamentalist ministers have been preaching a dangerous message of religious extremism to the American people...

"In a recent broadcast...Falwell said: 'Biblically sound textbooks must be written for every school child in every course of study. Our textbooks...are very humanistic and very riddled with anti-Christian philosophies'...

"A massive, new crusade is now underway...an attempt to 'Christianize' America. To achieve the goals of this 'Christian Nation Movement,' leaders from the Religious Right—the Revs. Jerry Falwell, Jimmy Swaggart, Pat Robertson, along with Phyllis Schlafly, Jesse Helms and others—have targeted every vital institution basic to American life: 1) our public schools; 2) our federal courts; and 3) even public officials."

**NORMAN LEAR**



**I**t seems that Mr. Lear, under the guise of being a patriotic, flag-waving American, is trying to brainwash the American public into believing the Moral Majority is a book-burning, pro-censorship organization which tries to deny people First American rights...Mr. Lear is raising funds right now to destroy us! And not only that, he has the networks and liberal press backing him as well. This makes him a real threat to us...

"This wealthy television mogul, who has deluged America with such anti-moral, anti-family programs as 'Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman,' has now launched a million dollar, anti-Christian ministers campaign of TV spots..."

"The man that some people believe to be the greatest threat to the American family in our generation...has successfully brought fifth and sexual perversion into our living rooms and led the way to today's gutter programming."

**JERRY FALWELL**



What makes all this possible is money, which Lear's group raises through a time-honored technique: painting the opposition in fearsome colors. Lear aides monitor Falwell's every utterance with a "televangelist survey" that provides fresh grist for their fund-raising mill.

Lear, in turn, is a leading character in Falwell's fund-raising appeals. While direct-mail donations to conservative causes have been declining, the Moral Majority still raised \$7 million last year as part of Falwell's \$100 million empire.

Lear said that, after one Falwell mailing called him the number one threat to the American family, he received death threats from a man who turned out to have the letter ped to his wall.

While many believe that Lear, a prodigious fund-raiser, bankrolls People for the American Way, he donated just \$100,000 of its \$5 million budget last year. Nearly 20 percent comes from foundations, with the rest from individual donors responding to appeals that rarely fail to mention Falwell.

"They use me as a whipping boy," Falwell said. "I am to them what Ted Kennedy is to the right—I'm their means of raising money. If I were to die today, their organization would go out of business."

To that, Lear replied: "Look at his mail and how much it mentions me . . . In his mailings, which are far more vitriolic than anything he says on the air, he suggests that anybody that disagrees with him is satanic."

THE WASHINGTON POST

(40)

OFFICERS OF THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY, INC.

Chairman, Harry Ruja; President, David S. Hart; Vice-President, Marvin Kohl; Treasurer, Dennis J. Darland; Secretary, John R. Lenz; Vice-President/Information, Lee Eisler.



## BRS COMMITTEES (CONTINUED)

(41) Philosophers' Committee Chairman David E. Johnson reports:

On December 28, 1985, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Washington (D.C.) Hilton, the Philosophers' Committee of the Bertrand Russell Society sponsored a session in conjunction with the Eastern Division meetings of the American Philosophical Association. The audience fluctuated from 10 to 18. The program as announced contained a panel by Marx Wartofsky and Justin Leiber on Russell and Wittgenstein, followed by Hugh Moorhead on "Bertrand Russell in War and Peace." By 9:45 Wartofsky had not appeared, so Leiber talked briefly about what would have been discussed were Wartofsky to have appeared: i.e., differences between Russell and Wittgenstein as role models for the profession (in relation to public affairs) and in how they were treated by the profession. The audience gave about five minutes of lively challenge to Leiber's presentation. Then we turned to Hugh Moorhead's paper. About fifteen minutes into this paper, Wartofsky popped in and announced that he had apparently scheduled himself for two panels simultaneously, and would stay with the other session.

Having clarified this confusion, we proceeded with Moorhead's paper, which was divided into a conceptual clarification of some of Russell's discussions on the topic. The focus of the latter part was on Russell's role as an educator of the culture in the factors leading in the direction of war (e.g., nationalism, patriotism, glory, fatalistic views of human nature, and disuse of reason), followed by his proposals that might lead to peace (quite a gamut over his lifetime). Russell's primary influence here, Moorhead argued, was among lay readers rather than among academicians. The paper concluded with an exhortation to the hearers to advance Russell's work by starting with his view that war, man's ultimate absurdity, is indeed a philosophical problem.

