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Joseph R. Peden, Publisher

Washington Editor, Karl Hess

Murray N. Rothbard, Editor

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BIAFRA, RIP

After more than two years of heroic struggle against overwhelming odds, little Biafra lies murdered--murdered by the centralizing State forces of Nigeria, forces that were backed, of course, by those two great centralizing powers of our time, the United States and the Soviet Union. Over two million Ibo tribesmen--the bulk of the citizens of Biafra--lie dead, two million more lives racked up on the permanently bloody altar of central State power.

The American public is totally unfamiliar with the real situation in Africa. They tend to think of "countries" like Nigeria, the Congo, Gabon, etc. as genuine countries, as people bound together by common ties of culture, language, fellowship, and other attributes of nationhood. Nothing could be further from the truth. None of these African countries are countries in any legitimate sense of the term; they are geographical figments, grotesque parodies of nationhood.

How did they get that way? These nations, though now independent or quasi-independent, are all legacies of Western imperialism. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Britain, France, and Portugal engaged in a mad scramble to conquer and carve up the numerous tribes and the vast land area of the African continent. The carving was purely the result of scramble and agreement, and had nothing to do with the ethnic, cultural, or tribal boundaries in the continent. Regions and districts were based purely on the administrative convenience of the imperial power, not on the needs or realities of the tribes involved. Many tribes were split down the middle by the boundaries of these "countries".

One would think that when the British and French finally left Africa, this unholy mess would be straightened out and the needed realignment and splitting-up of countries finally take place. But this was not to be. For the British and French could only rule the immensely greater populations in Africa by finding local rulers, satraps and collaborators, to govern the native population on behalf of the imperial power. The first step of an imperial power is to find or create channels of rule by creating native satraps and "quislings" who can serve as transmission belts for imperial dictation. The Western powers found those satraps in two ways. One was by working through existing tribal chieftains, helping these chieftains cement their rule over their own tribes and over other tribes in the region. Another was by creating an educated urban elite who would staff the offices of government and rule the scattered but silent rural majority of the country. When the British and French made their orderly withdrawal from their official empire, they

took care to leave their bureaucratic and feudal satraps in charge of the various countries. Britain and France then remain as *de facto*, though no longer *de jure*, imperialists, and the new native elites remain close economic and political collaborators with their old masters. The last thing that the new elites want is self-determination and national justice for the numerous African tribes; their own parasitic and exploitative power rests on retaining the old imperial boundaries and strong central governments derived from imperial rule.

Nigeria, for the libertarian, is a particularly poignant example of the African middle. By favoritism and gerrymandering, the British made sure that the newly independent Nigeria would be governed by the feudal chieftains and emirs of the backward Moslem North. Not only suppressed but also systematically slaughtered were the Ibos of Eastern Nigeria. Everyone knows that the Ibos are generally hated in West Africa for being the embodiment of the "Protestant" virtues: intelligence, hard work, thrift, entrepreneurial ability. Give a few Ibos half a chance and they will create jobs, commerce, and wealth wherever they go. Even more fascinating for the libertarian is that the Ibo, of all the tribes in the region, have always been libertarian and quasi-anarchistic. Their tribe never suffered from centralized rule, and their methods of government were so loose and so local as to be virtually tantamount to no aggressive government--no State--at all. Hence they gave the British conquerors of the nineteenth century by far the most trouble of all the tribes, because the British could find no tribal rulers, no satraps, to act as transmission belts for their rule. Because of the anarchism of the Ibos, the British found them almost unconquerable and found that they could not be ruled. Hence the British, too, hated the Ibos.

When the government of Nigeria began to subject the Ibos to persecution and slaughter, they declared their independence and established the nation of Biafra. Of course Britain supported the Nigerian State. Of course Soviet Russia, with its horror of decentralization, secession, or national independence from central rule, backed the Nigerian State. And of course the United States did the same, piously inveighing against the "Balkanization" of the African continent. All of these Empires want the Third World to have unitary and "efficient" rulers who can follow their own orders, and dictate easily to their subjects below. All of these monster States are implicated in the shame of the murder of little Biafra.

