

Correspondence

The Ordeal of Civility

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

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

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

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

John Murray Cuddihy
New York, N.Y.

The Case of the Vanishing Link

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

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

Susan Sauer

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Frank Patton, Jr., Responds:

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

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

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

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

Amnesty at an End?

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

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

(Continued on p. 67)