

any truth to Professor Feuer's article entitled "The Decline of Freedom at Berkeley" in the current issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*, last year's student assault has already brought substantial devastation to one of the world's most renowned academic centers.

Force cannot be a legitimate weapon in my hands and an improper one in yours, if we are equals. Once force becomes the main instrument of public policy, all aspirants to anything are automatically licensed to intimidate and brutalize, if they can. One is reminded of an illustration used recently by Barbara Ward. "I would even go further and say in New Guinea, it is attractive to live in a village because every time you leave that village, you change your language and that gives you a perfect right to head-hunt in the next village. Well, obviously this is a very attractive way of running human affairs and this is what some people want to restore in Europe. What after all was 1914 and 1939 but the idea that your tribe can head-hunt in the next village?" We haven't yet returned to actual head-hunting, but we are aimed in that direction.

Civil Rights Plus Power

The civil rights movement has caught the disease, and has made

the predictable progression from an original basis of limited, applied pressure to a spectrum of coercive action that includes outright terrorist tactics, leaving many of its most genuine and active participants confused and dismayed at the beast they have helped to nourish.

Perhaps you saw the article in *Look Magazine* reporting an interview with Lillian Smith, the author of *Strange Fruit*, who was one of the best-known backers of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. Miss Smith, gravely weakened by cancer, talked about her resignation from SNCC when it embraced the Black Power concept. She recalled an early warning she had made to the officers of that organization. "You're going to have the same temptation that Jesus and Gandhi had — the temptation of personal political power. You will want to get power in your own hands . . . You will want to stir people's hatreds."

As in the case of anybody that starts down the path of power tactics, the civil rights leaders have had to run faster and faster to keep ahead of their troops, procuring more devastating arms and making more sweeping demands to satisfy the power appetite they have generated. Napoleon and Hitler and Stalin, indeed, all tyrants,

have been destroyed by the same self-accelerating pace of aggression.

In the Name of the Church

The national acceptance of force as the main technique for change is nowhere so startlingly manifest as in a statement printed in the July 31st issue of the *New York Times* signed by forty-eight members of the National Committee of Negro Churchmen. Their purpose is to help people comprehend the reasons behind the thrust for Black Power and to justify Black Power within a certain framework of understanding. The entire text is based on an assumption that "powerlessness breeds a race of beggars," and that it is only as power is placed in the hands of Negroes that they can achieve the actual role of complete citizens and the full dignity of human beings.

There is some reason to believe that instead of powerlessness breeding a race of beggars, power breeds a race of tyrants, but my point here is that these are Christian clergymen who declare that power in its coercive, leverage, intimidating sense, is essential to the full life of a citizen. It is my recollection that Christ at no time recommended or endorsed the use of force to accomplish any of his aspirations for mankind. His doctrine was a self-policing one. He

did not urge that prostitution be prevented by law and stamped out by a constabulary. He directed the individual offender to go and sin no more. That half a hundred of Christ's prominent ministers would proclaim a human right to power in his name is, I should think, dramatic evidence of the degree to which coercive power is coming to dominate the hopes as well as the actions of all segments of our population.

The Process of Corruption

Now, there are some fundamental problems that may arise when force becomes the instrument of social interaction. I shall indicate only two. One is that however lofty the original motives of any power-wielding group, human nature is such that that power eventually seems to fall into the hands either of self-serving or self-righteous officers. On the one hand, the original slogans become hypocritical justifications for plundering the community and for gathering more power. On the other, the officers seek additional power in order to force their "enlightened" views on more and more people.

Perhaps you heard of the company president who called in an employee who had refused to sign up for the pension plan. "You sign or be fired," he declared. "I'll sign," was the quick response. "Well, why