We can only hope that someday Biafra will rise again, and that ethnic justice, come that resurrection morn, will redraw the map of Africa.

LEFT AND RIGHT

The Psychology Of Opposites

What is Left? What is Right?

On the rapidly changing American scene the distinction between Left and Right is becoming more and more a question of personal psychology. The scramble of ideologies is undergoing such an upheaval at present it is virtually impossible to label a political candidate on the basis of his position papers. When Norman Mailer ran in the Democratic Mayoralty primary in New York City last year he identified his political position as "to the left and to the right of everybody else." And he was right. His radical decentralist program defied all standards of liberal/conservative traditionalism. He scornfully referred to this tradition as "the soft center of American politics" and offered a program closest to the quasi-anarchist position of Paul Goodman.

Anarchists, and those calling themselves anarchists, abound on both sides of the political spectrum, from the grabbag collection of SDS to the split-off faction of YAF. Timothy Leary, running for Governor of California, adopts a platform of pure free-market libertarianism and is called a "Radical Leftist". Ronnie Reagan, long-time favorite of conservative free enterprisers, promises to Preserve and Protect the corporate-liberal status quo even if he has to break some skulls doing it.

(Curious, isn't it, what superb bulldogs the conservatives make for the liberal superstructure?).

As Bulldog Nixon swings the Right more accurately into a position of total repression, and Spiro the Righteous roams the earth impugning the courage of those who would rather live than die in Vietnam, everyone of even the slightest libertarian sympathies is polarized more sharply to the Left. So Left is Right and Right is Left. Free market is Left and Socialism is Right. Voluntary communes are Left and State Capitalism is Right.

It's enough to give you a headache.

But the long-term test of whether an individual will identify with the Left or with the Right is one--as I mentioned earlier--of personal psychology. The Left, it seems to me, has the capacity of bleeding for flesh-and-blood human beings. Even the horrible liberals, lately scorned by both radical capitalists and pot-happy flower children, were originally motivated by the desire to "help the oppressed". The fact that they chose the worst means possible of doing it--coercion rather than freedom--is another question entirely. The concern for fellow human beings which originally motivated them was genuine. Now they are fat and powerful and they use the Reagans and Agnews to protect them when all attempts at co-optation end in failure. They are the New Conservatives while those who call themselves conservatives are nothing more than bully boys for their corporate-liberal mentors.

The Left bleeds for flesh-and-blood people.

The New Left--the radicals, the revolutionaries, the students who are turning against their social democratic parents--are driven by outrage; they are obsessed with a mania for justice because other human beings are victimized by racism, because fellow humans are imprisoned in rotting tenements riddled with filth and rats. They see the injustice that exists around them and they are incensed because they have the capacity to identify with the victims of an unyielding and thoroughly unresponsive superstructure, a system controlled and operated by insatiable racketeers and their political puppets who will never give up power until they are smashed out of existence.

The Left bleeds for people.

While the Right--even our anarchist friends recently separated from YAF--concern themselves with abstractions. They are more upset over the fact that their free

market principles are not given a chance to operate than they are because fellow humans are trapped in overcrowded schools and ghettos. They seem to be incapable of empathizing with suffering individuals and dismiss all such concern as misguided *altruism*. Their notion of justice is one which involves only themselves, and they fail to see that they will never enjoy personal freedom until *all men* are free of injustice. The Objectivist drive for liberty is *not* so much to create a world in which all men are free to live their lives in peace, but *rather* to conjure a society in which Galt-like superheroes with wavy hair and "ice-blue eyes" can demonstrate their economic superiority over "parasitic illiterates who litter the welfare rolls."

Thus it is possible for our anarcho-Objectivist friends in Philadelphia to hold demonstrations calling for the "Release of John Galt"--while Bobby Seale is fighting for his existence in Chicago.

Thus it is possible for our Objectivist friends in Maryland to ask me to prove that Fred Hampton and Mark Clark "had not committed or threatened to commit violations of the rights of others . . ."--after they had been shot in their beds at four in the morning by Chicago police (this article is my answer to them).