## OPINION

(42) I.F. Stone is interviewed in *The Progressive* (reprinted in the *Utne Reader* Oct/Nov 1984).

[We recall that Stone gave the closing public lecture of the Bertrand Russell Centenary Conference at McMaster University, in 1972. His topic was "Russell as a Moral Force in World Politics".]

**T**hrough six decades of history, I.F. Stone has established himself as the dean of dissident journalists in the U.S. A sports and local news beat reporter in the 1920's, Stone later became Washington, D.C. correspondent for PM, a New York "free-wheeling sheet" in the 1940's that "respected the intelligence of its readers." As publisher, editor and principal writer for I.F. Stone's Weekly, he became widely known for his iconoclastic reporting. The Weekly closed shop in 1972, and Stone now savors the time available for reading. The interview was conducted by Erwin Knoll, longtime friend to Stone and editor of *The Progressive*.

**PROGRESSIVE:** I've often heard you described as America's greatest muckraking journalist, but I seem to recall that you don't particularly like that title.

**STONE:** My God, I'm not the greatest. Henry Demarest Lloyd, the man who wrote *Wealth Against Commonwealth*—he was the greatest. But you're right about my not liking the word *muckraking*. It was coined as an insult to Teddy Roosevelt. It comes out of *Pilgrim's Progress*, and just as the terms of *Tory* and *Whig* were once insults but became respectable appellations in British politics, so *muckraker* has become more or less respectable. But the term really does a disservice to journalism. After all, you're not just raking muck, you're trying to help people understand what's happening in the society.

A good journalist has a fire in his belly and a duty to expose abuses.

**PROGRESSIVE:** Do you believe journalism is generally performing that function of help-



ing people understand what's happening? Is it doing it less well than it did when you went into newspaper work more than sixty years ago?

**STONE:** No, I think the press is better than it was in the 1920s. *The New York Times* was just godawful in the 1920s. Godawful! When I was a young man and Hoover was President, *The Times* had a Washington correspondent named Richard V. Oulahan who used to play medicine ball with Hoover almost every morning. And just about every day there'd be a front-page story in *The Times* that wasn't really a news story at all but a disguised editorial about what a great guy Herbert Hoover was. *The Times* is a far better paper today.

**PROGRESSIVE:** How would you define the

function of the press? What is it supposed to do?

**STONE:** The duty of the press is to inform the public and police the Government.

**PROGRESSIVE:** Isn't that a rather formidable mission to impose on what is, after all, a business enterprise?

**STONE:** That was Jefferson's ideal.

**PROGRESSIVE:** But Jefferson wasn't thinking about entrusting this mission to great conglomerate media corporations.

**STONE:** No, and he wasn't thinking about the electronic media, and all that can become a serious problem. You know, there's one good idea in the Soviet constitution: When Stalin's constitution was promulgated in the 1930s, he claimed it was better than the American constitution on freedom of the press because it provided that printing presses and other necessary materials should be made freely available to anyone who wished to express himself. Of course, he never obeyed it.

**PROGRESSIVE:** Do you believe there will ever be a society that provides that kind of freedom of expression?

**STONE:** I don't know. But if our media should be wholly swallowed up by big interests, the day may come when people will have to enact laws making printing presses and electronic time available to critics. . . .

The American press has a party line. It's not as bad as the Soviet press, it's not as rigid, but there is a defined realm of respectable discourse. If you cross over the bounds to the right or to the left—it's a little more flexible to the right than to the left, but it applies on both sides—then you don't have to write for the desk drawer or hide your writing under the bed, as in the Soviet Union, but you sub-

ILLUSTRATION BY JULIAN ALLEN

mit it to the American equivalent of *samizdat*—*The Progressive*, *The Nation*, *In These Times*. You're relegated to publications that reach only a small number of Americans. So the dissidents here are allowed to talk to each other, but they don't get a chance to talk to the wider public. And on television—my God, you almost never get to see anyone on the Left.

**PROGRESSIVE:** Given that—I don't want to call it bias—given that institutional inertia on the part of the mass media, how will we ever reach enough people in this country with enough information and analysis to bring about fundamental political change?

**STONE:** Well, we do—somehow. The system is not perfect, and it's not monolithic. There's a parable in the Gospel about the seeds that fall on stony places. Quite often you find in the daily newspaper bits and pieces of information that run counter to what I call the party line. They don't make the front page, and they're not amplified by editorial writers, columnists, speechmakers. They're not repeated, they're just dropped. If you're a careful reader, you pick up these droppings and develop their inferences, their meanings for your own audience. That's what you do in *The Progressive* and what I did in the *Weekly*.

