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# *A* *nswering*

# **PAUL BLANSHARD**

by Dale Francis

AVE MARIA PRESS · Notre Dame, Indiana

■ Dale Francis has refuted Paul Blanshard before . . . in his astute pamphlet *American Freedom and Paul Blanshard*. Reviewers say it strips bare the intellectual pretensions of the man whose book *American Freedom and Catholic Power* has unhappily gained so wide a readership.

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# Answering Paul Blanshard

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# Answering Paul Blanshard

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PAUL BLANSHARD has written another book. It was to be expected. The financial success of *American Freedom and Catholic Power* was certain to drive him to new attacks on the Catholic Church. The new book, *Communism, Democracy, and Catholic Power*, is not likely to be his last attack against the Church, either. Paul Blanshard has a good thing and he will drain every last red cent from it, even if the only returns be religious hatreds.

*Communism, Democracy, and Catholic Power* is a more vicious attack on the Catholic Church than Blanshard's first book. It is filled with greater distortions and deceptions. But, like his first book, it will receive a good press from a certain segment of society. The secularists will praise it as another great scholarly work. The enemies of Christianity will recognize it as an ally in their constant battle. The intellectually blind will urge that it be read by all the nation.

The problem in talking about Blanshard's books is in knowing where to begin. One lie can be told in a sentence but it might take a thousand words to refute it. A distortion might be made in a word but a page can be required to show why it is a distortion. So Blanshard, as is true of all professional hate-mongers, has the advantage. Hitler in his hate campaign against the Jews needed only to speak a few lies to raise the passions of people against the Jews. Yet to counteract his venom would have taken books — and then, of course, no one likes to read the defenses against attackers. The attacks are always so much more sensational, so much more interesting.

### Blanshard's Methods

Perhaps the best way to start is to show a typical Blanshard trick. On page 64 of his new book, Blanshard discusses what he calls the "subjection" of the Catholic people to their clergy. In making his point he lists the people who find the Catholic approach appealing. Here are his words: "Peasants, nuns, Brothers, slum-dwellers, mystics, monks, illiterates, priests, dreamers, find in the Catholic approach to life a comfort and an inspiration."

Now examine Blanshard's words and you will discover the secret of his intellectual dishonesty. Actually, he has not told a lie.

It is true that all the classifications he lists can find "the Catholic approach to life a comfort and an inspiration." But Blanshard lists only these; he allows his readers to believe that from these classifications come the bulk of the satisfied Catholics. While he has not openly lied he has lied in the truest sense of the word. This is typical of Blanshard's methods and it demonstrates just why it is difficult to counteract his poison.

It is likewise difficult to tell exactly what Blanshard believes. A minister of the Unitarian church wrote in a Springfield, Massachusetts, newspaper that he didn't care what Blanshard believes or what Blanshard has done. "Whether or not he beats his grandmother has nothing to do with whether or not what he reports is true," this minister said.

Now whether or not Blanshard beats his grandmother may be of little importance in this particular case but it would be of utmost importance if he were writing on the subject of how to treat grandmothers.

### **Blanshard and Freedom**

In his books Blanshard's thesis is that the Catholic idea is in conflict with American democracy. Since this is his thesis the reader has not only the right but the necessity to try to find out exactly what Blanshard means by American democracy. If Blanshard criti-

cizes the Catholic stand on various issues, then the reader has the right to ask Blanshard what he proposes in such cases.

In his latest book Blanshard says the fundamental thesis on which our whole way of life is based is "that the majority of the people have the right to determine our future by free choice based on free discussion, with certain inalienable rights guaranteed to minorities."

Now that is high-sounding and with some clarification it would probably be an acceptable definition to American Catholics. But at the same time it can mean a great many different things and it would be interesting to know what it really means to Paul Blanshard. In an article he wrote several years ago for the *Annals* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science he said something that sounds very little like what he says today. Then he was talking about what he would do if he could gain control in the United States.

Then he wrote, ". . . we would abolish the Constitution altogether and give the national congress the power to interpret the people's will, subject only to certain general principles of free speech and assemblage."

There's a difference between what he says now and what he said then but it would be interesting to know how much of the same basic thought of yesterday is concealed by



the slightly higher-sounding words of today.

