

# Correspondence

## The Ordeal of Civility

To the Editors: I am genuinely surprised and sorry to learn that my book, *The Ordeal of Civility: Freud, Marx, Lévi-Strauss and the Jewish Struggle with Modernity*, has offended E. Digby Baltzell and, presumably, other gentlemen in the Philadelphia area (Books, *Worldview*, February). Up here in New York, it seems, we don't even know when we've broken a "gentlemen's agreement." But it's to our credit, I think, that we don't mind being told when we have (in this case, it appears—the reviewer is not altogether clear—we violated the gentlemen's agreement that one must always treat Jewish themes and Jews themselves as ritually delicate objects).

We especially don't mind if we are told by someone like E. Digby Baltzell, who, patently, gets no fun out of it, and who writes not out of anything so common as inclination—on the contrary, his first "impulse" was to "decline the invitation" to review my book—but solely because he eventually reconsidered and decided that he was, in his words, "duty bound" to review it, albeit briefly. An author has no right to be pained by negative criticism when it issues from so high-minded a source and flashing deontological credentials; pain, surely, for any well-socialized sociologist, is swallowed up in privilege (1 Cor. 15:54).

But what about E. Digby Baltzell on St. Paul and the Epistle to the Corinthians? About that, I'm not quite so sure. Philadelphian though he be, does he really believe that there would have been room at the Franklin Inn for St. Paul? or at St. Paul's, for that matter?

In any case, when my time comes, they'll put me in with Fields, W.C., if he'll have me, under that stone, if there's room.

John Murray Cuddihy  
New York, N.Y.

## The Case of the Vanishing Link

To the Editors: I would like to have seen in Frank Patton's piece "Religion by Permission of the Government" (*Worldview*, December) at least some acknowledgment of the special problems Jewish religious bodies might have as they confront IRS *ultimata* like the one limiting the clergy's role to "the duties of a minister of the gospel" if the tax-free allowance is to be applied. And in an article which addresses "religion" in the United States, I miss even the hint of ecumenical feeling conveyed by the now conventional linking "church-synagogue." This may reflect the government's limitation, but, again, if Patton chooses to address "religion," surely some explanation of the government's Christocentric phraseology is to be expected.

Patton does, at one point, mention the refusal of a parsonage housing allowance to an executive of a Jewish organization. But there, quite early in the article, we lose track of the Hebrew . . . uh, communion, shall we say, Mr. Patton? Until the end, that is, when Jews, along with Protestants (who are prominent in the article), are castigated for their lack of visibility at the U.N. in debates on population issues. One would assume from "Religion by Permission of the Government" that the Jews, at least, had too puny and inconsequential a voice even to be heard, let alone be counted, in any discussion.

Susan Sauer

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Frank Patton, Jr., Responds:

In response to Susan Sauer's comment, my strong impression (without researching the issue) is that Jewish religious bodies have not been especially harassed or troubled by the IRS and other government restrictions described in my article. While Jews have been in the forefront in social action, their work has not especially been carried out through institutions which are identifiably religious. The Protestants, in contrast, have often worked in this area through and visibly in the

name of their religious institutions. Consequently, Protestant churches have been directly criticized as activists in social action, and their right to tax benefits has been continually questioned.

The matter of the relationship of the Jews to our government, or to any government, is an issue much broader than the question of Church and State; it is an issue going to the meaning of ethnicity, to the history of discrimination, to ethnic, cultural, and religious survival; these are generally questions beyond the scope of my article.

However, the first president of the activist organization, Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, Inc., mentioned in my article, was a Jew, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, the National Director of Interreligious Affairs for the American Jewish Committee. Rabbi Tanenbaum and the AJC withdrew from IFCO, leaving it essentially a Protestant organization. Rabbi Tanenbaum's major contribution to the regulatory aspects of Church and State may well have been as the taxpayer participant in the landmark Tax Court case which held that he was not entitled to the ministerial housing allowance on the ground that he did not perform religious functions in his employment. Many Protestant ministers employed by social action groups have since been plagued by the Tanenbaum Tax Court decision.

## Amnesty at an End?

To the Editors: The amnesty drama is about to end, not with a bang, but a whimper. Chances are the present program (cf. *Worldview*, "Watergate and Amnesty," by Richard John Neuhaus, September) will not be extended, and we'll be right back where we started—with no amnesty policy.

