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CONSERVATISM, LIBERALISM, AND NATIONAL ISSUES

Special Editor of this Volume

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sibly contribute to each other? Protestantism has been nationalistic and confined to national boundaries. The ecumenical movement is forming new ties and channels across national boundaries. Protestantism has been exclusively Western. The ecumenical movement is changing this through the participation of the so-called "young churches" in Asia and Africa. Not all is well, of course, with the ecumenical movement. There are those who confuse the promptings of the Holy Spirit with the "urge to merge," who think that ecumenicism can be measured by the number of people they are acquainted with on five continents, and who believe that the household of faith consists in the multiplication of interdenominational, interracial, and international "buzz groups." These people have been dubbed "ecu-

maniacs," but the ecumenical movement is far bigger than they are and will eventually have far-reaching political as well as religious repercussions, especially in foreign policy and international relations.

Protestantism may be confusing and diverse, but it is also creative and dynamic, and it is getting ready to make an invaluable contribution to the exciting and critical times in which we live. And, in this age of science and technology, Protestantism's contribution will be in the realm where we need it most: the realm of the mind and of the spirit.¹

¹ Publications useful to the casual reader representative of the movements treated in this article are: *Christianity Today*, conservative theologically and politically; *The Christian Century*, liberal theologically and politically; *Christianity and Crisis*, conservative theologically and liberal politically.

Liberals, Conservatives, and Catholics

By FRANCIS G. WILSON

ABSTRACT: Among Catholics, there is little controversy over theological and doctrinal matters. However, the teaching authority of the church, *the magisterium*, extends to the application of Christian, natural-law ideas to social questions. The social encyclicals are general and their application to specific situations is within the authority of the bishops. It is here, especially, that Catholics become divided between liberals and conservatives. Ever since the establishment of the organized American church, Catholics have accepted the American system of separation of religion and politics, but there has been controversy on particular matters. Catholics have favored the liberty of parochial schools and, ultimately, auxiliary benefits to the Catholic school child. Although the freedom of the artist is generally recognized, the Catholic defense of morality has approved more censorship of the mass media than liberals ordinarily approve. Catholics are divided in the defense and criticism of the free market, though it would seem to be clear that most Catholic opinion does not consider the American economy in violation of the social encyclicals. Liberal Catholics are critical of the competitive system, and conservatives believe that papal teaching is in accordance with the free-market system.

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EVERY Catholic is aware that his religious experience is lived on different levels. On some matters, there is a virtual monolithic agreement, and, on others, Catholics differ among themselves within the country and between countries as any other people do. Catholics are both liberals and conservatives. Some who assert a kind of "integral Catholicism" or proclaim a version of pacifism are probably just plain revolutionaries. Among the faculties of Catholic universities, the trend toward liberalism has been particularly notable, possibly because the Catholic intellectual seeks to communicate easily with the intellectual elements of his society.¹ But all Catholics, however various in their political differences, are probably convinced, if they have thought about it at all, that Catholicism is a core issue in the whole history of the West, and, certainly, none would deny that the status and freedom of the Catholic church has been a primary issue in American history.

TEACHING AUTHORITY AND SOCIAL ISSUE

At the center of the Catholic experience is a body of doctrine, the creed, the church, as existential, to which the individual by membership has made a commitment which shapes his essence and the structure of his personality. Being such a commitment, there is seldom much discussion, except among top-level theologians in the ecumenical movement, about the specific doctrines of the church. Neither is there much discussion of these matters between Catholics and others, because matters of faith are existential and inward. Thus, the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, the teach-

¹ Some Catholic writers like John Cogley do not like to apply either "liberal" or "conservative" to Catholics. See his comments in *The New Republic*, Vol. 138, No. 7 (February 17, 1958), pp. 18-20. Cogley is editor of *The Commonweal*.

ing authority or the *magisterium* of the Pope and all other bishops, the doctrine of the Mass, and the broader theological system are not customarily a matter of general dialogue, to say nothing of common dialectic.² The faith is traditional and theological, and it is formulated by the church through the centuries from the Bible, from the deposit of tradition, and from the immediate teaching of councils and episcopal authority.

