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## The Cult of Liberation: The Berkeley Free Church and The Radical Church Movement 1967-1972 volume 1

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THE CULT  
OF LIBERATION:  
THE BERKELEY FREE CHURCH  
and  
THE RADICAL CHURCH MOVEMENT  
1967-1972

A dissertation by  
Harlan Douglas Anthony Stelmach

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The Faculty of the  
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in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
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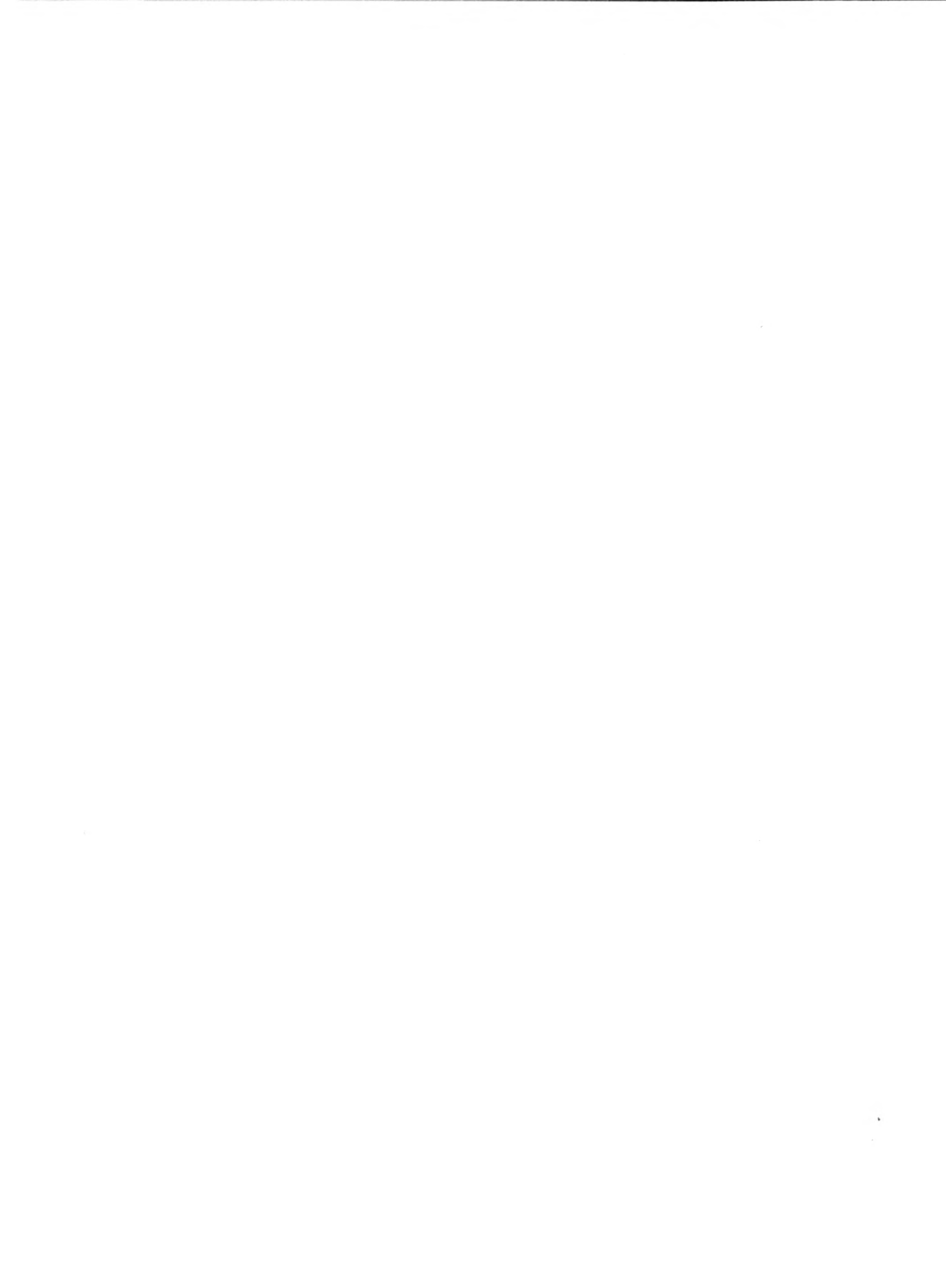


## PREFACE

The Cult of Liberation began long before I enrolled at the Graduate Theological Union (GTU). This dissertation is the product of one continuous quest to understand my world.

The immediate history of this quest started with my seminary training at Harvard University and the Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies, Bossey, Switzerland, 1967 - 1970. My world was filled with a sense that a new day was dawning. I perceived this newness in political and cultural ferment, in my theological studies and within myself. The new left was closing down Harvard; the counter culture "controlled" the media; the god of the past was dead and people were spiritually alive as creators of their own destiny. I was part of these new developments, the death of the old, the birth of the new; or was I? In Bossey I began an interest in "futurology", whatever that is, and what I called "autobiographical research." I guess I thought that if humanity was really coming of age, I could at least see the signs within me. So, where else but Berkeley, California did you go to do research on your own pilgrimage?

I arrived in Berkeley in the fall of 1970. The promise of a new day of the 1960's, however, was being replaced with the dashed hopes of the 1970's. But still, the search to make sense of the world



around me grew more intense though more sober and realistic. Luckily I had a family background that instilled within me the importance of values, not a set catalog of values but the certainty that values were crucial. The lack of values in the world around me led me to reject it and look for alternatives. But which alternatives? I wanted to continue my religious studies, but I also wanted to learn more about the political economics of the world in which I lived.

I began working with a radical research organization, the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA). NACLA provided me the opportunity to find out about "the ruling class," "The Movement," and myself. I worked on several projects investigating the power machinery of the United States: a machinery that was less in the service of humanity's coming of age and more interested in harnessing humanity for the service of the inhumanity of late capitalism. I now realized more fully my separation from the society that I naively thought could be the source of a new world. That very society, which I now called by its right name, capitalism, blocked the very hope and newness that I had seen around me and felt inside.

The political left was hard hit by the experience of the 1970's. Personal lives were disintegrating, an indication of the Left's loss of effectiveness. Fortunately, the women's movement arrived to at least make the struggle on the personal level a constructive one; however, not one without pain. I became "us" somewhere in the midst of this pain; and it was through my wife, Madelyn, that I first met Richard York,



who was the minister of the Berkeley Free Church. His wife, Melinda Harley, was a member of Madelyn's women's group. This connection would prove more fruitful for my autobiographical research than I first imagined. In fact, Madelyn and I became associated with the Free Church after its hope of survival was slim.

My first conversation with Richard York concerned the research I had begun on religion and the new left. I was still a student at the GTU and became involved in a research project that I thought would be a fruitful way to continue my research interests. The project was a study on new religious consciousness in the Bay Area. The project was coordinated by Charles Glock and Robert Bellah, two sociologists associated with my program in Religion and Society at the GTU. I reasoned, at the time, that the new left was concerned with a level of social reality that was fundamentally important for, and had already contributed to, the new religious consciousness. York seemed to be a logical resource for this interest. There was a time span of two years between this first conversation and my eventual decision to use the Free Church as a case study to explore my reasoning about the new left's demise.

During this period of time, I continued my research on the new left and worked at NACIA. It was also during this period that Madelyn and I joined with York and three others to try and resurrect the Free Church; it did not happen. Madelyn then began working at the Center for Women and Religion (CWR) at the GTU. And though my association with the Free Church was brief, it allowed me to see the need for integrating my political work at NACIA with my religious interests. There-





fore, I helped to begin a religious organization that began publishing a theoretical journal called Radical Religion. Religion and politics, once separated in my life, now returned in a more integrated fashion. It was in the process of working on Radical Religion that I realized the Free Church story needed to be told as one example of how religion and politics had been combined. I proposed this to York and he agreed to give me access to his personal archives.

After six months spent in organizing the archives, my research began in earnest in the fall of 1975. After three months of interviews with over forty participants in the Free Church's five year history, I began to write. Yet I was not writing in a vacuum. There were pressures and responsibilities that determined the final form of this dissertation. One pressure (its strength not always easy to gauge) was trying to write this dissertation within an educational setting which I now understood to be a replication of the society I denounced. Theological education in the United States is valueless. This does not mean that all people within this institution are valueless. In fact, it was my good fortune at the GTU to have a support community of faculty, friends, and students that provided the encouragement and space to see the importance of my work. This support community really began at home; Madelyn was still an employee of the GTU at the CWR. We experienced and struggled with this institution together. It was only with this shared sense of the context in which my dissertation was being written that our family survived the year long ordeal of actually writing a dissertation.



The organization publishing Radical Religion, The Community for Religious Research and Education (CRRE), also became an important GTU related support group. CRRE was now staffed by GTU students and faculty. But more importantly, CRRE developed organizational ties outside the GTU to an international radical religious constituency. It was for this constituency that I began to write my dissertation. I felt a responsibility to communicate my knowledge of the Free Church and to translate my academic work into a useful theoretical case study for this constituency. Radical Religion was one effort to serve this constituency, my dissertation should be seen as another. Fortunately, the radical religious community developed enough clarity to provide a clear direction for my study of the Free Church. In the fall of 1974, American Christians Toward Socialism (ACTS) was formed of which CRRE was largely responsible for starting the Bay Area Chapter of ACTS. Facilitating the socialist option for religious people became my primary concern. There were past organizations that had tried to begin this struggle and failed. I wanted to examine the forces inhibiting their success. I looked to my own interests, experience, and autobiographical research to pursue this concern. The Cult of Liberation is my attempt to contribute to this vital struggle.

Harlan Stelmach  
Berkeley, California  
November, 1976



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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

Remember in the sixties when the main item of religious news was church "social action"? Social activists within the churches castigated the religious establishment for not involving itself in the problems of the world. Malcolm Boyd chastized comfortable suburban churchgoers for not looking beyond their pretty stained glass windows.<sup>1</sup> Harvey Cox and others jolted complacent Christians with a theology of "rapid social change" appropriate to the "secular city."<sup>2</sup> Sociologists followed this media coverage with studies on the "new challenge" or "liberal clergy" within churches.<sup>3</sup>

Something really was happening within the religious establishment. Spurred on by Vatican II, Catholics were experimenting with demands to be more involved in the world. The mainline Protestant denominations' foundations were being shaken with calls for renewal and unity in the ecumenical movement, a new reformation. The civil rights movement in the early and middle sixties was a logical place for these new church activists to live out their religious faith and ethics "in the world." The moral and spiritual leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. within the civil rights movement, in the early sixties, was testimony to and living justification for the demands of the social activists. In the late sixties, the "peace movement" against the United States' war in Viet Nam, was the arena of action for many Christians. The social activists involved in the peace movement were in part inspired by the example





of such clergy as the Berrigan brothers, William Sloan Coffin and Robert McAfee Brown. The sixties were the high water mark of religious social action. No protest movement in the sixties escaped the crusading spirit of church activists, or so it seemed at least to those comfortable churchgoers they castigated. The church was seemingly being turned "inside out."<sup>4</sup>

The Berkeley Free Church was a major actor in the drama of church social action in the sixties. The emergence of the Free Church coincided with the high water mark of social action, and its dissolution paralleled the receding waters of church based social action in the early seventies. The rise and fall of the Free Church, as this study points out, indicates that there were forces outside the churches that were also dictating the ebb and flow of the waters of church social action. As much as the church activists were involved in social reform movements in the sixties and early seventies, most of the leadership and impetus for these movements were not church based. The growing oppositional youth culture,\* composing the new left and the "counterculture," was the source and inspiration for much of the church social activism. Therefore, the Free Church's identity was shaped not just by its relationship to church based social action but also by its role in the oppositional youth culture of the sixties and early seventies. The floundering of the youth culture and social protest in the early seventies coincided with the floundering of church social action, a fact which indicates that church social action was not an independent force but more a dependent product of the oppositional youth culture.

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\*The concept "oppositional youth culture" is used in this study as an umbrella for both political and cultural youth protests. The term "counterculture" is used to designate just the cultural wing of youth protest. This is the way in which "counterculture" is most often understood now, even though it was originally understood to be the umbrella term by scholars. In order to avoid this confusion, "oppositional youth culture" has been used instead.



However, in spite of its apparent dependency on the radical youth experiments, the radical church movement was dynamic and was composed of its own vital and varying forces---and not just composed of youth. Much like the secular oppositional youth culture, the youth radical church activists had their adult gurus. If A.J. Muste and Allen Ginsberg were early gurus or parental figures for the secular youth, seminary professors, pastors and priests were the parental figures for the radical church movement. People such as Harvey Cox, Malcolm Boyd, Rosemary Ruether, Daniel and Phillip Berrigan, Martin Luther King, Jr., Stephen Rose, Father Groppi and John Pairman Brown provided the "adult" leadership within the churches. These were individuals who had been active in longtime church based social action remnants (Brown, Episcopal Peace Fellowship), recently engaged in Third World struggles (the Berrigans in Latin America), ecumenical social action (Cox's Secular City was written as a study source for the World Student Christian Federations' U.S. affiliated organization, the precursor to the University Christian Movement), civil rights (King and Groppi) or church renewal efforts (Boyd, Rose and Ruether).

