

AMERICA'S DECLINE

THE EDUCATION OF
A CONSERVATIVE



REVILLO P. OLIVER

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During World War II, Dr. Oliver was Director of Research in a highly secret agency of the War Department, and was cited for outstanding service to his country.

One of the very few academicians who has been outspoken in his opposition to the progressive defacement of our civilization, Dr. Oliver has long insisted that the fate of his countrymen hangs on their willingness to subordinate their doctrinal differences to the tough but idealistic solidarity which is the prerequisite of a Majority resurgence.

SOME QUOTABLE QUOTES FROM *AMERICA'S DECLINE*

On the 18th Amendment (Prohibition): "Very few Americans were sufficiently sane to perceive that they had repudiated the American conception of government and had replaced it with the legal principle of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' which was the theoretical justification of the Jews' revolution in Russia."

On Race: "We must further understand that all races naturally regard themselves as superior to all others. We think Congoids unintelligent, but they feel only contempt for a race so stupid or craven that it fawns on them, gives them votes, lavishly subsidizes them, with its own earnings, and even oppresses its own people to curry their favor. We are a race as are the others. If we attribute to ourselves a superiority, intellectual, moral, or other, in terms of our own standards, we are simply indulging in a tautology. The only objective criterion of superiority, among human races as among all other species, is biological: the strong survive, the weak perish. The superior race of mankind today is the one that will emerge victorious—whether by its technology or its fecundity—from the proximate struggle for life on an overcrowded planet."

AMERICA'S DECLINE

ORDER No. 1007—\$8.50

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376 pp., pb.

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ISSN: 0145-7667

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ONE STRATEGY

FOR DISPOSSESSED AMERICANS

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VOL. 13 — NO. 6

FEBRUARY 1986

Voice Of Thinking Americans

LIBERTY BELL

The magazine for *Thinking Americans*, is published monthly by Liberty Bell Publications, George P. Dietz, Editor. Editorial Offices: P.O. Box 21, Reedy WV 25270 USA - Phone: 304-927-4486.

Manuscripts conforming to our editorial policy are always welcome, however, they cannot be returned unless accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope. Manuscripts accepted for publication become the property of Liberty Bell Publications.

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George P. Dietz, Editor & Publisher

Back to the Land

One Strategy for Dispossessed Americans

Back to the Land: One Strategy for Dispossessed Americans

Broad acres are a patent of nobility; and no man but feels more of a man in the world if he have a bit of ground that he can call his own. However small it is on the surface, it is four thousand miles deep; and that is a very handsome property.

Charles Dudley Warner

Any attempt to advocate agrarianism today must first be largely a clearing away of mistaken ideas about it. This is perhaps particularly true if a return to the land is advanced as one possible strategy for patriotic Americans who seek the survival of their people in a rapidly disintegrating nation. For many such activists, probably because of their pride in the scientific and technical achievements of their people, agrarianism connotes nature worship, a Luddite rejection of modern technology and acceptance of an ideal of primitive self-sufficiency.

Contemporary agrarianism does not advocate a return to the land because of some idealistic exaltation of nature. The rationale for agrarianism today is the simple recognition that farming or other forms of domestic production provide the only way by which a considerable number of people may own the means by which they earn their livelihoods. In an era when most men dream only of advancement in the institution which employs them, agrarians are realists, not romanticists, because they acknowledge the basic fact that a man who does not own the means by which he earns his livelihood can never be truly free and will often fail to appreciate, much less exercise, his rights as a man and a citizen.

Even traditional agrarians have recognized that the greatest evil of

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factory production is not its urban setting but its reduction of workers to a state of dependency. The famous passage in Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia* in which he concludes that "The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government as sores do to the strength of the human body," also includes his seldom-quoted reason why such urban mobs cannot be trusted to preserve a republic: "Dependence begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition." Another traditional agrarian, John Taylor of Caroline, denounced proponents of "the manufacturing mania," who argued that it would guarantee the independence of the United States, by correctly predicting that it would result in dependency for ninety percent of the populace: "What! Secure our independence by bankers and capitalists? Secure our independence by impoverishing, discouraging and annihilating nine-tenths of our sound yeomanry? By turning them into swindlers, and dependents on a master capitalist for daily bread?" (It is interesting to note that Taylor published these words in his *Arator* in 1818, the very year that Karl Marx was born.)

Traditional agrarianism, which does have a Luddite tendency, must be sharply differentiated from what, for the sake of convenience, may be called the new agrarianism, which began with the homesteading movement led by the agronomist Ralph Borsodi during the 1930s. According to Borsodi, the homestead may include all tools and machinery which can be used in domestic production. The threat to the homestead and the agrarian way of life, Borsodi believed, arises not from the machine itself but from its use in factory production rather than domestic production. Factory production arose with the application in industry of the steam engine, which had a centralizing effect on production and drove domestic industries virtually out of existence. The industrial application of electricity, however, made possible a reversal of this centralization, a dispersal of production back to units the size of the homestead. If Borsodi had lived to see the personal computer, he would no doubt have considered it to be yet another example of how technology can be enlisted in support of domestic production.

Although the new agrarianism is antithetical to the dominant belief that one must produce and consume as much as possible, even beyond basic needs, it does not mean acceptance of the primitive standard of living which would result if each homestead attempted to be wholly self-sufficient. Few of the people involved in the move back to the land since the 1930s have taken as their ideal the self-sufficiency sought by "survival-

ism," a rather recent and marginal development. Many new homesteaders choose to earn a large portion of their incomes by employment while gradually moving towards their goal of complete self-employment. Others immediately attempt to escape any dependency on employment, producing half for their own consumption and half for sale. Few, however, choose to produce no commodities at all, only products for home consumption. The homesteading phenomenon should, therefore, be seen as a continuum with primitive self-sufficiency representing a "survivalist" extreme chosen by few.

Beyond the fact that the new agrarianism is not a retrograde movement, there are these other, positive reasons why it is worthy of the consideration of American patriots: (1) Although they are not yet politically and culturally conscious, the overwhelming majority of homesteaders are themselves of old American stock; (2) The homesteading movement may be a means of overcoming, to some extent, the pervasive apathy in a society of alienated proletarians; (3) A planned and localized movement back to the land might be the foundation for a community supportive of traditional American values.

Not only are most of the new agrarians unhyphenated Americans, but their movement need not be one of the left. The political economy of the new agrarians is distributism, not socialism, a belief that the ideal economy is one in which a maximum number of heads of households own the means by which they earn their livelihoods. Admittedly, a cultural leftism has permeated the movement, largely (as elsewhere) through default of something better. It should be noted, however, that the leading exponent of the new agrarianism, Borsodi, was himself an outspoken foe of egalitarianism, obviously influenced by Nietzsche, and a contributor to Seward Collins's unparalleled *American Review*. Nothing intrinsic to the new agrarianism places it of necessity in the "hippie" counter-culture. On the contrary, many of the new agrarians may be the most likely prospects for the missionary efforts of patriotic activists.

Contrary to Marx's prediction, proletarianization has not resulted in a general economic immiseration of the working class. Ironically, the very affluence of the workers in modern industrial capitalist society is frequently, and unthinkingly, blamed for their pervasive sense of apathy. The basis of this apathy lies, however, much more in a psychological immiseration which Marx, writing in his notebooks during his early, Hegelian period, called alienation. That he soon dropped this concept is not evidence that it is invalid, but that Marx probably realized that such

alienation would continue under socialism and communism.

Alienated from others (who are strangers competing for employment and promotions), alienated from their work (which is not work for themselves, but for an institution), alienated from the product of their work (which they do not own), alienated from their own human nature (which is developed only in the confines of a narrow specialization), proletarians, in America as elsewhere, however affluent they may be, are trapped in a state of mind which can only result in apathy. Consequently, Americans who work in offices or factories they do not own are little concerned about whether their places of employment are publicly or privately owned. They live outside their working hours only for what they call their "free time." Accustomed to undertaking significant action only upon the request of their superiors, it is no wonder that they have become the servile mobs feared by Jefferson and Taylor. The man who has never known even the responsibility of owning the means by which he earns his daily bread cannot reasonably be expected to be motivated by a sense of responsibility to the republic.

Obviously, the true negation of alienation, at least from the standpoint of the freedom-loving American, is neither socialism nor communism, but property, property widely owned and used by its owners, which means property in land. As a corollary to this, the rational response to apathy is neither moralistic condemnation nor exhortation to action, reactions popular among "rightists," but a frank recognition of apathy's origin in workers' alienation.

Although few people may ever be able or motivated to return to the land, a homesteading movement given a sense of purpose by patriotic activists might succeed in establishing communities which, particularly in the event of a societal collapse, could wield a decisive influence over a significant area. Efforts toward such an end could be modest in the beginning, loosely coordinated, not hampered by rigid organizational commitments, the lunacy of "communes," or other proven mistakes of past undertakings. Imagination, perseverance and youthful energy would be essential. Almost all patriotic activists recognize that the patriarchal homestead has been the life source of their nation, the city its grave. By joining in a new movement back to the land, at last a few of them would finally be acting on that recognition.

Political Objections to Agrarianism

Advocates of agrarianism have often been accused of encouraging flight from political reality. That was the accusation even as early as the 1830s when George Henry Evans advocated homesteading as an answer to the growing poverty and cyclical unemployment which were even then becoming evident in America's cities. The accusation will be no less strident today and most vehemently expressed by the political left, those would-be revolutionaries who wish to see everyone reduced to proletarian desperation. Although most patriotic Americans may ignore the anti-agrarianism of the left, they are likely to heed the accusation against a new agrarianism that will arise from the political right. That accusation will be that a return to the land is simply a strategy for evasion of the duties of the patriotic American citizen, that homesteading is an attempt to flee from problems rather than solve them, that America will fall to its enemies unless concerned citizens mobilize themselves in support of some particular political party or movement.

The new agrarian may reply that homesteading, rather than being an evasion of problems, can be an endeavor to establish a secure base from which they may be attacked, a reasonable expectation, but homesteading as such a limited strategy will still seem pallid and lifeless compared with the sanguine visions of imminent and total victory which are publicized by the spokesmen for one or another political organization. It is necessary, therefore, to take a critical look at existing and proposed organizations which, one and all, year after year, promise much, yet deliver little.

One perennial hope held out to the concerned American is that of a great restoration of the nation through the election as President of a patriot who emerges from the ranks of one of the major parties. Few such Americans now expect that leader to appear in the Democratic party, which -- having lost most of its conservatives -- has become the American equivalent of Britain's Labour Party and the Social Democrats of West Germany and Scandinavia. (America's social democrats are, in fact, less patriotic, if anything, than are their European counterparts) Hope, nonetheless, still rises anew, at least quadrennially, when a supposed conservative or patriot seeks either the nomination or the presidency itself on the Republican ticket. The hopeful entertained their delusion for decades after Taft's defeat in 1952 and Goldwater's defeat in 1964, then the

long-yearned-for promise seemed ready to be fulfilled with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980.