For one thing today Blanshard speaks of "inalienable rights." Presumably, if he means what the Founding Fathers meant — and, of course, super-patriot Blanshard would — then he means that these rights are inalienable because they are God-given. Yet it is difficult to find any indication that Blanshard believes there are any God-given laws or rights.

### The Right to Live

Blanshard seems also to have forgotten that the first of those inalienable rights is the right to life. Blanshard is openly a supporter of legalized euthanasia, the deliberate destruction of people who are considered "incurably" ill. While supposedly this legalized murder would require the permission of the ill person, anyone with a minimum knowledge of human psychology would know that a painfully ill person could not possibly be in rational enough state to make such a decision even if there was not the added fact that suicide is no more morally right than murder.

On this problem of God-given rights Blanshard makes some revealing comments in his criticism of the Catholic Church. He critically cites a couple of sentences in Pope Pius XI's denunciation of communism in which the Pope said, "In man's relations

with other individuals, besides, Communists hold the principle of absolute equality, rejecting all hierarchy and divinely constituted authority, including the authority of parents. What men call authority and subordination is derived from the community as its first and only font.”

Blanshard obviously believes that this part of the condemnation of communism by the Pope is false. All right, what does Blanshard believe? Apparently he disagrees with the Pope, apparently he believes that “authority and subordination is derived from the community —as its first and only font.” If he does, then, what happens to God-given rights? Where are the inalienable rights Blanshard mentions? The answer is obvious. When Blanshard speaks of inalienable rights he doesn’t mean what most Americans mean. He has his own concepts. They happen, at least in this case, to be quite close in essence to what communist totalitarians believe.

### **Blanshard the Theologian**

As in his first book, Blanshard denies that he is discussing the Catholic Faith. It is “political Catholicism,” he is interested in, he says and adds he is not speaking of “Catholicism as a theory of relationship between man and God. . . .” That’s what

he says but in his first book he went so far as to call the Real Presence of the Holy Eucharist a magic device of control over the people wielded by the priests.

In his latest book he also demonstrates that his protestations mean nothing. Again he becomes Blanshard the theologian. Again he attacks belief after belief of Catholics on the basis of his own theological opinions. Despite the fact that he is intellectually unequipped, he doesn't hesitate to make dogmatic, theological statements. A few examples will illustrate this peculiar confidence Blanshard has in his own infallibility as a theologian.

"Many of the most important doctrines," Blanshard writes, "have no clear sanction in original Christianity." He lists among these Purgatory, opposition to birth control, Papal Infallibility, indulgences, the Sacrament of Marriage and condemnation of divorce. "In fact," he writes, "they have nothing more to do with original Christianity than Stalin's taste in philology with original Marxism." He then invites his readers to check these doctrines with their Bibles.

Of course, Blanshard expects that if they check them at all they will check them in the King James version, which omits some parts of the Bible. But then you'd think

that an all-wise theologian like Blanshard would be aware that there was a considerable period during which the Church was without the Bible and that in this period before the Bible the Church had guidance. But then Blanshard's theological knowledge doesn't include such basic facts.

### Support for Birth Control

He knows all about the theological facts concerning birth control, though. He writes, "The priestly fiction, which has been used so extensively against birth control — that Jesus Christ is opposed to contraception — is just as clear a distortion of fact as the Kremlin doctrine that acquired biological characteristics are inherited."

That is interesting, isn't it? Of course, Blanshard the theologian knows all Christ knows. It would not do to talk to him about the Trinity. His Unitarian publishers would not allow him to discuss such theological ideas. He would not be able to understand that what God the Father condemns certainly God the Son condemns.

Blanshard also discusses the Catholic insistence that all abortions are against the law of God. He says it is another "manufactured dogma." This is the same Blanshard who is so strongly for legalization of mercy murders. The Catholic insistence

that euthanasia is morally murder is another case of what Blanshard would probably call a "manufactured dogma." This is the same Blanshard who, in an article in the *New Republic*, reported Soviet Russia's legalization on abortions for such trivial reasons as inconvenience, as a progressive step. This is the same Blanshard who in his first book protested so vigorously against such sinful activities as bingo games. Bingo is evil and Blanshard fights it, but murder of unborn babies and the aged and infirm is quite all right and Catholic insistence that it is not, just shows that Catholics don't really understand theology at all.