It will be a tragedy. Conditional amnesty is a sound policy in principle. It balances the competing claims of respect for conscience and for law. Alternative service provides an equitable basis for those who broke the law and avoided its penalty to

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## **In Cuba** **by Ernesto Cardenal**

(New Directions; 340 pp.; \$10.50/  
\$3.95)

## **Inside Cuba** **by Joe Nicholson, Jr.**

(Sheed & Ward; 235 pp.; \$8.95)

Two accounts of brief visits to Cuba, neither of them very interesting, but together constituting a rather instructive package. Cardenal is a Nicaraguan priest, poet, and avowed "Marxist revolutionary" (the book is a translation from the Spanish); Nicholson is an investigative reporter for the *New York Post*. Cardenal went to Cuba with the pious attitude of a pilgrim; Nicholson went out of his way to ask hard questions and look at disagreeable facts; both talked to spokesmen for the regime as well as opponents. Nevertheless, the pictures emerging from both accounts are quite congruent: a country in which a lot has been done for the poor; an economy that is struggling with immense problems but is making headway; general acceptance of and widespread enthusiasm for the regime; despite this, a pervasive presence by the organs of repression, at times acting with brutality.

## **Jonathan Edwards:** **Theologian of the Heart** **by Harold Simonson**

(Eerdmans; 174 pp.; \$6.50)

A well-informed and extremely sympathetic study with the focus on the personal piety of Jonathan Edwards, perhaps America's greatest religious thinker. For those unfamiliar with Edwards, except for his oft-quoted misunderstood sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," the book can be recommended as an introduction. Students of Edwards will be interested in Simonson's critique of people such as Perry Miller, who, he believes, refused to understand Edwards from the inside of his own religious experience, so to speak. Simonson particularly admires Ed-

wards's courage in contending against the tide of liberalism that so enervated Christian distinctiveness and confidence. Yet it is to be feared that Simonson's own celebration of "self-authenticating religious experience" will play into the hands of the pervasive subjectivism which is among the more noxious forces in our own culture. By so relentlessly setting grace against nature, reason against experience, and head against heart Simonson's picture of Edwards fails to capture precisely the *thinker* whose wisdom is so sorely needed in the present unhappy state of the American ethos. Nonetheless, a fine book that deserves to be widely read. Simonson is professor of English at the University of Washington in Seattle and has edited a collection of Jonathan Edwards's writings.

## **Man** **by Jürgen Moltmann**

(Fortress; 124 pp.; \$3.25 [paper])

Moltmann, one of the most important theologians of our day, addresses himself to one of the oldest questions in theology and every other field of disciplined reflection: What is man? Rejecting the nineteenth-century doctrine associated with Feuerbach, that God is the highest projection of man, Moltmann insists that an adequate anthropology must begin with "God as the criticism of man." Part of a "themes in theology" series published in Germany, this little book deserves a place on any shelf of contemporary religious thought.

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regain their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Properly interpreted, it could be a real force for national reconciliation.

Instead, the spirit in which it was presented was, at points, punitive and vindictive; until recently, al-

most no attempt has been made to present the principled argument that can and should be made for the policy; and there have been no clear and reasonable guidelines for the alternative service requirements.

On the other hand, opponents of conditional amnesty have done their share to assure the program's failure. Those opposed to any kind of amnesty will, of course, be happy to see the program fail; they will have won the argument by default. Those who will accept nothing less than unconditional amnesty may also see in the program's failure a victory for their cause. They seem primarily interested in making a point about the evil of the draft, the Vietnam war and/or American society in general. In a sense, the exiles are being held hostage to the views of active minorities committed not primarily to amnesty but to the vindication of their own ideological positions.

We've come a long way from the time when any sort of amnesty was officially unthinkable. Unless the program is extended and improved, and unless an effort is made to present the principled argument that can and should be made for conditional amnesty, we may well end up back at the starting point with little to show for the experience.

Eugene Mihaly  
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*for a World Without War, Inc.*  
*Berkeley, Calif.*

## **Correction (with apologies** **to Derr, Augustine,** **St. Thomas, and a host** **of moderns):**

Cremlins struck at just one letter in Thomas Derr's "Religion's Responsibility for the Ecological Crisis" (*Worldview*, January), but thereby changed the meaning of the sentence. The sentence correctly reads: "Clacken patiently documents a continuing strand of thought, including St. Augustine, St. Thomas, and a host of moderns, protesting the 'crude utilitarianism' which says nature exists *only* for man's use."