Yet, as Reagan's second term began, the record showed -- after allowing for inflation -- that he had increased federal spending at a faster rate than had Jimmy Carter, increasing it during the first five months of 1985 at the fastest rate since World War II. One consequence of this was a doubling of the federal deficit from \$914 million to \$1.8 trillion in 1985. Clearly, the great champion of the conservatives and patriots had failed them soon after entering office and, as students of voting trends realize, there will never again be an opportunity to elect a President as ostensibly "rightist" as Ronald Reagan.

Patriots who have recognized that the bipartisan system inevitably leads to the compromise of most principles have long since placed their hopes in the rise to power of a third party. Since World War II numerous rightist parties, each claiming to be the new majority party, have organized, issued manifestoes, run candidates for President, received few votes, and then -- due to the demoralization of their leaders -- quickly perished. Only two such efforts, that of Strom Thurmond in 1948 and George Wallace in 1968, have achieved even a modicum of success, but have, even then, failed to win a single state outside of the Deep South or to achieve their goal of forcing the election to be determined by a vote of the U.S. House of Representatives. The best that a rightist third party can ever do, as demonstrated by history, is to elect a *de facto* but unrecognized President of the South. Other regions, where most of the populace consists of recent immigrants whose sentiments of nationalism are attached to an Old County in Europe, not to the United States, simply will not support a rightist third party, whatever its style may be. Since recent population growth in the U.S. has been largely due to the immigration of people from Third World nations, an ever-dwindling fraction of the electorate may be expected to support third parties of the kind that appeal to Americans of the old stock. An absolute majority has always eluded a third party except in the states below the Mason-Dixon line, an area that in the future will be less and less the exclusive political property of rightists.

Many of the most active and intelligent among patriotic Americans have believed that their country might be saved by a non-partisan organization working to educate the mass of voters. The best known and most influential of these efforts, the John Birch Society, was founded in 1958 and attained, within a few years, a membership of more than 100,000.

Soon, however, its growth gave way to stasis followed by a slow decline. Some observers, mostly former members, believed that the organization failed to grow because of injudicious statements made by its founder, but others thought it failed due to the founder's excessively pedagogical style. Yet others, few in number, believed that the society failed to reveal the true enemies of the nation, but many conservatives in the political mainstream denounced its endorsement of a conspiracy theory of history. Those patriots having more faith in conventional politics believed that the society set for itself unrealistic goals, such as impeachment of the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, while some, who went on to form small paramilitary bands, found it to be insufficiently militant. Whatever the reason for the organization's failure, which possibly had little to do with the factors noted, it failed to sustain its original level of membership, much less promote, even modestly, its aims of "less government, more individual responsibility, and a better world."

A few individuals have reacted to the failure of such educational efforts by seizing upon the unfortunate notion that an aggressive, carefully-selected, determined elite can bring about some kind of a national restoration or, as the case may be, revolution. At best, such people only make themselves look silly; at worst, they quickly discover that their actions are only a form of suicide.

Usually, this delusion takes the innocuous form of daydreams about a general strike of the intelligentsia and/or capitalists, something like the fantasy widely retailed by Ayn Rand in her novel, *Atlas Shrugged*. This whimsy, aside from the problems entailed in organizing and coordinating such an effort, overlooks the fact that a significant percentage of educated people -- especially those outside the independent professions -- are strongly committed to the political left because they are employees of institutions dependent on ever-increasing federal spending. Any general strike of managers and small capitalists would, moreover, result in little more than an outcry from the public that the government "must do something" to end the resulting crisis. Nationalization of the means of production would almost certainly be the response to any such effort that threatened to be effective.

A less harmless delusion has afflicted a highly publicized few who have more or less openly boasted of their intent to foment a revolution. The attempt of these few to make their delusion a reality has ended in disaster for all concerned. Moral and legal considerations aside, it is simply political romanticism for any small group to attempt the over-

throw from within of a modern state such as the U.S. Such would-be revolutionaries simply cannot match the personnel and equipment that the government can mobilize in its defense. Modern governments can be overthrown from within only if the internal assault is coordinated with the attack of an external enemy. Obviously, the external enemies of the U.S. government, exclusively Marxist, would be unwilling to assist a rightist *coup d'etat*. Moreover, the political left in the U.S. can mobilize in flesh and blood reality at least ten guerrilla revolutionaries for each one that the right could even dream of mobilizing. Much media attention has, unfortunately, been lavished on various aberrant personalities who have played a role (usually that of "Nazi") which has, for whatever psychological satisfaction they may have derived from it, served only to discredit the more rational majority of American patriots. The posturing of the former about "taking to the streets" is particularly ludicrous because even they probably realize what elements have really taken the streets of America for their territory. If, as seems unlikely, a band of revolutionaries even approach being a serious threat to the U.S. government, they will almost certainly be leftists supported by the *Lumpen*-proletariat of the inner city.

The New Agrarianism

The decision to go back to the land, actually to do something to get there and survive there, must begin with individuals. Unfortunately, most individuals, feeling isolated and helpless, regard homesteading as a project for only the intrepid or the foolish. It is a sad irony that proletarianization, the cause of the helplessness of the individual, removes from him the will as well as the material means needed to escape his dependency.

Often, those who are most bitter and desperate over their own helplessness in an urbanized, industrialized society are the most apt to reject even the possibility of escape. They have so identified themselves with the massive organizations which employ them that, like Winston Smith in 1984, they have finally begun to believe that they love Big Brother, believe that their little place in the awesome, monumental institution they serve transfers to them something of its grandeur. Those rebels "preferring hard liberty to the easy yoke of servile pomp" are angrily dismissed

by them as fools. The psychology of defeat thus assures continued defeat. This decrepitude of will has, unfortunately, become endemic among Americans who identify with the political right. Any advocate of a new agrarianism must recognize this fact, although he may permit himself to entertain the hope that the few individuals who will rise to the challenge will be those who -- exceptional in their will, determination and energy -- will compensate with their quality for their lack of numbers.

Homesteading, admittedly, may not be an attractive alternative for the average individual, but even a few exceptions to this rule per thousand would amount to a million or more in the United States. The exceptions probably increase in frequency as the homesteading alternative is presented to ever lower socio-economic strata. Obviously, a man who owns his own business or professional practice, who owns an imposing home and who has a family would have no reason whatever to abandon what he has in favor of subsistence farming. Farther down the social scale, a man who has a mortgage, fairly remunerative employment and a family would also ordinarily be reluctant to try homesteading. Only his awareness that his children would immediately begin to benefit from an environment more wholesome than that offered by most urban areas would lead him to give even a second thought to homesteading.

Yet farther down the social scale, a man who has boring, ill-paid work in a factory, who rents or has a small mortgage and who has a family might not see in homesteading the baleful hardships that immediately bar it from consideration among middle-class people. In some instances, he would see it as a deliverance from an urban purgatory for himself, his wife and children. However, he, least fearful of hardships involved, would also think homesteading impossible for anyone lacking the necessary capital.

Similarly, young married couples struggling with urban life and insecure, ill-paid employment, owning no property and having no children, might also be amenable to homesteading as an escape, but they would be equally likely to dismiss it as visionary for anyone lacking ready cash and credit.

Granted that homesteading can be an attractive alternative for some people, the problem remains of showing them how it is possible. The seemingly towering impossibility of homesteading for an individual or family becomes reduced as one becomes informed of how it can be done. Probably the best overview of the topic is *Five Acres and Independence* by Maurice G. Kains, a basic handbook of homesteading, first published

during the depression of the 1930s, and still in print. It demonstrates that the capital needed for subsistence farming does not have to be beyond the means of the average person. This is particularly true if homesteaders buy land where prices are low (e.g., Appalachia, the Ozarks) and do practically all of their own work.

Obviously, such a project requires youth and energy and is best undertaken by individuals and families who can accept the possibility that an investment of several years of their lives may come to naught. No matter how simply and reassuringly the details of it may be presented, the fact is that homesteading by individuals and families must be an arduous undertaking. Nonetheless, necessity is the mother of homely perseverance as well as brilliant invention. It is not unlikely, moreover, that necessity will appear in the future in its most threatening manifestation -- most threatening to the urban worker -- as a depression followed by a societal collapse. Under emergency conditions, yesterday's impossibility seems merely improbable today and is somehow accomplished, though rudely and barely, tomorrow.

Homesteaders must balance several factors in considering where to settle, at least two of which -- the price of land and nearness to outside employment -- are crucial to the success of their endeavor.

Areas where land is inexpensive may also be areas where employment in neighboring towns may be had only at low wages. (In the Arkansas Ozarks in 1985, for example, 20 acres were offered for sale at \$25,000, an apparent bargain since it included a house with electricity, a well and a barn. However, the condition of the property and its distance from opportunities for outside employment were counterbalancing factors. Nonetheless, a determined homesteader might decide that freedom from an onerous mortgage would compensate for any problems arising from the property's location.)

Areas where land is more costly, however, may also be areas closer to employment opportunities which would enable the new homesteader to get through the difficult transitional period from total reliance on outside employment to total self-employment. (In southern New Jersey in 1983, for example, a developer was selling "farmettes" -- new homes on tracts ranging from 1.5 to 11 acres -- for \$75,000 to \$120,000. Here, the nearness to employment opportunities would seem to be counterbalanced by the need to meet a higher monthly mortgage payment. Added to this is the galling fact that, pending the unlikely success of the South Jersey secession movement, southern New Jersey must ever remain a satrapy of

the loathsome urban colossus to its north.)

The many problems which confront an individual considering homesteading -- raising needed capital, choosing a suitable property and location, arriving at an accommodation between outside employment and self-employment, assuring that all family members will derive some long-term benefit from the endeavor -- all add up to a snarl, a Gordian knot at which he can pick until he grows weary or which he can cut asunder by turning to others for help. The latter option, cooperation with others of like mind, may go against the entrepreneurial spirit of most people on the political right. It should not, however, because these same people find acceptable all kinds of business ventures having two or more proprietors. Extending such a cooperative network to the extent that it becomes an intentional community -- a community founded in lieu of a natural community -- will, however, be a new and possibly troubling undertaking for many Americans having traditional values. Would not, they will ask, such an intentional community be something like a commune?

Seen from the perspective of the individualist homesteader, himself on the right, intentional communities and communes both belong to the left. This misperception fails to distinguish between a cooperative (centrist) endeavor and a collectivist (leftist) experiment. The founders of an intentional community will be as mindful of the follies of communalism as they are of the futility of individualism.