Blanshard's theological pronouncements enter into the subject of whether or not Our Lord made Peter the head of His Church. Blanshard quotes the Biblical verse and then, after a little double talk, says . . . "it is clear that the words of Jesus are broadly symbolic and not definite." Theologians can stop discussing this passage. Blanshard, the infallible, has spoken.

### Freedom of the Press

Sometimes Blanshard makes tactical mistakes. For instance, he writes: "All Catholic publications, of course, are edited and

written by men who are dependent for their livelihood on the organizations which own the publications.”

Actually, this is true of all publications. The men who edit and write the *New York Times* are dependent on the owners of the *Times* for their livelihood. That doesn't mean that their freedom is hampered. Blanshard is dependent on the owners of the publications and the publishing houses for which he writes. Does that necessarily mean he is hampered in his freedom? Well, the answer to that is to be found in examining the publications for which he works.

Blanshard writes primarily for *The Nation*. He was listed as an associate editor, he was their correspondent in Rome during the Holy Year; his articles are a major feature of the magazine. All right, what is *The Nation* like?

*The Nation's* reputation has been fairly high in liberal circles in the past. Today it has forfeited any claim to being even a liberal publication. Under the editorship of Freda Kirchwey it has become an anti-Catholic, unliberal-minded magazine. Evidence supports such a judgment.

Clement Greenberg was formerly the art critic of the magazine. He still had an interest in *The Nation* and wrote for it occa-

sionally. But as *The Nation* became increasingly an apologist for the imperialism of the Soviet Union, Greenberg felt called upon to protest. He wrote a letter, criticizing the editors and their columnist J. Alvarez Del Vayo for what he felt were consistent pro-Soviet stands. Naturally, he expected his communication would be printed and that the editors would explain their position. Instead he got the answer of totalitarians. He was told that *The Nation* would not only refuse to print the letter but that if he attempted to publish it in any other magazine or newspaper *The Nation* editors would sue him and the magazine for libel. Refusing to be intimidated, Greenberg sent the letter to the *New Leader*. That publication printed the letter and was promptly sued by *The Nation*.

### How to Get Along

That is the magazine for which Blanshard works. You can be pretty certain that Blanshard knuckles down to the editor. He writes what *The Nation* wants to print. It may be, however, that they are in basic agreement and so *The Nation* doesn't have to intimidate Blanshard.

Blanshard also brings up the subject of books, and here it is interesting to take a

look at his publisher. The Beacon Press is an Unitarian publishing house. The Unitarians are committed to disbelief in the Divinity of Christ. Since the Catholic Church is the bulwark of belief in the Divinity of Christ the Unitarians recognize the Catholic Church as the greatest enemy to their belief. So Blanshard's attacks serve the religious purposes of his Unitarian publishers. You can be quite certain that the Beacon Press would never publish a book that defended belief in the Trinity and you can be quite certain that so long as he is writing for the Beacon Press, Blanshard will never offend them by suggesting belief in the Divinity of Christ.

Blanshard has made a tactical error in bringing up the subject of freedom of the Catholic press at all. Actually, the Catholic press has considerable freedom. To bring in a personal note, I have written for and edited Catholic publications and so I can speak from first-hand experience.

As the editor of a diocesan weekly, I was never once in my two years as editor told to print or not to print any news item. I had complete freedom—greater freedom than I had had working on secular newspapers. To give an example, I have in Catholic publications taken the following stands—I came out against banning the



communist party in 1946; I criticized the Catholic War Veterans for their anti-Red campaigns in which they demanded that certain Catholics state whether or not they had made their Easter duties; I criticized the campaign against the movie "The Bicycle Thief"; I criticized Cardinal Spellman's letter to Mrs. Roosevelt; I have criticized Franco; I have criticized other policies of Catholic leaders. I'm not certain how wise I was in all of these cases, but the point is that in official Catholic publications I published these articles. If it were true that there is no freedom in the Catholic Press you can be certain that I would have found it out. I'm not one to sidestep a controversial issue.

### **Pressure Against Freedom**

As a matter of fact, in some twenty years of writing for newspapers and magazines on controversial issues I have only had pressure exerted on me once. I've written exposés on politicians, administrators; I've discussed red-hot subjects; yet only once did anyone try to pressure me out of printing something I had written.