A lot of it can be found right there in the press, and even more of it can be found in the public record—in Congressional hearings and debates, in official documents. For example, when [Senators Wayne] Morse and [Ernest] Gruening opened up on the Tonkin

## “The American press has a party line . . . a defined realm of respectable discourse.”

Gulf resolution [authorizing full-scale U.S. military intervention in Vietnam], I covered it in the *Weekly*. It was all there in the *Congressional Record*, but nobody bothered to read it, and editors weren't interested enough to have reporters cover it. It didn't fit the party line—just as you don't get stuff in *Pravda* or *Izvestia* that tells the Russian people that the war in Afghanistan is a big mistake.

But the difference between the Soviet press and the American press is that if you look hard enough, here, you can find a lot of good stories. It's possible for people to keep informed. One reason the *Government* is so badly informed is that it has too damned many intelligence agencies. I mean that very seriously. There was a revealing moment when President Kennedy called in David Halberstam [of *The New York Times*] and General [Victor] Krulak of the Marines, who was head of intelligence for the military in Vietnam, and said, in effect, “Hey, you guys—I read Halberstam's reports in *The Times* and I read Krulak's secret reports and it reads like two different wars. Which is the real war?” Of course, the real war was being reported in *The Times* and *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal* and the phony war was the stuff that came in over the President's desk. It looked like the real stuff because it was stamped **SECRET**, but it was a

bunch of bullshit. . . .

Secrets play a very small part in human history. You don't come to understand what's happening by peeping through keyholes and seeing how a foreign leader goes to the toilet. In writing history or journalism—it's the same thing—you get to understand by looking at the fundamental struggles, the interests, the classes, the ideas that become facts, and you try to make sense of all that.

The virtue of a free society is that it doesn't have to depend on spies and secret police. Those people are all paranoid, trained to look for plots, but history is not made by conspiracies. An essential premise both of liberal philosophy—Locke, Milton, Jefferson—and of Marxist philosophy, which is also part of the English materialist tradition, is that history is not made by conspiracies. As the Declaration of Independence states, people will suffer great evils for a long time before they act to bring about change. Hazlitt has a wonderful essay on the French Revolution in which he makes the same point: People don't revolt until conditions become intolerable.

History is made by fundamental forces, not by dark conspiracies. Human beings are rational, to some degree, and that rationality gives hope, and we journalists are supposed to feed this rational element, to inform, to persuade, to illuminate, so people can make decisions on the basis of debate, and so that a government that's on a bad track can switch to a good track.

**PROGRESSIVE:** But how can you apply this enlightened, rational, but leisurely process of public deliberation to the threat of nuclear holocaust, which may confront us with the prospect of catastrophe not in a matter of years or months, but in perhaps days or even hours?

**STONE:** The public is very well informed on this. It's a mistake to think people are unaware of the danger. The latest figures in a poll commissioned by the Committee on the Present Danger, who are hawks and arms-race buffs, show that 81 percent favor a nuclear freeze, and 31 percent favor nuclear disarmament.

But the human race is trapped by its primitive instincts, the macho appeal of war, and the obsolescence of the nation-state system.

Man may now be an endangered species. We know that if a great change in climatic conditions requires drastic changes in the behavior of a species, it will probably die out. If the icecaps were suddenly to melt, polar bears would die out. No species seems to be able to adapt beyond a margin, and man may be in the same position. Unless he can free himself from his own primitivism, unless he can learn to master technology instead of being mastered by it, he's doomed.

That's not a question of capitalism or communism, but free society or dictatorship. All that is superficial and propagandistic; it's not the heart of the question. If our antagonist today were a republican Russia or a czarist Russia, it would make no difference at all in the arms race. After every great war, the victors square off against each other for the next one. This has to do with the trap created by human nature and the make-up of the international system.

**PROGRESSIVE:** How do we break out of this trap we've devised for ourselves?

**STONE:** By talking about it, agitating, orga-

nizing. The freeze movement is doing its best; it's a wonderful grass-roots movement—the most encouraging thing that's happened in the last ten years.

There's still hope, but the end could come at any time. Unless we get a freeze very soon, Moscow and Washington will both lose control of their own destinies. Then there's no more Constitution, no more Politburo, no time to get the President out of bed, no time for debate. With the advance of technology and the reduction of warning time, the good old days when we had thirty minutes' notice of an ICBM coming across the Atlantic are just about over. . . .