The unpalatable aspects of communes are exposed (albeit unintentionally) in *Celery Wine: The Story of a Country Commune*, by a pseudonymous Elaine Sundancer. This self-described "hippie commune" of 17 acres is situated in northern California and immersed in the drug culture. All members of the commune sleep in one large room in a communal house, living arrangements preventing any privacy. The members neglect basic hygiene (e.g., washing hands) until one of them contracts hepatitis. Even then, however, they seemingly need to justify to themselves their new concern for hygiene. (A poster is hung up quoting Che: "Compulsive cleanliness is bourgeois, but sanitation is a revolutionary necessity.") The commune's income is supplemented with checks from parents and, briefly, food stamps. Concerned parents occasionally fly in from New York. The commune's population spends most free time in a kind of group therapy. The first item on the agenda is always living amicably with others and, secondly, determining who among transient visitors should be accepted as members of the commune. (Gordon, a

young man who contributed most of the money used to buy the acreage, objects to virtually every newcomer.)

This commune may be taken as an example of everything that an intentional community should not be if it is to sustain the lives and promote the interests of rational, sane, responsible Americans. One need not do any reading in ethology to realize that the commune begins with an assault upon human nature. The responsibility involved in owning personal property and the deeply rooted human need for personal space are not simply bourgeois prevarications raised against the communalists' ideal of sharing all things. Rather, they are essential to the maintenance of a healthy personality. The fact that fulfillment of these needs is largely thwarted in an urbanized, industrialized society does not gainsay their importance. In refusing to see that these needs are innate in humans (and perhaps other animal species), the communalists, far from confronting the alienation of the worker in industrialism, actually institutionalize it as the basis for an all-levelling altruism. However, far from accepting this sabotage of personality, even remotely normal people in a commune develop a conscious estrangement from others that usually leads to a schism within the commune. Dissidents may leave and establish other communes, but others leave to establish normal households. Obviously, the commune is only appropriate for those who must live under siege. Even then, if outside pressures are not sufficiently intense to provoke solidarity among the communalists, the commune's days are numbered. Living things need a minimal living space, else they wither and sicken or break loose and wander elsewhere.

The communalists fail also in the area where they most noisily contend for their merit, their claim to motivate people to realize an ideal rather than to live merely to produce and consume. Although the ideals of the commune -- altruism, egalitarianism, universalism -- are the most touted ideals of the modern age, they are a facade for somewhat less elevated motives. The idealistic attempt of the communalist to have a loving concern for everything has as its result an early, and not always veiled, collapse into caring about nothing; that is, nothing save self-expression, doing one's own thing, finding oneself and so forth.

Although the founders of an intentional community will reject the ideology of the communalists, as they do their living arrangements, they will recognize that their community must be founded with a purpose beyond merely ensuring the survival of a few homesteaders. While ideology -- in the sense of a closed system of ideas detached from reality

-- is potentially destructive of a community, the absence of any sense of purpose beyond personal survival too often fails to sustain the individual homesteader. The principles on which the intentional community envisioned here is to be based will follow from a determination that not merely will the descendants of the community survive in a genetic sense, but that the culture of their ancestors will survive with them. This basic determination in itself has become highly controversial in a nation having a governing stratum which has accepted, if not welcomed, a future dissolution of that nation into a mosaic of fragments of nations. The fact that this determination has become controversial means that the "middle American" no longer has a secure place in the center of things. True, he does not yet (in 1985) feel that he must flee into the wilderness to save his scalp, but he increasingly suspects that if he stays where he is, his children and grandchildren will be, more or less subtly, kidnapped, brainwashed and estranged from him and his heritage. Forestalling this robbery of posterity is the primary purpose from which all other principles of the new intentional community must follow.

Controversial as it is in its purpose, an intentional community must not show a face of belligerence to the world. Paramilitary operations, fortifications, stockpiles of weapons and all the other accouterments of militancy must be strictly forbidden. In fact, it is best that no obvious line of demarcation exist between the community and the rest of the world. If there is a sign, it should be discreet and indistinguishable from other business signs. Newcomers with a relish for cults and outre symbolism should be kept at more than arm's length.

The new community should begin in as quiet and innocuous a manner as possible. Perhaps one founder of the community having a large tract of land can sell smaller tracts to homesteaders who are other founders of the community. A nucleus of at least 10 heads of households, representing from 20 to 40 people, is perhaps the minimal critical mass needed to cross the tenuous line that marks off a group of like-minded friends from the more promising terrain of a new community.

Although not all tracts need be contiguous, at least several should be and the others within a mile or two. Although the community will grow by recruiting more homesteaders, its significance even from the start should be assured by situating it in a county of only a few thousand people, one at least a hundred miles from any city large enough to be recognized by name across the nation. Inconspicuous in its beginnings, the community will, nonetheless -- standing as it does for its controversial

purpose -- from its beginning have a societal weight -- however such a thing may be measured -- in excess of its share of the populace.

The urban worker in business or industry has become accustomed to classifying all of his waking activities as either work or recreation, the former more or less boring and the latter an escape from it. He has become so inured to seeing all of his productive activity in terms of this dichotomy that he never thinks of questioning it. Therefore, it will seem to him that the members of an intentional community will be giving almost all of their energies to toilsome and boring work. This, however, will be only the appearance, not the total reality of the situation. In much of the activity of the new community, the elements of work and recreation will be reunited into what, for want of a better term, may be called productive activity. Work may exhaust one's energies but it is not as onerous when it is work for oneself. It is work for the profit of another, especially an impersonal organization, which appropriates the product of one's toil -- generally a few routinized operations -- which is particularly distasteful and soul-destroying.

Work on one's own land with one's own tools producing one's own product does not have this alienating quality. Granted, it is not play, but only adults lost to the alienation of urban industrial life have a real need for play. Even then, as the incidence of social pathologies in cities shows, play itself may not be an adequate escape. Destruction of an unhappy self through alcoholism and drug abuse is too frequently the final escape. Hopefully, the members of the new community will, by their escape from urbanism and industrialism, also begin to effect an escape from the unnatural polarities of boring, alienated labor and exhilarating, wasteful play.

This is not to deny that the first several years of life in an intentional community will often be arduous and toilsome for its founders. Their first objective must be to become self-supporting with minimal reliance on outside employment. Much of the founding members' time will be occupied in working on their own properties either in farming or some form of "cottage industry." From the beginning, however, the whole community should have one cooperative enterprise, even if it takes only a fraction of their time. The capital needed to sustain such a project should be held as shares by all members of the community; ideally, no one member should have a controlling interest five years after the founding of the community. The cooperative endeavor may range from something as trifling as marketing produce to something as ambitious as the manu-

facture of a commodity for sale in a cooperatively owned workshop. Obviously, other areas of cooperative activity would include sharing and exchange of work in construction of buildings or clearing of land. A continuing objective should be maintaining a balance between individual homesteading and cooperative enterprise.

While achieving economic viability during its first few years, the founders of an intentional community must win acceptance in the county they have chosen as their home. They should do this as individuals, not as an organization having a name. The latter approach will immediately arouse the suspicion and excite the hostility of residents whose ancestors may have settled in the area one or two hundred years ago.

Such a negative reaction does not await just cultists and communalists. Ineptitude in entering a new area can have dire results for even a group of conservatives. Phillip Finch, in his *God, Guts and Guns: A Close Look at the Radical Right*, tells how a young Christian Constitutional conservative and his friends were virtually chased out of a Western county after he presented to "the county planning commission a plan for a subdivision that he called Constitution City." Many of the conservative ranchers in the area thought that their county was the object of an attempted Communist takeover.

The lesson of this cautionary tale is that even conservatives should approach their new neighbors naturally, not as ideologues. The best introduction to the neighboring area is probably through the part-time work that will be undertaken by most members of the community during its first few years. (The whole problem of winning acceptance can be circumvented, of course, if someone already has influential relatives living in the county.)

Before assuming that it has local political power, the founding community must be surrounded by several times its number of like-minded homesteaders either recruited to move into the community or converted to its purpose through association with its founders. This stage of development is one in which the founders will have to reach beyond the circle of their acquaintance. Obviously, wise choices will have to be made. Without operating too much like Freemasonry, the founders should vote among themselves to determine if a potential new homesteader is to receive the full support of the community. This support, in addition to technical expertise and advice, might extend to offering newcomers employment in the community's cooperative enterprise. Ideally, no newcomer should be dependent on the community for 100

percent of his income for more than a year. The continuation of dependency beyond this period, especially for several newcomers, would lead to the rise of a division between labor and management antithetical to the spirit of the community. These positions for newcomers might be thought of as apprenticeships or fellowships having the purpose of helping the newcomer make the transition to full membership in the community.

Above all, the founders of the community must strenuously resist the temptation to expand its numbers by accepting "rice Christians"; that is, destitute persons professing a belief in the community's purpose in exchange for a ticket to a soup kitchen and a place to sleep. Let there be no more Rajneeshpurams!

As the community grows beyond its founding nucleus, some form of organization will be needed beyond the fellowship of shared ideals which may have sufficed for its founders. From the beginning, therefore, one of the founders should sustain needed coordination and information by publishing a newsletter, perhaps only a mimeographed sheet published monthly. Most copies of each issue should be mailed to friends and acquaintances throughout the United States, especially to those who may be future homesteaders. The newsletter should probably not be the publication of an organization, but of one individual. As the circulation of the newsletter grows, it can assume a more formal style and appearance.

Depending on their locations in the county, the newcomers to the community should organize themselves into one or more groups having non-political names (e.g., Maple Creek Property Owners' Association). This will enable business to be conducted according to formal rules of procedure less necessary when the community was limited to its founding members. When the community is ready to run candidates for county offices, the newsletter and the local organizations will serve functions that are complementary, but distinct, the former as a vehicle for raising funds and the latter as a source of campaigners and endorsements.

Probably fewer than ten percent of the adult population of a county can effectively control its politics if they are dedicated, organized, discreet and diplomatic. Few other than members of the local merchants' association are really active in local politics in a county having only a few thousand people. However, if an incumbent is overwhelmingly popular, patience is the better part of valor. At no time should people feel that they are being pushed aside by a clique of strangers. It would certainly be a

political blunder, therefore, if several newcomers filed as candidates for positions contested in a primary. Candidates should talk about their beliefs and the issues, but avoid abstract substantives, especially those ending in "ist" and "ism." (Almost everyone, for example, will remain convinced, despite all disclaimers, that a distributist must be a Communist, a libertarian a libertine.)

Political acceptance can be greatly expedited if one of the members of the community has a position with a local school, church or newspaper. Lacking that, a member may himself become eligible to join the local merchants' association. Given patience and time, all county institutions can be increasingly staffed and controlled by newcomers. The fact that talented, educated young people generally do not return to the sparsely populated counties of their childhood necessitates a greater change in personnel than might be supposed. In fact, a sparsely populated area far from the mainstream of American life may prove to be the very place most amenable to a political transformation.

It may be thought that if an intentional community, similar to that envisioned here, ever comes into being somewhere and becomes the dominant political force of a county, its impact will be negligible, not extending beyond providing a few escapists with a false sense of achievement. This dour assessment assumes, however, that such a community would be the only one of its kind in the United States.