In this single incident, the question wasn't whether or not what I'd written was true or false. I had merely quoted from the writings of a man who had said

some things that seemed to me in serious conflict with American democracy. The man didn't want me to print the article because he happened to be posing as a great patriot. He threatened me with a libel suit, then failing to scare me with that he tried to threaten me by pressuring my employer.

Strange thing it was indeed that the man who tried to pressure me was none other than that great freedom lover and defender of the right of men to speak their minds — Paul Blanshard.

When asked about this at a public meeting in Chicago, Blanshard told the audience of 5,000 persons that he had threatened suit because I had told him the pamphlet was to be called "Paul Blanshard — The Fascist."

### **Blanshard not Fascist**

No one with any knowledge of Blanshard's career would suggest he had ever been a Fascist party member or sympathizer. But the fact that he had not does not mean that he hasn't ideas in harmony with fascism. What I had said I planned to do was to show the essential fascism in his thinking. I believed then and I believe now that Blanshard gives an all importance

to the state that is to be duplicated only in fascist concepts.

But even if Blanshard had from my first letter been confused and thought I planned to call him a Fascist party member, he could not have thought this after my second letter. I even informed him of every point I was going to make against him — an unheard of thing — so that he would have every opportunity to correct me if I was in error.

What is significant is the fact that his letter to the president of the university for which I work was written not only *after* he had been informed he was not going to be called a fascist but after he had been informed of every point I was going to make against him.

Blanshard was for several years a paid propagandist for the Socialist party. When he was forty years old he wrote for the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* an outline of the pattern of government as he would have it be.

### Blanshard's Blueprint

“If we gained control of the American government, we would probably begin with a complete revision of the national governmental system. We would do one of

two things. We would write an amendment to the Constitution giving the federal government the right to regulate all private business and to enter into any business which it deemed proper, or we would abolish the Constitution altogether and give the national congress the power to interpret the people's will, subject only to certain general principles of free speech and assemblage." This was the political blueprint of Paul Blanshard.

Is it his blueprint today? Blanshard says it is not, that at the very time this was published he had already renounced his views. Yet more than a year later Blanshard wrote a letter to the pro-Socialist magazine, *World Tomorrow*, in which he protested being called an "ex-socialist."

"No one doubts your sincerity," Blanshard wrote to them, "but most intelligent radicals in America will question the rather sophomoric and arrogant way in which you dismiss veteran Socialist workers who happen to disagree with you in regard to political technique in the present confused and uncertain American situation." In other words, Blanshard was publicly admitting that his so-called renouncing of socialist views was just a political technique and that he had not surrendered his old opinions.

What about today? Has he really changed his ideas or is he just using a political technique that requires he appear to have changed? No one but Blanshard can answer that question, but no one can fail to notice the sly propaganda that he inserts in his writings.

For example, Blanshard in the role of Church historian, announces, "The spirit of the Church during that period (the first three centuries) was not wholly unlike the spirit of the first Utopian socialists who despised the conventional forms of worldly power and attempted to realize a dream of economic equality." Throughout his book he definitely indicates an admiration for all degrees of socialism.

Blanshard claims to have studied the Catholic Church with some thoroughness. If he has then he certainly should have been able to get some understanding of what is meant by Papal Infallibility — even if he couldn't accept it. But Blanshard's book demonstrates that he either has no understanding of the meaning of Papal Infallibility or that if he does, then he is deliberately attempting to mislead his readers.

Blanshard tries to create the impression that Catholics think the Pope is divine. Here are a few sentences from his book dealing with the subject:

“In spite of the doctrine of infallibility, the Vatican has tried to impress the fact upon the world that Catholics do not worship the Pope. . . . Regardless of its professions, the whole machinery of the Church is geared to exalt the personality of the Pope to the divine level. . . . He is in practice one of the plural gods of the Catholic system of power. . . . Ostensibly his every act in public ceremonies is a tribute not to his own divinity but to the divinity of the God he serves. . . . But in practice he is himself the god of all St. Peter’s pageantry, and the Catholic people are the slaves who come to worship him as the Church’s divine agent on earth.”