Youth, however, provided the critical mass for any adult led social action projects. And later, with "resistance" to the Viet Nam war church youth provided both the leadership and the critical mass. Youth became the vanguard for church social action in the late sixties. If the secular youth culture had gone beyond its early gurus in the late sixties, so had the church based youth activists---not without some dire consequences. The new location for radical church momentum became the oppositional youth culture. Organizations such as the Berkeley Free Church had their origin in this shift in momentum. The older forces or adult



activists were still active, however. New organizations emerged such as Clergy and Laity Concerned about Viet Nam (CALC). Also church based protest still had vitality in the so called "peace churches," such as American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and with mainline denominational bureaucrats who tried to have the churches confront the world outside. But "underground churches," youth churches, experimental ministries and campus ministries, largely staffed by young seminarians or young ministers, became the location of church social action in the late sixties. The Free Church was part of and helped to create this shift. It was a shift to the oppositional youth culture for its momentum, to be "out on the brink" and "active with the Spirit" in new movements for peace and justice. Though still tied to established church support (largely financial) these experiments "on the edge" provide the context for this study of the Berkeley Free Church.

We tend to forget this history, due not only to loss of memory, but also because today, over a decade later, the nature of religious news is very different. It is not social action that attracts attention, but "bizarre action:" the occult, the mystical, the alien and the "new religions." Even "old time religion," seemingly making a comeback, has appeared in equally bizarre guise: Jesus cults, extreme fundamentalism, and the "Moonies."<sup>5</sup>

Though both periods are distinct in many ways, it is important to see that the line from the early sixties to the middle seventies has a common foundation in the nature of spiritual and political protest. Both religious social activism and the "spiritualization" of religion have their roots in the soil of modern society. They are a cry of human protest, the sighs of the anomic and alienated against the "seduction of the spirit"<sup>6</sup>



or, in the words of D.H. Lawrence, the "fight for the life that grows within us."<sup>7</sup> However incongruent the successor religious movements of the present day may seem to the social activism of the sixties, their very existence and nature is dependent upon the religious social activist projects of the sixties. This is so because the radical church movement of the sixties, in its alliance with the oppositional youth culture "out on the brink," lost its religious vision in the early seventies and numerous organizations, such as the Berkeley Free Church, ceased to exist. This is not a study of the successor religious movements of today. But it is a study that provides a foundation for a better understanding of the early seventies and the current apolitical "new religious consciousness."<sup>8</sup> The successor religious movements arose at a time when the early cultural vision of the oppositional youth culture splintered from the new left politics of the early seventies. The radical church participants, being grounded in the oppositional youth culture, mirrored this split. Therefore, any "new religious" movement was destined to inherit this context. This was a context which prejudiced the possibility for an integrated religious (cultural)-political consciousness.

The Cult of Liberation is the story of a religious organization, the Berkeley Free Church, that had its origin in the religious and political concerns of church social activists in the middle sixties. It is a story and analysis of the evolution of these social activist concerns within the larger dynamic of the oppositional youth culture---a dynamic that led to the dissolution of the Free Church in the early seventies into what seemed little more than a political cult with little religion left. If a few "catch-words" could be used to describe this larger dynamic, they would be protest, vision, and experimentation. The new left experimented





with new politics in its protest against technological society. The counterculture experimented with new life styles and values in its protest against valueless society. All participants in the oppositional youth culture experimented with a new consciousness in protest against their experience of the dominant one-dimensional and instrumental rationality in U.S. modern society.<sup>9</sup> This context of protest and experimentation was crucial to the development of the Free Church and to the evolution of its "political spirituality."

### I. The Free Church: A Profile

In the beginning, which was June 1967, the Berkeley Free Church was called the South Campus Community Ministry (SCCM). SCCM was the creation of local churches and merchants in Berkeley, California concerned about the youth ghetto emerging in the "South Campus" area near the University of California. The South Campus had been noted for youth protest ever since the Free Speech movement in 1964. In 1967 this small radius of territory was a full-fledged youth ghetto, flourishing with the latest manifestation of youth protest, countercultural hippies. The so called hippies were the culmination of youth disenchantment with the "success oriented" values of dominant "adult culture." It was a time of all out generational revolt, with "free love," not "uptight" or duplicitous love---or so it was thought, in the effevescence of the moment. The hippies frequenting SCCM were largely responsible for its new name, the "Berkeley Free Church," only a month after its founding.

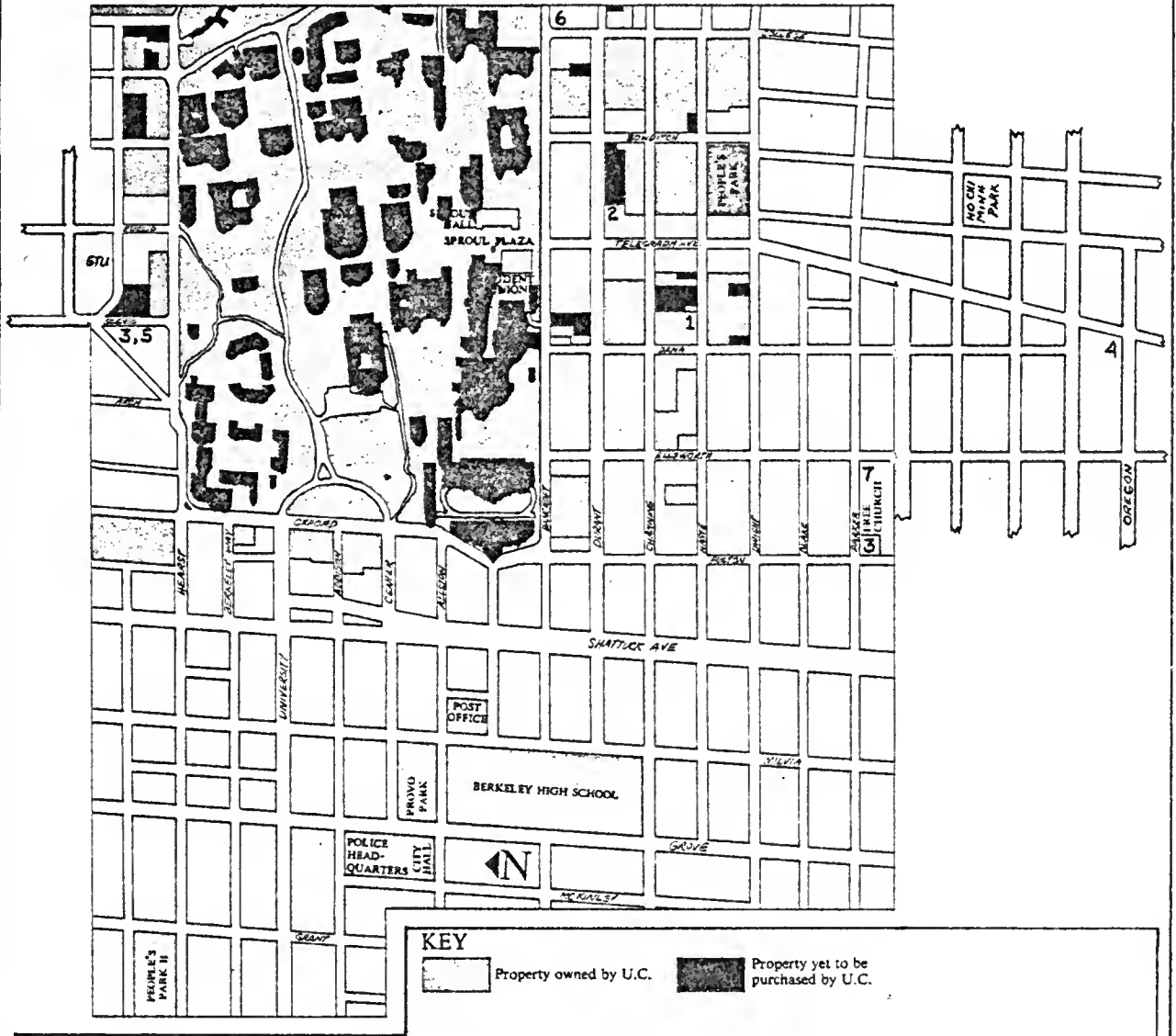
The Free Church, the name it carried until its closing, was headquartered in five main locations (see map page 7 ), in the heart of the South Campus youth ghetto. The religious social action of the Free Church



Graphic 1  
 MAP OF THE LOCATIONS OF THE  
 BERKELEY FREE CHURCH  
 1967-1972

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

"SOUTH CAMPUS"

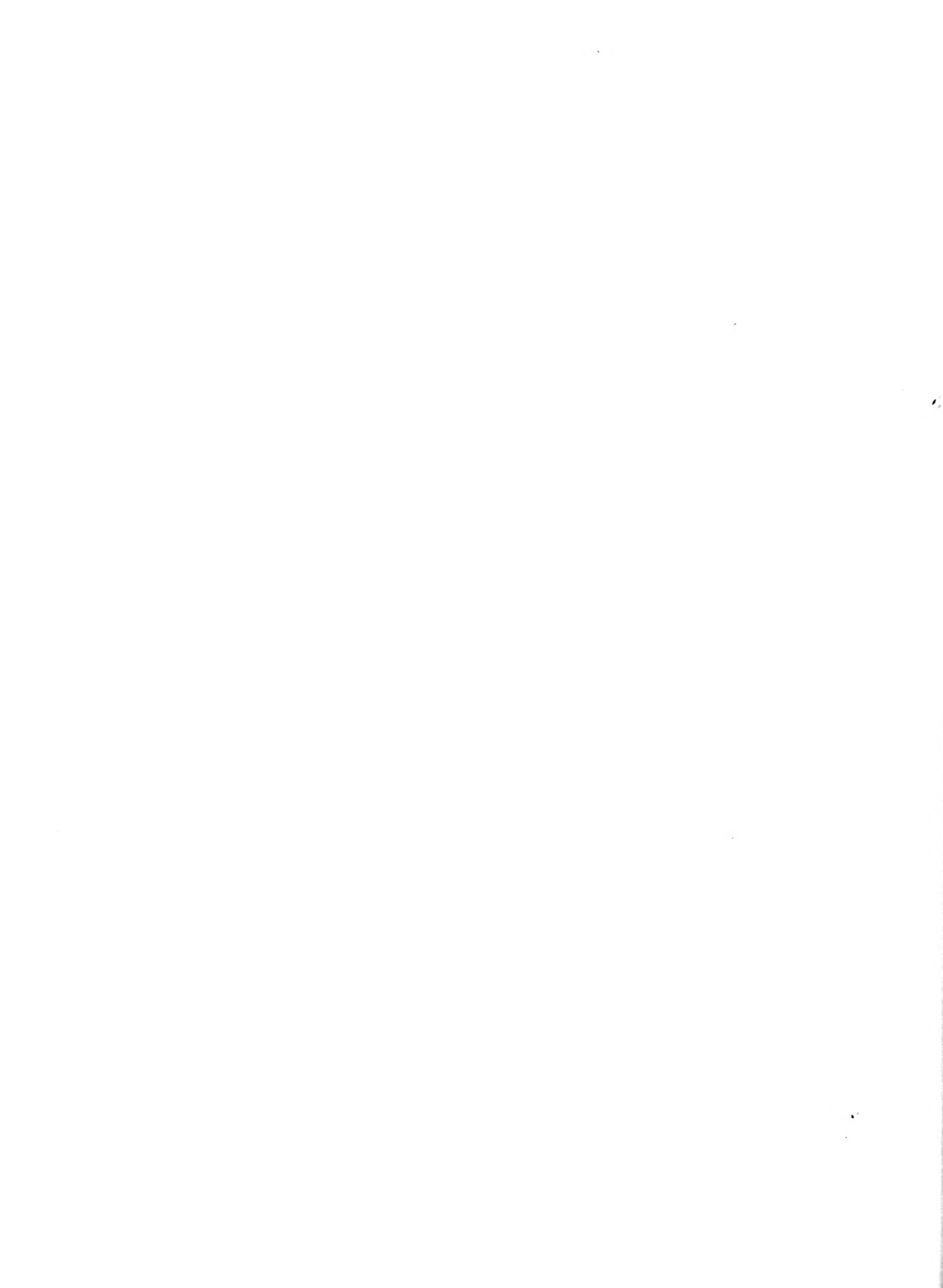


KEY

Property owned by U.C.
  Property yet to be purchased by U.C.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. (1967) "Haste House"   | 4. (1970-71) Oregon Street                      |
| 2. (1968) Lutheran Church   | 5. (1971) Scenic Avenue<br>(Interaction Center) |
| 3. (1969) Two Locations:<br>Parker Street and<br>"Human Interaction Center" | 6. (1972) UNITAS                                |
|   | 7. SUBMARINE CHURCH                             |

Source:  
 Ramparts, August 1969  
 Special issue on "People's Park"



was greatly colored by its location in this youth ghetto---from its hippie countercultural origin to its new left politics. This evolution from "hippie church" to political cult is the main story of the Free Church, and can be partially told here by describing the Free Church's changing purpose, structure, leadership and constituency.