**PROGRESSIVE:** I've known you for a long time. Even when talking, as we are right now, about the most grim and threatening developments, I've always found you hopeful. You said just a moment ago, “There's still hope.” In 1953, several years before the Russians launched their first Sputnik, you saw clearly a danger that very few other people saw—the danger of space war—and you raised the alarm in the *Weekly*. Here we are, thirty years later, having advanced relentlessly toward that danger. How do you sustain your optimism? How can you still believe that we'll be able to get a handle on it?

**STONE:** History is not a totally fatalistic drama. People can change it at least a little bit, and they have a duty to try. Aristotle tells a wonderful story about how a defeated army in headlong flight suddenly begins to turn around and make a stand and fight. How does that happen? he asks, and this is what he says: One man decides he'd rather turn around and die than run—and he does. Then a second man follows him, and a third man, and a fourth man, and soon there's a whole knot of resistance, and before you know it the whole army has turned around and what looked like a defeat has become victory.

**PROGRESSIVE:** And you believe people can still turn the defeat we all face into a victory?

**STONE:** I think so, yes, though I wouldn't want to bet on it. But that's our duty. It's a citizen's duty—and a journalist's duty—to

## “ . . . on television—my God, you almost never get to see anyone on the Left.”

fight. You never can tell, sometimes you win.

A friend once gave me a word of hope: He said, “You know, Izzy, if you keep on pissing on a boulder for about a thousand years, you'd be surprised what an impression you make.”

I never thought, at the time of the witchhunts, that I would live to see the day when J. Edgar Hoover would be recognized as the kind of jerk he really was, and when guys like me would find a certain amount of acceptance, if not applause. I never thought that would happen. Who would have thought that a Senate committee would expose the dealings of the CIA, the attempts to kill Fidel Castro, the dirty work against Salvador Allende? That was wonderful.

It's still a free society, but it'll become

less so if people don't have the courage to utilize it.

**PROGRESSIVE:** You've written about great moments in human history and about terrible moments, but you tend to remember the great moments more forcefully than the terrible ones, don't you?

**STONE:** Well, you have to remember both, and they're often so mixed up. Anatole France, who's unjustly no longer read, wrote a wonderful novel, *Les Dieux Ont Soif—The Gods Are Thirst*—which is really a handbook for the study of revolution. It's a portrait of a Jacobin, a terrible mixture of idealism, cruelty, brutality, love, humanity and inhumanity, justice and injustice—all in one personality that really summed up the whole French Revolution. It was a dreadful thing to live through the French Revolution, just as dreadful as the Russian Revolution, and it had the same admixture of idealism and horror and irrationality.

**PROGRESSIVE:** So we keep reinventing the wheel and painfully learning the things others learned before us. Don't you find even that discouraging?

**STONE:** No, you don't have to reinvent the wheel. The human race has learned a little bit. But the human being is still very much a caveman, and he figures that the solution to any problem is to get rid of that bastard across the valley, and that the only way to create peace is to get a bigger club and go in there and smash his brains out. That's deterrence. That's what Reagan wants to do to Russia. That's the "evil empire"—that other guy across the valley. . . .

**PROGRESSIVE:** We haven't talked about what you are learning from the Greeks.

**STONE:** What I learned from the Jews is more important. I'm in love with the Greeks, but when it comes to these problems we've been talking about, the Hebrew Prophets—and I include Jesus among them, and Marx, too, for that matter—have it all over the Greeks. There's no compassion in the Greeks. There's no respect for the lowly. Socrates never speaks of the wisdom of the poor and the humble, the wisdom that comes from sacrifice, experience, and suffering. For him, virtue is knowledge—but lots of knowledgeable people are pretty awful. You can be a great scholar and a bad human being, or ignorant and a wonderful human being.

You see, Christianity is a marriage of two diverse strains. One is the deeply democratic strain of the Hebrew Bible and the

Gospels—the strain that elevates the common man. Right at the beginning of the Bible you have God saying to the angels, "Let's make man in our image." So man was made in the image of God. That's a compliment; that doesn't demean him. It elevates him. It also says we all come from the same father and mother. So the idea of equality comes right out of those early chapters of the Bible. In the Peasant Revolt, when they finally got the Bible away from the Church and translated it so common people could read it, it spread revolution just as liberation theology is doing right now in Latin America.