### **Ignorant or Bigots?**

This is absolute and complete nonsense. It is difficult to tell whether Blanshard really has no understanding or whether he is deliberately and maliciously trying to mislead his readers. A man doesn’t have to accept Papal Infallibility in order to understand what is meant by it. If he has really made a serious study of the Catholic Church it seems impossible that he could so completely misunderstand — unless, of course, he is mentally incapable of grasping the idea.

Blanshard repeats many of the old

charges against the Church. He mentions Pius XI's condemnation of communism but adds that the Pope "revealed no comparable indignation over the subordination of his country to the fascist 'community'."

It would hardly seem necessary to remind a "student of the Church" of Pius XI's encyclical, *Non abbiamo bisogno*, which was a condemnation of Italy's fascism and which preceded his encyclical on communism by some six years. Of course, Blanshard may not think that this shows "comparable indignation" but Mussolini would certainly not have agreed with him. Mussolini thought it was so severe that he did everything in his power to keep it from the people. This was no theoretical blast at fascism either. It was made right within the nation then in the grip of fascist leaders. Later, again before the encyclical condemning communism, the Pope issued the famous encyclical *Mit brennender sorge*, which condemned Nazi Germany.

### The Pope Against Fascism

Blanshard would have his readers believe that the Church was silent about or cooperating with the fascists and the nazis. The truth of the matter is that before the Pope ever spoke out against communism he had already condemned the practices of

both Mussolini's fascists and Hitler's nazis.

But then, of course, Blanshard isn't a man who can be pleased with papal action. No matter what the Pope may assert Blanshard will interpret it his own way. For example, Blanshard thinks the present Pope wants war. Of course, there are countless papal allocutions that denounce war. Of course, Pope Pius XII has constantly urged men to find ways to maintain peace. But Blanshard doesn't think the Pope means what he says.

Said Blanshard, "The clerical appeals for war against Russia are always dressed in spiritual phrases and embroidered with the cliches of peace and prayer, but the intent is unmistakable. When the Pope issues an appeal to pray for the Russians, and the Catholic press of the world simultaneously features every act of Soviet aggression and every hysterical denunciation of Soviet policy, the meaning of the papal supplication is self-evident."

This libel against the Pope shows more about Blanshard than it does about the Catholic Church. As every Catholic knows the prayers for Russia have been said after Mass in churches all over the world since June 30, 1930. As every Catholic knows the prayers said for Russia are said "in order that peace and freedom to profess



the Faith may be restored to the people of that country." The type of mind that sees a plea for war in these prayers is strangely perverted.

Incidentally, is there something wrong in featuring "every act of Soviet aggression"? Is Blanshard trying to say that editors shouldn't record the imperialism of Soviet Russia? If he is, then why is he so anxious that the public be not informed? If he isn't, then why does he mention it at all?

### About Nuns

As in his first book, Blanshard is worried about nuns being separated from the world. He again shows a complete ignorance of the meaning of vocations and explains vocations in a way that again reveals a great deal more about Blanshard than about anything else.

"Recruiting," he writes concerning Religious Orders, "is largely based on the guilt feeling of youth and adolescence about sex, and the conviction of sin is systematically exploited to induce a commitment to the Religious vocation. After commitment, celibacy is skillfully associated with devotion in such a way as to sublimate sexual energy into institutional channels. Many commentators have pointed out that for male celibates the figure of the Virgin

Mary, and for female celibates the figure of Christ, are used as agents for the redirection and sublimation of thwarted sexual energy. Religious Orders for women carry the sexual symbolism so far that they dress their postulants in bridal costumes when they are sworn in to full membership as 'brides of Christ'. The psychological result of such a substitution upon a community of sex-starved young nuns has been brilliantly described by Rumer Godden in her book, *Black Narcissus*."

Blanshard, in this self-revealing paragraph, doesn't mention that Rumer Godden's book is a novel, but then it isn't unusual to find Blanshard using fiction to support his arguments. What is strange is that Blanshard doesn't mention that the nuns in *Black Narcissus* are not Catholic but Protestant nuns and that their outlook is bound to be both psychologically and essentially different from that of Catholic nuns.

Blanshard complains that "the life of the Catholic Religious is almost totally devoid of personal freedom." What Blanshard means, of course, is that their lives are totally devoid of the things Blanshard thinks they should want to do. It is apparently beyond his comprehension that a Trappist monk should choose a life of si-

lence or that a cloistered nun should choose a life of prayer.

