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What Happened to Sin?

"There are only two kinds of men; the righteous who believe themselves sinners; the rest, sinners, who believe themselves righteous."—Pascal.

"What happened to sin?" was the question to which one of Oregon's distinguished editors devoted a column not long ago.

Charles A. Sprague, editor and publisher of the Oregon Statesman in Salem, remarked:

"Sin used to be a very live subject of theological discourse and for sermonizing. It is related that Jonathan Edwards, the great preacher of colonial times, preached with such vigor in denouncing sin and the pains of hell to be visited on sinners that some of his auditors grasped the pillars of the church to avoid being swept into the fiery pit. Not many preach that gospel with such force these days."

Not only is "sin" preached less than it used to be; the concept itself seems to have become less than fully valid in the minds of many men.

SIN is defined as transgression against the laws of God, and, by extension, the laws of man. In our increasingly secular society, with the influences of psychology and the other man- and mind-centered sciences or quasi-sciences, we are much more apt to probe for motivations and for the causes of action, than simply to label a man a "sinner," damned to perdition.

We are more apt to suggest psychoanalysis than reform; more apt to seek hidden motives than to judge actions on the basis of morality; more apt to try to cure than to try to redeem.

MR. SPRAGUE comments:

"One might conclude that sin has been abolished, and sinning has become popular. What has happened to sin is that the former controls exercised largely through religion as well as the law have become less binding. And society has not yet effected alternate controls that are binding."

The moral sanctions which once applied against gambling, drinking, card-playing and dancing have almost disappeared. And almost anything which is not an out-and-out crime is condoned, if not approved.

Transgressions against moral laws, as long as they do not affect another person, are taken to be an individual's own business.

BUT, Mr. Sprague concludes, there still is sin, even though the old codes have been modified:

"... There is the sin of abuse of the body by vice or indulgence; the sin of abuse of the mind by neglect, by mental atrophy, by filling it with trash or worse. There is the sin of the emotions, of greed and selfishness and passion. There is the collective sin of abuse of power whether in business or in politics; and there is the greatest sin of all, modern war. So there is still abundant reason for priests and preachers to declaim against sin, for moral degradation corrodes the individual and brutalizes society. And the recovery of spiritual health does not come from the sublimation of psychiatry but from the old, old path of penitence, confession and satisfaction."

The "old, old path" is not always an easy one to follow. It takes courage, dedication and a lively faith to confess error and seek absolution—particularly now that the sanctions once wielded by the clergy have lost most of their force.

And, as Mr. Sprague remarks, no alternative controls, save only the law and the mores of an ever more permissive society, have evolved. There is little indication that they will.

WRITING in similar vein, Harry Golden said the other day:

"America is an anomaly among nations in that it is church-going but its religious faith is not very deep. The French are anti-clerical but devout, as are the Italians, and the English long ago decided God resembled an English lord and worshipping Him in no way transgresses against their reserve. Only Americans get upset about agnostics and atheists and the reason they do is that most church-goers don't like to be reminded of their own secularism."

Thus both Mr. Sprague and Mr. Golden find much to be desired in today's America, the one wishing for a broader acknowledgement of the concept of transgression against the moral law, the other deploring the hypocrisy inherent in secularism and materialism among church-goers.

WE FIND it far easier to respect an out-and-out agnostic or atheist, who lives by his own moral code and in harmony with his neighbors, than to respect a church-goer who sanctimoniously proclaims his piety and then violates half of the ten commandments in any given week. One of the fallacies which has hung on for years is that religion is a prerequisite for morality. It is not. A good Christian or a good Mohammedan may be strengthened in his observance of moral laws by his religion. But many non-religious people live by just as strict a moral code as professedly religious people.

The concept of sin may be easier for a devout person to comprehend and live by, but it is not unknown to others, to whom it may mean a transgression of their own moral code.

SIN, then, is not outmoded nor outdated, even in secular modern America, even though both the word and the concept have lost much of their currency.

To some it may mean the violation of God's commandments, as revealed in the Bible.

To others it may mean transgressions against a moral code based, not on religious teachings, but on the universal command to do unto others what you would have others do unto you.

Either way, a strengthened belief in the actuality of sin is something that Americans of all persuasions would benefit from achieving.—E.A.

Tusk to Tusk



Communications

Letters to the Editor must bear the name and address of the writer, although under certain circumstances the use of a pen name or initial for publication is permissible. The Mail Tribune reserves the right to edit all letters with a view to clarification and condensation. Letters submitted for publication must not exceed 400 words. The letters printed in this column do not necessarily represent the views of the paper, in fact the contrary is often the case.

