

capricious despot." But the identification of Ockham's God with a capricious despot fails because it does not recognize that God is omnipotent and omniscient whereas earthly rulers assuredly are not. God needs no restrictions; earthly rulers do. The reference to Aquinas is also misleading in that Aquinas added the category of divine law to his otherwise threefold category of eternal law, natural law, and human law. Divine law was an act of will recognizing the inadequacy of the other three categories for human guidance.

God is not the prisoner of His creation. One cannot pray to the Sphinx nor respond to a will that does not exist. Because God is free, man is free — free from both determinism and happenstance and, with it, consitutionalism is maintained.

— Reviewed by René Williamson

The Jesuits

The Pope and the Jesuits: John Paul II and the New Order in the Society of Jesus, by James Hitchcock, *New York: National Committee of Catholic Laymen, 1984. 210 pp. \$3.95 (paper).*

IN 1534, Saint Ignatius Loyola launched a religious movement known as the Society of Jesuits; the almost-450-year-old religious order is now known as the Society of Jesus, or more commonly, "the Jesuits." For hundreds of years after their founding, the Jesuits were looked upon as loyal apologists of the Pope — the Vatican's "shock troops" — who promoted the strict orthodoxy to which they adhered.

But then came the twentieth century, and with it the culmination of hundreds of years of scattered heresy. Pride, the sin which all Jesuits forswear, began to make an amazing comeback. Free-thinking

Jesuits like George Tyrrell began to advocate ideas alien to the Church; once solid theological foundations were shaken. Liberal Jesuits took heart as they watched Church dogma begin to crack: the sooner change came, the better. This revolutionary attitude came into its own during the turbulent 60s, when the Society of Jesus exploded with heresy and radicalism, never to be the same again.

James Hitchcock, professor of history at St. Louis University and author of *Catholicism and Modernity: Confrontation or Capitulation?*, has here written a stunning exposé of the organization which takes a special vow of obedience to the Pope — yet consistently engages in activities specifically condemned by the Pontiff. Mr. Hitchcock begins his startling book with a brief history of the Society and then explains the "unraveling" which it was to experience after the Second Vatican Council. Although the Council "scarcely authorized such a result," Hitchcock writes, it was nevertheless "widely interpreted as an overwhelming signal of release, 'liberating' Catholics from all the obligations to which their faith had historically committed them." Hence, a "whole generation of [religious] trained under the older rigorous system now chose to throw off its alleged 'repression.'" Nowhere was this more evident than in the Society of Jesus, which now "no longer represented itself to its newest members as a cohesive organization to which they must aspire to be worthy, but as a loosely organized group of idealistic men, often possessed of the most diverse and contradictory notions of what Jesuits ought to be and do."

"Many Jesuits," continues Hitchcock, now believed that "the true meaning of Christianity was only discovered at the time of the Second Vatican Council." Papal authority subsequently gave way to individualism; disdain for Church dogma and teaching became commonplace. "Personal feelings [were] now given a status bordering on the holy." Consequently, the euphemistic phrase "the spirit of Vatican II" became the all-purpose alibi for the

latest heresy. Whenever religious wished to justify some atrocity — abortion, pornography, homosexuality, Communist revolution — they would sanctimoniously invoke “the spirit of Vatican II” and that would be the end of it. The disastrous results of such a “new order” Catholicism were inevitable, and Hitchcock has done a superb job of documenting them, piling the evidence sky high.

In a chapter entitled “Dissent,” Hitchcock attributes many of the problems now convulsing Catholicism to the celebrated heretic, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. The latter’s quasi-mystical cosmic-evolutionary theology was a smash hit with young pseudo-intellectual religious. Teilhard’s heretical theology, denounced several times by the Vatican, lends itself “quite readily to the uses of those who would deny the sinfulness of humanity and who wish to give secular events a profoundly religious significance.” Armed with Teilhardism, a cult of liberal Catholics developed a conviction that “the Church would become credible only through a radical and daring revision of its teachings and practices, which in the end would render it almost unrecognizable as its former self.” Indeed, after the Second Vatican Council, many Jesuits “seemed embarrassed at any sign that the Society was being surpassed in its progressivism by other groups.”

We read of Jesuits who feel obligated to ridicule the Pope; of Marxist Jesuits who attack America and praise Communist revolutionaries; of Jesuits who promote abortion and gay rights; of Jesuits who fornicate without rebuke from their superiors; and, sadly, of the few remaining orthodox Jesuits, who are ostracized by their liberated brethren for remaining loyal to the Church. One liberal Jesuit even had the gall to question the intellectual and scholarly credentials of those “reactionary” Jesuits who have the audacity to accept Church teachings.