It is often glibly said that the Catholic church in America is not the church in Spain. Such a statement says either too much or nothing of consequence. There are differences in national tradition, in the public-law status of the church, and in the relations between Christian and secular intellectuals. These matters are widely discussed, but they do not touch the core of doctrine in the creed. The church in Spain is, in truth, the same as the church in America, but Spaniards are not Americans. The many and various modalities of Catholic life and political experience give rise to profoundly different appreciations of the life of the church in a social order.

Some one has said the life of the faith is around the parish pump. There is much truth in this, for the parish teaching of the congregation by the local priest and the administration of the sacraments for Catholic families are the immediate measures of Catholic experience. Political differences seldom enter here, for it is the practice of the faith in each individual and in the family that stands in the foreground. It is the Catholic teaching on the family, the position on divorce and birth control, the regular participation in the sacraments,

² The *magisterium* is sometimes seen as a kind of theological consensus developing within the church in contrast to the more formal examples of the exercise of the teaching authority. This emergence of teaching, *ex iure magisterii*, is not clearly defined in theology.

and the education of the children in the faith that become for many almost the sole experience of their Catholicism. Sacramental life is doctrinal life, and it does not fend itself either to intellectual or to political controversy.

In societies in which the class struggle over religious and economic order has exploded, the struggle of the church to retain its freedom is radically different from those societies, like the United States, in which public order is given existential precedence over the struggle between the exponents of conflicting ideological issues. American religious thought of all faiths has been driven to consider the issue of industrial order and the life of the worker. All agree that distributive justice demands that the worker be able to support his family with a standard of living that is, as Charles Peguy argued, at least above the level of destitution. Poverty and frugality may not in themselves be considered something that makes the moral life of the family impossible. But the class struggle is the destroyer of the liberty of the church; its freedom disappears in the virulence of civil conflict. Social legislation and, latterly, concern for underdeveloped countries, as in the encyclical *Mater et Magistra*, have been the Christian and, indeed, in most European conservatism, the remedies for the class struggle and for the restoration of the Christian life of the workers.

CATHOLICS ACCEPT THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

Catholic positions on the proper forms of government have led in the direction of conservative thought. Catholic political theory has affirmed the necessity of the state, and only an occasional pacifist or revolutionary agrarian among Catholics has openly asserted an anarchist stand. Catholic thought has generally denied that the government of the church is a model for the form of gov-

ernment in the state; the freedom of the church and the conditions of Christian life have been of more concern to Catholic theologians and publicists than the form of government. Most Catholic experience has been under monarchical systems, though much of it has also been in republics. Although there have been Catholic critics of the doctrine of popular sovereignty, notably after Rousseau's time and the French Revolution, Catholic thought has merged into the classical tradition of the right of the people to participate in their government. Pope Gelasius I in 494 urged, in a letter to the Emperor Anastasius, that there are principally two modes of life, the spiritual (the *Sacerdotium*) and the temporal (the *Regnum*), and such seems to be the position of all Christian bodies today. The third mode of life, the *Stratum*, or the university, was recognized in a recessive manner during medieval times. Thus, a Catholic may be either a democrat or a monarchist, and he may favor aristocratic or popular systems, but the freedom of the church and the justice of the temporal order are inescapable postulates of his political philosophy.³

When we turn to American issues, Father Ong has noted a paradox puzzling to foreigners: "a Catholic mentality which in many ways is the most conservative in the world set in the

³ Among the recent books along this line, one may consult Heinrich Rommen, *The State in Catholic Thought* (St. Louis: R. Herder Book Co., 1945); John Courtney Murray, S.J., *We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1960); Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951); Yves R. Simon, *Philosophy of Democratic Government* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951). Sir Ernest Barker, *Social and Political Thought in Byzantium* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), p. 26, has emphasized the third order, the *Stratum*, more than most writers, who have often referred only to the *Sacerdotium* and the *Regnum*.