### The Purpose of the Free Church

The "South Campus" in Berkeley is not only the home of a large student-youth population, it is also the location of a high concentration of churches and small shops. SCCM, in the beginning, being a creation of concerned merchants and church leaders, reflected their concerns in its purpose. The summer of 1967 had been forecast as a time of conflict and of irreconcilable differences. A large influx of hippies was expected to make its way to Berkeley and to the Haight Ashbury district of San Francisco. The previous summer, merchants, clergy and city authorities experienced a situation of over-extended housing and basic social services along with over-extended toleration for this new breed of "pampered youth," loitering on sidewalks and "displaying odd habits." Therefore, conflict resolution and providing for basic services were on the minds of a small group of merchants and clergy who conceived the idea of a ministry to these South Campus youths. The purpose of the ministry would be to convince city authorities of the legitimate needs and aspirations of the hippies while at the same time interpreting to the hippies the interests and concerns of city leaders and residents.

No clear concept of what this attempt at human reconciliation and "basic communication" might entail was articulated at the beginning. Its exact nature and structure were to be worked out through a process of



assessment and reassessment as the experimental ministry unfolded. In late May of 1967 incorporation papers and by-laws were drawn up in which the purpose of SCCM Inc. was expressed:

To minister to the needs of persons in the South Campus area, especially those temporarily resident in ways which are feasible for an association not directly based in local religious, humanitarian, municipal and welfare institutions.<sup>10</sup>

This mandate to minister to the "needs of persons" who were "temporarily resident" led the SCCM in two directions simultaneously. The first was to establish a social service referral organization: a telephone switchboard that would help youth find housing, food, health care, and counseling---an alternative social service agency quickly emerged. The second direction was more or less unintended, though still falling within the stated purpose: a "congregational" or "church" aspect to the ministry. The "Free Church" (for many meaning the "Hippie Church") was as much a fact of life for the early SCCM as was the switchboard. The hippies had religious needs that could not be directly met by "local religious institutions." The hippies were alienated from established churches. Therefore, a ministry such as SCCM took little prodding from hippies to become a free church. An up-off-the streets church emerged.

For most of the participants (leadership and youth), the "service" and congregational aspects of the ministry were inseparable in its first few months. Even for many of the sponsors, these two developments had to be seen as very positive and potentially very productive for the reconciliation and conflict resolution concerns of the clergy and merchants. By gaining the confidence of the hippies, SCCM, by all accounts, was a success from the start---at least relative to the minimal concerns and purpose.





Later on, though, when the emerging congregation by its "protesting hippie" nature and origin became a base for an independent voice within SCCM, a new dynamic began. The Free Church increasingly became the champion of "street people's" needs and rights, that is, the advocate of the needs and rights of its "hippie congregation." This dynamic grew to the point where reconciliation, in its old conflict management form, became untenable. The only possible basis for reconciliation, from the emerging congregations' point of view, became the recognition of the legitimate needs and goals of the street culture by various authorities--- whether they be police or the original sponsoring merchants and clergy. This new purpose within the ministry led the Free Church increasingly to see themselves, not without some ambivalence, as an organization rooted less in the "establishment" and more within the youth ghetto of the South Campus itself.

Among the numerous reasons for this, two are worth mentioning in this introductory profile. The first was the composition of the youth ghetto which had not only its counterculture hippies but its political radicals as well. The second factor was the nature of the staff leadership of the Free Church, and its predisposition to the youth ghetto, in both its cultural and political forms, and the development of a new counter religious organization.

#### Structure and Leadership

The early sponsors of the Free Church, merchants and clergy, realized that for their reconciliation goal of the proposed ministry to be successful they needed a "director" who could gain the trust of "the kids." It was realized that none of the adult sponsors could fill this



role. They were "over thirty" and too tied to the establishment to be "trusted." A young person with sympathies toward hippies was needed--- that is, someone who could mediate between the hippies' interests and concerns and those of the SCCM sponsors and city authorities. The sponsors hired Richard York, a recent graduate of the local Episcopal seminary in Berkeley, the Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP). He was young at 28 years (but not too young, for this job required "maturity," too). He had countercultural credentials and was eager. York became the director and was the only paid staff person at the time. York, as the sponsors' hired staff person, working with a growing clientele of hippies, was the key to the sponsors' reconciliation goal. The reconciliation goal helped to foster a three-tiered organizational structure, a structure which remained, though in modified form, until the Free Church closed.

1. At the "top" was the board of trustees of the Free Church. The board was composed of the early sponsors and of additional sympathetic church and community people. Their main functions were to "legitimize" the Free Church and to provide the means, money, buildings and equipment to sustain the organization. Ultimate decision-making officially rested with the board, though day-to-day decisions were the prerogative of the director and his growing staff.

2. In the middle were the intra-organizational reconcilers--- director York and (eventually) other staff members. The Free Church maintained three full-time staff positions throughout most of its history--- a director, a "theologian-in-residence" and a social service organizer, often seen as co-directorships. These three positions did not fully materialize until 1968. However, this "middle tier" component was a reality in 1967 with: the volunteer help of "responsible hippies" to oversee the



switchboard workers, the subsistence wage work of Glee Bishop, a friend of York's from seminary, and the everpresent help of York's first wife, Joy Nesmith.

The relationship between "paid staff" and the "volunteer staff" actually created two levels within this middle tier, levels that remained until the Free Church dissolved. The upper level was composed of the three full-time, large salaried staff positions. The lower level was composed of part-time volunteer (or later "subsistence wage") staff. The latter were primarily drawn from the Free Church's street clientele. The full-time staff were more directly accountable to the board, while the part-time workers were officially accountable to the full-time staff. The loyalty and identification of both the full-time and part-time staff, however, was (though to a lesser degree for full-time staff) with the "bottom tier" of the organization---the volunteer workers, the "clientele," or the street constituency. At most points in the Free Church's history it maintained a large "volunteer army" to operate the service ministry. These volunteers plus the part-time staff were often either considered to be the lower level of the middle tier or the real bottom tier of the organization. These distinctions remained vague.

3. The bottom tier was most often, however, seen as just the clientele that frequented the Free Church. Youth who came by to use the Free Church's switchboard, housing or referral services, though amorphous, were considered to be "part of the Free Church." They were the "hangers-on," the mobilizable street people who could be counted on for Free Church work or street projects such as: staffing the switchboard, building parks, putting up posters, or demonstrating. Membership in the Free Church's growing congregation was never well-defined. Therefore, if one went to a



worship service or even utilized the social services of the Free Church, one was often considered a Free Church "member." This lack of membership definition was very much in keeping with the "participatory" nature of the politics and culture of the 1960's.<sup>11</sup>

However, when this bottom tier of the organization sought a real part in the decision making process at the board level, or even at the staff level, it was usually accomplished by the subsistence wage staff, overseeing the volunteers. The term "clientele," which was often used by upper level staff and board members to describe this bottom tier, betrayed a definite notion of inequality. In a very real sense this bottom tier was often just the youth ghetto constituency of the South Campus; it was the pool of "coercibles" or possible converts to the Free Church's social service or other programs. At different stages in its history, the Free Church, in good "catholic" fashion, spoke of the South Campus as its "parish." The bottom tier then, in the final analysis, was the whole population of the youth ghetto.

The important fact about this three-tiered structure was that in practice it functioned to put most of the power in the hands of the three full-time paid staff members. They made decisions on a day-to-day basis and could effectively isolate either the bottom or top tiers by playing one against the other. They were the facilitators, the mediators, and in the end the major determining force within the organization. Who held these three full-time staff positions?

The position of director was held by Richard York from the beginning of the Free Church in 1967 until its end in 1972. The official title of "director" was often dropped in favor of a more collective sounding title such as co-staff, co-director or co-pastor. York, however, was the main





force and guiding spirit behind the Free Church.

Glee Bishop and York's first wife Joy shared many of the responsibilities of the ministry in the early days of the Free Church. They helped in most of the crisis situations with the hippies. Bishop, a trained social worker, eventually became the head of the social service switchboard side of the ministry. She also received assistance from her spouse, Darrol, a CDSP graduate with York.<sup>12</sup> She held that position until the summer of 1968. Bishop and York worked as a team the first year.

In the summer of 1968 the Free Church began its triumvirate staff arrangement. Anthony Nugent, another friend of York's from seminary and a fellow community organizer in Oakland, became co-director or co-pastor. He was in charge of a new component of the ministry, a coffee house-community center. Nugent held this position until February, 1970. Joining Nugent in 1968 was John Pairman Brown, York's and Nugent's former professor in seminary. Brown's position on the staff was as the "resident theologian." His primary role was to interpret the fast-moving events on the street to avoid losing perspective on their real meaning in theological terms. Brown held this position almost until the end of the Free Church, he resigned before its closing. Both Nugent and Brown were more political than the hippies of the first year; and both were firmly grounded in the radical church movement of the time. Their presence was crucial to the development and evolution of the Free Church in more political and alternative church directions.

After Nugent left the Free Church, Richard Boylan took his place, not as co-director but as York's administrative assistant. Boylan, a former Catholic priest, was a student in the School of Social Welfare at the University. His work as administrator was largely to stabilize and



consolidate the social service component of the ministry. This he attempted while trying to cope with the deteriorating environment of the late 1960s and the internal contradictions of the three tiered organization and the re-emergence of the reconciliation purpose of the organization.

There were many other people, too numerous to mention here in the Introduction, who contributed significantly to the life of the Free Church. Their names will appear as the story of the Free Church unfolds in the following chapters. I have particularly mentioned the names of the key staff people because of the crucial role they played in giving direction to the Free Church. In fact, the Free Church story can largely be told by documenting how the key staff people functioned in an evolving organization. The story cannot, however, be told in isolation from other factors. For what the staff did, and could do, was relative to the evolving structure and purpose of the organization amidst the total environment of the sixties and the various constituencies that developed in the youth ghetto of the South Campus.

It must be admitted, however, that the data available to the author was largely from the perspective of the staff leadership. Most of the bottom tier of the Free Church, due to its transient nature, could not be located and substantively tapped. Therefore, the data still remains only partial on the Free Church. However, it is my contention, which is supported by ample evidence in the following chapters, that it was the leadership of the Free Church, if anyone, who was responsible for the successes and failures of the Free Church. This study is largely about them.

#### Constituency and Base

It seems clear that from the start there existed two models for



the ministry that came to be called the "Berkeley Free Church." First, there was the social service and reconciliation model. The second was the rapidly emerging alternative church and advocacy model. These two models, though not inherently or theoretically irreconcilable, were constantly in tension with each other. Also, though they were different, it is important to note that the origin of both was rooted in the church social activism of the 1960s. The "world out there" had to be taken seriously. If you were liberal clergy, as were most of the early Free Church sponsors, the plight of hippies must be dealt with to be true to your Christian faith. The faithful must be active in God's reconciling process in the world. Also, if you were a young activist seminarian like York, Nugent, Bishop or Boylan, or an activist seminary professor like Brown, "messy" tasks such as an experimental ministry to hippies and radicals was a logical means for involvement in the world. Staid suburban parishes, seen as isolated from the real world, were not options for these activists. Therefore, perhaps it was no surprise that with such a pre-disposed leadership the Free Church would move in the direction of an alternative church---a church that advocated the perceived rights, needs and values of its constituency over against an established society and church that were increasingly coming under attack from this constituency. Therefore, the Free Church always had two constituencies for whom, or two bases from which it operated: the church and the world or religion and political action. At different moments within its history the emphasis was greater in one direction or the other. And the Free Church's organizational self-understanding, at given moments, depended upon which constituency and base it emphasized the most.

Its church based constituency rapidly developed beyond the vision



of the local liberal clergy sponsors. In fact, by 1970 the Free Church was seen by many church activists as one of the "vanguard" organizations within the national radical church movement. This position was established by alliances with radical and renewal segments of the church and with the oppositional youth culture (in the world). First, the Free Church allied itself with other church radicals across the country. These were mainly radicals who were protesting the war in Viet Nam. The leadership of the Free Church played an active role in the Resistance Movement, which refused the military draft. Nugent, York and Brown were all members of the Resistance. These contacts later allowed the Free Church to help coordinate national confrontations against the established church structure. These church radicals criticized the churches for failing to put the resources of the church on the side of peace and the oppressed. But the radical church movement was not just church activists outside the church structures. It also consisted of key church leaders in the bureaucracies of all the large denominations. The Free Church generally subsisted on large grants from church agencies controlled by sympathetic bureaucrats. The Free Church's alliances with these bureaucrats gained it an indispensable, but ambiguous, legitimacy as well as money to keep the organization alive and solvent. These bureaucrats were also motivated by a vision of "church renewal" through active involvement in the reformation of the world.