Concerning Death: To the Editor: Your recent article, "The Rites of Death," suggested a number of questions.

Shouldn't we quietly prepare for death, knowing that man shares the fate common to everything that lives? Is not each of us handed a combined Birth-Death Certificate when born?

Some relatives seem to appear "from out of nowhere" to accomplish little more than a deepening of sorrow. Alas that they "had no time" before to pay even a simple visit! Why the rush now to wreath flowers around the coffin, when they didn't proffer even a wildflower to the living?

Sometimes a widow "goes to pieces" over the death of her husband and withdraws from life. May it not be due to an unconscious feeling of remorse for having previously neglected her mate, rather than a conscious testimony of her undying love?

Shouldn't the church, with its dogma of the fundamental evil nature of man, bear its share of responsibility along with the "death industry"—for the "maudlin, deceptive and pagan practices, with trappings and rituals which do little enough to honor the dead or console the living"?

And by what criterion do we choose those worthy to have a BIG funeral? Should such as Al Capone, with his \$50,000 lead casket, be so honored? Or Stalin, with his mausoleum? How come the great of earth are memorialized with "storied urn, or animated bust," while other "hearts once pregnant with celestial fire" are relegated to the potter's field? May not an imposing funeral signify little more than an ephemeral endeavor to prove social or religious status?

I like what one minister said recently: "I want no costly stones around my grave; if possible, no stones at all. And I don't want you to revisit my grave. I have no intention of ever being anywhere near it after my funeral, so I don't see why you should be."

Why funerals at all? Those blown to bits on the battlefields of the world were never thus privileged! And, certainly, if the atomic missiles fall there will be no need to even bury the dead!

George M. Babcock 427 Hospital dr., Ashland, Ore.

Have You...? To the Editor: Have you seen a field of clover?

On a lovely, warm, June day? Have you seen the pink heads nodding In their quiet, lazy way?

Have you heard the lark a-singing, Melody-a-bubbling out? From a yellow throat all tremble? Such a daring little scout!

Have you seen the white clouds drifting, Hanging low in skies of blue, Fluffy, fleecy things, just loafing In the way that white clouds do?

Heard the brown thrush singing sweetly? Heard the catbirds strident call? Watched the butterflies a-hov'ring O'er the ivy covered wall?

Oh, June, you are the loveliest Of all the months that fall, A happy time, a joyous time For man—for nature—all. Mary R. Jones, 428 North Holly st., Medford

Mysterious Exile Is Political Power In Complicated Argentine Situation



By PHIL NEWSOM UPI Foreign News Analyst

In Montevideo, Uruguay, across the broad River Plate from Argentina, a mysterious figure once again is pulling strings in Argentine politics.

He is a stocky, bushy-browed self-made man in his late 40's whose name is Rogelio Frigerio. He describes himself as a friend of former Argentine dictator

Juan D. Peron and ousted President Arturo Frondizi. Right now the Argentine military has a warrant out for his arrest if he should be so foolish as to return to Argentina.

Which does not, however, eliminate him as a force. Frigerio is mysterious because he seldom operates in the open. He did not even emerge as a figure in Argentine politics until after Peron's overthrow in 1955.

Before that he was too busy making money, first through a chain of men's shops and, later, in the textile business. It was while trying his hand as editor of the news magazine Que, closed under Peron in 1946 and reopened in 1956, that Frigerio began plugging Frondizi for president, a labor which occupied his attention all through 1957.

According to a story denied by Frondizi but claimed by Peron to be true, it was in 1957 that Frigerio went to Caracas, Venezuela, and signed a pact with a Peron representative guaranteeing the Peronista votes that led to Frondizi's election.

At any rate, Frigerio became Frondizi's all-powerful social and economic czar after Frondizi's landslide victory in 1958.

He is the figure credited with being in back of Frondizi's reluctance to break with Cuba.

He is also credited with being the man responsible for the ouster of Roy Rubottom, U. S. ambassador to Argentina and former assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs.

But he also is the man credited with Frondizi's appeal to Fidel Castro to break off with Russia, and with the decision to invite foreign investment and aid in the development of Argentina's oil industry.

He is, to say the least, controversial. Within recent months he has conferred with Peron in the latter's Spanish exile.

As an individual, Frigerio is big business and speaks for big business—but Argentine big business. He likes President Kennedy but dislikes Wall Street.

His objective is to bring three million isolated follow-

ers of Peron back into the country's political life in a union with the middle class followers of Frondizi.

The purpose, he said, is to give the masses greater benefits and to spur the nation's economic benefits.