midst of the nation whose genius seems to be adaptability and change."⁴ If Catholic conservatism accepts the traditional order of social and economic life in America, it has meant, at the same time, a repudiation of both the Protestant and Catholic confessional or state churches of western and eastern Europe. Alexis de Tocqueville reported, as a Frenchman and a Catholic, the fact that American Catholics were devoted to the public-law status of the church, that is, the system of separation of church and state and the liberty of the Christian to practice his faith. Much as Orestes A. Brownson, Lord Bryce in his study of the *American Commonwealth* in 1888 discusses the enthusiastic Catholic acceptance of the American order. Mon-signor John Tracy Ellis, the eminent historian of the Catholic church of America, affirms the same meaning of the American Catholic tradition of separation and liberty.⁵

⁴ Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Frontiers in American Catholicism: Essays on Ideology and Culture* (New York, 1957), p. 3.

⁵ John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholicism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 155, in which he said he had found no utterance, public or private, of an American Catholic bishop at variance with the American principle of separation of church and state. Such a position was taken in 1948 by the Chairman of the Administrative Board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. See Mons. Ellis' article, "Church and State: An American Catholic Tradition," *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 207, No. 1242 (November 1953), pp. 63-67, and the literature cited on p. 79 of others may be cited to the same effect. In his numerous and brilliant articles in *Theological Studies*, Father Murray has suggested a broader basis in Catholic thought for the American system than just the American tradition. Father Wilfrid Parsons, S.J., made a careful study of the historical antecedents of church-state relations in the United States in *The First Freedom: Considerations on Church and State in the United States* (New York: D. X. McMullen Co., 1948), as a result of the Champaign County School Board Case. See also Jerome G. Kerwin, *Catholic View-Point*

between the public and religious orders is not inconsistent with the Constitution and the protection of individual liberty. As part of a relatively undiscussed issue now, one can say that both parochial education and released-time religious education have joined the traditional, conservative backgrounds of American life.

But these issues are complicated. At times, the liberals seem to be supporting a *status quo* in the separation of church and state, and the Catholic and many religious conservatives defend what seems to some an almost revolutionary position. Thus, the use of public buses to take children to parochial schools, though constitutional nationally, is highly controversial, and, above all, federal aid to education shakes the roofing of the national capitol. Some forms of aid have been given to students in Catholic colleges and universities, but what about the high school and the grammar school? It may be guessed that most Catholic bishops are opposed to federal aid to education, but, if there is to be such, the parochial and elementary high schools should receive it also, for the benefit and equal treatment of the Catholic child, rather than as financial support for the church. The controversy between the liberal conservator of our tradition and the Catholic innovator centers on what the reality of the American tradition is.⁶ A Catholic may say: First things first. And the first thing is the freedom of the Catholic parent to provide religious education for his children. But conservatism is, among many things, a theory of change, and here the Catholic position in favor of

⁶ Religious education in relation to state universities, quite apart from any federal aid, is becoming an increasingly important issue. State laws on the relation of religion and the public schools—not to mention local and customary practice, whether legal or illegal—are so varied that generalized statements are almost impossible to make.

auxiliary services for the Catholic child in the pursuit of religious education is, for the Catholic, a change that would align the American present with a vast Christian past.