Church renewal, to be achieved through societal renewal, became the cornerstone of radical church strategy in the 1960's.<sup>13</sup> And it determined the location of the second constituency and base of operation and support for the Free Church's similar twin goals: the oppositional youth culture. This base may not have been on the agenda or the minds of many of the original Free Church sponsors, but it became an indispensable part of what





the Free Church was becoming: a radical church. In the beginning the Free Church found this base outside the church in the cause of the counter cultural hippies. But with the Free Church leadership's involvement in the antiwar movement, this base was expanded to include a strong political component. However, perhaps the most significant factor in determining the base and constituency within the world for the free Church was its location in the youth ghetto of South Campus Berkeley. The Free Church's location "on the street" brought it into daily contact and identification with the program and destiny of new left radicals. The Free Church could not avoid involvement in the massive demonstrations and riots, from the French Solidarity Strike to People's Park. Whether it was involved as an agent of reconciliation or as an advocate, it was involved. It had to be. The dual program of church and societal renewal demanded it. Its legitimacy as a vanguard radical church was justified to the extent it was involved. And just being on the street left no alternative.

The tensions of this strategy which defined the Free Church's constituencies and base in the oppositional youth culture's politics and life styles, for the sake of church renewal, is the basis for understanding the evolution of the Free Church from a hippie church to a political cult. By 1972, it shared the destiny of most of the movements spawned in the 1960s.

## II. Significance of Free Church and Relationship to the Oppositional Youth Culture

The radical church movement, of which the Free Church was part, shared many features of the secular youth politics and culture of the sixties. Much has been written about the nature of youth protest in the sixties. The one common feature that most commentators agree upon was the



existence of a "new consciousness."<sup>14</sup> But this was not a new consciousness in fully developed form; it was in the making. And just as significant, it was based on a negative critique and assessment of modern society and the dominant notion of reality. Modern society was criticized for reducing the human being to a mere tool and in the process killing the "inner spirit." Therefore, this new consciousness was based on protest against this fact of dehumanization. The very essence of humanity, its transcendent quality, which distinguished it from lower animal forms and machines, had been denied. The sigh of the inner life, the need for meaning in a meaningless world, were the starting points of this new consciousness. The torch of protest was picked up by youth to illuminate the darkness of this "reduction" of humanity to mere machines. They became the agent for a new politics and culture.

Much like the location of youth protest in general, the radical church movement took place largely within the insulated confines of educational institutions. The seminaries were ablaze with seminarians attacking the evils of society. Many major seminaries in the United States were temporarily "closed down"<sup>15</sup> in the 1960s due to protests about civil rights, the war or the process of education itself. Also important as a location of the radical church movement were the campus ministries within many universities.

The nature of protest at the seminaries was similar to the secular youth protest. They were essentially protests about the quality of life in modern society. This protest was translated into attacks on institutions that allegedly helped to foster a reduction of life and failed to come to grips with basic human problems and needs. The educational institutions were an early target. Education was too oriented to developing noninvolved



"cheerful robots" oriented to an "overdeveloped society."<sup>16</sup> Cheerful robots were not inclined to the involvement necessary to "right the wrongs" of racism and militarism. A major target for the radical seminarians was the institution of religion. Religion was seen to be misused as an agent for fostering technocratic values which helped to legitimate cheerful robots. The very religious symbols and values important to the integrity of the transcendent dimension of life were now drained of real content in order to support the machine-like processes of modern society. Along with secular activists, the radical seminarians uncovered repressive forces at every turn of the Great Machine Society's wheels. The family, the church, the university, the state---all institutions and every area of life were being reduced to the logic of techniques for the lubrication of bureaucratic "machinery."

Therefore, the starting point for the new consciousness that the church radicals shared with secular radicals was a negative critique of modern life. The bases of success in modern society were under attack and rejected. Success or achievement for personal careers or rewards were affronts to activists' vision of humanity. Their vision saw humanity as capable of transcending the egoism of the self. They also viewed society as "uptight," no longer capable of feeling. This denial of feeling was a degradation of what it meant to be a total person. But there was an affirmation (even if only implicit) in the midst of this negative critique: humanity is one, people are ends in themselves and create their own history. Therefore, on the basis of this affirmation and negative critique, an alternative strategy was developed. There were, however, few available models for developing real alternatives. In fact, as youth there was even little personal experience to draw upon, many activists felt that the



imagination would show the way. The way would be a process of experimentation based on a politics of protest, vision and imagination. It was a fragile foundation to build an alternative history, but it was all that existed---or so it seemed.

A key component of this strategy was disaffiliation, the "Great Refusal"<sup>17</sup> that was so often talked about in the sixties. All of society was debased. The only way out was to forge a completely new alternative. Crucial to this negative assessment was the delegitimation of the justifications that were used to maintain modern society, such as private property, competition and the pursuit of wealth. The new mentality was a debunking mentality and at times a "value relativism," partially cultivated by the educational process which focused on science. In many ways this debunking or scientific mentality was a cornerstone for the very society the radicals challenged. The methods and principles of science would be utilized to analyze "sacred" values and show their arbitrariness and relationship to false values. For the dominant society such a mentality also fostered a passivity of values and the worship of experts and techniques.<sup>18</sup>

This value-relative posture was only partially shared by the radical church movement. Certainly organizations like the Free Church were motivated by a negative critique of society and established religion but it had a value-rich tradition from which to draw. The Christian faith was a functioning source of inspiration and commitment. The radical church movement did see the need to go outside the church structure and set up "experimental ministries." This was a certain kind of disaffiliation, but mainly oriented to structures rather than values. They did not, at least initially, disaffiliate with their biblical faith. They just wanted the content put back into it.





Many issues have to be sorted out to understand the reason for this evolution and apparent failure. Or perhaps one could argue, and should at least pose the possibility, that the cult direction was the only option for the Free Church given the alternatives at the time. Also, one should raise the possibility that this direction was in fact chosen for the sake of its religious dimension. How can this be so? Only careful retelling of the story of the Free Church in relationship to its church resources and its oppositional youth culture resource can we begin to answer this question or look for other more viable interpretations.

The major point to be stressed in the telling of the Free Church's story (and the basis for my interpretation in the concluding chapter) is that the outcome was negatively prejudiced by the fragile (though hopeful) beginning of the radical protest of the sixties. This was a fragility that was due to a "flight of consciousness" and an experimentation oriented strategy for devising and rooting an alternative reality in the face of great odds. The risks were great in this strategy but so was the option not to try. Indeed the radical movement's trail was marked with many false solutions and growing opposition. But in the end there did emerge at least a deepening analysis of modern society within this struggle of which we are the beneficiaries.

There were built-in contradictions in the radical church movement which at times were the source of creativity, but which in the face of opposition were also the source of the movement's inability to move beyond a politics and culture of protest, vision and experimentation. These contradictions were largely the result of the radical church movement's dependency on the very church structures it criticized. For example, its financial survival was contingent upon denominational funding.



But this dependency was also related to the limitations of a strategy based too much on vision, too much on the exposure of the evils of society and not enough on an adequate understanding of the roots of these evils and how to root the vision. Caught in the dilemma of these contradictions, the radical church movement, much like its youth culture allies, mirrored the dominant culture, sought inappropriate alliances, and was coopted or defeated in its program for change and revolution.

Admittedly, these comments are broad strokes from the pen of hindsight; they are not meant as a total denial of the worth or the significance of the radical church movement in the struggles of the sixties. The heritage that these struggles have given us is rich and in the end hopeful. We must, however, sort out the successes from the failures and ask penetrating questions to arrive at a better understanding of the apparent demise of a hopeful experiment. Perhaps the movement was only premature or its demise only a momentary disruption of its history.

The following case study of the Berkeley Free Church is an attempt to describe one example of a group that was part of the project of the sixties. The study is a contribution to the continuation of the fight for the life forces that emerged in the sixties. Therefore, it is hoped that usable elements for societal reconstruction might be isolated in this study---elements that would take us beyond the wasteland of technocratic society. I propose to attempt this goal by tracing the evolution of the Free Church from its social activist religious roots through its identification with the cultural and political struggles of the oppositional youth culture of Berkeley, California. Particularly important in this study is the focus on an explicitly "religious" organization in the midst of these struggles. This focus allows us some observations about a strategy that



would be appropriate for religious activists, who must take seriously the struggle for and recovery of the transcendent in modern life without being reduced to bizarre religiosity.

### III. Questions, Method and Structure

Why did the Berkeley Free Church cease to exist? In attempting to answer this question, this study of the Free Church will also attempt to provide answers to other related questions. One question, why the current religious situation is dominated by bizarre religiosity, is only posed, but its answer is indirectly given. This study can be seen as an attempt to provide the basis for a better understanding of our current religious setting---inside and outside the established churches.

The location of the Free Church within both the established churches and the oppositional youth culture allow us to pose specific questions relative to each, and seek some answers. What was the nature of the youth culture's protest and strategy that contributed to the Free Church's own self conception and eventual demise? What was the nature of the established church's religious foundation on which the Free Church also based its self conception (even if only a negative critique) and contributed to its demise? Why did the Free Church fail to develop a viable alternative in its relationship to established religion and the youth culture? Why did the Free Church lose its religious integrity? And did this loss of integrity contribute to its final disruption and failure to create an alternative?

Also within a careful retelling of the story of the Free Church and a thoughtful analysis we might get a glimpse of why the oppositional



youth culture ceased to exist---at least in its original form. The study of the Berkeley Free Church, however, is an attempt to answer a more specific question too: what is the appropriate form of a new radical religious alternative? One that would be able to learn from the mistakes of the radical church experiments of the sixties.

In order to best answer these questions I have approached the study of the Free Church chronologically, to show how the Free Church evolved, relative to the specific environment of the sixties. I have presented this historical material in five chapters, basically oriented to retelling the story. I have attempted to present the data on its own terms (not from an unbiased perspective for this is impossible given the questions in which I am interested), to let the events themselves tell the story. With the specific questions mentioned above guiding my choice of events, the analysis emerged. The final chapter is my attempt to come to grips with the meaning of the analysis that unfolded in the telling of the story of the Free Church for present day political spirituality.

I was fortunate to have had access to the personal files of Richard York, and other principal participants in the Free Church, as well as the general archives of the Free Church. These documents provided the foundation on which I could begin a process of interviewing over forty individuals associated with the Free Church. The historical documents and the interviews, however, were skewed in the direction of the leadership of the Free Church. However, I sought to offset this limitation by putting the story of the Free Church, and its analysis in the context of dynamics larger than leadership differences or mistaken judgements. In the final analysis, the demise of the Free Church must not lie in any one individual's hands, but in what Max Weber has called the "iron cage" of modern society.





But the larger goal, to which this study points, is not just an interpretation of this iron cage but the ability to change it, to release the captive transcendent in modern society.



Correction: The documents are no longer held at the CRRE Historical Archives, but as of 1995 are in the Graduate Theological Union Archives, Berkeley, CA.

(Valley Forge, PA: The Judson Press, 1965); ed. The Church Amid Revolution. (New York: Association Press, 1967); The Secular City, Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective. (New York: MacMillan, 1965). On Not Leaving it to the Snake. (New York: MacMillan, 1967).

<sup>3</sup> Charles Y. Glock, Benjamin B. Ringer and Earl R. Babbie, To Comfort and to Challenge, a Dilemma of the Contemporary Church. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967); Robert Lee, ed., The Church and the Exploding Metropolis. (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1965); and Pierre Berton, The Comfortable Pew. (New York: J.B. Lippincott, 1965).

<sup>4</sup> J.C. Hoekendijk, The Church Turned Inside Out. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962).

<sup>5</sup> The "Moonies" are the followers of Sung Myung Moon's Unification Church. The first study of Moon was by John Lofland, The Dooimesday Cult. (New York: Prentice Hall, 1966). For broad treatments of the new religions see: Jacob Needleman, The New Religions. (New York: Doubleday, 1970); and Charles Y. Glock and Robert N. Bellah, ed., The New Religious Consciousness. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).

<sup>6</sup> The conquest of the spirit has been a recurrent theme in many contemporary analyses of modern culture. Harvey Cox, The Seduction of the Spirit, The Use and Misuse of People's Religion. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973); Theodore Roszak, The Making of a Counter Culture, Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1969); Myron B. Bloy, Jr., ed., Search for the Sacred, The New Spiritual Quest. (New York: Seabury Press, 1972); and Morris Dickstein, Gates of Eden, American Culture in the Sixties. (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

<sup>7</sup> Dickstein, Gates of Eden, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Glock and Bellah, New Religious Consciousness.

<sup>9</sup> Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man, Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964); Jurgen Habermas, Toward a Rational Society, Student Protest, Science and Politics. trans. by Jerney J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968). C. Wright Mills, "Culture and Politics," in Power, Politics and People. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1963) pp. 236-246.



<sup>10</sup>"Proposed By-Laws for South Campus Committee," 1967, CRRE Historical Archives, Berkeley, California.