Thus it is possible for these same right-wing anarchists to speak of the Vietcong as "communists" and "morally evil" despite the fact that ninety-five percent of them have probably never read Karl Marx and are concerned mainly with the swollen bellies of peasant children.

How does one begin to understand such a mentality? How does one begin to understand an individual who can bleed for an unlikely, dehumanized character out of fiction but not for the young victims of an early-morning police raid on the apartment? How does one understand the special arrogance of fellow "anarchists" who are content to establish a personal sphere of economic freedom and let the rest of society go to hell with itself? How does one understand a "libertarian" organization which wears on its masthead the American dollar sign (hardly the symbol of free market currency), or fellow "anarchists" who cavort in public in stretch suits and gigantic dollar signs plastered over their torsos?

It would be too easy to blame it all on Ayn Rand. This gentle lady did not create this special psycho-mentality out of nothing; she merely tapped an attitude that was already there simmering under the surface and brought it into the open. The fact that so many people responded so enthusiastically to her Cult of Total Self-Absorption (as distinct from genuinely rational self-interest) provides a good deal of insight into the makeup of the right-wing mentality.

The Objectivists, despite all their talk of individual liberty and limited government, are inveterate Right Wingers. Anarcho-Objectivists are no exception for they still adhere to the psychology of fiction-worship and are incapable of bleeding for the flesh-and-blood world surrounding them.

The philosophical division between free market anarchists and voluntary communists is growing less important in light of the current struggle to free the neighborhoods from outside control. The purist ideals of total communal sharing and a totally free market of individual traders are important in themselves *as ideals*, as logical ends of different though consistent processes of reasoning. But the most important factor in the rough-and-tumble struggle for survival, the war to secure the right of flesh-and-blood people to control their own affairs, is the *psychology of*

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Massacres In Vietnam

The Old Right's great responsibility over the last quarter century has been that of bearer of the most profound truth about the American state. As Harry Elmer Barnes expressed it after the U. S. had unleashed its massive bombings of Vietnam--"we always knew that the business of the U. S. government is mass murder." The Old Right at the end of the second great imperialist war in 1945 recognized the special repugnance of the U. S. government. The burden of that fact was so great that many sought to evade the responsibility by adopting the historical amnesia of the New Right which paralleled the historical blackout about that war imposed by the Old Left (that this parallel is more than accidental may be suggested by the fact that many of the philosophers of the New Right had been the creators of the historical blackout when they were part of the Old Left).

The massive bombings of civilians by the U.S. air force was a natural development of American imperialism. The fire bombings of German cities such as Hamburg and Dresden, of Japanese cities such as Tokyo, and finally the atomic bombing of two Japanese cities, was the result of the unquestioned assumption which formed the foundation of U. S. policy. The development and application of strategic airpower to civilian populations is the unique contribution of the U. S. to that whimsical facade labeled Christian Civilization.

The Old Right found a uniting element in its condemnation of the U. S. technological implementation of its program which declared a whole people to be The Enemy. On October 5, 1946, in his famous Kenyon College speech "Equal Justice under Law", (in Arthur E. Kirch, *Voices in Dissent, An Anthology of Individualist Thought in the United States* Citadel Press), which attacked the launching of the Cold War by the untried war criminals of the second world war, Churchill, Truman et al., Senator Robert A. Taft analyzed this American advance to barbarism. Taft described the Cold War policy as an abandonment of international law and the substitution of naked U. S. police power. This was a continuation of the American foreign policy which had lost sight of the truth that the police are incidental to the law, and that any deviation by the police from absolute adherence to law makes the police the creators of complete disorder in society. The U. S. failure to respect the law of humanity by its war against civilians had created the postwar disorder in world society. "Our whole attitude in the world, for a year after V-E Day," Taft declared, "including the use of the atomic bomb at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, seems to me a departure from the principle of fair and equal treatment which has made America respected throughout the world before the second World War."

The continued application of total war against civilians was carried out against the Korean people by the U. S. air force, 1950-53. Although some of the facts of U. S. genocide against the Korean people were reported at the time in European papers, little was known about it in America due to the blackout by the government-inspired press (the tentative moves recently by a few elements of the media toward independence brought forth the massive bellows from the offices of the chief magistrate as well as of the president of the senate).