Censorship is, quite naturally, another issue of import, though its application is primarily local. The Supreme Court has held that pornography is not a social interest protected by the First Amendment. Catholics are surely on the side of the legal protection of morality. But the moral protection of the young is nothing new, for it has always been an interest of the civic order. Probably the issue is most precisely the struggle of the "creative artist" against the scruples of the censor animated by his adherence to legal and moral codes. Censors have often been stupid, and many of the absurdities of censorship are not to be attributed to the clergy. The issue runs the gamut, all through the arts of the novelist, the painter, the poet, the director of movies, the artist in the mass media, and on to the writer, even in the field of journalism. The major Catholic principle from the time of St. Augustine on seems to have been something like this: one may prudently tolerate a moral evil if greater evils might follow from attempted suppression, either by action of the Christian citizen or by the civil magistrate. Evils are not to be praised, but greater evils are to be condemned. Or, as St. Thomas argued, legislators have to attend to what happens in the majority of cases; they must deal in general terms. In 1957 the American bishops included in their statement that "it must be recognized that civil legislation by itself does not constitute an adequate standard of morality." And Father Gardiner said freedom under the law comes from "the reasonableness of the law."⁷

⁷ Harold C. Gardiner, S.J., *Catholic View-point on Censorship* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1958), pp. 40, 43, 189.

On censorship in the arts, the Catholic intellectual position seems to be moving parallel with a moderate liberalism, but, in the defense of Catholic morality, the Catholic position is strongly conservative. The parish pledge taken by members of the Legion of Decency and the stand of the National Office for Decent Literature in relation to magazines are much more in favor of censorship than the customary liberal defense of free expression. For the liberal, the defense of the freedom of the artist is not distinguished from the freedom of just anyone in the depiction and discussion of sex. But such a distinction is fundamental in the contemporary American attitude of Catholic leaders toward censorship. As John Courtney Murray has urged in discussing voluntary organization and action, such as the Legion of Decency:⁸

The juridical premise of their action is not in doubt. In the United States it is generally acknowledged that the voluntary association is entitled to concern itself with matters that relate to the public welfare. It is invidious to stigmatize all such associations as "pressure-groups," pursuing "private interests." The fact is that, in their own way, they can perform a public function.

The problem of censorship is the issue of a correct balance between freedom and restraint. All censorship, Father Murray believes, should be in the ultimate interest of freedom, and freedom is to be balanced against the exercise of restraint under the police power vested in all free governments. Our chief problem is not censorship in literature, he said, but the fostering of literary creation. The church has no lack of censors, but "she prays continually that God may give her men of learning who

⁸ See his "Literature and Censorship," *Books on Trial*, June-July 1956, p. 4, distributed by the Fund for the Republic, Inc.

can write the words that need to be written. The American Catholic community particularly needs to attend seriously to this problem of literary creation."⁹

DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE, FREE MARKET, DESSEGREGATION

Ever since the impact of the Industrial Revolution became apparent in the nineteenth century, and ever since men learned to talk about progress, reform, and revolution, the issue of whether something can be done to lighten the burden of the poor has been a preoccupation of both Christian and secular intellectuals. Because of the sympathy for the poor among Christians, the Christian criticism of industrialism has led the intellectuals to side with much of the socialist program, though, at the same time, the atheistic and deistic philosophy of the left-wingers has repelled the Christian philosopher and theologian. Catholic sympathy for socialism and revolutionary philosophies has been inherently contingent. Consider the re-

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5. See Father Murray's debate with the editor of *Harper's Magazine* on the National Office for Decent Literature, in *America*, Vol. 96 (November 3, 1956), pp. 120-123. Some candid discussions of the artist and the censor have appeared in the writings of Norman St. John-Stevias, "The Author's Struggles with the Law," *The Catholic World*, Vol. 194, No. 1164 (March 1962), pp. 345-350; "The Author Wins his Battle," *ibid.*, Vol. 195, No. 1165 (April 1962), pp. 34-42. St. John-Stevias believes that now the author has won his fight for protection under the law, since British and American courts have arrived at substantially the same tests for obscenity. On p. 42, he says: "If we could tackle the problem of violence and the joint problem of hard-core pornography, we should have made a very important contribution to society's welfare." See also his important *Life, Death and the Law* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961). St. John-Stevias is a noted British authority, now widely known in American Catholic circles.