The United States has endorsed the popular front idea and hopes the Argentine military will permit truly free elections next month. Such would seem to assure a victory for the combined Frondizi-Peronista forces.

At the moment, as Argentina drifts and its economy disintegrates, military decrees forbid either a Peronista candidate for president or a candidate openly supported by Peronistas.

And whether Argentina would benefit by the return of the U. S.—hating Peron or his policies is at best extremely "iffy."

In the Day's News

By FRANK JENKINS

In Frankfurt, Germany, President Kennedy tells a million cheering Germans that the United States will RISK ITS CITIES, if necessary, to defend its allies. He added: "A threat to the freedom of Europe is a threat to the freedom of America."

He continued: "The Atlantic community is indivisible. Hundreds of thousands of our soldiers serve with yours on this continent as tangible evidence of that pledge. Those who would doubt our pledge or deny this indivisibility—those who would separate Europe from America... or split one ally from another... would only give aid and comfort to the men who make themselves our adversaries and welcome any Western disarray."

QUESTION: Who was he talking to? The answer is rather plain. He was talking to a gentleman named De Gaulle.

THIS may be taken for granted. This strange gentleman named De Gaulle was undoubtedly listening very carefully indeed to what President Kennedy was saying in Frankfurt, the ancient capital of Germany.

He was watching and sizing up the MILLION cheering Germans who greeted President Kennedy as he arrived in Frankfurt to make the speech that was billed as the MAJOR address of his 12-day tour to West Germany, Berlin, Ireland and Britain.

He must have been saying to himself: "What will these Germans do? Will they stick with me, in my proposal of a Europe for Europeans? Or will they stick with the U.S.A.?"

LET'S put it this way: If the Germans stick with De Gaulle in a Europe for Europeans proposal, it will be about time for us to pick up our toys and come home. That's about the size of the situation that is shaping up.

ON THE lighter side: A dispatch from Bonn, Germany, tells us that "President Kennedy has stunk in American history. In a brief speech at Cologne, he told the German crowd gathered in the city hall square: "As a citizen of Boston, which TAKES PRIDE IN BEING THE OLDEST city of the United States..." As a matter of history, the oldest city in the U. S. is St. Augustine, in Florida, which was founded in 1565. Boston was founded in 1630, 65 years later.

IT WAS a bit embarrassing, of course. But let's not blame our President too much for his slip. The speech, of course was written by his speech writers.

That brings up another story. A while back, in Washington, Oregon's Senator Maurice Neuberger sent out to Congress offers a satisfactory first step toward transportation equity.

K. Fritz Schumacher, Former Santa Fe "Rail" 81 West Grand View ave. Sierra Madre, Calif.

To add injury to insult, much of the money so spent comes from railroad taxes. If this discriminatory "transportation policy" is allowed to destroy our railroads, the nation built by railroads will fall apart with them, President John F. Kennedy's repeated transportation message

to Congress offers a satisfactory first step toward transportation equity.

Try and Stop Me

By BENNETT CERF

A BRIDE THREW her arms around her husband's neck when he returned from the office and told him, "I've made your favorite desert for tonight! A coconut cake!"

When she brought it in from the kitchen, he was properly appreciative. "It looks just perfect," he assured her, "but what's that big bump in the middle?"

"You old zany," she pouted. "That's the coconut."

Matter of Fact

By Joseph Alsop

TO THE NEW SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

Washington—The warmth of President Kennedy's welcome in Germany is a significant political fact, in and of itself. It is bound to give added impetus to a highly important new trend among the American policy-makers.

The trend is towards the formation of a new "special relationship" comparable to the rather time-worn U. S.-British relationship and in some degree replacing it. And the people on the receiving end of this new special relationship are to be our principal enemies in the last war, the Germans.

The growing feeling that this is a good idea is highly important, precisely because such a German-American relationship, if formed, will be so important. To be sure, it is bound to be a bit amorphous; relationships of any kind, whether personal or international, are always hard to blueprint.

YET CONSIDER THE immense role played by the Anglo-American special relationship in its period of greatest intimacy and fruitfulness—which was the period before President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Macmillan came to power.

In that era, the British and American policy-makers worked together almost as though they had been serving the same masters. Their collaboration influenced every development, whether within the Western alliance, on in the West's unending contest with the Eastern bloc.

Very nearly the same degree of intimacy with the German government is now being advocated by men with great leverage in the State and Defense Departments and in the White House. There are at least three reasons for this high level support for such a major new departure, which was first proposed only a couple of months ago by former Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson.