### Blindness at "Newsweek"

Those persons who claim, as did the *Newsweek* Magazine reviewer, that the man is not basically unfair to the Catholic Church should have some difficulty in explaining Blanshard's condemnation of contemplatives. He writes, ". . . the so-called contemplative orders are scarcely above the level of juvenile escapism."

For sheer stupidity it is difficult to top that statement. For sheer bigotry it is even more difficult. Blanshard, whose own little mind is unable to fathom the depth of the contemplative life, thinks that because it doesn't fit into his own little twisted mold that it is therefore, as he calls it in another place, "social stupidity."

How do you attempt to convince a man with so little concept of the meaning of religious life? Totally devoid of any idea of the meaning of prayer, Blanshard is therefore totally unable to understand how a life of prayer could serve the world.

Blanshard discusses Catholic and Protestant relationships. He doesn't like the Catholic attitude because, as he says, ". . . Protestants worship the same God and the same Christ . . ."

## Blanshard's Publisher

Again this is a good place to look at Blanshard's publishers. The Unitarian church sponsors the Beacon Press. The Unitarians hold that Christ is nothing more than a good man, that he is not God. Does Blanshard think that this attitude is in any way similar to the Catholic recognition of the Divinity of Christ? It should be evident even to Blanshard that the denomination that publishes his work is in direct opposition to the Catholic Church, and that the Church can not logically cooperate with them in religious worship.

Blanshard then lists some of the points in which Catholics can not cooperate with Protestant religious organizations. He winds it up by saying, "There is, of course, no corresponding anti-Catholic policy in the Protestant system."

The fact is that Protestant publications are almost without exception anti-Catholic. It is difficult to pick up any Protestant publication without finding some attack on the Catholic Church. It is equally difficult to find any Catholic publication that in any way criticizes or attacks Protestant groups. Where the Tom Watsons and the Paul Blanshards have long published articles and books opposing the Catholic Church there

have been no writers among Catholics who have attacked Protestant denominations. A large collection of anti-Catholic material could easily be compiled but it would be difficult to find anti-Protestant material from Catholic sources.

Blanshard calls attention to some attacks that have been made against Protestants in predominantly Catholic countries. Such attacks have occurred and Catholics regret them but the fact of the matter is that many Protestant evangelists in Catholic countries have invited such attacks by openly insulting Catholic beliefs. In one Latin-American country it was learned that a Protestant missionary who had complained at being attacked had publicly destroyed a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The remarkable thing isn't that this man was attacked but that in a country where the people honor Jesus and His Mother he was able to come out of the affair as well as he did.

### **God in Education**

Blanshard's high respect for his own opinion is shown throughout the book. For example, in his discussion of the public school question it apparently never occurs to him that education without God is incomplete. It does occur to many outside of

the Catholic Church. Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen, president of the faculty of Protestantism's Union Theological Seminary, has called for a return to religion in education in a book, *God in Education*, issued almost at the same time as Blanshard's new diatribe. Said Van Dusen, "Religion . . . is the queen of the sciences. . . . This is its rightful position, not because the churches say so . . . but because of the nature of reality—because if there be a God at all, He must be the ultimate and controlling Reality through which all else derives its being; and the truth concerning Him . . . must be the keystone of the ever-complete arch of human knowledge."

But it never occurs to Blanshard to question whether or not Catholics are right in their protest that public school education does the job of educating incompletely. Blanshard, who is a product of public schools, is convinced that only in public schools is the answer to education to be found. Yet Blanshard soon after completing his education in public schools was making statements that most Americans would feel were far from the American ideal. While products of other schools were among those who were fighting for their country, young Blanshard in World War I was already a socialist and in a

public statement after the war said, "The difference between one capitalist government and another is not worth dying for."

This is not to say that the public schools do not turn out as patriotic Americans as do the parochial schools — that would certainly be untrue — but it is to say that Paul Blanshard is hardly the public school product to point to with pride.

### Sower of Disunity

Blanshard is currently touring the nation urging Protestants to fight against permitting any Catholics on public school boards. He says that since the Catholic Church has its own schools and requires children to attend them that Catholics therefore have no right to be public school board members.