Does Reagan know what he's doing with this religious issue? The Bible's a revolutionary document. The saying, "Sooner shall a camel pass through a needle's eye than a rich man enter into the gates of Heaven"—that's not in Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*, that's in the Gospels.

On the other hand, we have the neo-Platonic and hierarchical view of a society made up of orders—not just of classes but of rigid orders—and that idea, too, passed into Christianity. In that vision, the lower classes obey the higher classes, and the higher classes give the poor an occasional pat on the head and a beggar's mite.

It's the hierarchical strain we find in St. Augustine and in Calvin, who believe that if someone's rich and powerful, it shows he has grace. That's made to order for the ruling class, for the rich against the poor. But it's completely contrary to the Gospels. The Gospels are a *cri de coeur* of the poor.

**PROGRESSIVE:** What do you enjoy these days, Izzy? What do you do for sheer fun?

**STONE:** I read Greek poets, and other poetry. Hebrew poetry. I've been a pious Jewish atheist since my Bar Mitzvah, but I am pious, and at my age, every day is a gift from God. It's wonderful to hear the birds in the morning, and to see the trees, and to see babies.

There's so much to learn and so many things I haven't read and it's so much fun—just so damn much fun. I go to bed with a whole pile of books, and I check out things in the encyclopedia, and it's all one seamless web; human history and human destiny. I read *The Birds* of Aristophanes in Greek last year, and it was so joyful that it gave me a new appreciation of the birds outside my window. And the human race is like the birds, and its poets are the birds that sing. Somehow we transcend our fate, we tran-

scend death by poetry.

Imagine, you pick up a poet who lived more than 2,000 years ago—like Sappho—and she speaks to you with such immediacy, such power, such pride. And Homer is wonderful—he's just a mish-mash in English, but in Greek he's such a great artist. It's worth all the agony of learning Greek.

**PROGRESSIVE:** It seems to me that what we've been talking about all afternoon, in one way or another, is your pride in the human experience. You talk about history as something that was accomplished by a great team of which we are all members

**STONE:** Yes, that's right. You know there's a chorus in the *Antigone*, and very few scholars have stopped to think about what it really means: It's a celebration of the common man—of the wonders of learning how to sail and how to fish, how to hunt, how to communicate. It's a poem to man. Socrates and Plato demean the common man, but the playwrights celebrate him; they're very democratic—Aeschylus, Sophocles, and above all, Euripides.

I figure if you treat common people as dogs, as they did in ancient Rome, you make a rabble out of them. If you affirm the myth of equality, it's still a myth—but it gives people self-respect, and it makes them feel equal. That's what DeTocqueville recognized: Myths can be very creative.

Socrates and Plato always talked about the human community as a herd, but Aristotle talked about it as a *polis*—a civilization—and *koinonia*—a community. Civilization means people can live together in peace. We need a world *polis*.

It's madness to reach out to the stars and begin the great adventure of going to the moon and the planets and maybe beyond and still be divided here on Earth by all these stupid, anachronistic quarrels.

**PROGRESSIVE:** But you still hope.

**STONE:** Look, history is a tremendous symphony—music full of anguish and horror and discord, but there's also beauty in it. I wish kids would start studying history again. The whole history of the human race is fascinating. It's mostly dark, but then there are the bright spots. . . .

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#### ABOUT OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

- (43) American Atheists held their 1986 Convention in Somerset, NJ, on April 18,19,20. We expect to report on it in our next issue.
- (44) Hemlock Society's "Hemlock Quarterly (April 1986) reports that Hemlock's Aid-in-Dying Act (Humane and Dignified Death Act) is on the move. USA TODAY did a half-page on it, interviewing Hemlock's founder, Derek Humphry. Hemlock mailed the Act to every legislator in California, Arizona and Florida, states where there has been keen interest in euthanasia. Hemlock Society membership -- now 13,000 --has more than doubled in the last 3 years, with new members coming in at the rate of 600 per month.
- (45) The Rationalist Society of St.Louis --"the oldest local freethought organization in the USA" -- puts out a nice 5-6 page monthly newsletter, "Secular Subjects". They'd probably send you sample issue, if you asked. Box 2931, St. Louis, MO 63130.

## FOR SALE

- (46) Members' stationery, 8 1/2 x 11, white. Across the top: "The good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge.\* Bertrand Russell" On the bottom: "\*Motto of The Bertrand Russell Society, Inc." \$6 for 90 sheets, postpaid. Order from the newsletter, address on Page 1, bottom.

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