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The Need for God

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This is a political journal, and what we are discussing here is the political need for God. The near-revolution in France and the assassination of Senator Kennedy dramatise the present distress of Western culture and its dire need for *something*. We are going to try to show in this article that that something is God, and that if a society is to be stable politically it cannot rely on Reason alone for the guidelines to its behaviour or the source of its authority.

Some years ago (*RSA World*, File 1, No. 9) we likened the culmination of the rationalist philosophy, utilitarianism, to a trackless tram. Two of its features, we noted, were that the tram wore a destination board marked "Happiness" and no licence plates. We outlined the manner in which the vehicle had been constructed: The raw materials for it were discovered some three centuries ago in the theory of inalienable individual rights of John Locke and the science of Isaac Newton. The materials were transported across the English Channel, and were there processed by the philosophers of the French Enlightenment. The result was an unqualified belief in the attainment of human happiness under the guidance of Reason. Men were rational beings, essentially good, and the evils of society were to be traced to faulty institutions and false concepts. Reason was placed in stark opposition to custom, tradition and reverence: while intelligence, the growth of knowledge and the advance of science represented the only hope for civilisation.

The processed parts re-crossed the Channel and were assembled by men like Jeremy Bentham. They dismissed the ancient institutions and sanctions of Britain (and all countries) as mere habits and needless impediments to progress. The Ten Commandments—all commandments, bar one—went overboard. The solitary exception was the dictate of pleasure: the greatest happiness for the greatest number. This was to be the sole criterion—economic, social, political, moral. "Nature," declared Bentham, "has placed man under the governance of two sovereign masters—pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do." The whole scale of values was tied to the satisfaction of individual wants. Crime did not "deserve" punishment: on the contrary, punishment was evil because it caused pain.

This rationalisation of values was linked with unbounded optimism in the reasonableness of men and with the limitless potential of science to produce wealth and control the material environment. The full participation of all citizens in the government of society, the wondrous workings of the machine, would secure utopia. By the mid-twentieth century, the vehicle was streamlined to cut through all resistance: it was adorned in the luminous paint of the atomic age, and jet-propelled by a universal outbreak of egalitarian humanism.

Now it has transported our culture to the precipice, Danny le Rouge to the Sorbonne, the assassins to Dallas, Memphis and Los Angeles.

The exaltation of the reasonableness of the individual had led to universal suffrage and to the apotheosis of democracy. The polling booth became the holy tabernacle: the new missionaries went out armed with the ballot paper, leaving the Bible behind. Democracy was no longer the fallible means towards a Christian society but its own justification and end. One-man-one-vote, self-determination, egalitarianism, charters, bills, declarations—these were the new articles of faith, the new creed. Divorced from irrational reality by the rationalists, they took no account of men and women as they are. Forced unnaturally into life, they increasingly dominated the political landscape. Now the fall leaves rasp through the concrete jungles of our hothouse culture—the illuminated notices of coming nakedness.

In the transports of anti-colonial euphoria, the Western nations urged the introduction of democracy among all emancipated people. After a decade or so, it survives in scarcely one of them. It was doomed there from the start: the basic conditions for democracy do not exist in Burundi. It has been a deplorable and wasteful experience for the new states. However the future of the world and the redemption of civilisation do not depend on them but in the Western nations. Men nod their heads and say knowingly today that of course it was always silly to suppose that the Westminster model would work in Timbuktu.

Lord, how they miss the point! The Westminster model no longer works in Westminster. A form of social organisation that has no higher sanction than the momentary impulse of the masses will not work anywhere. Such an impulse returned Mr. Wilson's Government to power a couple of years ago with an immense majority. Today the impulse is different. Mr. Anthony Wedgwood Benn (Minister of Technology, be it noted) refers to "discontent expressing itself in apathy or violent protest which could engulf us all in bloodshed". He wants yet more political responsibility and power for the individual. Mr. Angus Maude, Conservative M.P., writes in *The Spectator* of the necessity to protect parliamentary democracy from "the virtual certainty of an ultimate outbreak of popular violence". He looks to the House of Lords for salvation. There is no salvation to be had in either of these directions. A community which is held to ransom because of a dispute as to which of two men should knock a rivet into a sheet of metal cannot be saved either by Mr. Benn's "participating" democracy, or even the noblest Lords.

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FROM WEEK TO WEEK

Decidedly the time has come to call a spade a spade, which means considering the personal responsibilities involved in the situation which the British face. Britain—just—survived two world wars, and for centuries has not suffered a foreign invasion, except that due to unrestricted immigration and, what amounts almost to the same thing, the presence of traitors, of both the Fabian and the Communist variety, in their midst, some of them occupying positions of high office.

