However, weakening loyalty to the Church is not merely caused by the increasing inability to reconcile the secular knowledge required for everyday life with the myths enshrined by the Church. Other things being equal, people are quite willing to support a religion even if they do not take its supernatural basis too literally. The Confucian religion long survived a wide-spread abandonment of its few metaphysical principles. Extraneous factors such as cultural conservatism, tradition, aesthetic fondness, ethnic loyalties, nostalgia for childhood memories, etc. may be sufficient to keep a religion functioning as a symbolic public ritual devoid of actual superstition. The Church's problem is that it has built its entire tight organization around its authority as an infallible guide to faith and morals when these morals demand an inordinate sacrifice that can only be motivated by a firm belief in its supernatural mission. The tendency, then, is for the moral prohibitions to be abandoned when the supernatural basis crumbles. Similarly, the strict rules of the Orthodox Jews demand so much sacrifice that they encourage a complete rejection of Orthodoxy when doubt as to their supernatural foundation is once entertained.

The Church's rules concerning abstinence from meat on Friday, prohibition of divorce and birth control, its demand of a Catholic education and frequent attendance of its ceremonies, etc. all demand sacrifices that chafe at the waning faith of Catholics, and hence the pressure to relax the rules. However, the dilemma of the Church is that although it must extricate itself from these archaic rules, if it is to survive, its prior commitment to these practices were so complete that it cannot extricate itself without endangering its entire foundations. Church pronouncements on faith and morals are thought to be sacred and unchangeable because kept from error by God.

The Church has modified the unmodifiable in the past, e.g., in its turn-about on the question as to whether it was ever moral to charge interest for money lending. However, with the education and communications of the modern world, this is clearly a risky undertaking. Yet the Church has cautiously undertaken some reforms because of the rising tide of discontent within it.

DISCONTENT WITHIN CHURCH

The signs of discontent are everywhere. And it is found not only among a few disgruntled lay intellectuals or maverick priests. Top clerics in the hierarchy are grumbling. So great, in fact, is the discontent that now that the door of change has been forced open slightly a flood of proposals for change are pouring in to open the door wider and wider. Priests are forming unions to negotiate salaries with their bishops, seminarians go on strike to protest the curricula, American missionary priests join the anti-American guerillas, priests are asking to be allowed to marry, laymen want a voice in selecting the bishop, — not in their wildest nightmares did good council fathers realize what a Pandora's box they were opening! Now the hierarchy is frightened because they fear they will lose control. Pope Paul VI has vainly called for a halt to criticism and proposals for change.

But the Church cannot get out of its dilemma. Although the changes threaten to get out of hand, the pressure for change is so great that the clock can never be turned back to the secure confidence of the past. The contradictions of the Church will eventually shatter its liberal image and lead to a decline of its influence.

Father James Cavanaugh is the author of a widely-read book, *A Priest Looks at His Church*, in which he was highly critical of, but still loyal to, the Church. Eventually, however, the Church's inability to change its basic policies caused Fr. Cavanaugh to leave in disgust. In his book he criticized the theory of clerical celibacy and asked for a change; now, he has married outside the Church. It is quite likely that his evolution presages the future experience of many Catholics. The Church will be torn asunder by the dilemma of its being an anachronism in the modern world, and its influence will decline. The Church's present activity and favorable publicity are a final burst of flame before the light flickers and gradually burns out.

THE CHURCH IS OUTDATED

The basic point about the Catholic Church is that the social forces that gave rise to it and preserved it are played out. The inexorable march of secularization will make it less and less useful to capitalism as a means of insuring workers' loyalty to the system. However, it is true that there is probably a long future for some form of supernaturalism. The unknown encourages an element of mystery among those more susceptible to the old modes of thought. The miseries and unfulfilled hopes of capitalist society will continue to create the need for a refuge which mysticism and superstition can feed on. However, the Roman Catholic Church is not an organization that can satisfy this demand as well as some of its competitors, particularly liberal Protestant groups such as the Unitarians, which are free from past crippling commitments to a morality and structure that are very difficult to reconcile with capitalist society. At any rate, the decline of the Church, and of all supernaturalism, will be a welcome relief to socialists because it will clear the air for men to see that they must work together to build a socialist society where everyone can find his happiness here on earth so that there will be no more need for the supernatural. W. J.

Seeing What Isn't There

A GALBRAITHIAN VISION

The world socialist movement contends that the shattering problems thrown up by capitalism are not to be solved within the social and economic relationships basic to capitalism. We also contend that socialist society is possible now but that the prevailing political ignorance and confusion stands as the last remaining obstacle to the introduction of world socialism. We are organized as a vehicle which the working class can use — once it reaches the maturity of socialist understanding — to take the necessary political steps to transform capitalism into socialism.

WHAT CAPITALISM REALLY IS

Capitalism is, basically, a market economy in which the prime concern is the production of commodities for sale on the market with a view to profit. In the drive for markets and profits capitalism has spread to all corners of the globe. Simple manufacture has evolved into a gigantic, socialized, electronic technology. The shrinking world, with its evolving features of state capitalism, retains the same basic social relations (in both the private and public sectors) that typify capitalism as a social system: the social relations of capital and wage labor. The capitalists own the means of production and distribution together with the products turned out while the workers receive only wages (regardless of the form these wages may take). The workers are exploited of the wealth they produce by brain and by brawn while the capitalists live off the value produced by the workers over and above their wages.

Capitalism, we contend, has laid the groundwork for a system based upon common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of society as a whole. The stage is set and awaits action by an aroused socialist majority.

This theme has been elaborated in greater detail again and again in The Western Socialist throughout the years of its existence.

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