But what is most outrageous is that members of the Society of Jesus, once such proud apologists of the Church, have pulled a Judas and turned on the very

Church they are supposed to defend. They refuse to honor it until it kneels to their radical demands. As Hitchcock explains it:

... the mode of thinking which identifies all social problems as the effects of unjust and oppressive “systems” cannot help but regard the Church itself as one such system. So, according to this reasoning, if politicians and businessmen are suppressing legitimate aspirations of the poor, so too are the popes and bishops suppressing the legitimate aspirations of women, homosexuals, and divorced people.

Accordingly, liberals have molded their own brand of orthodoxy; traditionalists are now regarded as the heretics.

As an example of the modern-day “perfect liberal” Jesuit, Hitchcock recounts the sorry career of Father Robert Drinan, the former Massachusetts congressman. As an example of the “perfect radical,” Hitchcock analyzes the antics of the flamboyant Jesuit, Daniel Berrigan, the classic “political pilgrim,” who has routinely denounced America, yet embraced or excused brutal Communist regimes abroad.

In the second-to-last chapter, “The Totalitarian Temptation,” Hitchcock outlines the extent to which Marxism has hypnotized Latin American Jesuits and missionaries. The most significant aspect of this chapter is Hitchcock’s account of the case of Roger Vekemans, a Belgian Jesuit who directed social programs in Chile in the 50s and 60s. During this time, Vekemans, a devout Catholic, was dedicated to social change. But, unlike his radical brethren, he was (and still is) highly critical of Marxist influence on movements that purported to help the poor. Because of his criticism of Marxism, Vekemans has been savaged by leftist religious, who have no patience with an anti-Marxist missionary, however dedicated he may be to sound social change.

Here is a case of a Catholic clearly devoted to rational and truly Christian “social justice,” but who was blackballed

because he would not "go all the way"; would not embrace the liberation theological ideal, which is nothing less than a Marxist state with a politicized God thrown in.

Hitchcock writes, "As the Vekemans case shows, Christians who support change are continually required to make unreserved commitments to the revolution. Whereas Catholic reformers of an earlier generation doubted whether they could make even tactical alliances with Marxists, the present generation treats all such misgivings as foolish and seems to regard the ability to endorse Marxist programs as a test of sincerity." Hence, "Vekemans' case demonstrates the price avowedly anti-Marxist religious are likely to have to pay in the present atmosphere of Latin America." It is not surprising, then, to read of "a group of Brazilian Jesuits indicating that they found Marxism wholly positive and of great value in their work, and hoping that someone would synthesize it with Catholicism as Thomas Aquinas had done with Aristotle."

Hitchcock ends his book with a justifiable warning that the Society of Jesus may "pass into history along with numerous other religious communities which simply lost their reason for existing" if they do not soon purge themselves of their pernicious elements. The hour may be late but there is still time to reform. John Paul II is well aware of the radical shenanigans taking place in the Jesuit order, and has personally intervened to see that the necessary changes come about. (Indeed, the Society's recent severe action taken against Fernando Cardenal, the former Jesuit who was ousted from the Society for repeatedly refusing to leave his educational post in the Sandinista regime, was said to be prompted by the Holy See.) Too, Hitchcock tells of the of the "small signs" indicating the conservative Jesuits are "growing bolder" in the face of mass heresies.

Most commendable about Hitchcock's book is the fact that there is no bitterness. It is almost a dispassionate work; the author simply recounts the devastating

facts and lets them speak for themselves. As Joseph Sobran writes in the introduction, Hitchcock "is serious and charitable where it is tempting to be flippant and satirical. . . . [He] never goes beyond the evidence, never even supposes that the evidence is complete. He knows what he knows, and that is enough. He has made the case he set out to make."

It is a case which needs to be heard.

— Reviewed by William Doino, Jr.

Peripatetic Conversations

A Stroll with William James, by Jacques Barzun, *New York: Harper & Row, 1983. viii + 344 pp. \$16.50.*

WHILE WILLIAM JAMES (1842-1910) is today recognized as having been one of America's foremost psychologists and philosophers, his contributions are often misunderstood and his thought is frequently obscured. Professor Jacques Barzun's new book provides a welcome corrective and is one of the best single introductions to James in print. Other works, particularly Ralph Barton Perry's monumental *Thought and Character of William James* and Gay Wilson Allen's *William James: A Biography*, have more laboriously explored Jamesian fields, and numerous specialized studies have treated one or another question about James in greater depth or analyzed more completely his relationship to a given school. Still, few, if any, of such works have so sympathetically grasped James's central vision, so understood his relevance across a whole number of fields, and so continued the dialogue between James and the contemporary generation. In short, James has received a treatment as generous, as lucid, as sprinkled with references to literature, history, and the arts, and (almost) as readable as one that he might himself