In matters of defence, an officer of the rank of Wing Commander in the Air Force may be presumed to write as an expert, and the words of Wing Commander Sir John Hodsoll, which appeared in a letter published in the *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 19, 1968 should be carefully considered, especially those which we emphasise, with a view to appropriate action, if any is still possible. The least would be to call those responsible to account.

"Sir—The speed with which the Warsaw Pact forces moved into Czechoslovakia has shown clearly the utter unreality of the Government's assumptions as to the amount of warning we might receive—hours, not days or weeks. Also of leaving this country devoid of any Home Defence organisation.

"I imagine that NATO will be taking a hard look at the state of such defences in their member countries, along with their review of the armed forces at their disposal. I do not suppose they will look with any satisfaction at the state of unpreparedness in Britain, which at one time had the finest Civil Defence Service in the world.

"The impression, which the Government *has tried to put over*, that Civil Defence can be reconstituted in time to meet an emergency, is complete rubbish. *The greatest pains have been taken to destroy the organisation*, and even discourage the volunteers forming themselves into disaster squads. *There is no framework left on which anything can be rebuilt.*

"As regards training, all local and central facilities *have been scrapped* except the Home Office* School at Easing-

*The Home Office is the potential equivalent, and in some ways the actual equivalent, of the Headquarters of the NKVD.—Ed. T.S.C.

wold, which is being turned into a rag-bag of staff college, technical school and goodness knows what else. A grossly unfair burden has been put on the staff to deal with what is obviously complete nonsense.

"Since the regional organisation will shortly cease to exist, the Home Office will now have to communicate directly with all the principal local authorities; as will other Government Departments with those under their wing. *How it is proposed to keep in touch with them or to communicate quickly with them in an emergency* is anyone's guess. The 5d. stamp won't help when the Russians are moving.

" . . .

"JOHN HODSOLL
"Tarrant Rushton,
"Dorset."

So much for the reverse of this particular coin. What of the obverse?

The reader at this point should refer to the short but highly important book, *Theory of Subversive Action**, only recently available in an English translation. Parallel to the Home Office lines of communication with "local authorities", the Communist subversive apparatus has its own headquarters (under the direction of the Kremlin, the most fully informed intelligence organisation in the world) with lines of communication to its own "local authorities". Cosyns-Verhaegen names no names, and makes no accusations; his book is like a lens placed before an eye with defective vision: what had been a blur stands forth with startling clarity. There is abundant evidence, well-known to everyone but not clearly seen, of subversive activity in Britain. Has the Government taken "the greatest pains to destroy the organisation" which makes massive subversion possible?

Members of Parliament, *representing their constituents*, have the right, duty, and immunity to confront the Government, and Mr. Wilson in particular as the man nominally answerable to Her Majesty the Queen, and thus to British citizens, with the question of responsibility for the most appalling danger which has ever faced the British people. If the danger materialises, impeachment is called for.

Constituents may have hours . . . or days . . . or weeks to press on their Representatives in Parliament the question of impeachment—their final recourse but, miserably, not remedy. But God helps those who help themselves, and it is God's help which is needed now.

The ABC weekly broadcast feature, "International", carried in its edition of Sept. 27, 1968, the following report by Ritchie McEwen, of the London School of Economics:

"Yugoslavia is bringing its defence to combat readiness. World War II partisans who fought with Marshal Tito against the Germans are ready to take to the mountain fastnesses again, just as they did more than 25 years ago, if the Russians should decide to invade their country.

"For the past few weeks the veterans of World War II have been holding meetings throughout the country to discuss the measures they would take if their country is again invaded. Although most of the former partisans are now well over 40, some past 60, they claim that they have not lost their skill at mountain fighting.

"High up in the mountains the almost impregnable fastnesses which served Tito so well during the occupation have

*R. Cosyns-Verhaegen: K.R.P. Publications: 7/9 posted.

been modernised. Twenty mountain roads high above the valley have been broadened at selected points where they run straight and level for several hundred yards, to act as emergency landing strips, and the primitive bunkers used in World War II have been strengthened with ferro-concrete and additional camouflage ready for all eventualities. The Yugoslav Army has been quietly placed on an emergency footing and garrisons have been brought up to full strength, so that troops have been deliberately concentrated 30 to 40 miles inside the border so as to avoid the danger of frontier incidents.

"Garrisons along Yugoslavia's western frontier facing Austria and Italy have been strengthened too, so that Russia will not be able to put forward the same excuses as in the case of Czechoslovakia, that Yugoslavia is insufficiently prepared to defend herself against Capitalist aggression from the West. Almost daily reports of increasing military activity along the Hungarian and Bulgarian frontiers are coming in, and shortly a fresh series of Warsaw Pact staff manoeuvres are to begin, alarmingly similar to those that preceded the occupation of Czechoslovakia.