<sup>11</sup>Paul Jacobs and Saul Landau, The New Radicals. (New York: Vintage Books, 1966); Arthur G. Gish, "An Analysis of the New Left." in The New Left and Christian Radicalism. (Grand Rapids, MI, 1970) pp. 7-46; and Kirkpatrick Sale, SDS. (New York: Random House, 1973).

<sup>12</sup>Glee Bishop has since remarried and has returned to her maiden name.

<sup>13</sup>Stephen C. Rose, The Grass Roots Church, A Manifesto for Protestant Renewal. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966); and John R. Fry, The Trivialization of the United Presbyterian Church. (New York: Harper and Row, 1975).

<sup>14</sup>Charles A. Reich, The Greening of America. (New York: Bantam Books, 1970); John Charles Cooper, The New Mentality. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969); Roszak, Counter Culture and Glock and Bellah, Religious Consciousness; Mills, "Culture and Politics;" and Richard Flacks, Youth and Social Change. (Chicago: Markham, 1971).

<sup>15</sup>Documents on the closing down of Pacific School of Religion, Harvard Divinity School and Union Theological Seminary, New York, can be obtained at the CRRE archives.

<sup>16</sup>Mills, "Culture and Politics."

<sup>17</sup>Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man; Mills, "Culture and Politics;" Roszak, Counter Culture.

<sup>18</sup>Roszak, Counter Culture; Roszak, Where the Wasteland Ends, Politics and Transcendence in Postindustrial Society. (New York: Anchor Books, 1973); Habermas, Rational Society; Peter Berger, The Sacred Canopy. (New York: Anchor Books, 1969); and A Rumor of Angels. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1969). For a treatment of the rise of "scientific value relativism" see Arnold Brecht, Political Theory, The Foundations of Twentieth-Century Political Thought. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959) pp. 207-260.



## Chapter II

### THE "HIPPIE" CHURCH

1967

#### I

Berkeley's hip-radical newspaper the Berkeley Barb claimed that Christianity's tentative answer to hippie-poet and guru Allen Ginsberg was given by the Free Church. This "ultimate compliment" was paid in the reporting of the Free Church's August 12, 1967 Festival of the Virgin Mary. The Festival, celebrated just two months after the start of the Free Church, was "complete with rock bands, kids painting cars and the peace torch flickering beside a ten foot statue of the virgin."<sup>1</sup> The Festival, held in the parking lot of the First Presbyterian Church, just off Telegraph Avenue, drew 500 people.<sup>2</sup> Poetry was later written to capture the event:

we made her statue ten feet tall  
a trailer in the parking lot  
was where she stood  
her station was the sky  
were you there  
i cannot convey it unless you were  
gaunt mary draped in burlap gazed us down  
half-risen as she seemed  
we traded garmets [sic] at her feet  
while many dreamed  
new idiom met the old mythology<sup>3</sup>

New idiom did meet the old mythology in the Festival. Allen Ginsberg met Christianity; the summer-after-Haight-Ashbury-flower-children met the Church and free love hippies met the Virgin.

During the Festival, Richard Lyle York, the "hippie priest" of





the Free Church, led a procession of clergy. He was carrying a pot of holy water while incense bearers perfumed the way. "The procession then wound out through the crowds to the center, where the ministers proceeded with the ceremonial washing of the feet of twelve spectators." The Barb account of the event continues: "York read a prayer-poem entitled 'I would like to rise very high' by Michel Quoist, a French slum priest. Candles were passed out and some of the crowd joined the procession. York blessed the crowd by flicking holy water onto it with a green branch as he went. The procession stopped at the feet of the virgin."<sup>4</sup>

what is this coming together of  
 mankind  
 in happenings  
 all ages and all faiths  
 or none  
 with the old symbols a new pantheon  
 with new laughter the old festivals  
 are graced  
 what is this levity  
 against a darkening sky  
 and who believes  
 god has no sense of humor  
 and no fun  
 the festival was joyous  
 and we came  
 and lit a torch for peace  
 did mary smile  
 o were you there  
 did you see the washing of the feet  
 did you bear a light  
 in the procession of lights  
 in the altered street  
 was it you behind me and can you tell me why  
 i am i  
 whoever that may be  
 and why  
 we came<sup>5</sup>

People made attempts, other than poetry, to analyze the event. York wrote in his daily journal that the Festival "really turned people on. [It] was a real bridge. [The] foot washing illustrated what the



Graphic 2  
FESTIVAL OF THE VIRGIN MARY  
1967



Source:  
Free Church Archive/CRRE



Free Church is all about---serving each other."<sup>6</sup> Five years later, York once more spoke of the foot washing act.

We did a procession out in the middle of this big "bè-in" at the intermission and did a number on the microphone, a real short one, about why we were having this and what the Free Church was. Then we started washing hippies' feet with big buckets of warm soap water and towels, in all these big vestments...it just blew these freaks minds. Cause, here were all these clergy washing their feet--- which is just what it was all about.<sup>7</sup>

Whether or not the foot washing was "just what it was all about," the event did symbolize what the Free Church was rapidly becoming, a hippie church. Another analysis of the Festival concluded:

The Assumption Festival...was in large part spontaneous, worked out by the community which clotted around the Yorks. I look at it here not as something staged by a student of Christian liturgy but as a happening produced and accepted by a community.<sup>8</sup>

That community (or as they liked to refer to themselves at the time, "family") was a church, facilitated by the hippie priest, Richard Lyle York.

## II

Who was this hippie priest who could be accepted by a crowd of 500 to bless them with holy water? How and why did he happen to be in that parking lot? The answers to these questions take us into the whole culture and environment of the late sixties. A homily by York on St. Francis of Assisi given in October of 1967 in a hippie celebration at the Berkeley Catholic Newman Center helps to illustrate the cultural context in which the Free Church and York participated.

Let me run it down to you about this cat from Assisi! Like he had super-advantages. His family had all the bread they needed. His mother was cool. His father was a straight businessman with cloth for sale: respectable, leading citizen in the community.



As a teen-ager he was like super-straight too. He was gifted, promising, with a successful career before him in the family business....

His case history shows no signs of like turning-on with drugs but he began to act, much of the time like he were on a "trip," withdrawn, and experiencing visions and hallucinations....

His actions became increasingly bizarre. Like he insisted nothing mattered but love and brotherhood. He made it with the Peace scene too, and openly advocated total integration.

But what really blew the minds of the straights was that he turned against education and urged the run-aways and drop outs who flocked to share his pads to stay away from books....

The cat claimed he was trying to live like Jesus....

Like he put it all down so he could love people and do his thing, which he said was God's thing and the thing we all should do.<sup>9</sup>

Richard York came to the ministry with the Free Church by letting go of much of what he could have easily had. He was "gifted, promising, with a successful career before him." As a student at the San Francisco Art Institute and as a seminarian at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP), he excelled. He graduated with honors in theology and church history from CDSP, winning numerous prizes and fellowships. He was gifted at oratory. He won the senior class homiletics prize, receiving offers to put his sermon to musical and dramatic form.<sup>10</sup>

Privilege and success were not always so certain for York. As the middle of three children, he grew up in a family he characterized economically as living in "genteel poverty."<sup>11</sup> His mother was a trained nurse but gave up her profession when she married York's father. York's father, educated at Occidental College, was an off-again-on-again secondary school teacher and salesperson.

Religion was a major aspect of York's family life. His mother was a third generation Anglican American from Pennsylvania. Her grand-





father, George Zeller, was an Anglican priest. Zeller wrote a major book on the Christian case against "reason and evolution," which York eventually refuted in a term paper for a seventh grade science class. York's father was raised a Presbyterian when his family moved to the Bakersfield Valley region of California, after ranching in Montana. York's parents met in a "Christian Endeavor" meeting. These groups were pan-Christian youth groups similar to the YMCA and YWCA movements. After his parents married they raised their family in "Bible preaching" conservative Presbyterian Churches. York lived in Hollywood, California his first eleven years. Here the family attended the Glendale Presbyterian Church where the well known conservative minister, Ted Cupman, was pastor. York called the church a very fundamentalistic church; no movies were allowed, for example. York recalled attending four services every Sunday. There was also religious discipline at home: meal and bed-time prayers and special family devotions.

York began his upward climb in status after his parents moved to Santa Maria, California, where he attended three years of high school. He excelled in school and at the end of his senior year began dating one of the most popular girls in the school, Joy Nesmith. Nesmith was the daughter of the minister of the local Methodist Church attended by the York's after briefly attending the local Presbyterian Church. York and Nesmith went away to college. York went to the University of California at Santa Barbara and Nesmith went to Whittier College. This arrangement lasted less than two years. They both moved to San Francisco. York attended art school and Nesmith enrolled at San Francisco State. They were married the next year, 1961.



The next few years Joy and Dick York shared a religious quest. In 1962, via tape recording from a Pentecostal uncle in Fresno, Dick and Joy converted to tongue speaking. They ran prayer groups while attending the Anglo-Catholic Episcopal parish, Holy Innocence in San Francisco. Their prayer groups coincided with James A. Pike's attempt to censure pentecostals in the Diocese of California of which he was Bishop. Nation magazine, doing a story on these events, interviewed Joy and Dick. The next stop was Episcopal seminary at CDSP in Berkeley.

In the beginning, Joy and Dick did not share similar politics. Dick was a Republican and Joy was a Democrat. Dick recalls wearing his "I like Ike" button when Dwight David Eisenhower was the Republican candidate for President. He considered himself apolitical in comparison to Joy. Besides the political education he received from Joy, he also received first hand consciousness-raising in 1960. His political science class tried to attend the San Francisco meetings of the House UnAmerican Activities Committee. Along with other students picketing the meetings, his class was driven down the City Hall steps with water hoses by police. He recalls being amazed at the discrepancy between the media coverage of the event and what he personally saw happen.

These experiences of York's youth and young adulthood, no doubt, were significant forces that shaped York's future ministry with the Free Church. Certainly one could argue that his basic sensibilities were never far away from his background in art and evangelical religion. However, the Richard York who became the director of the Free Church was more a product of the cultural and political ferment of the late 1960's than of his artistic and evangelical roots.



York was a political activist at CDSP. He was the contact person for the Seminarians' National Emergency Committee on Viet Nam. The Anti-War Movement was fully developed nation-wide. In February of 1967 York helped to coordinate and participated in the Mobilization of Clergy Against the War in Viet Nam in Washington, D.C. Crucial to York's anti-war activities was Dave Nesmith, Joy's brother. Dave was working in Viet Nam with the International Voluntary Services. His letters home described vividly the atrocities of the U.S. war effort. York was deeply affected by these reports. Also as a married student, now with two children, financial necessity forced Joy and Dick to live in a West Oakland low income black housing project. (In fact, they were being supported by small contributions from York's network of tongue-speaking friends.) It was in the housing project that York gained his community organizing skills and experienced first hand the injustices of racial and class oppression. The experience in West Oakland gained them a notoriety and political consciousness that helped dictate their vocational choice away from the traditional parish setting.<sup>12</sup>

It was in his senior year at CDSP that York solidified his growing anti-establishment political stance. Also it was this year that York developed friendships and relationships in a crisis situation that were to carry over to his eventual work with the Free Church. The peace torch mentioned at the Assumption festival was a memorial to the World War II victims of the atomic bomb. It may have seemed out of place to many who just saw York as a hippie priest---or even to many of the hippies. But seen in terms of York's immediate political past in seminary, the torch was a deliberate attempt by York to insert politics into an otherwise



predominantly religious or apolitical event. What happened his senior year?

On February 19, 1967 (four months before the start of the Free Church), the Yorks and two classmate friends, Darrow and Glee Bishop, were at a service for the Massing of the Colors at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. In a subsequent article written by York for Win and Liberation magazines, he documents what happened at the Cathedral this way:

...five hours after the sacrament of our Christs' Broken Body and Shed Blood had been celebrated on its altar, some two hundred armed, flag-bearing and helmeted troops marched into the very sanctuary and surrounded the altar of that Cathedral....

...It was the massing of the colors, a mayor-declared civic holiday, a time to remember George Washington....

One of us had a program. "My God," someone said, "they're going to march on the altar---into the sanctuary with those guns!" Something had to be done. We had to try to stop them. And our bodies were all that we had.

I thought about my seminary studies, about the ordination I look forward to, about my Bishop. "This could be the end of that," I said to my wife. She said, "would you do it if it meant sacrificing ordination?" "Yes!" I answered. I thought later, this spectacle is the result of generations who have answered that and similar questions in the negative.

Then it began to happen. The organ sounded. The people stood, the march of the troops from the transepts to the sanctuary began. The five of us [including the Bishop's small child] ran for the sanctuary door, arriving there just as the first soldiers did. We pushed ahead of them and sat down at their feet, blocking the door.... Darrow got hit on the back with the butt of a rifle...They marched over us...They began kicking us...Soon they were all in surrounding the altar with rifles and flags. The band began the National Anthem. We sat and wept.