If several such communities were established successfully in middle America, the great expanse between the Appalachians and the Rockies, during one decade, and if these communities formed a network, possibly exchanging ideas and personnel, their impact might be more than negligible. The impact of such communities would be significant if, in the following decade, they inspired others to imitate their success. Hundreds of intentional communities were, in fact, begun during the nineteenth century, and disappeared only because of errors -- dogmatism and communalism -- that need not be repeated. Today, the Hutterites survive along with the Old Order Amish. Utah itself can be called the secularized remnant of an intentional community, Deseret.

Given propitious circumstances -- such as the devolution during the next century of multi-national, pan-ethnic America -- a second movement back to the land could sow the seeds of a national renaissance within the borders of a Remnant America.

B. A. N.

Another Agrarian's View

The idea of leaving the urban "rat race" for a simpler, slower-paced life in the country is something many Americans have considered. We often associate life on the farm with good wholesome living, independence and self-reliance.

Nevertheless, the practical thought of actually giving up our urban-suburban luxuries and conveniences is usually enough to puncture these daydreams. But not always. Some people persist in believing that the liabilities of life in a mass, technocratic society exceed the assets. They have already withdrawn, or are preparing to withdraw, to rural homesteads.

American society, from this viewpoint, is excessively fast-paced and fragmented, with little time allowed to maintain the crucial human ties of family and friendship. Other indictments follow: Nine-to-five routines, bosses and meaningless jobs blunt initiative, personal growth and creativity. Artificial and denatured foods sap vitality from the body, and sterile urban living separates us from the soul-renewing wonder of the natural elements.

It is hard to deny the essential truth of these charges, so it would be useful to examine just how feasible an alternative homesteading might be.

The decline of family farming and the present farm crisis may suggest to some that homesteading isn't feasible. The farm problem, however, generally involves highly capitalized holdings specialized in one crop for a regional, national or international market. The homestead is a relatively low capital operation geared toward providing food, shelter and other essentials for a family. Given individuals or groups with sufficient skill and motivation, self sufficiency on the land is no less feasible today than in the past. Such groups as the Amish are cases in point.

Discipline and self-denial of this sort, however, may seem a bit much for the average person who finds homesteading appealing, but who would like to retain at least a few of the genuine amenities of modern living. Bearing in mind that the whole purpose of homesteading is a way of life, and not a means to money, a potential homesteader has a number of possibilities for bringing in sufficient income to live comfortably above bare subsistence.

The most feasible avenue today, one many farm families and rural dwellers are already using, is full-time or part-time employment outside the home. This provides them a basic income, while they spend their weekends and spare time doing garden and farm work. Opportunities for this sort of divided work seem likely to increase as small-scale industry continues to locate and relocate in rural areas.

Certainly not all salary-paying work need be in a plant or a factory. Rural economies have particular need of professionals and tradesmen, such as doctors and mechanics. Law enforcement officers, teachers and journalists for local newspapers might find slots. In short, openings exist for all basic and essential services.

Changing economic arrangements and technological developments may open up other possibilities for cash income on the homestead. The clothing industry in some areas, for example, has decided to parcel out production quotas to "homework." Under this system, housewives receive payment for knitting or sewing a quota of items. The housewives gain from being able to earn money while staying with their families, and the companies gain from having a highly-motivated, nonunion workforce and less overhead. This mutually beneficial, decentralized arrangement might well spread to other areas, and make cash income on the homestead more feasible.

The computer revolution offers an example of innovation opening up opportunities for stay-home work. In time, computer terminal networks may make it possible for many types of professional and office workers to punch in material from home, instead of having to report to the city every day.

A point to keep in mind is that our centralized economic system is not God-ordained. Human creativity and enterprise are the only limits to finding new arrangements which will meet diverse needs.

A final note on homestead income is that farming by itself is not out of the question. The current farm crisis generally involved producers of grain crops and other large-quantity items for national and international

markets. At the same time, farmers of various specialty crops have fared relatively well. These are crops which lend themselves to small-scale cultivation and local markets. Examples are fruits, nuts, berries and herbs. Sales of these items can bring an adequate income, if not always an abundant one.

On the subject of raising crops, one of the greatest opportunities of homesteading is that of growing and raising one's own food. According to some estimates, a family of four can raise all the food it needs on only one acre. Whether or not a person wishes to be this self-sufficient, it is worth considering again the low quality of much of the food we purchase at stores. To blame are modern methods of "factory farming," food processing and the use of chemical additives. The consequences, many nutrition writers believe, are our high rates of cancer, heart disease, other serious ailments and the general sense of malaise so many people feel.

Homestead gardens, however, could provide fresh supplies of completely "natural" foods. Many people testify that the nourishment and taste are worth the effort.

Also contributing to good health would be fresh air, pure water and the chance to do different types of physical and mental work. Many Americans are so far removed from these benefits that they have no idea of what they're lacking.

The same indeed could be said of so many other deficiencies in our modern society. This is not to romanticize the old days on the farm. Times then were tough with or without our many modern conveniences. In any case, there is no reason why we must choose between today and yesterday. The better course is to conceive a tomorrow which draws on the best of both.

The standard of living provided by technological society is one argument usually offered against homesteading. But a relevant question is how permanent this comfort is. It would be senseless, as an illustration, to parachute from a plane with engines humming -- unless a glance at the gas gauge showed it near empty.

The gauge on our national economy indicates a similar peril. Continuing massive deficits and a banking system made shaky by questionable foreign loans may yet bring us to an economic breakdown, with massive unemployment, hyper-inflation, civil disorder and disruption of vital services.

Then many a suburbanite might rue the day he passed up the opportunity to escape to a rural setting and acquire skills of self-sufficiency. What

may come could be far worse than the 1930s collapse.

At that time the American people were relatively united by values, culture and a common sense of national purpose. A quarter of the people lived on farms and could support themselves if all else failed. Today the situation has changed considerably with erosion of national consensus and many moral restraints. Now perhaps three percent of the people live on the land. In the event of a major depression, urban residents could face violence and cutoffs of supplies.

Increasing the possibility of social upheaval is the country's changed demographic picture. Present trends of immigration and relative birth-rates among different ethnic groups could give the U.S. a black-Hispanic-Oriental majority by the middle of the next century. This shift, if indeed it comes, is sure to set the stage for serious conflict, particularly in those states such as California, Texas and Florida where the greatest changes are likely to occur. Big cities in almost all parts of the country may face the same prospect.

Perhaps the best arrangement for homesteading, economically and in most other respects, would be a community of homesteaders living fairly close to one another. This would facilitate sale and barter of goods and services, as well as mutual aid in times of difficulty. Most helpful to bring such unity about would be some unifying political or religious ideal.

Given the conditions and distressing trends of contemporary society, a growing number of individuals and groups may consider withdrawal.

Religious groups, for example, may tire of a society geared toward self-seeking and hedonism. As many such groups have done in the past, they might retreat and build new communities where their values would be respected and passed on to their children.

Members of various ethnic and racial groups might decide that they prefer the richness of their own traditions and identity to a "melting pot" society which renders all its ingredients equally bland and insipid.

Then there could be plenty of plain average Americans who sense they are losing their birthright as a free people. Mass society preserves the outward form of freedom, but increasingly subverts the substance. Personal initiative and responsibility wither when statist and corporate structures inhibit their exercise. Homesteading offers a person the chance to take charge of his life and experience firsthand the joys and tribulations of genuine living.

I'm a city man with a strong attachment to the country. My feeling is not just toward the land, but to the virtues and traits commonly associated with rural living: independence, a wholesome way of life, strong family ties and a strong sense of tradition, folklore and native culture.

As Americans have moved away from farms and rural areas, these traits and attributes have become correspondingly scarce. In my own native region, the South, many of the descendants of proud cavaliers and yeoman farmers are now the bland mass-men of cities and suburbs. Perhaps I am one of them more than I care to admit. But at least I can take consolation from the thought that dissatisfaction with a bad situation is a sign of health and that many other Americans seem to share the feeling in varying degrees.

Surely something's wrong when technology and mass urban scale overshadow the human element. An impersonal, rat-racing existence ever accompanied by noise and pollution is simply a life without meaning. Eventually people will rebel against it, even to the point of social breakdown.

The prospects for a free society face no less danger from the sort of employment we commonly find today.

To a great extent replacing the independent farmers and merchants of the past is the employee of government and corporations. Working for a wage is of course no moral failing. I do myself. But this doesn't blind me to its dangers. Always following orders makes one subservient and dependent by habit. Jobs with too much specialization or too little meaning stunt personal growth and development. Our constitutional guarantees notwithstanding, how can America remain free if freedom is something we preach, but seldom practice?

It's not a modern question. Thomas Jefferson asked it 200 years ago. He doubted that liberty could survive in a society made up mainly of cities, factories and wage-earners. Jefferson believed furthermore that the soul of a free society is a strong community of independent farmers. Producing their own sustenance and practicing sound habits of mind and body, the rural yeomen would know freedom firsthand and would strive to uphold it. This "country ideology" has deep roots in Western political thought, going all the way back to Aristotle.

Mention it today, however, and the first word you're bound to hear is "impractical." As a common reply runs, "What do you want to do, repeal the Industrial Revolution?" The answer, of course, is no. Industry and technology aren't above criticism, but few can deny that they have

improved our lives in many ways. One must also admit that the rural life of the past was often far from ideal. Farmers commonly migrated to cities to escape hard toil and isolation.

But the relevant question to ask is whether technology must necessarily give us the sort of hectic, depersonalized urban lives we have today. If we say yes, we must concede that technology is our master. If on the other hand we maintain that technology is our servant, then we should use it to fashion a world to our liking. In this instance we might envision settlements combining the best of rural farm living with the best assistance of modern invention.

The ideal would be a way of life centered around the homestead and the community, providing a healthy balance between mental work, physical labor and creative leisure. Such communities would be sufficiently isolated to promote self-reliance and strong personal ties among family members and neighbors, while close enough to modern communications to allow participation in the outside world.

The economic arrangement for the community might be part-time self-employment or wage work combined with the proceeds of working the land. Already the computer revolution holds out the prospect of work being done from remote terminals. Some companies are seeing the value of cottage industry piecework.

As time goes on, these and similar trends -- some purposefully directed -- could open up opportunities for large numbers of people wishing to return to the land and a simpler way of life. The homesteads envisioned, I should hasten to add, would be different from the family farms of today, which are rapidly going broke. The fate of the homesteads would not be tied to the fickle shifts of national and international markets. They instead would raise crops for subsistence and local needs. Supplementary employment would provide the remaining non-food items.

Building new homesteads certainly would require ingenuity, hard work and just plain guts. The odds right now are against it. Nevertheless, there might just be some discontented people in our high-rise gulags who are weary of office politics and ready for the sweat and challenge of authentic living. Undeterred by cries of impracticality -- the same cries that our pioneer forebears heard when they left Europe -- new homesteaders might make their visions into realities. Perhaps better small-scale farm technology could be devised; perhaps small-scale local manufacturing could develop. Taking off the blinders of fear and "impracticality" are the first steps freedom-starved people can take toward freedom.