"But despite the gathering of the clouds there is no sign of panic in any part of Yugoslavia. Marshal Tito himself is remaining in his summer residence on the Isle of Brioli. There is no sign of panic buying of foodstuffs in the towns and no one really believes that the Kremlin leaders will decide to invade the country; but if they do so the Yugoslavs are determined to fight, if need be to continue the struggle under seasoned partisans of World War II high up in the mountain fastnesses which proved their value so well nearly 30 years ago."



Yugoslavia has no common frontier with Russia, and therefore is not subject to direct invasion by Russia. On the other hand, Italy is just across the Adriatic Sea, within very comfortable flying distance from those 'emergency' landing strips high in the mountain fastnesses. The American Mediterranean fleet is based on Salerno, well in the south of Italy. Communist Russian troops are now concentrated to the north of Austria, and Communist Yugoslav troops to the south. This 'defensive' posture by Yugoslavia against Capitalist aggression by the West should certainly deter Russia from invading Yugoslavia. Perhaps, indeed, Russia lent Yugoslavia the bulldozers etc. to broaden those roads, and in the true spirit of Communist rivalry, supplied the cement to

modernise those veteran bunkers. But not, of course, the bombs to be used against the Russian comrades struggling upwards from the valleys.

The Need for God

(continued from page 1)

There have been warnings enough. As early as 1872 Walter Bagehot, one of the most illustrious of all British journalists, was expressing his doubts about the recently extended franchise. "What I fear," he wrote, "is that both our political parties (the Conservatives and the Liberals) will bid for the support of the working man; that both of them will promise to do as he likes if he will only tell them what it is; that, as he now holds the casting vote in our affairs, both parties will beg and pray him to give that vote to them." Bagehot saw the net result as "the supremacy of ignorance over instruction and of numbers over knowledge".

That was in 1872. By the mid-twentieth century, universal franchise, compulsory free education, a national health service—the welfare state—had come into being in Britain. The man who was primarily responsible for bringing it into being was Lord Beveridge. In an article in 1951 (again in *The Spectator*) he expressed his dismay at the immorality of a populace "all too ready to assume that, without much personal exertion, it is their entitlement to draw their share of an inexhaustible common fund from centralised authority". He wrote: "Can a country whose destiny (in part at least) is in the hands of a people so irresponsible and so ignorant hope to be well-governed?"

Britain was the home of parliamentary democracy; France, of liberty, equality and fraternity. Today in France, the liberty of the rationalists sows disorder and hatred. The present revolutionaries in France are not oppressed peasants or factory workers but students of the Sorbonne, versed in the arts and humanities. Their objective is not to improve the lot of their fellow men: the Government offer to reform education and raise wages merely incited their rebelliousness. They are not reformers but anarchists. These young men and women of the Sorbonne—well-educated, well-read, privileged—have laid bare the fangs of naked intellect. It is no coincidence that their comrades in anarchy were mercenaries from the Congo. With no other guide than Reason, the intellect would as soon consort with violence as with virtue. We have it on the authority of David Hume, the architect-in-chief some two centuries ago of the present condition of our culture: "Where a passion is neither founded on false suppositions nor chooses means insufficient for the end, the understanding can neither justify it nor condemn it. It is not contrary to Reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger."

And in America, education, science, the machine, have produced wealth altogether beyond comprehension. The country's annual national product is moving rapidly to the 1,000,000,000,000 dollar mark: and in 1968 an army of poor camp in a shanty town between the monuments to Washington and Lincoln, called Resurrection City. Malnutrition and chronic starvation are widespread through the nation. The sufferers, it is said, number millions.

Universal literacy has become the high-yield field of pornographers. It is exploited by ad- and ideas-men. The pursuit of Ideas is on. They have been captured, processed, made marketable and put into mass circulation. They are taken for what they are said to be and consumed like cornflakes.

There is no discrimination. In this Age of Reason, the amateur thinker has been submerged. Millions allow professionals to do their thinking for them. Thinking has lost its intrinsic worth. It has become a made-to-order article, C.O.D. It has no spontaneity. It must fill half a column, page seven, Thursday, or 10.20 to 10.30 p.m. (peak listening period) Sunday. The audience accepts the ideas their columnists, commentators, newscasters and analysts give them and get from one another. The audience is arming itself with weapons that are stronger than guns. Without checking measurements, multitudes step into ready-made patterns of thought. They wear their ideas proudly as though they were of their own making, like bow ties that fasten at the back.

