

P.C.I., for example, while gaining some strength in Florence, Forlì, Genoa and Pisa, lost in many other cities, most conspicuously in Rome, where they dropped a seat on the provincial council. The neo-Fascist M.S.I. lost even more conspicuously.

The implication is that the center-left experiment has been accepted, if without enthusiasm, by the Italian voters in a cross section of cities and towns. (Note that an average of ninety per cent turned out for these elections.) The relative stability of the Socialists, under sharp attack from both the P.C.I. and the P.S.I.U.P., and the neat gains by the Social Democrats—gains which tended to be highest precisely where the P.C.I. losses were greatest—seem to justify the optimism felt by protagonists of the *apertura*. Most conspicuously, the attitude of the press has been perceptibly changing, influenced in part by Socialist unification.

Yet this optimism needs to be tempered by caution, for there are many obstacles to a wider acceptance of the *apertura* just as there are to a wider acceptance of the sincerity of Socialist claims that they unified to provide a democratic alternative to perpetual C.D. rule. For example, I have heard some conclude that by the creation of a few more Socialist under-secretaries, the Socialists will have been brought into the Establishment and would thus cease to provide an ideological alternative to the present regime.

The obstacles to the *apertura* are those likely to be erected against some of the legislative bills to which the Socialists are committed. A five-year plan, regional autonomy, urban-affairs legislation, new health measures—all are questions which could easily divide the C.D. majority, thus bringing the *apertura* to an end.

Nonetheless, the alternatives to the *apertura* are few. A new Liberal-P.S.D.I. coalition with the C.D. is highly unlikely. Saragat's prestige as President of the Republic and his Party's role in the center-left experiment—to say nothing of the Liberals' hostility to the Socialists—ensures the unlikelihood of that solution. Repeating the Tambroni experiment of moving rightward would seemingly end either in civil disorder or in a Salazarian state.

Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the *apertura* will continue to grope its way along a path amenable both to impatient Socialists and reluctant Catholics. If the latter can be brought, as Fanfani would have it, to press for reforms rather than "asking others to lower their demands," Italian workers might begin to look on the Italian state as an instrument useful to maintain. The local elections recently concluded suggest that the center-left is slowly gain-

ing supporters. Should that tendency continue, the *apertura* may succeed in demonstrating that a nation poor in resources, torn by memories of civil strife and impoverished by war, can nonetheless achieve relative affluence while enlarging the consensus to representative democracy. In that case, it will have gone beyond serving the interests of the Italian public alone. This is a time when many nations, new and old, need to see that disciplined social transformation is not beyond democracy's grasp.

correspondence

"THE NEW STUDENT MOVEMENT"

New York, N.Y.

Dear Sir: We stand in Tom Kahn's debt for a fascinating position paper on the mortal errors of the politics of the new student movement in *worldview* for July-August.

However, this largely polemical and surprisingly conservative piece (for the author of *The Economics of Equality*) should be clearly understood to be just that—a position paper—rather than a more objective filling of *worldview's* assignment "to describe, analyze, and evaluate the new student movement." As one not working closely with the student movement, one with every temptation to frown at each seeming excess in declaration and deed of the young Turks—even I had to wince at the extremism of Kahn's strictures on the young radicals. He doesn't really state the case for them or for their styles of protest, proposal, or project. He accuses the student groups, virtually *en masse*, of over-reliance on militant demonstrations, an obfuscating mystique of activism and existential protest, of exclusive middle-class estrangements with the totally different agonies of the poor, of unwarranted linking of home-grown racism and white-colonialist traps in foreign policy.

Mr. Kahn seems to discount, among other things, the possibilities of a moral idealism on the domestic front as genuine and as sophisticated as those expressed abroad in the Peace Corps. He suggests class-bound chains for middle-class students so strong, so inexorable, that none could really identify effectively over the long haul with the desperation and despair of those locked in urban ghettos, even if he wanted to. To the precise extent will alienation of the poor not be overcome by dreams of "participatory democracy," but may well require the very sort of riot and civil disobedience and

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heedless go-it-alone self-reliance of dissident groups which Mr. Kahn and, indeed, most of us so rightly abhor.

I hope that *worldview* will seek out more sympathetic reviewers of the grash political activism of the student Left with a yen to provide Yang for Kahn's Yin.

L. ALEXANDER HARPER

The Author Replies

New York, N.Y.

Dear Sir: I will not quarrel with Mr. Harper's designation of my article as a position paper. It was originally delivered as a speech in which I sought to stake out, before an adult audience, a vantage point from which to judge the New Left.

Nor can one quarrel with the label "conservative," except to deny it. I am, by age, part of the

New Left generation. I think I am sensitive to the issues that move it. But I am also a committed radical who believes that America needs a strong democratic Left, rooted in the society and relevant to its problems. I therefore tend to view the radical impulses of my generation in the light of this consideration: in what measure do they contribute to the construction of a durable radical movement in this country? My criticisms of the New Left—not *en masse* but as a distinctive current of thought and action—are made by this standard.

There are those who—convinced that radicalism's fate is to flash cyclically in the sky, never achieving embodiment as a lasting mass movement—do not judge as I do. My judgments may be in error; they may even appear conservative. But no one who ignores the standard—I do not accuse Mr. Harper—is genuinely radical.

TOM KAHN

other voices

MORAL DILEMMAS IN REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE

Another view on ethics and wars of national liberation, which has been the subject of lively discussion in the pages of worldview during the last half year, appears in the September issue of Social Action, monthly publication of the Council for Christian Social Action in the United Church of Christ. The author of the article, from which the following excerpts are taken, who also edited this issue of Social Action devoted to "Revolution and Security in the 'Third World,'" is Alan Geyer, CCSA director for international relations.

... Throughout the Third World, new theologies of revolution and charters of moral indignation inspire and rationalize the seemingly relentless struggles of nation-states to attain genuine independence and security. If the social and racial elements in contemporary revolutions distinguish them from the issues at stake in 1776, it is nonetheless well to remember the long and painful struggle of the American nation to fulfill the meaning of its own revolution for two centuries—to survive the violence and bitterness of a civil war at the end of its first century and to overcome the sources of violence and bitterness in the racial tensions at the end of the second century. These tragic facts of our own national existence are not without meaning for the attitudes we bring to the turbulence on three continents in the Southern Hemisphere. . . .

The first moral and spiritual requirement which

the Third World rightly exacts from American Christians is to accept the reality and necessity of revolution itself. It is to have a faith which is spacious and humane and rugged enough to comprehend the very structure of society itself and to permit and even inspire radical political action to upset the prevailing distribution of power in that structure. . . . Whether revolution can always stay within the limits of non-violence and peaceful change, either in the Third World or in America's own struggle for racial justice, is a question of great urgency in Christian deliberations just now. What is unquestionable is the ubiquity and inevitability of revolutionary change. . . .

This readiness to accept the dynamism of emerging nations and to do so not simply as a grim secular necessity but as a human participation in the work of Christ—this is the fundamental ethical imperative to which all other attitudes, principles, and policies must relate. . . .

The struggle for power which belongs to revolutionary and all other forms of politics is forever marked by inequality, controversy, coercion, impulses to violence, the necessities of compromise. A theology of revolution cannot pretend that any of these attributes of the struggle for power can or should be entirely banished. Violence is not intrinsically more immoral than all forms of non-violence. In fact, violence is not as simple a category to define as some suppose. There is such a thing as the "violence of order": the stifling of protest and dis-