FIRST OF ALL, Gen. de Gaulle has perhaps unintentionally sent German stock soaring on the international market. If the Germans follow de Gaulle, an exclusive, inward-looking Gaulist Europe will become a possibility. But if they are given the chance, as Dean Acheson suggested, the Germans will almost surely prefer partnership with President Kennedy to partnership with de Gaulle.

Secondly, the former special relationship with Britain is by now pretty frail and under-nourished, being all but entirely limited to exchanges

Strictly Personal

By Sydney J. Harris

THE GERMANS, WHO are making the most serious defense effort of all the Europeans, will also be the most affected by any changes in the existing defense structure.

Hence they are the obvious partners of the Americans in this vital but delicate task. The task is delicate because certain things are plainly going to need doing, which may cause disquiet abroad, and particularly in Germany, if they are not thoroughly discussed and completely understood before they begin to be done.

For example, there are the steps which will be necessitated by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's pledge to reduce the burden on the balance of payments of the U. S. armed forces overseas, from the present level of \$1.6 billion to a maximum of \$1 billion. For this purpose, superfluous bases will be closed, superfluous bodies will have to be brought home, and so on.

WHATSOEVER happens, General de Gaulle's propagandists will then surely point to the steps being taken as proofs of the U.S. intention to "abandon" Europe—which is what General de Gaulle hopes we will do. But the propaganda will not matter—in fact—it will fall on deaf ears, in fact—if the American plan has been carefully staffed out with our other allies, and especially with the Germans.

A great many overseas bases of most of SAC's B-47 bombers, for instance, have long been entirely superfluous; and they also place a heavy burden on the payments—balance. The supply and support system of U.S. forces in Europe can also be much slimmed down, from its present plethoric condition, without reducing U.S. fighting strength in the line.

Further economies can be made in the Far East, as well. There will be nothing to alarm anyone in all this, if the needed steps are merely understood before they are taken. But this is only the beginning of the problem. When the NATO Secretary General, Dirk Stikker, completes his Ottawa-ordered hard look at prospective NATO force levels, something will have to be done about the balance sheet Stikker presents. And once again, whatever needs doing can best be done by German-American collaboration.

Flight o' Time

Medford and Jackson County History from the files of The Mail Tribune 10, 20, 30, 40 and 50 years ago.

10 YEARS AGO June 27, 1953 (Saturday)

The first West Coast Air lines flight from Medford to Klamath Falls left more than half-an-hour behind schedule when it took off at 1:02 p.m.; scheduled to leave at 12:30, the plane was late coming into Medford due to weather conditions.

Anti-hall planes of the Rogue River Valley Traffic association seeded clouds built up to 16,000 feet threatening halliorters over the valley.

20 YEARS AGO June 27, 1943 (Saturday)

Robene Starcher becomes third person to give hair for war effort.

From Arthur Perry's "Ye Smudge Pot" column: "A Mae West story showed up in local giggling circles last week and all report it was a pleasant change and relief from the current epidemic of little moron tales."

30 YEARS AGO June 27, 1933 (Monday)

Prof. Henry Hartman urges valley fruitmen to show united front.

Jail inmate links jailer to ballot thefts.

40 YEARS AGO June 27, 1923 (Tuesday)

Leon Haskins, T. E. Daniels, and Bill Hammett back from fishing trip near Prospect.

Grain in Sams Valley saved by recent rains.

50 YEARS AGO June 27, 1913 (Friday)

F. R. Hayward, assistant manager of the Crater Lake company, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Falzner, B. T. Goss and Robin Gray leave Medford Saturday morning with a wagon load of supplies to open up the road to the lake and start work at the camp and on the new inn.

Market Report: eggs, 15 cents; butter, 30 cents; cider 25 cents a gallon.

What's Your I.Q.?

Nine or ten correct is superior; seven or eight is excellent; five or six is good.

- 1. A baseball playing field is called what?
2. What sort of surgeon specializes in remodeling human features?
3. In which city was the Declaration of Independence signed?
4. In what country is Baghdad?
5. Name the author of "Ivanhoe."
6. Correct the following sentence: "The aim of all his efforts were to gain peace."
7. In which city is The Little Church Around the Corner?
8. What is a tennis playing field called?
9. "The Star Spangled Banner" was written by whom?
10. Which state has the largest strawberry crop?

Answers: 1. Diamond. 2. Plastic surgeon. 3. Philadelphia, Pa. 4. Iraq. 5. Sir Walter Scott. 6. The aim of all his efforts was to gain peace. 7. New York City. 8. Coventry. 9. Francis Scott Key. 10. Louisiana.



"Wonder if a beard would improve my appearance?"