After that a man came over to me and asked me what group we represented. "The Christian faith and our consciences...."13

The incident became a cause celebre, particularly in Episcopal circles, due to the good media coverage in the local newspapers and official church publications. The San Francisco Chronicle first carried





the basic facts of the encounter.<sup>14</sup> The Berkeley Barb carried the same account of the event York had written for Liberation and Win. The Barb account included a picture of the Bishop's child being held by Allen Ginsberg with the caption: "Hearts swelled as Poet-Guru consoled lost child at Human Be-In last month. Plastic soldiers marched over same child in Grace Cathedral last Sunday."<sup>15</sup> Local clergy wrote in support of the Bishops and the Yorks.<sup>16</sup> York also received numerous direct responses to his Liberation and Win article from non-church people.<sup>17</sup> All of these letters and responses helped to confirm York in his anti-establishment political direction. One such letter came from the Episcopal Campus Minister at Stanford University, Lane W. Barton Jr. Barton sent York a copy of the letter he had sent to the Dean of the Cathedral and the Bishop of the Diocese, C. Kilmer Meyers. Meyers had just replaced Pike as the Bishop. The letter is a good example of the positive sentiment for York's actions.

Good Friday, 1967

Just a note to tell you that I agree completely with my friend, Dick York, about playing soldier in the cathedral church.

I plan to be with you next year if the military mickey mouse is rescheduled. I expect you will have a lot of contrary-minded company.

We have a whole year to contemplate our tactics and we can come up with something more effective than getting hit on the head with a rifle butt.

I think of some of my former friends, the ones I served with in G Company of 345 Infantry, especially the ones whose lives were torn out of them by the flying steel. How bitterly they would regard the pious pomposities we go through in these remembrance ceremonies! A great many of our young riflemen, perhaps a majority of them,



Graphic 3  
THE BISHOP'S SON AND  
ALAN GINSBERG 1967



HEARTS SWELLED as Poet-Guru consoled lost child at Human Be-In last month. Plastic soldiers marched over same child in Grace Cathedral last Sunday. (photo by Paul Kagan)

Source:  
Berkeley Barb 1967



would point in a strange direction, if they were asked to identify the real enemy. They would round on the windbag burghers and the braying politicians who are so conspicuous at the memorial services.<sup>18</sup>

The negative reaction to the Cathedral incident was not well publicized. However, there were numerous discussions by the Cathedral authorities about the events. One such meeting is reported in a letter by the Dean of the Cathedral, Julian Bartlett, explaining his differences with the Cathedral protest. The letter is a good example of the kind of established church mentality from which York became increasingly alienated:

At a recent meeting of the Diocesan Department of Social Relations, I attempted to explain to them that there was another valid Christian position: namely, that the rifles referred to are ceremonial accoutrement and are part of the traditional ceremonials surrounding the carrying of the national ensign in procession. In my view...there is no essential difference between the ceremonial, unloaded rifles and the stainless steel, shiny helmets--or for that matter the dress uniforms---worn by the members of the color guard. It is all traditional accoutrement.

Moreover, members of the Armed Forces can be and indeed are often Christian people and are filling a role in our social structure. They are our military people and the Armed Forces are our Armed Forces. It is not a question of "they" and "us." Whenever these people are called into combat we all share in their actions, in my view.

In light of the above comments, to deny these people certain pieces of their ceremonial accoutrement would be to deny them any of their pieces of accoutrement---and, consequently, to deny them personally entrance in their roles as members of the Armed Forces into the Cathedral Church. This was a Service of national recollection, giving thanks for the leadership of the first President of our country. It was not a "Jingoistic" affair. The Cathedral Dean and Chaplain has in the past and will in the future, exercise reasonable control over the content of the liturgy. If the Cathedral Church is to be the community's Cathedral Church and a house of prayer for all people, it appears plainly evident to me that such services of national remembrance have a place in our precincts.



Now, you may disagree with these points but, if so, know that we differ as Christian gentlemen and in all good conscientiousness...<sup>19</sup>

York was losing his tolerance for a church that made judgements on such criterion as "filling a role in our social structure" and had such a big heart and narrow vision as to "differ as Christian gentlemen."

Back in Berkeley at CDSP, three days after the incident, the Yorks' and the Bishops' Ethics professor and friend, John Pairman Brown, posted a petition in support of the Cathedral action. The petition was addressed to the Right Reverend C. Kilmer Myers, [Episcopal] Bishop of California:

Dear Bishop Myers:

As you undoubtedly know, on Sunday afternoon, February 19, 1967, in the course of a military observance at Grace Cathedral, a large number of uniformed troops with helmets and rifles marched into the sanctuary. Some of the undersigned who happened to be present spontaneously interposed their bodies, out of respect for the sanctity of their Cathedral, and were roughly handled. We wish to join them in expressing our sense of outrage. Many of us who attended the "Tet" fast at the Cathedral the week before felt that on that occasion the Cathedral had regained its ancient function of privileged sanctuary from violence; and we affirm that the presence of weapons within the Cathedral is incompatible with that sacred character. We therefore respectfully petition our Right Reverend Father in God to make it a solemn policy of the Diocese of California that armed troops shall not in the future be permitted to enter our Cathedral, nor uniformed troops her Sanctuary.<sup>20</sup>

Fifty seven seminary related people signed the petition. Only two were professors, John Pairman Brown and Rev. Samuel M. Garrett (Garrett is a Professor of Church History). Coincidentally, the Board of Trustees of CDSP met on February 23. On February 24, the Dean of CDSP, Sherman Johnson, penned a letter to Brown.

Your contract with us as Professor of Christian Ethics





establishment posture into his Free Church ministry. In this same letter, York went on to talk about the firends who eventually went with him:

What saves me from constant retreat, from panic and from terror, is close community with other human beings who are out here with me. You have been one of those people "out here," Darrow has been one, Tony [Nugent] has been one, etc. However, I think the community has to be carefully watched and fed, or else in the fear of the edge, it too falls apart.<sup>23</sup>

At different stages in its history, the Free Church provided the structure to help feed this community.

#### IV

With these events behind him, York interviewed for the job as a street minister to the hippies who were predicted to overflow from Haight Ashbury to Berkeley in the summer of 1967.

The sponsors of the Free Church, and York himself when he took the job, understood York's work to be a "service" or "street" ministry--- the clerical collar on the street assessing the basic needs of the hippies: food, clothing, housing, drug counseling. The original name of the ministry was the South Campus Community Ministry. Bylaws drawn up by the sponsors in May of 1967 for the purpose of incorporation state SCCM's purpose as:

To minister to the needs of persons in the South Campus area, especially those temporarily resident in ways which are feasible for an association not directly based in local religious, humanitarian, municipal and welfare institutions.<sup>24</sup>

Who were the sponsors; and how was SCCM formed?

Donald P. Buteyn, Minister of Outreach for the First Presbyterian Church, more than any other person was responsible for SCCM's existence.



He was its president and chief architect. It was Buteyn's "Tentative Sketch of Ingredients for an Ecumenical Ministry by the Churches to the South Campus Community of Berkeley" that provided the basic framework and goals for the ministry:

This program should be conceived as experimental and subject to the honest evaluation of all concerned persons and groups.

It must be ecumenical, both in terms of strategy for service and mission...

It must be cooperative, embracing in its planning and program the insights and concerns of as many facets of this complex community as can be brought together...

It must be flexible. Its structured program must have as little formal structure as possible...

It must have a spiritual dimension with depth---depth of commitment by leadership; depth of insight theologically; depth of character that breathes integrity; the capacity to love in Christ, to speak for Christ, and to point to Christ...

The ultimate purpose of the ministry shall be to serve the total needs of people as they are made known and as lives respond with the hope that in this context of meaningful dialogue and relationship insight can be shared, help given and received mutually, and Christ discovered as active in the midst of many hearts and many lives. Communication is the key. And communication outside of the warming Spirit of Christ is hardly adequate or in the fullest sense mature.

It shall be redemptive in its intent and thrust, with the understanding that God will show all who relate through this program where life and hope can be found in a world of confusing movement and tension.<sup>25</sup>

I asked Buteyn, now the Administrative Minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Hollywood, why he and others felt the Free Church was needed in 1967. His answer:

I think the whole thing began, as a lot of these things do, in an attempt by the religious community in the Sather Gate area, (primarily the clergy) to be responsive to the growing problem in the area and in the spring of 1967. That March there was a growing sense of pressure in the Bay Area



about the anticipated influx of kids in the summer of '67...There was some certainty, and it was well founded, that Berkeley would be a second kind of Mecca for these kids. A lot of apprehension in February, March and April of that spring among merchants in the south campus area, university officials, local police, city fathers, property owners as to what this would mean. And you could see it coming as a gathering storm. Some people saw it like an April showers and some saw it like a tornado...

The property owners and business people, university officials [and] police saw it as a gathering storm. The people already in the sub-culture, students and old Berkeleyans, who had been around a long time and seen these things come and go before, saw it just as another thing that would pass or the harbinger of a bright new day. People who were anxious about our involvements in Southeast Asia saw this as the inevitable process of building on the student revolution that had started in '64 [with the Free Speech Movement]...a challenge to the established systems.

...The Churches really were apprehensive more than anything else, either apprehensive or aloof. In the case of First Presbyterian Church there was a little of both, more aloofness, or lack of awareness, than apprehension.

...we had to move to organize a program that the kids would not be afraid of as they began coming...

[Our purpose] wasn't really clear as I look back. [We] were concerned that we provide an emergency service to the kids to try to defuse the situation, maintain some control, maintain communication with the kids and do the best we could to maintain a kind of civilized climate. To alleviate violence and rioting which was anticipated and to keep police informed and involved and not too uptight. To allay the fears of the merchants, whose thought it was if we meet this thing constructively and positively, we avoid a monstrous thing as best as we could.<sup>26</sup>

The process which brought SCCM into existence was a hasty one.

The kids were soon to arrive or were already arriving when they began to interview the candidates. There was a series of community meetings where a citizens coalition was formed. Buteyn acted as the representative from the established churches and had the approval of his church session to act in this capacity as part of his job as Minister of Outreach. A half dozen clergy were involved from the beginning. They were: Brad Brown,



Rector at All Souls Episcopal Church; Bill Pothier, a Presbyterian minister doing community work in Berkeley and a likely candidate for the SCCM director's job before York was interviewed; Robert McKenzie, Pastor of St. John's Presbyterian Church; and George Tittman, Rector at St. Mark's Episcopal Church. The coalition also included a half dozen merchants, individuals from the university and the police department (mainly as observers). The merchants involved at this time included: John Alsberg of "Nicoles" clothing store (closed in 1973), Fred Cody of Cody's Books, Eric Goodman of Eclair Bakery, Ove Wittstock of Layton's Shoes and Larry Blake of Larry Blake's restaurant.

With this seed money and support from a broad based citizen's committee, the South Campus Community Ministry came into existence. Robert McKenzie, one of the founding sponsors, documented the next step in a Christian Century article:

Five candidates were interviewed for the position. One stood out as the obvious choice: Richard York, who had just graduated from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific (Episcopal) and was soon to be ordained deacon. An hour's interview revealed that here was a churchman with a profound sense of calling to the Christian ministry, plus a strong sense of identity with and appreciation for the values and style of life which mark the hippie community.<sup>27</sup>

York was chosen director; and went to work June 15.

## V

It is not surprising, given his past, that York got involved in an "experimental" rather than traditional ministry. Certainly the Festival of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary made it clear that York's ministry was anything but a traditional ministry. Experimental ministries are





unpredictable. York's was no exception. In fact the events of York's ministry moved so rapidly that Brown's wife, Emily, in their Christmas letter remarked that "Jock [Brown's nickname] tries to analyze it but it gets ahead of him."<sup>28</sup> Brown had attended the Festival and wrote a six page analysis of it. In this analysis, however, Brown's conclusions seemed to capture what the street ministry was rapidly becoming: "The elements were there for an actual peace and freedom community---an actual church."<sup>29</sup>

The "actual church" that the Free Church was becoming, and that was communicated in the Assumption Festival, was also a product of the religious, political and cultural climate that had sped York to his anti-establishment stance.

The choice of a hippie Christian "be-in" as the first public religious activity of the Free Church was a reflection of some of York's early rationales for his ministry and the youth counter-culture of the sixties---with which he identified himself, especially through his politics. The reasons given for the Festival were that the "frequenters of the Free Church" wanted a Christian "happening" and this particular religious holiday was next on the calendar. Those who frequented the Free Church were counter-cultural youths still riding the crest of the hippie movement. The term hippie was stereotyped as synonymous with new forms of youth life style, dress and outlooks: communal living, use of drugs, long hair, beards, love, peace and "do your own thing." The Festival was also planned as an event to "break the ice" and put the Free Church in the forefront of the Telegraph street scene. The ministry, as it was designed by the sponsors who hired York, was to be a "Christian



presence" on the Avenue. What better way to demonstrate your presence than with a mass hippie-like festival. The Festival, however, indicated that it was more than a "presence" staged by the hired minister of "outside" established churches. York's ministry was not foreseen by its sponsors to move so rapidly beyond Christian presence (and a service ministry) to a community talking self consciously about being a church. Some of the sponsors were delighted and some were threatened.