As a Southerner, it is my hope that such a movement could get underway here. The soul of the South is rural, but the region today seems hell-bent on becoming a clone of the concrete, urban anthills of the Northeast. Oddly, this is happening at a time when the once progressive image of those domains has been tarnished from urban blight, economic decline and social unrest.

At this point I know someone will say that I'm wrong to assume that all rural people are virtuous upholders of the Republic and all urbanites are dregs. Frankly, I don't assume it. I've met too many country dregs and fine city folk to make such a sharp distinction.

Yet even if the notion of rural virtue is a myth, one might note that myths quite often arise from some basis in fact. Is it any accident, I wonder, that the great architects of American freedom, such men as Washington, Jefferson and Madison, were often men from the country?

Cite all the advantages you like of the citified lifestyle most Americans now live, and something is still lacking. Part of it is having a degree of self-sufficiency -- standing on your own ground and harvesting its fruits. Something else is closeness to nature and the elements. The smell of fresh-cut hay or the sight of a starry rural sky on a winter's night are stimulants to the senses and the imagination. They renew minds and spirits.

Urban culture has its own less-healthy stimulants -- drugs, alcohol, pounding music and frantic ambition. These deplete instead of renew. Our society boasts of its high standard of living, while ever-increasing boredom and frustration belie this boast. Perhaps we should ask just how "practical" such living really is.

A new vision of country life can offer escape and freedom to those with the boldness to give it a try.

J.V.

POSTSCRIPTS

by
Revalo P. Oliver

A JESUS WHO WAS A CHRIST

In the first century B.C. and the following century, Egypt, Palestine, and adjacent parts of the Near East swarmed with goëtae, itinerant mountebanks who practiced thaumaturgy, performing tricks of magic to make the yokels gawk and part with their money. These fakirs were also in the salvation-business and promised some sort of posthumous felicity to generous contributors in the name of whatever deities the given set of proletarians venerated. Most of the goëtae were Jews, and the more talented ones often succeeded in setting themselves up in a first-class business with numerous adherents.

When the goëtae were plying their trade among Jewish peasants, they often took the logical step of representing themselves as christs (messiahs), divinely ordained to become Kings of the Jews and lead them to the dreamed-of slaughter of civilized races and the dominion over the whole world that Yahweh had promised his Chosen Predators. It is a statistical certainty that many of the goëtae bore the name YŠW', just as it is a statistical certainty that in any group of Americans today, whether plumbers or lawyers or salesmen, you will find quite a few who are named John or William. YŠW' was a very popular name among Jews because it was the name given to the hero of the stories about the conquest of Canaan and the joyful slaughter of the Canaanites in the "Old Testament," and, as a matter of fact, we have record of quite a few fakirs and trouble makers who bore that name. The name, transmitted through Greek¹

1. Semitic languages have phonemes that do not occur in Indo-European speech, so no representation of a Semitic name in an Indo-European spelling can be more than a rough approximation. The name was evidently pronounced somewhat like 'Yea-shoog' or 'Yeh-shoug' (cf. note 3 below) without a following vowel-sound, at least in Aramaic. Greek, having early lost the letter of its alphabet that would have approximated the sound of Hebrew Š, had to represent it by *sigma*, whence *s* in Latin. The lost letter,

and Latin, appears in English as 'Jesus.'

One of the most interesting Jesuses was a thaumaturge whom Ralph Perier and I have mentioned a number of times in the pages of *Liberty Bell*, most recently in my *By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know them*, p.4. He was Jesus ben Pandera, who was born in the reign of a Jewish King who had assumed a civilized name, Alexander Jannaeus. When he grew up, he learned magical tricks in Egypt, wowed the Jewish peasantry and even impressed Alexander's widow, Alexandra Helene, acquiring her favor and a considerable following, but he eventually was ruined by the holy men with whom he was in competition and, betrayed by one of his disciples, named Judas Iscariot, when he rode into Jerusalem on an ass, was hanged, after which there was hanky-panky about disposal of his body. His career obviously contributed quite a few elements to the tales about a later Jesus in the "New Testament."²

The Jewish record of Jesus ben Pandera, hostile to him as are all Jewish accounts of christs who failed, is preserved in a book commonly called *Sepher Toledoth Yeshu* ("Book of the Lineage of Jesus"), extant in several recensions, which differ in various details. The best summary of the story known to me is by Dr. Martin A. Larson, in his *The Essene-Christian Faith* (New York, Philosophical Library, 1980), pp. 151 ff. All versions of the story affirm that this Jesus really performed miracles, having learned the secret name of Yahweh, which enabled him to raise the dead, etc., and lost his power when he was in some way deprived of either his recollection of the name or of the parchment on which he had laboriously copied the four letters

which resembled M and stood in the alphabet between *pi* and *qoppa*, disappeared because it represented a sound that did not occur in Greek, except in a few local dialects that disappeared in the sixth century B.C.; it was so completely discarded that, unlike *vau* (the digamma), *qoppa*, and *sampi*, it was not even kept as a numeral. When I say that the letter disappeared, I refer to its phonetic value, not its shape. The shape, i.e., like our M, did survive for a time in a few epichoric alphabets, but as a substitute for the more common shape of *sigma*, being, so to speak, a *sigma* turned on its face.

2. The elements that the two tales have in common are listed by Dr. Larson, *loc. cit. infra*. It is not at all unlikely that there was another Jesus who, in Roman times, tried again and also came a cropper, and that, given the identity of two names, stories about them were conflated; that, in fact, would explain many of the passages in the "New Testament" that flatly contradict others.

of the name and which he then inserted in an incision in his thigh. It is a reasonable inference that a story so precisely dated and, in its essentials, circumstantial is based on an actual occurrence, despite the supernatural garnish added to it.

The record of Jesus ben Pandera has mightily embarrassed professionals in the Jesus-business ever since it was rediscovered in the Sixteenth Century. One expedient is to feign ignorance of it and hope the customers will not have heard of it; I note that the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford Press, 1957; reprinted 1966), a compilation which, despite some concessions to historical scholarship, reflects little credit on its publisher, avoids all mention of it. The more common expedient is to claim that the story of Jesus ben Pandera was devised by the wicked Jews during the Middle Ages to undermine faith in the Saviour of the "New Testament." That, of course, is intrinsically absurd: no one who intended to contradict a story about a Jesus who flourished when Palestine was a Roman province would transpose the story to an earlier period when Judaea was ruled by an historical Jewish King and Queen. Moreover, the holy men who made that claim were, if at all educated in their profession, consciously lying. One cannot suppose that students of theology would not read so important a Father of the Church as Origen, from whom they would necessarily learn that the story about Jesus ben Pandera was known to Celsus when he wrote, c. A.D. 170.

If you really want to read an English translation of one recension of the story about Jesus ben Pandera, it is readily available in an inexpensive booklet: *The Jewish Life of Christ, being the Sepher Toldoth [sic] Jeshu*,³ s.l. & a. Despite the blank on the title page, the booklet was obviously published by the American Atheist Press, P. O. Box 2117, Austin, Texas, from which it may be obtained for \$3.00. It was probably published around 1982, but I have just come across it and write this note for readers who may be curious and want to read such a translation without recourse to the Library of Congress or the libraries of the major universities. I am sorry to have to

3. The English is followed by the title in Hebrew characters so blurred you may not be able to make them out, so I give here the standard transliteration: SFR TWLDWT YSW. You will have noticed that the final letter of Jesus's name in Hebrew has been omitted: to the Jewish mind, that is a cute way of showing contempt. Incidentally, the omitted letter, which is represented by the rough breathing (') in the standard transliteration, denoted a deep guttural or laryngeal sound which, I am told by Semitists, is beyond the range of most or all Aryan mouths.

add that the booklet is so full of misprints that it will keep a reader in a state of continual exasperation.

The Atheist Press chose to copy a translation made in 1885 by G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler from an inferior recension of the story in which some details were stupidly altered with characteristically Jewish malice by an editor, who added a bumbling attempt to prove that Jesus ben Pandera was identical with the Jesus of the "New Testament." You will wish to compare that recension with the earlier version summarized by Dr. Larson. Foote and Wheeler accompanied their translation with copious historical notes, which I must not take time to review here. A few have been made obsolete by information that became available after 1885.

The translators added an historical introduction and a commentary at the end. What gave me pause for a moment was a quotation (on page 47 of this reprint) from an essay by the Reverend Mr. Sabine Baring-Gould, who undertook to discredit the story about Jesus ben Pandera, claiming it was invented in the Middle Ages. All Protestant Christians have probably sung many times Baring-Gould's best-known hymn, "Onward, Christian Soldiers." He was a well-educated man, a graduate of Cambridge, and he has left no few works of learned research, of which *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages* (1866) is still in print. He was both an English gentleman and scholar of high attainments, erudite, acute, and judicious. But when his pious passions were aroused by a threat to his religion, he could lie brazenly and assert that the story of Jesus ben Pandera was unknown to Celsus. He could lie not only brazenly but recklessly, hoping that his readers would never read the surviving parts of Celsus's work.⁴ Do you wonder that I despair of minds that have been

4. Baring-Gould must have counted on the complicity of his fellow clergymen, who, as I remarked above, would almost certainly have read in the course of their theological studies the *Contra Celsum* of Origen, who, writing around 250, tried to refute by declamation the book that Celsus had written eighty years before. For the Greek text of the extant parts of Celsus's work, see the edition by Otto Glöckner in the series of Lietzmann's *Kleine Texte für theologische und philologische Vorlesungen und Übungen*, Bonn, 1924. There is an excellent French translation by the eminent Louis Rougier in his *Celse, ou le conflit de la civilisation antique et du christianisme primitif* (Paris, Éditions du Siècle, 1926); this, minus Rougier's introduction, was reprinted under the title *Celse contre les Chrétiens* (Paris, Copernic, 1977), while the introduction was replaced by Professor Rougier's admirable study of the disastrous influence of the Judaic superstition on Western Civilization, *Le conflit du christianisme primitif et de la civilisation antique* (Paris, Copernic, 1974; 2d edition, 1977).

made feverish by the Jews' greatest hoax?

* * *

The story of Jesus ben Pandera, if considered critically, will give us a convenient illustration of the way in which all such tales, including those in the "New Testament," are elaborated.

It is a reasonable inference that the story has an historical nucleus: that among the numerous goëtae there was a Jesus who, by his skill in magic and spellbinding patter, acquired a sizeable following and imposed for a time on the widow of Alexander Jannaeus, Alexandra Helene (Salome), who ruled Judaea from 78 to 69 B.C. He and his followers doubtless spread wondrous stories about his divine powers and the miracles he had wrought. Like many others, he was probably of obscure origin and claimed to be a Son of God. Holy men are always in keen and unscrupulous competition with each other, and it was probably through some intrigue that he lost the Queen's favor and protection, and was hanged. His dupes, believing in his divinity, doubtless devised stories to account for his ignominious end and awaited his return with celestial reinforcements to make good his promises to them. If he was born during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (103-76), he cannot have been the Essene "Teacher of Righteousness," who was crucified by that king c. 88 B.C.