This is typical of this man's meager knowledge of the meaning of democracy. This country's first beginnings came when the people rose up to fight against taxation without representation. Catholics pay taxes for public schools and if not a single Catholic school child ever attended a single public school the very fact that Catholics are taxed to pay for public schools gives them a just right to participate in the decisions made in spending that money. Blanshard's totalitarian reasoning should be logically carried on to exclude childless

persons from serving on school boards.

Blanshard shouts he believes in democracy but it would take a blind mind to fail to see that what he says is far from democracy. As a logical outcome of his rabble-rousing tour of the nation a completely non-Catholic school board in Boone, Ia., dismissed a Catholic teacher solely because his children attended parochial rather than public schools. If Blanshard is right, then they were right but fair-minded non-Catholics raised up in protest against this violation of liberty and even the POAU, which supports Blanshard, hurried to make some feeble protests, realizing their propaganda had carried them too far too fast and that the people weren't ready for such bigotry yet.

### **Blanshard the Incomprehensible**

Blanshard's methods are sometimes as incomprehensible as they are reprehensible. An example is his dissection of Cardinal Spellman's letter to Mrs. Roosevelt. Now whether Cardinal Spellman's letter, which was written in righteous indignation, was prudent or not is questionable but Blanshard doesn't discuss this phase at all. Here is an example of what lines his attack takes. He quotes the following sentence from Cardinal Spellman's letter:



“ . . . you could have acted only from misinformation, ignorance or prejudice, not from knowledge and understanding.”

After which Blanshard makes the following peculiar observation:

“This type of attack, from a man who has never been a lawyer, legislator, parent, or educator, is worth noting.”

Actually, the Cardinal's sentence is politely worded and certainly not an attack, but even if it were it is impossible to understand why the fact the Cardinal was not a legislator, parent or educator, would enter into the discussion.

What is true about the controversy is that Cardinal Spellman was rightfully irritated by the fact that Mrs. Roosevelt in a column on Cardinal Mindszenty had used without verification charges made against the Hungarian Cardinal by George Seldes, whose little news sheet, *In Fact*, consistently over a period of years sneezed whenever Stalin had a cold. Mrs. Roosevelt followed this injustice — and if Blanshard had ever been a working newspaper man he would have known that you are not justified in using material without checking your sources — by commenting on the school question at the time a specific bill was being discussed without acquainting herself, as she admitted, with the provi-

sions of the particular bill. Her comments which she meant to be general were naturally applied to the specific bill and she was pulled into the specific discussion whether she wanted to or not.

Incidentally, Blanshard used the same Seldes statistics in his insinuations against Cardinal Mindszenty. Blanshard has never been a working newspaperman. His entire career has been spent propagandizing or writing articles with what he called "as much zip and spice . . . as possible." He, therefore, never follows any of the rules newspapermen would consider necessary in assembling his so-called facts.

### **Blanshard the Intellectual**

Blanshard, the intellectual, in a discussion of miracles, says that Catholics "have an unbalanced diet of too much sentiment and too little science, and the result of their cultural malnutrition is that they are kept permanently immature because they have never learned the art of mental growth of freedom."

Now it is certainly true that all things that have been called miracles are not necessarily miraculous but it is equally true that there are valid miracles. Although he doesn't actually say so, you get the idea that Blanshard does not believe in mir-

acles at all. So naturally, a great deal of the Catholic Faith appears to him by his own lights as superstition.

Blanshard, who of course was only going to discuss the political power of the Church, goes into a discussion of whether or not Catholic dogma changes. Blanshard says it does and he cites as his prime example the recent pronouncement of the Assumption as dogma. This is to Blanshard a "manufactured dogma" and although he admits that dogmas "have long traditions behind them" he adds that the Pope shapes the interpretations of these traditions or that he can even invent a new tradition at will. Of course, being convinced of his own capabilities as a theologian Blanshard adds there is no proof of the truth of the Assumption.

As a matter of fact, he goes on to say, "The truth is that the whole structure of Vatican power has virtually no support in biblical literature in spite of the papal claim that it has." Again, Blanshard the theologian ignores the fact that the Church preceded the Bible and that for a long period of time there was no other guidance than the Church.