Thus, when the U. S. unleashed its massive fire power against the Vietnamese people, it was remnants of the Old Right who understood immediately the absolute barbarism being applied in Vietnam while the Old Left and most of the amorphous New Left spent months in utter confusion about the realities of U. S. policy due to an almost incurable patriotism. The pacifist movement had shared the Old Right's analysis and burden regarding American barbarism during and since the second world war. As a result they were equally in the forefront in understanding the geno-

cidal nature of the war against the Vietnamese people (A. J. Muste, Dave Dellinger and Staughton Lynd were most active in this regard).

Old Right elements in the current anti-imperialist movement emphasized what others had not the memory or the experience with U. S. barbarism to know. Thus, they were in a position to perform a vanguard function by initially raising the issue of genocide and presenting the earlier history of U. S. barbarism to convince those anti-imperialists who had not yet shed their love affair with the U. S. government. Finally, after the U. S. intervention in Vietnam had become understood, the anti-imperialist movement adopted the radical critique presented by the Old Right. The Old Right transmitted to the Movement as a whole the realization that the U. S. government and its agents are war criminals. The recognition of the criminal nature of the U. S. state and its servants was the major intellectual advance which permitted the Movement to grow from protest to resistance.

The Vietnamese in the northern and southern parts of their country have been subjected to the war crimes committed by the U. S. war criminals for more than five years. They have been poisoned with chemicals and anti-personnel gases, bombed by anti-personnel bombs, cluster bombs and the many other devices developed by U. S. know-how. B-52 saturation bombings, 'free fire zones' air strikes, search and destroy missions, torture, atrocities and massacres by the U. S. have become the everyday life of the Vietnamese people. Having suffered this genocide the Vietnamese may wonder if it was not irony when the incumbent chief U. S. war criminal insisted that the atrocities and barbarism must continue in order to save them from . . . massacres. As recent revelations have verified, the Vietnamese are being subjected daily to massacres by the U. S. The victims include men, women and children. The most famous crime attributed to the Germans during World War II was the 1942 massacre in the Czech town of Lidice where every male was shot, but not the women and children. The U. S., unlike the Germans, has universalized the atrocity to make a Lidice out of the whole of Vietnam.

The chief manager of genocide touched all our hearts by his sincerity when he declared recently: "We saw the prelude of what would happen in South Vietnam when the Communists entered the city of Hué last year. During their brief rule there, there was a bloody reign of terror in which 3,000 civilians were clubbed, shot to death and buried in mass graves." The case of Hué was discussed in an article in *The Christian Century* (Nov. 5, 1969) by Len Ackland who had lived in Hué and speaks Vietnamese. Writing about the seizure of Hué by the National Liberation Front, he said: "When on the first day of the attack, about 20 Vietcong entered Gia Hoi (a precinct of 25,000 residents in Hué) in order to secure the area, they carried with them a list of those who were to be killed immediately as 'enemies of the people.' According to Le Ngan, director of Hué's special police, the list consisted of five names, all those of officers of special police." The Catholic priest of the district explained that "none of his clergy or parishioners were harmed by the NLF." The Saigon rulers refused to make Hué an open city to save the lives of the citizens. Instead, the Saigon army and U. S. marines undertook the systematic destruction of Hué by bombing and artillery in order to dislodge the NLF who had gained control of the city without resistance. No Saigon officials have sought to estimate the number of people killed by the American bombings and artillery attacks on Hué. Tran Van Dinh, a former Vietnamese envoy to Washington who broke with the Thieu-Ky regime, is a resident of Hué and described how members of his own family had been reported by the Saigon government as killed by the NLF while the family knew they had been victims of the U. S. bombing and had been buried in

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MASSACRES IN VIETNAM— (Continued from page 3)

temporary graves since a regular burial was impossible during the U. S. bombardments. As George McT. Kahin, Cornell professor and America's most prestigious South-east Asian scholar, has noted, the three thousand people who died in Hué were mainly the victims of U. S. bombs, bullets, shells and napalm—an additional aspect of the overall genocide committed by the U. S. against the Viet-

namese people. So much for the fabricated "Vietcong massacres".