To make our example brief, let us consider only the account of his birth and parentage.

According to what must have been the original and not implausible version of the story, Joseph, a lustful Jew who also bears the obviously assumed name of Pandera (=Greek *panthera* or *pantheras*), seduces a young woman, Mary, by stealing into her chamber at night and, under the cover of darkness, pretending to be her betrothed, John. When Mary and John are married, they discover that it was not he who took her virginity, but she is already pregnant, and John takes her to Egypt to avoid scandal. Her child, of course, is Jesus.

In what theologians call "hostile gospels," the purpose is to denigrate the protagonist. Redactors habitually try to improve the tale they are transmitting. If it was felt that it was not sufficient that Jesus was a bastard, the story could be improved by disparaging his mother and placing on the circumstances of his conception a peculiarly Jewish stigma.

A recension of the story that shows this stage is translated in

G. R. S. Mead's *Did Jesus Live 100 B.C.?* (London, Theosophical, 1903), pp. 258 ff. According to this version, John and Mary are accustomed to engage in sexual intercourse while they are betrothed. Joseph enters and in the darkness Mary, thinking him John, objects that she is menstruating.⁵ That does not deter the lascivious Joseph from indulging his lust. Soon after Joseph has departed, John enters the chamber, and Mary naturally exclaims, "What? You again!" John thus discovers what has happened, suspects Joseph, and departs without touching his fiancée, whom another man has defiled. When Mary is found to be pregnant, John knows, from the phase of her cycle in which she conceived, that he cannot be the father. He abandons Mary and leaves town, going to Babylon (which at that time was what New York is today, the largest Jewish city in the world).

The redactor of the recension translated by Foote and Wheeler tried to improve on this. He makes Mary's mother condone and even suggest the clandestine rape. He, however, wanted to present John as a very chaste and pious youth, so he eliminated the practice of sexual relations between John and his fiancée. Joseph enters, is mistaken for John, and insists on copulating with the girl despite her condition. So far so good, but in the version the redactor was improving, Mary was visited twice in one night. Instead of simply suppressing the second visit, the bumbling redactor makes Joseph return for a second bout. But, with the stupidity characteristic of such meddlers, he forgot to alter the girl's exclamation that John has never before come to her twice in one night since they were engaged! Since John in this version has never had connection with his fiancée, he knows he cannot be the father of her child, and, to avoid being suspected, he runs off to Babylon.

In another recension, Mary appears as a peasant girl who is the wife of a village carpenter. She, doubtless in keeping with the adage that when husbands are away, wives will play, commits adultery with a foreign (Macedonian?) soldier named Panthera. Driven by her husband from their hut, she gives birth to her child in the wilderness. Another version makes Mary a

5. This is a subject on which the rabbis of the Talmuds enjoy exercising their Yiddish ingenuity and hair-splitting subtlety, and on which they expatiate almost endlessly with a pertinacity that seems incredible to Aryan minds. On the Jews' sexual fixations, which seem so unnatural and repulsive to us, see Allen Edwardes, *Erotica Judaica*, New York, Julian Press, 1967.

prostitute and her mother a bawd.

One could go on to show how each element in the story was revised in successive recensions, but the one example will suffice.

As we all know, when a man repeats a story, whether an anecdote or a folk-tale, he often censors it to eliminate what displeases him, and revises or expands it to sharpen its point for his audience. When there is a strong religious animus, an urge to denigrate or exalt the subject of the tale becomes paramount.

Fortunately for us, religious emotions commonly make narrators overlook what is inconsistent in the changes they make. We noted above one example: the doubling of Joseph's visit to Mary. We cannot be certain whether that inept alteration was made in oral or in written transmission of the tale. A quite different oversight appears in the manuscripts (Ninth Century or later) in which the redactor or, at least, the copyist overlooked a detail which, by implication, contradicted the Jewish orthodoxy of his time.

Jesus ben Pandera claims that he was born of a virgin and is therefore a christ, alluding to the prophecy in *Isaiah*, 7.14: "The Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son." That 'virgin' is the correct meaning is obvious from the Septuagint, in which the word is *parthenos*, and even more from the common-sense consideration that the pregnancy of a virgin would indeed be remarkable, whereas hundreds of young women conceive every day and about half of them bear sons. Nevertheless, when the Jews, perhaps in the Third Century or late in the Second, determined to sever themselves completely from their Christians, they altered the Hebrew text and replaced the word for 'virgin' (probably BTWLH) with 'LMH, which means 'young woman.' An alert redactor would have made the Jews who heard Jesus's use of the supposed prophecy object that he was falsifying its meaning, and would have thus retrojected into the time of Queen Alexandra Helene the interpretation that was orthodox in his own time.

If we had the early oral and written versions of the gospels that were finally included in the "New Testament," we should doubtless be able to trace a similar process of constant revision before the texts were canonized by the Fathers in widely disseminated copies, so that only relatively minor tampering with the text was possible thereafter. As it is, we have many surviving inconsistencies in the tales, and a very clear example in

the drastic censoring of a passage in the gospel that is attributed to a certain unidentified Marcus, of which one of the earlier texts was preserved in a letter by Clement that was discovered by Professor Morton Smith. (Text with commentary in his *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark*, Harvard University Press, 1973; translation in his more popular book, *The Secret Gospel*, New York, Harper & Row, c. 1973.) □

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Selecting a Rural Haven

The following tables will enable the reader to eliminate from consideration many undesirable states. For example, states dominated (or soon to be dominated) by urban areas. While there are rural, ethnically homogeneous, virtually crime-free counties in states such as Michigan, Ohio and New York, the balance of political power is held by urban centers.

Due to the massive influx of Mexicans into California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, and Cubans and others from the Caribbean and Central America into Florida, these states must also be eliminated from consideration.

Once a state has been selected, several rural counties should be chosen for personal inspection. The U.S. Census Bureau publishes reports containing population estimates and other relevant information for each county in the nation (*Local Population Estimates, Series 26*, for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402).

States Ranked by Population
(1980 Census)

1. California.....	23,668,562	26. Oklahoma.....	3,025,266
2. New York.....	17,557,288	27. Iowa.....	2,913,387
3. Texas.....	14,228,383	28. Colorado.....	2,888,834
4. Pennsylvania.....	11,866,728	29. Arizona.....	2,717,866
5. Illinois.....	11,418,461	30. Oregon.....	2,632,663
6. Ohio.....	10,797,419	31. Mississippi.....	2,520,638
7. Florida.....	9,739,992	32. Kansas.....	2,363,208
8. Michigan.....	9,258,344	33. Arkansas.....	2,285,513
9. New Jersey.....	7,364,158	34. West Virginia.....	1,949,644
10. North Carolina.....	5,874,429	35. Nebraska.....	1,570,006
11. Massachusetts.....	5,737,037	36. Utah.....	1,461,037
12. Indiana.....	5,490,179	37. New Mexico.....	1,299,968
13. Georgia.....	5,464,265	38. Maine.....	1,124,660
14. Virginia.....	5,346,279	39. Hawaii.....	965,000
15. Missouri.....	4,917,444	40. Rhode Island.....	947,154
16. Wisconsin.....	4,705,335	41. Idaho.....	943,935
17. Tennessee.....	4,590,750	42. New Hampshire.....	920,610
18. Maryland.....	4,216,446	43. Nevada.....	799,184
19. Louisiana.....	4,203,972	44. Montana.....	786,690
20. Washington.....	4,130,163	45. South Dakota.....	690,178
21. Minnesota.....	4,077,148	46. North Dakota.....	652,695
22. Alabama.....	3,890,061	47. Delaware.....	595,255
23. Kentucky.....	3,661,433	48. Vermont.....	511,456
24. South Carolina.....	3,119,208	49. Wyoming.....	470,816
25. Connecticut.....	3,107,576	50. Alaska.....	400,481

Increases and Decreases
in State Population 1970-1980
(by Percentage)

1. Nevada.....	+63.5%	26. Kentucky.....	+13.7%
2. Arizona.....	+53.1%	27. Montana.....	+13.3%
3. Florida.....	+43.4%	28. Maine.....	+13.2%
4. Wyoming.....	+41.6%	29. Alabama.....	+12.9%
5. Utah.....	+37.9%	30. West Virginia.....	+11.8%
6. Alaska.....	+32.4%	31. Delaware.....	+ 8.6%
7. Idaho.....	+32.4%	32. Maryland.....	+ 7.5%
8. Colorado.....	+30.7%	33. Minnesota.....	+ 7.1%
9. New Mexico.....	+27.8%	34. Wisconsin.....	+ 6.5%
10. Texas.....	+27.1%	35. Nebraska.....	+ 5.7%
11. Oregon.....	+25.9%	36. Indiana.....	+ 5.7%
12. Hawaii.....	+25.3%	37. North Dakota.....	+ 5.6%
13. New Hampshire.....	+24.8%	38. Kansas.....	+ 5.1%
14. Washington.....	+21.0%	39. Missouri.....	+ 5.1%
15. South Carolina.....	+20.4%	40. Michigan.....	+ 4.2%
16. Georgia.....	+19.1%	41. South Dakota.....	+ 3.6%
17. Arkansas.....	+18.8%	42. Iowa.....	+ 3.1%
18. California.....	+18.5%	43. Illinois.....	+ 2.8%
19. Oklahoma.....	+18.2%	44. New Jersey.....	+ 2.7%
20. Tennessee.....	+16.9%	45. Connecticut.....	+ 2.5%
21. North Carolina.....	+15.5%	46. Ohio.....	+ 1.3%
22. Louisiana.....	+15.3%	47. Massachusetts.....	+ 0.8%
23. Vermont.....	+15.0%	48. Pennsylvania.....	+ 0.6%
24. Virginia.....	+14.9%	49. Rhode Island.....	- 0.3%
25. Mississippi.....	+13.7%	50. New York.....	- 3.8%

**Population Increases and Decreases
by State, July 1983-July 1984**
(by Percentage)

1. Alaska	+4.0%	26. Tennessee	+0.9%
2. Arizona	+2.8%	27. Alabama	+0.7%
3. Florida	+2.2%	28. Mississippi	+0.7%
4. Hawaii	+2.1%	29. New Jersey	+0.7%
5. Utah	+2.1%	30. North Dakota	+0.7%
6. New Hampshire	+2.0%	31. Massachusetts	+0.6%
7. Georgia	+1.8%	32. Nebraska	+0.6%
8. New Mexico	+1.8%	33. Oregon	+0.6%
9. California	+1.7%	34. Rhode Island	+0.6%
10. Nevada	+1.6%	35. Connecticut	+0.5%
11. North Carolina	+1.5%	36. Indiana	+0.5%
12. Idaho	+1.4%	37. Kansas	+0.5%
13. South Carolina	+1.4%	38. Louisiana	+0.5%
14. Virginia	+1.4%	39. Minnesota	+0.4%
15. Texas	+1.3%	40. New York	+0.4%
16. Delaware	+1.2%	41. Wisconsin	+0.4%
17. Maryland	+1.2%	42. Illinois	+0.3%
18. Montana	+1.1%	43. Kentucky	+0.3%
19. Washington	+1.1%	44. Michigan	+0.3%
20. Arkansas	+1.0%	45. Iowa	+0.2%
21. Colorado	+1.0%	46. Ohio	+0.1%
22. Maine	+1.0%	47. Pennsylvania	+0.1%
23. South Dakota	+1.0%	48. Oklahoma	-0.4%
24. Vermont	+1.0%	49. West Virginia	-0.5%
25. Missouri	+0.9%	50. Wyoming	-1.0%