jection of socialism in the nineteenth century by Jaime Balmes and Juan Donoso Cortes, but consider, also, the criticism of *laissez-faire* capitalism which has seemed to destroy the Christianity of the workingman because it has, in some circumstances, denied him the minimum of material goods necessary for the practice of virtue. In this sense, the Catholic position is extremely complicated; it is clearly conservative in some ways and liberal in others. One thing is certain: it is continually evolving. The recent encyclical *Mater et Magistra* of Pope John XXIII is proof of the widening scope of the application of Christian philosophy to those outside the European and American industrial area. Though the World Council of Churches seemed to retreat in its Evans-ton meeting in 1954 from the so-called democratic socialism of Amsterdam in 1948, *Mater et Magistra* was hailed by some journalists as papal socialism and the approval at least of the welfare state. It is here that American Catholics are sharply divided between liberals and conservatives, because the Catholic liberalism, although not accepting the pragmatism and scientific moral view of the liberals, have turned against American capitalism and against the competitive freedom of the businessman. The Catholic conservatives, on the other hand, have increasingly argued that the papal encyclicals on the social question are compatible with the maintenance of the free-market economy, and they cite papal statements in defense of property, a return on investment, and the rights of the businessman. Liberals have shown exasperation at any other than a "left" interpretation of the papal documents that extend back to the *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII in 1891, which resolutely favored the intervention of the state, although *Quadragesimo Anno* of Pius XI in 1931, forty years later, "insists on the discretion which must

obtain in this intervention."¹⁰ It is commonly recognized that the encyclicals and the many messages of the popes on social issues are documents written under special circumstances. They can be understood completely only when the circumstances under which they were published are considered. They are general directives to be adapted to time and place, but they do reflect in degree the formal *ex cathedra* teaching authority of the Pope, his *magisterium*. Under these conditions, the formal interpretation and application of the encyclicals become a function of the American bishops, that is, the American hierarchy, which on occasion has made statements like the one in 1960 which affirmed the need of personal responsibility and less reliance through "inordinate demand for benefits, most easily secured by the pressures of organization. . . ."¹¹ One of the most persuasive and moderate statements has been offered by Father Murray:¹²

In sheer point of fact, the Church in America has accepted this thing which is the American economy. Her life, the life of grace, is tied to it in multiple aspects. It is, in fact, the thing that has given peculiarity both to certain institutions of the American Catholic Church and to certain forms of Catholic life. The major instance is the whole system of Catholic education, supported by the voluntary contributions of the faithful, who have found in it a means of professing their faith and expressing their spirit of charity and sacrifice. Catholic education in its present many-storied structure would be impossible apart from the American economy, the wealth it has created, and the wide distribution of this wealth that it has operated.

¹⁰ See Daniel A. O'Connor, C.S.V., *Catholic Social Doctrine* (Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1956), pp. 69-70.

¹¹ Quoted by Roger A. Freeman, "Big Government and the Moral Order," *The Catholic World*, Vol. 195, No. 1166 (May 1962), p. 88.

¹² Murray, *We Hold These Truths*, p. 180.

92 THE ANNALS OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY

Important alterations in the economy (not to speak of changes in the tax structure) could deal a serious blow to the *res sacra* which is Catholic education. Other institutions of the Church's apostolate would be similarly affected; the involvement of any large diocese in the workings of the American economy is fairly deep.

Although all Catholics will agree that the principles of distributive justice are supported in the natural law, the means of defining and effecting such justice has been a matter of vigorous discussion. William F. Buckley, Jr., the Catholic editor of the conservative *National Review*, has argued for many Catholic conservatives the proposition that "subsidiarity" and "freedom of association," two prominent principles in the social encyclicals, support the idea of the free-market economy and competition under the laws of justice. Subsidiarity is the principle by which the lesser unit or function, the industry or the local authority, should not be interfered with by the centralized authority of the government as long as the lesser unit or function operates in the interest of moral principles and the distributive justice of the natural law. Catholic liberals are insistent that the free-market system betrays the worker and that it is, indeed, much the same whether in Europe in the nineteenth century, in America in the twentieth, or in areas under the impact of foreign investment. Senator Eugene J. McCarthy, a Catholic liberal from Minnesota, has stated as a general proposition that Catholic social principles point to the acceptance of the liberalism of the New Deal and currently of the New Frontier.¹³