### The New May Be Old

In another part of his argument that the

Church constantly changes he points out that the Pope may, as he puts it, "create a new rule against artificial insemination..." It should be apparent even to Blanshard that the problem is a new one and that while the direct application of the moral law might be new, the moral law that condemns the practice is certainly not. It is certainly true that new problems require new answers but the answers are not invented out of thin air but are founded upon laws always believed by the Church.

For example, euthanasia is condemned by the Catholic Church — and, praised by Paul Blanshard. The Church's condemnation may seem to be fairly new but the fact is that the need for it only arose when men so completely lost their moral sense that the murder of the ill and aged seemed like mercy instead of murder.

### **Blanshard's Demands**

Blanshard winds up his book with a list of three immediate demands he would like to see made. First, that the Catholic Church cancel its rule that Catholics should attend Catholic and not public schools. Second, that Catholics be allowed to study any side of every social question. Third, that the Catholic Church recognize all marriages of Catholics that are legal as

being valid and accept divorce as well.

It is somewhat difficult but it would be worthwhile to examine these points without anger.

As for the first demand, the Catholic Church has a perfect right in our American democracy to require that members of the Church attend Catholic schools. Of course, those members can disobey the rules set down by the Church, but if they do, then it is the right of the Church to declare they are no longer in good standing.

As for Catholics being allowed to study both sides of all social questions, when study is the purpose, the permission exists already. Catholic students do study both sides of questions like birth control and divorce. What Blanshard really means is that Catholics should permit moral anarchy so that nothing would be taught as being either true or false. The difficulty with that is, there are things that are true and there are things that are false.

As for the marriage and divorce problem, it is quite simple. Marriage is a Sacrament. Most Protestant denominations do not recognize this but it is true. Catholics are, if they are to continue to be Catholics, required to marry in their Church. As for divorce, despite Blanshard the theologian, it is against the law of God and Blanshard

the Biblical scholar should be able to discover that. If someone with the totalitarian ideas of Mr. Blanshard were to come into power in the United States and force all people to conform to what he believes to be right, divorce would not be made suddenly right in the eyes of God.

### He's Against Communism

Oh, yes, about half of Blanshard's book was devoted to communism. It isn't a very brilliant analysis and the condemnation could be more severe but it probably is good protection for Blanshard, whose past utterances made it necessary for him to take a present stand against communism or else be under suspicion.

What is interesting about this is the fact that while *The Nation* carried in its columns a great deal of the bitterly anti-Catholic material that appears in this book, it carried none of the anti-communist material. As Blanshard says, speaking of something quite different, "Fortunately for America's self-respect, there are still in the nation a number of courageous publishers who are more interested in freedom of thought than in conformity and success."

The sad thing about Paul Blanshard is that thousands of poor, deluded people

listen to him and believe him. Ignorant of facts, they allow Blanshard's half-truths to pass as truth.

This doesn't mean that his followers are the uneducated or the poor. Quite the opposite. Some of his most enthusiastic supporters are men with college degrees. His followers don't wear hoods and they don't burn crosses. They are respectable bigots who are shocked to be called bigots. They are people who think Blanshard is perfectly right when he says that Catholics should be kept off public school boards but would be shocked if anyone suggested that there was anything objectionable about the fact that in most public schools commencement addresses are given by Protestant ministers.

Yet I feel certain that the most of the Protestant people will eventually rise up against Paul Blanshard and men of his kind. After all, it is their problem. Blanshard isn't a Catholic problem, he is a problem for non-Catholics. We can only protest when his club of hate falls on us. They can disarm him.

I say I believe they will, too. When I wrote a pamphlet on the first Blanshard book I got a letter from a Presbyterian minister in Kansas. He said that while he disagreed theologically with Catholics he

recognized Paul Blanshard as the bigot he is. This minister distributed copies of the pamphlet to his congregation.

An Episcopalian rector of a Kentucky church, echoed the Presbyterian minister's charges. He purchased copies for distribution, too. In Ohio a ministerial association read the pamphlet and afterwards passed a resolution condemning Blanshard.

Dozens of bulk orders came from Protestants. All had seen through Blanshard. More and more non-Catholics are going to do the same thing. This book is worse than his first one. His speeches are often coarse and even bordering on the obscene. The non-Catholic people of the nation are too good, too deeply democratic, to be long fooled by Blanshard.





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