**Proportion of Population
Living in Metropolitan Areas**

1. California	94.9%	26. Minnesota	64.6%
2. Rhode Island	92.2%	27. Louisiana	63.4%
3. New Jersey	91.4%	28. Tennessee	62.8%
4. New York	90.1%	29. Alabama	62.0%
5. Maryland	88.8%	30. Georgia	60.0%
6. Connecticut	88.3%	31. South Carolina	59.7%
7. Florida	87.9%	32. Oklahoma	58.5%
8. Massachusetts	85.3%	33. North Carolina	52.7%
9. Michigan	82.7%	34. New Hampshire	50.7%
10. Nevada	82.0%	35. Kansas	46.8%
11. Pennsylvania	81.9%	36. Kentucky	44.5%
12. Illinois	81.0%	37. Nebraska	44.2%
13. Colorado	80.9%	38. Alaska	43.2%
14. Washington	80.4%	39. New Mexico	42.4%
15. Ohio	80.3%	40. Iowa	40.1%
16. Texas	80.0%	41. Arkansas	39.1%
17. Hawaii	79.1%	42. West Virginia	37.1%
18. Utah	79.0%	43. North Dakota	35.9%
19. Arizona	75.0%	44. Maine	33.0%
20. Indiana	69.8%	45. Mississippi	27.1%
21. Virginia	69.6%	46. Montana	24.0%
22. Delaware	67.0%	47. Vermont	22.3%
23. Wisconsin	66.8%	48. Idaho	18.3%
24. Missouri	65.3%	49. South Dakota	15.9%
25. Oregon	64.9%	50. Wyoming	15.3%

Farms Per State

State	1978	1982	State	1978	1982
Alabama	50,780	48,443	Montana	2,618	2,563
Alaska	383	570	Nebraska	63,768	60,240
Arizona	6,298	7,337	Nevada	2,399	2,721
Arkansas	51,751	50,530	New Hampshire	2,508	2,759
California	73,194	82,468	New Jersey	7,984	8,277
Colorado	26,907	27,117	New Mexico	12,311	13,483
Connecticut	3,519	3,757	New York	43,075	42,209
Delaware	3,398	3,338	North Carolina	81,706	72,799
Florida	36,109	36,352	North Dakota	40,357	36,436
Georgia	51,405	49,627	Ohio	89,131	86,942
Hawaii	4,310	4,596	Oklahoma	72,237	72,524
Idaho	24,249	24,711	Oregon	28,503	34,086
Illinois	104,690	98,489	Pennsylvania	56,202	55,539
Indiana	82,483	77,184	Rhode Island	674	729
Iowa	121,339	115,414	South Carolina	26,706	24,931
Kansas	74,171	73,318	South Dakota	38,741	37,147
Kentucky	106,263	101,700	Tennessee	86,910	90,568
Louisiana	31,370	31,638	Texas	175,475	185,026
Maine	6,775	7,003	Utah	12,764	13,983
Maryland	15,540	16,184	Vermont	5,852	6,315
Massachusetts	4,964	5,403	Virginia	49,936	51,863
Michigan	60,426	58,664	Washington	30,987	36,051
Minnesota	98,671	94,385	West Virginia	17,475	18,751
Mississippi	44,104	42,420	Wisconsin	86,505	82,203
Missouri	114,963	112,463	Wyoming	8,040	8,863

Percentage of Residents Born Outside the United States

1. California.....	14.8%	26. Virginia.....	3.2%
2. Hawaii.....	14.0%	27. Minnesota.....	2.7%
3. New York.....	13.4%	28. Ohio.....	2.7%
4. Florida.....	10.9%	29. Wisconsin.....	2.7%
5. New Jersey.....	10.3%	30. Idaho.....	2.3%
6. Rhode Island.....	8.8%	31. Montana.....	2.3%
7. Connecticut.....	8.5%	32. North Dakota.....	2.3%
8. Massachusetts.....	8.4%	33. Louisiana.....	2.1%
9. Illinois.....	7.3%	34. Kansas.....	2.0%
10. Nevada.....	6.7%	35. Indiana.....	1.9%
11. Arizona.....	6.0%	36. Nebraska.....	1.9%
12. Texas.....	6.0%	37. Wyoming.....	1.9%
13. Washington.....	5.8%	38. Missouri.....	1.8%
14. Maryland.....	4.6%	39. Oklahoma.....	1.8%
15. Michigan.....	4.4%	40. Georgia.....	1.7%
16. New Hampshire.....	4.2%	41. Iowa.....	1.7%
17. Oregon.....	4.2%	42. North Carolina.....	1.5%
18. Vermont.....	4.2%	43. South Carolina.....	1.4%
19. New Mexico.....	4.2%	44. South Dakota.....	1.4%
20. Alaska.....	3.9%	45. West Virginia.....	1.1%
21. Colorado.....	3.8%	46. Tennessee.....	1.0%
22. Maine.....	3.8%	47. Alabama.....	1.0%
23. Pennsylvania.....	3.6%	48. Arkansas.....	0.9%
24. Utah.....	3.5%	49. Kentucky.....	0.9%
25. Delaware.....	3.4%	50. Mississippi.....	0.9%

Percentage of Residents Born Outside the State in Which They Currently Reside

1. Nevada.....	78.7%	26. Illinois.....	31.1%
2. Florida.....	68.7%	27. New York.....	31.0%
3. Alaska.....	68.4%	28. Arkansas.....	30.9%
4. Arizona.....	67.5%	29. Missouri.....	30.2%
5. Wyoming.....	61.6%	30. South Dakota.....	29.5%
6. Colorado.....	57.3%	31. Nebraska.....	29.5%
7. Oregon.....	56.3%	32. Georgia.....	29.2%
8. California.....	54.7%	33. Michigan.....	28.7%
9. Washington.....	52.2%	34. Indiana.....	28.7%
10. Idaho.....	50.7%	35. Massachusetts.....	28.4%
11. New Hampshire.....	50.3%	36. Ohio.....	27.9%
12. New Mexico.....	48.8%	37. Tennessee.....	27.7%
13. Delaware.....	48.0%	38. North Dakota.....	27.4%
14. Maryland.....	46.6%	39. South Carolina.....	27.3%
15. New Jersey.....	43.9%	40. Maine.....	27.1%
16. Montana.....	43.1%	41. Minnesota.....	25.3%
17. Connecticut.....	42.8%	42. North Carolina.....	24.2%
18. Hawaii.....	42.2%	43. Iowa.....	23.2%
19. Virginia.....	40.0%	44. Wisconsin.....	22.8%
20. Vermont.....	38.8%	45. Louisiana.....	21.9%
21. Kansas.....	37.7%	46. Mississippi.....	21.5%
22. Oklahoma.....	37.0%	47. West Virginia.....	21.4%
23. Utah.....	34.2%	48. Alabama.....	21.0%
24. Rhode Island.....	33.0%	49. Kentucky.....	20.6%
25. Texas.....	31.1%	50. Pennsylvania.....	19.0%

Hispanic Populations of the States

1. California.....	4,543,770	26. Oklahoma.....	57,413
2. Texas.....	2,985,643	27. North Carolina.....	56,607
3. New York.....	1,659,245	28. Nevada.....	53,786
4. Florida.....	857,898	29. Missouri.....	51,667
5. Illinois.....	635,525	30. Idaho.....	36,615
6. New Jersey.....	491,867	31. Tennessee.....	34,081
7. New Mexico.....	476,089	32. South Carolina.....	33,414
8. Arizona.....	440,915	33. Alabama.....	33,100
9. Colorado.....	339,300	34. Minnesota.....	32,124
10. Michigan.....	162,388	35. Nebraska.....	28,020
11. Pennsylvania.....	154,044	36. Kentucky.....	27,403
12. Massachusetts.....	141,043	37. Iowa.....	25,536
13. Connecticut.....	124,499	38. Mississippi.....	24,731
14. Washington.....	119,986	39. Wyoming.....	24,499
15. Ohio.....	119,880	40. Rhode Island.....	19,707
16. Louisiana.....	99,105	41. Arkansas.....	17,873
17. Indiana.....	87,020	42. West Virginia.....	12,707
18. Virginia.....	79,873	43. Montana.....	9,974
19. Hawaii.....	71,479	44. Delaware.....	9,671
20. Oregon.....	65,833	45. Alaska.....	9,497
21. Maryland.....	64,740	46. New Hampshire.....	5,587
22. Kansas.....	63,333	47. Maine.....	5,005
23. Wisconsin.....	62,981	48. South Dakota.....	4,028
24. Georgia.....	61,261	49. North Dakota.....	3,903
25. Utah.....	60,302	50. Vermont.....	3,304

Black Percentages of State Populations

1. Mississippi	35.2%	26. Nevada.....	6.4%
2. South Carolina.....	30.4%	27. Kansas	5.3%
3. Louisiana	29.4%	28. Massachusetts	3.9%
4. Georgia	26.8%	29. Wisconsin	3.9%
5. Alabama	25.6%	30. Colorado.....	3.5%
6. Maryland	22.7%	31. Alaska	3.4%
7. North Carolina.....	22.4%	32. West Virginia	3.3%
8. Virginia.....	18.9%	33. Nebraska	3.1%
9. Arkansas.....	16.3%	34. Rhode Island.....	2.9%
10. Delaware.....	16.1%	35. Arizona	2.8%
11. Tennessee.....	15.8%	36. Washington	2.6%
12. Illinois.....	14.7%	37. New Mexico	1.8%
13. Florida.....	13.8%	38. Hawaii	1.8%
14. New York.....	13.7%	39. Iowa.....	1.4%
15. Michigan.....	12.9%	40. Oregon.....	1.4%
16. New Jersey	12.6%	41. Minnesota	1.3%
17. Texas	12.0%	42. Wyoming.....	0.7%
18. Missouri.....	10.5%	43. Utah.....	0.6%
19. Ohio	10.0%	44. New Hampshire	0.4%
20. Pennsylvania.....	8.8%	45. North Dakota	0.4%
21. California.....	7.7%	46. Maine	0.3%
22. Indiana.....	7.6%	47. Idaho.....	0.3%
23. Kentucky	7.1%	48. South Dakota	0.3%
24. Connecticut	7.0%	49. Vermont	0.2%
25. Oklahoma	6.8%	50. Montana	0.2%

Crime Index, 1983

Sum of state's violent crime rate plus 10% of its property crime rate.