Having observed the complete lack of accuracy in the presidential statement, it is necessary to ask why it was possible for the NLF to take Hué in a few hours without many shots while it required 26 days for the U. S. marine corps to recapture Hué at the price of thousands killed by American bombardments. The northern half of South Vietnam (part of the province of Annam which is divided by the 17th parallel) had been the center of the struggle of Vietnam's Buddhist majority for freedom from the Diem dictatorship which they caused to be overthrown in 1963. When the Thieu-Ky government imposed similar restrictions on their freedom, the Buddhist students in cooperation with the civil authorities and army commanders in this region in this region established an autonomous government in early 1966. Accepting the good faith of U. S. pro-consul, Henry Cabot Lodge, these civil, military and religious leaders of the Vietnamese of the region were betrayed and the Saigon troops were flown into Hué and other cities in U. S. transports to seize control and arrest the local leaders. Those who escaped became members of the National Liberation Front. Thus, leading the forces which entered Hué two years later were the former Buddhist leaders of Hué. These were welcomed by their compatriots, the citizens of Hué, while the Saigon officers and troops fled. Given the purges and executions committed by the Saigon police in Hué for two years, that only five special police in the district, according to the non-NLF source, were to be punished suggests the validity of the frequent accusation against the NLF that they are too mild and insufficiently rigorous in carrying out popular justice against the major criminals of the state apparatus. But, then it has always been beyond the conception of our European minds how Asians have such reverence for human life, even of an enemy. The race against time is whether the Vietnamese will have taught this to Americans before they are exterminated.

— Leonard P. Liggio

Recommended Reading

ANTIOCH REVIEW. The Fall, 1969 issue (\$1.50) is a special issue devoted to a critique of the professional scholarly associations. Particularly recommended are Alan Wolfe on the political science association and Martin Nicolaus on the sociologists.

Frederick Forsyth, *The Biafra Story* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, paper, \$1.45). A sympathetic account of the Biafran struggle by a British journalist.

H. D. Graham and T. R. Gurr, *The History of Violence in America* (New York Times: Bantam Books, paper, \$1.25, 822 pp.) Fascinating report on the history of American violence, as delivered to the national commission on violence. Particularly recommended are the two deeply and thoroughly researched articles by Prof. Richard M. Brown: "Historical Patterns of Violence in America", and "The American Vigilante Tradition", on the numerous American movements for private, non-governmental justice.

George Kateb, "The Political Thought of Herbert Marcuse", *Commentary* (January, 1970), 15 pp. A quietly effective refutation of much of the nonsense perpetrated by the leading New Left philosopher.

Mickey and John Rowntree, "More on the Political Economy of Women's Liberation", *Monthly Review* (January, 1970), 6 pp. The first sensible article on the women's liberation hokum, pointing out that capitalism emphatically does *not* insist that women remain in the home (certainly a pre-capitalist hangover), and rational economic reasons why wage rates for women tend to be lower and unemployment rates higher than for men.

LEFT AND RIGHT— (Continued from page 2)

comradeship. It is the ability to identify with the actual victims of injustice that cements the bond uniting revolutionaries on the Left, whether they call themselves anarcho-communists, free market anarchists, or just plain radicals.

Terminology has ceased to be important. As we enter a period of overt repression it is this crucial psychological attitude toward our fellow human beings that will determine on which side of the political fence each one of us will stand.

— Jerome Tuccille

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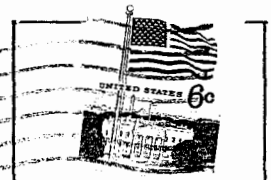
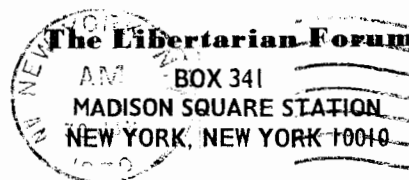
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