Obscenity is exploited on the stage; sex and violence by cinema and television. In the last ten years, the population of the United States has increased ten per cent; the incidence of crime, 88 per cent. The income of gangster organisations is reckoned in tens of billions of dollars a year—from protection rackets, gambling and traffic in women and drugs. The successful politician is the one with money, with the right public relations firm, the polished image, the ability to capitalise on passions and grievances. The Negroes, liberated in the last century from slavery, are cast in the chains of alien ways, prejudice and hatred. Today the President of the United States of America may not move freely among the people for fear of being killed. He and his Ministers must move through by-ways and back-doors; decoys are set out to draw the assassin's bullet.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

There it is. If democracy cannot prevail in Britain, liberty in France, the control of the material environment in America, what hope is there for our culture, for the world, for humanity? The hope is in the dethronement of Reason and of the allotting to it of no more than its rightful place.

What can we say about Reason? It is as essential to man for maintaining life as the heart or the lungs or the liver. It correlates and gives direction to the information transmitted by the senses to the mind. It is what separates man from animals and provides him with the master tool for progress. To be without Reason is likewise to be mad. But while Reason is the means for progress, it can measure only backwards the progress so far made. It cannot measure forwards, the margin that stands between the goal. We have come far since we lived in caves, but how much farther still are we separated from our Home?

Reason expands knowledge, but the expansion of knowledge moves ever further outwards the borders of the unknown to which Reason has no access. Science in all its complexity has blunted Reason. The Reason of the ordinary man could explain to his satisfaction the light that came from wax and wick: it takes for granted, it does not endeavour to explain, the light that comes from the electric globe. It cannot explain the atom or the hydrogen bomb. Common Reason can no longer penetrate to the heart of things, nor even think it can. Reason must also now be mechanised, transferred to computers, since it can no longer be contained and co-ordinated by the single mind.

Reason may direct emotion and instinct but it cannot

override or eliminate them. There is an innate irrationality deep-seated in the human psyche. Reason may describe good and evil but can never be their master. The most reasonable of laws cannot alone remove disorder: neither love nor lechery will yield to logic. Reason may rationalise abortion, infanticide, homosexuality, yet like all else depends for its existence on the perpetuation and continuity of life. Reason may be the servant of equity, but also the wanton hand-maiden of pride and prejudice. Reason may cause men to live wisely, but it can neither determine—nor perceive even—their fate, ordained by an external and eternal chain of happenings. Reason cannot tell us why we work and suffer and triumph sometimes and pass away. Only mystery can keep bright the hope that the reports of Reason darken.

Yet Reason in our time has been glorified. The sanctions and prescriptions of tradition, the authority of parents, the disciplines of society are brushed aside; and from the cradle to the grave, Reason is the criterion and the arbiter. Ours not to do or die, ours but to reason why. The inversion is complete: each man becomes his own law-giver, judge and executioner. In America today, the most resourceful and progressive community the world has ever known, they say that God is dead.

"Where", demanded the Roman pagan Caecilius of his Christian companion in the third century AD, "is that God who is able to keep you when you come to life again, since he cannot help you while you are in this life? Do not Romans, without any help from your God, govern, reign, have the enjoyment of the whole world and dominion over you?" In the same century, Tertullian boasted of the increase of Rome's population and wealth. Cyprian, a generation later, asserted that Rome was dying. Soon, Rome was dead.

Society cannot live by Reason only. Over-arching the conflict of intellects, wills, passions, ideologies, there must be authority from a transcendental source if political order is to be maintained.

One of the great orations of modern political history was made by Lincoln at Gettysburg on November 19, 1863. The prepared text of its most memorable passage read: "We are resolved that this nation shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people by the people for the people shall not perish from the earth."

That is the passage as Lincoln prepared it. It is not the passage as Lincoln spoke it. At the eleventh hour he made a correction. As he stood there addressing his people at this historic moment, he made a correction. After "nation", he added "under God". At this critical hour of our culture, the same correction must now be made.

(With our thanks, we acknowledge permission to re-publish this article from *RSA World*, "a bi-quarterly review of Southern African affairs in the context of world trends and thoughts"—Ed. T.S.C.)

Distinguished Service

Mr and Mrs Trayler, of 67 Caldwell Road, Liverpool 19, who have been sending out this paper from Liverpool to subscribers, come rain come shine, since 1954, are now relinquishing this task. With appreciation of their long, faithful and unobtrusive service, we send warm thanks and very best wishes for the years ahead.

Errata

We regret that in the issues of T.S.C. for 21 September and 5 October a speech at Uppsala was mistakenly attributed to Mrs Barbara Castle. The speaker was Miss Barbara Ward.

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