The early saga of the religious development of SCCM is wrapped up in the shift from service ministry to church. We have to go deeper into the religious climate of the times to understand this shift. The events themselves, in the months leading up to the Festival and immediately beyond, tell the story best.

Much of the impetus to become something other than a service ministry was provided by the "clientele" of the Free Church. The name "Free Church" was a product of the street culture at the time. There were free clinics, free stores, free buses and free love. York's earliest mention of the name Free Church in his journal is in connection with his conversations with two members of the Diggers, a hippie service commune that ran a free store in the Haight Ashbury and wanted to begin one in Berkeley. Just weeks after York was on the job, the Diggers presented the "idea of a Free Church, putting a wagon wheel out front [as a] symbol of the Gandhi spirit, the Buddhist spirit, of the pioneer spirit and of freedom."<sup>30</sup> Whoever first suggested the name Free Church for the work York was doing is not clear. It just happened and it stuck without any conscious forethought. Months later York explained:



...There has been some criticism of the popular name for this ministry, the Free Church. Of course, since it was given to the ministry by the street community, there is no changing it, nor do we wish to. In the San Francisco-Berkeley hippie community the work "free" is code<sub>31</sub> for hippie... "Free Church" merely means hippie church.

York goes on to explain why the term church is also apt to describe how the ministry had progressed in just a few months.

...The Christian members of the Free Church family (which included many non-Christian members) do constitute a new ecumenical church, growing up off the streets. This had been one of the most exciting developments... There can be no one tradition imposed upon this group, since it is made up of Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, and other unaffiliated members, all of them from the streets: motorcycle riders, hippies, ex-drug addicts, etc...

The worshiping has to be free. It is the scene of a developing liturgy from the hip community....

So in this sense, a new church does exist within the Free Church family ministry. But we do not see it as a new denomination, but rather as the ecumenical church being born.<sup>32</sup> [Italics mine]

Who were these people from the street who wanted a church? Much has been written about the spiritual values of the hippies and the search for the sacred that accompanied their turning away from values of affluence and privilege.<sup>33</sup> One person in the early days of York's ministry helps to illustrate where the "up off the street" church had its roots: Greg Mack. York referred to this ex-monk and ex-biker<sup>34</sup> from Detroit as his spiritual and street mentor. Mack, also a senior in psychology at the University, was one of the street hippies who clustered around York. He was actually related to SCCM before York. Mack was a hippie that the sponsors enlisted to help conceive the ministry and interview candidates. York was Mack's choice. York described him this way:

He calls himself "God's Man's Man." He is really my greatest help and supporter and critic. I really thank God for his help. He is so profoundly deep theologically---



so in love with Jesus---and so aware of [the] world, so with it, and so sensitive to people. He should be the Man...Greg especially stirs me to real depths of thought and examination. He silences me and teaches me.

Greg is one of the greats! He knows how to tell the Gospel stories in such a groovy relevant way (i.e. story of Jesus lost in Temple to illustrate what to do [with] runaway teeny-boppers)...Greg is my conscience and my priest.<sup>35</sup>

On the street, York remembers, Mack used to counsel him to "walk slow, walk slow." They were often a team in crisis situations.

But the impetus to become a church was provided by non-street influences too---not the least of which was York's own orientation to his faith. His interest in church formation and especially in ecumenical expressions of the new church, however, received crucial prodding from his friend Jock Brown---now out of a job, even though being paid by CDSP. York the previous year had written an article for Witness magazine on COCU (Consultation on Church Union).<sup>36</sup> In the article he described that the authentic ecumenical movement would arise from the grass roots---an idea no doubt influenced by Brown, his teacher at the time.

Needless to say, the hottest theological topic in the middle sixties was ecumenicity.<sup>37</sup> Nothing was on the cutting edge of church life if it wasn't ecumenical. But Brown's particular orientation to ecumenicity was what he began to call a "peace and freedom church."<sup>38</sup> This was a grass roots underground church that would be responsive to social issues. Brown became a major spokesperson for underground churches. His personal relationship to Malcolm Boyd, then the key publicist for the underground church movement and author of Are You Running with Me Jesus? solidified Brown's position. Brown and Boyd were friends and were co-participants in numerous anti-war meetings. Brown's notion of a grass roots church would later appear in the book Boyd edited, entitled The Underground Church.





The book also included contributions from Daniel Berrigan, Father Groppi and Paul Moore, Jr. York was also in contact with Boyd, who was a CDSP graduate. In the midst of Brown's dismissal Boyd, as a concerned alumnus, wrote a letter in support of Brown.

The underground church concept referred to a diverse movement. In Boyd's introduction to The Underground Church he tried to isolate some of the common features of the movement:

The Underground Church never set out to "replace" the Establishment Church, let alone to "become" it. The Underground Church must, in a real sense, be seen as a radical and contemporary extension of what, for lack of a better word, may be called Christian renewal...

The present Underground Church is a movement which has two basic drives which are identical with those of the Ecumenical movement: Church unity and radical involvement of the Church in the social concerns of contemporary life. In its actions, the Underground Church, in connection with both of these drives, has acted far more radically than has the Establishment Church. It has practiced Church unity across forbidden eucharistic lines, experimenting liturgically with the meaning, for men and women living today, of "worship." And it has been free of the pressures brought to bear by the social Establishment upon the Establishment Church. So it has become closely identified, in various sectors and ways, with so-called secular humanists in movements related to race, peace, and poverty. In fact, "the Church" has been "found" in many so-called secular movements within society, and yet at the same time seems not to be present in many of the programs and activities of the Establishment Church. Involvement and commitment, in the sense of presence within the secular arena and outside "churchianity," have become key concepts in the Underground Church.<sup>39</sup>

York had internalized much of this way of looking at societal renewal through the lens of church renewal by way of the underground church. But it was Brown's constant reminder to York of the need for a structure and definition of church beyond what he saw in the hippie "free"



concept, that helped York begin to define the Free Church as an underground church. York recounts one of these sessions with Brown, returning home from anti-war activities, just two weeks after his ministry started and two weeks before his journal reports an "underground church" meeting at the Free Church.

Had some good talks with Jock on underground church. He sees essential thing for such a church to be regular self-imposed discipline, democratic procedure, etc. Also pointed out failure of experiments in xian promiscuity (gave me a book on utopian experiments to read).<sup>40</sup>

If the Assumption Festival only exhibited "elements" of the kind of church Brown foresaw, York's letter to Bishop Myers in December of 1967 exhibited, at least in York's mind, an underground church concept for his hippie street ministry. In the letter York was explaining the actions of the clergy that had taken place at the Oakland Induction Center the previous week.

Members of the Free Church community were participants---feeling it part of the mission of our community to serve as the pastoral arm of the Movement to other parts of the underground church, especially those which represent the more political arm.<sup>41</sup>

## VI

The movement toward the notion of an emerging church for the SCCM ministry had its foundations on the two pillars of "involvement" and "commitment." As mentioned above, Malcolm Boyd viewed these pillars as essential to the church activists' concept of the underground church. These two pillars demanded a "presence within the secular arena and outside 'churchianity'." York carried this notion of the underground church with



him into his involvement with the street ministry; it predated his street ministry and had its origin in York's activism at CDSF mentioned above. Key documents indicate that a concept of an underground church was worked out by York and Brown in the midst of their involvement in the anti-war movement and during Brown's dismissal. The writings and speeches of Brown and York can be considered the first of two major streams of thought that contributed to the Free Church's self-understanding in 1967. The second stream was represented by the original SCCM sponsors. Though the courses of the two streams were not totally divergent, they only partially flowed together.

Much like the thought of the larger radical church movement, Brown's and York's theology and ethics were based on church renewal and unity through societal renewal by "active involvement in the social concerns of contemporary life."<sup>42</sup> Brown and York expounded this approach to renewal, which was a particular path to ecumenicity, in speeches, articles and reports during 1967---some predating June 1967 and some in the midst of the fragile emergence of the Free Church "family." In a document entitled "A Call to Covenant," dated August 1967, Brown set forth the basic ingredients for a new church, that is, what its commitment and involvement should be. He began with:

This call is addressed to Christian people who have an open mind about what church, or form of congregation, their loyalty is ultimately due to. It is also addressed to persons who, if they could find a church or congregation which was beginning to illustrate the reconciling nonviolence of Jesus, would like to try and take Christianity seriously.<sup>43</sup>

Brown outlined five evils of modern society in this article:

- 1) colonialism, 2) urban ghettos, 3) degradation of the biological environment, 4) distortion of traditional cultures by mass media, and



5) threat of nuclear war. The most "authentic response" to these evils, according to Brown, was the peace and freedom movement of the 1960's. He recognized the peace and freedom movement "as a true response to God's call in history and judgement on the churches."<sup>44</sup> Brown defined the peace and freedom movement as the more political or new left portion of the oppositional youth culture: the civil rights movement of the early sixties and the anti-war movement in 1967. Therefore, for Brown, the proper location of involvement for Christians was clear at this time in history; the peace and freedom movement, for it was the "true incognito church, doing God's work in the world."<sup>45</sup> Brown's identification of God working in the peace and freedom movement was also the basis for his ecumenical strategy. Ecumenicity was not achieved by "high-level negotiations on unity" but by "lay[ing] our bodies on the line as a pledge for the correctness of our reading the signs of the times."<sup>46</sup> "True reunion" of the church, according to Brown, would "bubble up from the roots" of this involvement, or not at all.<sup>47</sup> However, Brown made clear that this call to covenant still must take place "under the umbrella of the larger truth" of God in history. He did not want to add to the "roster of Christian denominations."

...for we reaffirm such parts of the truth  
as we have received from our own tradition...  
We profess ourselves loyal sons of our own  
Churches."<sup>48</sup>

Brown continually refined this "Call to Covenant" and it later appeared as the article in Boyd's anthology on the underground church mentioned above.

York drew heavily from Brown's writings and also contributed to them in his own work. His work with the Free Church, to a large degree,





provided a "test case" for Brown's theories. Though the Free Church in the beginning was not directly a ministry within the peace and freedom movement, it did conform to an emerging congregation at the grass roots. The Free Church in 1967 was largely formed by counter cultural youths (hippies), not political activists. However, the hippies were also seen by Brown and York as a protest against the evils of modern society. York, in fact, used Brown's "Call to Covenant" to define what he understood the Free Church to be in October of 1967. In a report to the sponsors, York used Brown's notion of ecumenicity outlined in the Call to Covenant, a grass roots ecumenicity. This was a similar notion to one which York himself outlined in a Witness magazine article in March of 1967, prior to his interview for the SCCM street ministry. The article criticized the "official" effort at church unity by the Consultation on Church Unity (COCU). York understood COCU to be only a "last stand for a white middle class church, a mighty fortress against a truly prophetic church." He wanted a "truly catholic church" which also represented the "inner city" and "lower class ecumenicity."<sup>49</sup> Like Brown, York was not calling for a sectarian separation from the established church:

Do we put our money on COCU or not?...  
I would say that...we cannot avoid the  
ecumenical movement, no matter how dangerous  
it may be...We must involve ourselves in  
COCU's efforts, but certainly not uncrit-  
ically...Perhaps COCU will be the mirror of  
self examination for the reform of our churches.  
We must all work to see that it is so.<sup>50</sup>

York understood his work at the Free Church in 1967 as his attempt to see that the ecumenical movement would be "the mirror of self-examination for



the reform of our churches." A grass roots hippie ecumenical church was a start in this direction.

The second stream that made up the Free Church's thought, theologically and politically, also stressed ecumenicity, commitment and involvement. The sponsors of the Free Church, and particularly Don Buteyn, understood service and ecumenical cooperation as keys to the churches' responses to the South Campus and the plight of the hippie. However, Buteyn's view of involvement was based on a particular notion of reconciliation. He saw better "communication" and "bridge building" as the basis for involvement, rather than advocating the rights of the peace and freedom movement (or hippies) as a means for the larger process of reconciliation outlined by Brown and York. Also, Buteyn's concept of ecumenicity was not so much church unity for the sake of church renewal, but rather church "cooperation" for "service" to the community. Robert McKenzie, pastor at St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley, an SCCM sponsor from the beginning, shared Buteyn's perspective on the street ministry. After the Free Church had been in existence for several months, McKenzie assessed that "the ministry was providing avenues for communication between generations---indeed...This might very well prove to be its most important function."<sup>51</sup>

However, in its actual ministry on the street during the first six months of its existence, the Free Church neither represented one stream or the other very clearly. In fact, rather than being two streams, it was more like one river, though its waters were different shades of



blue and its bed was not well defined. At the end of 1967 there was an internal alliance that was forged by York and the sponsors in order to counter the outside opposition to its work with the hippies. Nobody foresaw what the ministry would become but they did understand that it would be experimental. Therefore, at this early stage of the ministry, some of the conflicts represented by these two theoretical streams were tolerated in practice for the sake of the experiment.