State	Index	Rank	State	Index	Rank
Alabama	867	28	Montana	636	41
Alaska	1,183	10	Nebraska	602	44
Arizona	1,179	11	Nevada	1,516	4
Arkansas	680	36	New Hampshire	495	48
California	1,462	5	New Jersey	1,114	16
Colorado	1,163	12	New Mexico	1,321	7
Connecticut	902	23	New York	1,539	3
Delaware	1,142	14	North Carolina	856	29
Florida	1,554	2	North Dakota	322	51
Georgia	952	20	Ohio	887	27
Hawaii	889	26	Oklahoma	922	22
Idaho	641	40	Oregon	1,082	17
Illinois	890	25	Pennsylvania	669	37
Indiana	713	34	Rhode Island	898	24
Iowa	569	46	South Carolina	1,184	9
Kansas	798	31	South Dakota	354	50
Kentucky	667	38	Tennessee	820	30
Louisiana	1,134	15	Texas	1,150	13
Maine	533	47	Utah	790	32
Maryland	1,367	6	Vermont	584	45
Massachusetts	1,064	18	Virginia	704	35
Michigan	1,270	8	Washington	994	19
Minnesota	643	39	West Virginia	408	49
Mississippi	623	42	Wisconsin	615	43
Missouri	951	21	Wyoming	754	33
			Washington DC	3,042	1

State Comparative Tax Burdens

(Based on per capita state and local taxes, 1983)

State, Ranked by Amount	Average amount paid	As percentage of personal income
1. Alaska	\$4,908	33.0
2. Wyoming	2,443	20.2
3. New York	1,889	15.3
4. Minnesota	1,473	13.2
5. Hawaii	1,457	12.9
6. New Jersey	1,457	11.2
7. Connecticut	1,434	10.4
8. Wisconsin	1,425	13.2
9. Massachusetts	1,425	11.8
10. Michigan	1,370	12.5
11. Maryland	1,350	11.1
12. California	1,337	10.8
13. Washington	1,306	11.4
14. Rhode Island	1,295	12.0
15. Delaware	1,273	10.9
16. Illinois	1,255	10.4
17. Oregon	1,229	11.9
18. Nevada	1,214	10.3
19. Montana	1,179	12.6
20. Iowa	1,171	10.9
21. Pennsylvania	1,169	10.7
22. Colorado	1,166	9.8
23. Nebraska	1,146	10.8
24. Vermont	1,138	12.2
25. Kansas	1,129	9.7

State, Ranked by Amount	Average amount paid	As percentage of personal income
26. Oklahoma	1,123	10.3
27. North Dakota	1,100	10.3
28. Ohio	1,100	10.3
29. Virginia	1,094	10.0
30. Maine	1,082	12.1
31. Arizona	1,064	10.8
32. Louisiana	1,051	10.4
33. New Mexico	1,041	11.7
34. Texas	1,033	9.3
35. Georgia	973	10.3
36. West Virginia	972	11.2
37. Florida	968	9.0
38. Utah	963	11.3
39. New Hampshire	951	8.9
40. Missouri	931	9.2
41. South Dakota	914	9.6
42. North Carolina	911	10.2
43. Indiana	905	9.0
44. Kentucky	888	10.1
45. South Carolina	878	10.5
46. Idaho	875	9.9
47. Alabama	806	9.4
48. Tennessee	804	9.1
49. Arkansas	771	9.2
50. Mississippi	769	10.0

“Conservative Index” of States

Based on Congressional ratings by the American Conservative Union and Americans for Constitutional Action. The higher the percentage, the more conservative the state’s Congressional delegation.

1. Utah	92%	26. Delaware	43%
2. Idaho	91%	27. Minnesota	43%
3. Wyoming	82%	28. New Mexico	42%
4. Nevada	79%	29. Kentucky	41%
5. Virginia	75%	30. Illinois	40%
6. Alabama	73%	31. Maine	40%
7. Mississippi	72%	32. Oregon	40%
8. New Hampshire	72%	33. Arkansas	39%
9. North Carolina	72%	34. California	39%
10. Oklahoma	72%	35. Missouri	39%
11. Georgia	69%	36. Ohio	39%
12. Nebraska	67%	37. Pennsylvania	39%
13. Arizona	65%	38. Washington	34%
14. Kansas	65%	39. New York	33%
15. South Carolina	65%	40. North Dakota	30%
16. Indiana	64%	41. Montana	28%
17. Iowa	62%	42. West Virginia	26%
18. South Dakota	62%	43. Michigan	24%
19. Alaska	61%	44. Maryland	22%
20. Texas	59%	45. New Jersey	22%
21. Louisiana	55%	46. Vermont	19%
22. Florida	54%	47. Connecticut	17%
23. Colorado	53%	48. Rhode Island	15%
24. Tennessee	50%	49. Massachusetts	10%
25. Wisconsin	49%	50. Hawaii	9%

Other Voices

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country’s pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England’s griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man;
For him light labor spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more;
His best companions, innocence and health;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are altered: trade’s unfeeling train
Usurp the land and dispossess the swain

Oliver Goldsmith,
“The Deserted Village”

Husbandry was the first employment and the most honorable . . .
farming is a divine appointment.

George Washington

. . . the wealth of America is in her farms Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God

Thomas Jefferson

Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again, as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country.

William Jennings Bryan

"This family came to America in Colonial times and began its career amid the primitive conditions then prevailing. By 1830 there were many descendants. All of them were farmers and artisans and owned homesteads of fair size. One of the men was a hatter, another a tanner, a third was a smith and carriage-maker, a fourth was a wood-and-metal worker who made spinning-wheels, looms, barrels, furniture, and utensils, and a fifth was a distiller of brandy. The women of the household were equally versatile and skilled in the domestic arts -- spinners, weavers, dyers, and conservers of foodstuffs; they made blankets, coverlets, sheets, rugs, and clothing, usually wool, cotton and flax, some of which, after the lapse of a century, are still in use!

Of foodstuffs, this community of families produced wheat, rye, oats, and barley, chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, pork and beef, honey and sorghum molasses, cherries, peaches, plums, apples, raspberries, blackberries, and strawberries, potatoes, cabbage, peas, lettuce, onions, rhubarb, parsnips, turnips, melons, pumpkins and squashes, pure wines and brandy. Wool, cotton, and linen supplied clothing, carpets, and bedding. Fuel came from the forests. Houses, all good and substantial, were made of brick and wood, the materials for which came from the farms. The only articles which the community required for a high standard of physical life were wrought iron, glass, and salt, with tea and coffee as luxuries. Furniture, hats, tools, and implements were made in the farm shops. The community supported an academy, housed in a building made of brick and wood supplied from forest and field and erected by community labor.

In Colonial times and the early days of the Republic this community had no schools, but all members could read and write. All the branches of

the family had books. In the middle years of the nineteenth century they received periodically the catalogues of booksellers from New York and Philadelphia and bought books with discrimination, if sparingly. The more intellectually alert among the family were acquainted with the main currents of thought then running through the Western World -- religious, political, and scientific. None was rich; none was poor. No member of the community was ever uncertain as to possessing all the food, clothing, and shelter necessary for a comfortable life. All, men and women alike, were artisans and, judging by their surviving handicraft products, possessed an artistic skill which found joyful expression. This was not complete community autarchy, to be sure; such a thing is largely a fiction; but it was a high degree of self-sufficiency.

It is a matter of incontestable historical fact that these families had, largely as a result of their own labor without the boasted advantages of contemporary technology or foreign trade, an abundance and variety of foodstuff far beyond the budget of the overwhelming majority of American farming and laboring families today, and they enjoyed a continuing security in economy vouchsafed to none of the one-crop farmers and industrial workers in the contemporary order of things, with its enormous technical resources.

Charles A. Beard,
The Open Door (1922)

Surprisingly, despite recurrent troubles, the farming community continues to exhibit the traditional virtues of home and family. In 1983, for example, farm women ages 18 to 34 continued to be more fertile than nonfarm women, average 2.45 children per woman compared to 2.07 in the cities. Where 13.3 percent of urban women ages 35 to 44 were currently divorced, only 2.1 percent of farm women were so situated. Ninety-three percent of farm children lived with two parents, compared to 73.7 percent of city children. While Americans affected by the "I'm OK, you're OK" ethos are undoubtedly loath to admit it, farm folks do remain -- on average -- morally better people.

Allan C. Carlson
"Should America Save Its
Peasant Class?"

... America's overall future will to a surprising degree be determined by the future of its minority citizens. In 1980 one out of every four American children under the age of 15 was black or Hispanic, even though the total population consisted of only about 18 percent blacks and Hispanics. In the bellwether state of California, more than 40 percent of the total population in 1980 consisted of blacks, Hispanics, Orientals, and members of other minority groups. If current rates of population growth for specific ethnic groups are unchanged, within two generations, or about sixty years, most U.S. children could be black, Hispanic or Oriental. And when the U.S. celebrates its tricentennial in 2076, non-Hispanic whites may be a minority.

Anthony Downs,
"The Future of Industrial Cities"
in *The New Urban Reality*. (1985)

In the past thirty years many American cities have dramatically changed their racial coloring. In the twenty largest cities of the Northeast and Middle West (hereinafter referred to as the Snow Belt cities) the white population fell by over 2.5 million, or 13 percent, between 1960 and 1970 and by another 4 million, or 24.3 percent, by 1980. The black population in the same cities grew by 1.75 million (35.8 percent) in the first of these decades and by over 200,000 (3 percent) in the most recent one. Reliable data on the size of the Hispanic population are more difficult to obtain, but Kasarda, using the best data available, reports that in the four largest cities of these regions the Hispanic population grew by nearly 400,000, or 26 percent. As a result of these changes, Snow Belt cities have become homes for racial minorities; in the twenty largest the white population in 1980 was only 53.8 percent. Clearly, the processes of urban decline have been accompanied by an equally profound process of racial succession.

Paul E. Peterson,
Introduction,
The New Urban Reality

Although most Americans live in or near cities, nearly half of them would move to places with 10,000 people or fewer if they had the chance, according to a recent Gallup Poll.

New York Times,
March 24, 1985

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Farmstead, The Farmstead Press, P.O. Box 111, Freedom, ME 04901. Bi-monthly magazine, \$15 per year.

The Mother Earth News, P.O. Box 70, Hendersonville, NC 28791. Bi-monthly magazine, \$18 per year.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture publishes a yearbook dealing with some particular aspect of farming:

1978 - *Living on a Few Acres*

1982 - *Food, from Farm to Table*

1984 - *Animal Health -- Livestock and Pets*

The authors welcome comments from readers regarding **Back to the Land**. Letters may be addressed to them in care of the publisher.

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