¹³ See William F. Buckley, Jr., *God and Man at Yale* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1951), *Up from Liberalism* (New York: McDowell, Obolensky, 1959); Eugene J. McCarthy, *Frontiers in American Democracy* (Cleveland: World Publishers, 1960), "Religion and Politics," *America*, Vol. 101, No. 2602 (April 11, 1959), pp. 110 ff.

the efficacy of what they believe to be Communist conspiracy against American institutions. Catholic liberals have cooperated frequently with liberal groups like the Americans for Democratic Action, although, on the other hand, Catholics were often supporters of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin. In some respects, Senator McCarthy has been succeeded in his work by Senator Thomas J. Dodd, a Catholic and rather liberal Democrat from Connecticut.

The issue became acute among Catholics in 1962, during the attack on political extremism which seemed to flare up suddenly against all manner of "thunder on the right." Both Catholic liberals and moderates have been afraid of the emergence of a Catholic right, perhaps similar to some rightist Catholic movements in Europe. Catholic conservatives have responded that American liberalism has been singularly weak in its efforts against communism. And, further, some liberals have shown the signs displayed in Europe at the beginning of anticlerical movements. Of course, there are Catholics of extremist character on both the right and the left; there are pacifists and agrarians, and even anarchists, who, like "integrists" in Europe, look on history and existing institutions as sources of the corruption of the faith. The new Catholic right in America leans to the proposition that the liberty of the church is dependent on winning the war against communism and against a liberalism that is not vigorously anti-Communist in detail and in practice; it leans to the proposition that the church should strive to protect the political traditions of the republic and the freedom of the citizen in both politics and economics. Still, all conservatives who are conscious of communism are willing to concede that national defense will often make invasions of the tradition political and economic rights of

Americans necessary—if the Cold War is to be won against the Communist and anti-American conspiracy.¹⁴

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE DIALECTIC

It has been said here that Catholics are both liberal and conservative on those issues on which there is general debate. On the core doctrines of the church on which there is only limited discussion and no debate among Catholics, one might well say they involve neither the left nor the right. Debate among Catholics, liberal and conservative, has taken place with intensity in Europe in recent years. But, until William F. Buckley, Jr., founded the *National Review* in November 1953, there was little liberal-conservative controversy among American Catholics. The liberals were clearly articulate and eager in pressing an anticapitalistic interpretation of papal teachings, especially of *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. The lay editors of the professedly liberal *Commonweal* and the somewhat less liberal *America*, edited by the Jesuits, expressed a large body of intellectual Catholic opinion in America. Probably much of the conservative opposition was simply unable to express itself, if the later support accorded *National Review* by Catholic bishops and priests and by Catholic intellectuals—such as Garry Wills, Frederick Wilhelmsen, Colin Clark, Arnold Lunn, Father Stanley Parry, C.S.C., Colm Brogan, Erick von Kuehnelt-Leddihn,

¹⁴ A statement in 1962 called "Communism: Threat to Freedom," by Father John Cronin, associated with the National Catholic Welfare Conference, condemned extremism, which seemed in fact to argue that a Catholic could not properly be a member of the John Birch Society. There were vigorous rebuttals against the charge of extremism in opposing communism in the Catholic press. The American hierarchy was not involved in this debate over how Catholics should oppose communism.

CATHOLICS AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM

The conflict between the Catholic church and the international Communist movement has been continuous and bitter. There are many cases in which the Catholic clergy has been exterminated and the practice of the Catholic faith made a serious crime against the state. American liberals have said little in defense of persecuted Catholics, and on this matter, Catholics have separated from the liberals because of the neglect of their just rights. American Catholics have stood, however, for resistance to the persecution of any religion or race in the world-wide struggle against totalitarian systems. Conservative Catholics have been supporters of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the investigation of Communists by congressional committees, and they have favored both state and national legislation to restrict

and Willmoore Kendall—is any indication of conservative Catholic thought.¹⁵

¹⁵ See William F. Buckley, Jr., "A Very Personal Answer to My Critics," *The Catholic World*, Vol. 192, No. 1152 (March 1961), p. 363. It is in the pages of *The Catholic World*, edited by the Paulists, that the fullest expression in the American Catholic press has been given to the differences among Catholic liberals and conservatives. The editors of *America* have been highly critical of contemporary Catholic conservatism. Among the liberal critics of Buckley may be noted Father Christopher E. Fullman, Professor Francis E. McMahon, Professor Thomas P. Neill of St. Louis University, Father Kevin Lynch, C.S.P., and Kevin Corrigan, who wrote "God and Man at 'National Review,'" *The Catholic World*, Vol. 192, No. 1150 (January 1961), pp. 206-212. In general, the conservatives are charged with inadequate education in Catholic social teaching. Corrigan wrote, p. 211: "Thus we see the fine irony of a Catholic, William F. Buckley, Jr., an 'old' liberal criticizing another Catholic, John F. Kennedy, a typical 'new' liberal. But the great and grave tragedy is that neither has grasped the essence of the Catholic position vis-a-vis political and economic liberalism." Still, see Father D. J. Carol, O.F.M., "A Liberal for President," *American*

The conservative answer to the liberals has made "good debate" within the American tradition of public discussion. It is something that has been far less common in American Catholicism than it has been among European Catholics. In result, Catholics have been sharing more effectively in the public dialectic and dialogue on government policy in the United States.¹⁶ Catholic conservative thought has been given a warm reception in contemporary conservative publications. It is striking also that some diocesan publications have been distinctly more conservative than the self-avowed Catholic liberal publications.

Mercury, Vol. 91, No. 442 (November 1960), pp. 32-34, where the author says of Kennedy that his muddled thinking and misty attitudes would endanger our nation. Liberalism in politics, he said, is like the heresy of "modernism" in theology.

¹⁶ One may consult the French economist, Daniel Vilely, "Catholics and the Market Economy: Part One," *Modern Age*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Summer 1959), pp. 250-261, for a European free-market view.

Contemporary Juristic Theory, Civil Rights, and American Politics

By GEORGE S. PARTHEMOS

ABSTRACT: The severe disputations which rage in contemporary jurisprudential thought revolve primarily around certain vexing philosophical and ethical questions which cast jurisprudential thought into various philosophical molds or schools. The viewpoints of contemporary juristic theories, however, are also definitely colored by ideological factors of a conservative or of a liberal character, although, in most instances, these factors have remained either unclarified or completely lost in the intricacies of philosophical disputation. A significant feature of jurisprudential thought today is the strong revival of interest in natural-law theory. Sharp differences of opinion center particularly around the implications and consequences of natural-law jurisprudence for liberalism and conservatism as well as for civil rights and racial desegregation. Despite the fact that natural-law theories might embrace essentially different phenomena or that they might be used for contradictory purposes, in all their forms they are marked by characteristics which make natural-law doctrine essentially and fundamentally conservative. Sociological jurisprudence and legal realism, on the other hand, may be regarded as the principal forms of expression of liberalism in the area of juristic thought. The liberal implications and consequences of these lines of thought for civil rights and desegregation cases are especially evident.

George S. Parthemos, Ph.D., Athens, Georgia, is Acting Head of the Department of Political Science, University of Georgia. He has served as a social-science specialist to the Georgia State Department of Education. In 1958-1959, he pursued study and research at Harvard under a Rockefeller grant. He is former editor of Georgia Local Government Journal. He is author of Political Perspectives (1961) and of numerous articles for journals and newspapers.