By October, however, the differences in conception and ideology had sufficiently emerged to be discussed. York in his first major "director's report" tried to air some of these conflicts and offer a resolution of them by articulating a new "stance and direction" for SCCM. The major points of conflict revolved around the extent to which the Free Church would advocate the rights and values of the hippies and which concept of reconciliation it operated under, York's and Brown's vs. Buteyn's. York was straight forward:

The SCCM has not sufficiently recognized the hippie movement for what it is---a social revolution among our youth. In many instances it is formulating positive alternatives to established values and ideologies. To put it more plainly, there are conflicting ideologies here, real differences of position. There is also misunderstanding and poor communication. But when these are removed, one is still faced with a conflict, a choice, a decision to be made.

Reconciliation is not arrived at merely by clearing up communication channels. Often this will just make the conflict more plain.<sup>52</sup>

York went on to call the street ministry a "support" for the hippies, and define reconciliation in terms different from those of communication and harmony.



Social reconciliation is, in part, seeing to it that the minority's rights are protected, so that creative conflict can take place.

We should see our ministry as supportive of those elements of the social revolution which are inherently Christian or in keeping with Christian values (being careful not to confuse Christian values with middle-class values) and as a ministry to the casualties of that social revolution.<sup>53</sup>

The Free Church's "Christian ministry," as York defined it in October, was a delicate theoretical convergence of the sponsors' (actually Buteyn's) orientation and his and Brown's theories of underground and grass roots ecumenicity. In a carefully worded conclusion to his report, York provided the theoretical cohesion needed for the building conflicts within the organization.

It is much more helpful to look at the SCCM in terms of its scope, stance, direction, manner of response, style of life.

1. The SCCM is a ministry to the total needs of persons in the South Campus area, especially to the transient youth culture which has gathered there. Because of the nature of that community, it is imperative that the ministry maintain a large measure of autonomy from local religious, humanitarian, municipal and welfare institutions. It is further necessary that the concept of the "confessional seal" be extended to almost every relationship within this ministry, and held inviolable.

2. The SCCM is a ministry of Christian Presence on the street and within the hippie community. We have to be present before we can see our task clearly. In one sense, presence precedes witness; in another it is witness. To be present in the name of Christ spells death to the status quo: in society and in the Church. We will not tire of pleading and acting for the restoration of normal manhood as we see it in Christ Jesus. This means being involved in the fierce fight against all that dehumanizes, ready to act against demonic powers, ready to identify with the outcast, to join and encourage the ridicule of modern idols and new myths.





3. Another way of describing our stance is to say that the SCCM is a ministry of Availability: (1) physical availability: just being on the street; (2) psychic availability: being there because we want to be; (3) theological availability: allowing Christ to be made available through us, recognizing the Incarnation to be the Good News of God made available.

4. It is a ministry of Servanthood, which asks nothing in return. But it is an open ministry, willing to learn and grow from the relationship with those whom we serve.

5. It is a ministry which works through the community's own modes and social patterns, and does not attempt to impose upon its patterns or programs from without. Moreover, it seeks to serve as a catalyst to the development of the community's own latent and natural healing processes.

6. It is an ecumenical ministry, which affirms as already existent the reality of an ecumenical Church, the working of the Spirit of God, not in some other time or place, but where we actually are---both within the supporting Board of this ministry, and on the street.<sup>54</sup>

Though the peace and freedom movement is not explicitly mentioned in this report, the report's openness to such an option is significant: "being ready to act against demonic powers, ready to identify with the outcase, to join and encourage the ridicule of modern idols and new myths."

## VII

In order to better understand the Free Church in December, which York called "the pastoral arm of the Movement to other parts of the underground church," we need to examine the "foot washing" side of the Free Church---i.e. "what it was all about." The day-to-day operations of the Free Church were no less dramatic than the public events in which its leaders participated. The service component was always seen as the heart (if not the soul) of the Free Church. An early critic of the Free



Church, a member of the First Presbyterian Church, had to go to the Assumption Festival to see for herself this "hippie observance of a Holy Day."

I was very glad I went...There were three parts of the service that I felt were especially meaningful in an effort to say, "this is Christ's way": the foot washing, the prayer, and the free distribution of food. To me the foot washing was a symbolic demonstration of Jesus, the servant; and the free distribution of food symbolic of Jesus, our sustenance. During the prayer there was a reverent quiet. I noticed one young couple who obviously (from their facial expressions) were thinking through every word. It seemed to have real meaning for them, as it did for me. 55

The free food distribution was less than successful, for they ran out feeding the multitudes. Food shortages were to mark the first few months of the Free Church. York and his family were set up in an abandoned house that was renovated for his ministry. It was just off the Avenue and backed up to the church parking lot where the Festival was held. In many ways the house became the ministry, and York's family the minister. Joy York gives an account of those busy days in the summer when two or three hundred people would pass through their home in a single day.

...so often it took me three hours to get from the front of the house to the back of the house where one of my own children wanted some lunch. Then there was no food in the refrigerator...It was all gone again after shopping in the morning for \$40 worth of food... it was just a physical problem of there being too many people in the way to get from one part of the house to another.

...I would be coming down the stairs from where we sorta lived to get breakfast for the kids and there would be so many bodies stretched over sleeping that I couldn't get to the kitchen. And when I got to the kitchen to open the refrigerator door, I was standing like this [demonstrates straddling people] to get to the door...I remember one particular morning when there was this eleven year old kid, sorta sitting



there watching me get food for my children and looking really forlorn. He had come in the night before. He had runaway from home and he had a bad acid trip. And he watched for a little while and I asked him if he would like some breakfast. I didn't want to push him in any way. He said no and just sat there watching me talk to the kids and eat breakfast, taking it all in and not saying anything. These kinds of things weighed heavily on me in terms of what could I do.

...Then the police would be knocking on the door looking for runaways...The phone was constantly ringing. There were always people to feed, people that needed to do laundry, take a bath, use the bathroom, use the telephone. They just needed to use the house.<sup>56</sup>

The importance of the York's house and family to their early service ministry was borne out by one of the young hippie girls who became part of the "volunteer staff" to deal with the day to day operations. In an interview with York in 1973 she recalled when the Yorks moved away from the house and the difference that made.

...[the house] really missed you and Joy and the kids though...it was that family what [sic] the people really needed. I can remember feeling that too. It was a family and people coming through and sitting around drinking coffee and having the fire going, like wow its been a long time since I felt a home...<sup>57</sup>

Given the unpredicted demands of the ministry, it was not long before York enlisted the help of his friend Glee Bishop. She documented those first months like this:

I first began assisting Richard on July 11, at his request...As I [had] been a social worker, [had] worked in many church situations and [had] personal friendships with many hippies, he asked me to assist him. It all began with R. York walking up and down Telegraph Ave. to meet the youth who congregated there; with [me] sitting in Fr. York's office researching resources and setting up files. We realized at the onset that some of the problems Fr. York would encounter on the Ave. [needed] assistance beyond clerical blessing and he needed the resources and referral information at his fingertips immediately.

Our first service, based upon apparent and urgent



need, was an emergency housing service for the constant influx of youth with no legal place to sleep. We arranged one or two night housing in the homes, primarily of church families. Simultaneously began the emergencies: drug overdoses, attempted suicides, family crises, run-aways...

The youth whom we had housed and rescued began dropping back to Fr. York's home and a community began to develop. The more mature and reliable soon learned how to run the housing service. They helped answer the door and phone and assisted in the crisis situations. Thus informally began the switchboard.<sup>58</sup> [Italics mine]

The switchboard eventually became Glee Bishop's primary responsibility. Like most Free Church activities it was more than its outward appearance. After describing two functions of the switchboard, "to plug in people to each other" and "help people to plug into themselves," she describes a third:

Most important, the switchboard helps people see that they can also plug into God---mostly the staff does this through the actions of their own lives...

The switchboard is the service arm of the worshipping community of the Free Church. It is the responsibility of the community to share God's love in the world. It bursts from the love bubble of God.<sup>59</sup>

There were many "bursts from the love bubble" that summer.

Crisis situations were too numerous to document. York seeking at the time to convey the nature of his ministry, devised the following litany:

October 1967

#### PEOPLE I KNOW

Statistical conclusions, monthly reports, program evaluations---these cannot communicate the meaning and nature of a Christian Ministry. Only persons and particulars can do that. The South Campus Community Ministry (Free Church) is a ministry of Christian Proclamation and Presence on the street and in the hippie community. It is a ministry which grows out of personal relationships, out of friendships, out of knowing each other. Here are some of the persons I know whose lives have been affected by the ministry. Here's what the Free Church is all about!





I know a young man who has taken one hundred cough drops and is standing on the street convulsing and foaming at the mouth from the overdose.

I know a sixteen year old heroin addict who can't get medical attention for severe gonorrhoea because it is the weekend. Clinics are closed and he is a minor.

I know a girl who is pregnant, unmarried, needs surgery, hasn't eaten in two days and has no place to sleep. She feels she will have to deal in drugs to pay for her baby, because no one will hire a hippie.

I know a young husband who is threatening the life of a drug dealer who owes him the \$300 necessary to get his wife into the maternity ward. She is parked around the corner in the car---in labor.

I know a boy who is being beaten on the street by the kicking boots of twelve motorcycle riders, because he tried to protect a girl from an attacker.

I know a boy who took an overdose of methedrine before he reported to the induction center, and is now in the State Hospital in Napa.

I know a young man who tried to slash his wrists, and whose parents don't want him.

I know a little boy who went to the hospital with pneumonia, because his mother is running from the law, and they sleep in a car.

I know a run-away who can't get housing or medical attention without parental consent and who feels and acts like a criminal fugitive because the police are looking for her.

I know a boy who wants discrete medical attention for a stab wound.

I know a boy who is vomiting in my livingroom from a poison someone sold him, saying it was LSD.

I know an upper-middle-class mother who is nearly hysterical because her 18 year old daughter has run away, smokes pot, and is living with a hippie guy.

I know a boy who is hiding because there is a warrant out for his arrest for "disturbing the peace" at the hospital while in the emergency room being treated for attempted suicide by overdose.

I know a 17 year old girl, picked up by the police because she looked like a run-away, who is crying hysterically because the officer at the station has just finished a screaming and violent verbal attack on her morality. She was heading home from a babysitting job a 8 o'clock in the morning.



I know a young soldier who wants to become a conscientious objector.

I know a girl who has just been beaten, has both eyes blackened, but is too high on methedrine to make much sense telling you about it. She just wants a place to rest.

I know eleven hippies who went over a cliff in their car, are in the hospital in Colorado, have no money, and have called us for help.

I know eighty kids a night who come to us with no place to sleep except in public parks where they are in danger of arrest.

These are the people we know. This is the ministry and meaning of the South Campus Community Ministry.<sup>60</sup>

York's "People I Know" litany was representative of the nature of the "clientele" SCCM served. These same youths provided the core group or "family" which began to see itself as a "free church" and which York began to see as his emerging congregation. Though no hard data exists on the Free Church clientele, the partial data indicates that a cross section of American youth were represented in 1967.<sup>61</sup> The largest portion was from middle income to affluent backgrounds. However, a significant number of youths came from lower-middle and lower income families. On the whole, the youths were white; many were from broken homes. Most were alienated from their families, in some trouble with the law and very young---often under 18 years of age.

In one of his periodic "Director's Reports" to the sponsors of the Free Church at the end of October of that first year, York sums up the program with statistics of "Young People Served":<sup>62</sup>

From the middle of July to the middle of Sept., we estimate that about 1400-1500 young people went through the house per week. This is figuring about 200 per day...



Housing Service:	80 per night
Drug overdoses:	10 total
Bad drug trips:	10 per week
Hospital emergencies:	10 per week
Run-away work:	15 per week (plus many others which we did not have time to work with)
Draft counseling:	several per week
General counseling:	constant work going on
legal and arrests:	3-5 per week
beatings:	3 or 4 total

With these kinds of statistics the Free Church could not avoid the limelight and the attention of established institutions. For example, the conservative Berkeley Daily Gazette was always ready to feed sensational news from police reports to worried parents and the community. "Her Refuge at Hippy Church Ends," read an October 2 headline in the Gazette.

...A 17 year-old Oakland girl found wandering around the Telegraph Ave.-Haste St. area early Sunday morning, has been taken to Juvenile Hall by Berkeley police on the basis she is in danger of leading an immoral life.

The girl has been spending her weekends doing volunteer work for the hippy "free church"...

Her purse, left at the church was brought to the Hall of Justice by the "high priest" of the church, officers found a bottle of pills in the purse, one or more of which are allegedly illegal.

The girl said she works---and sleeps---at the church with the permission of her mother and the permission of the church priest, Dick York.

She said she has not been home for several days, that she is an 11th grade high school drop out. She just turned 17. Her mother is a domestic she said and is away from home most of the time.

Based on the apparent lack of parental control, officers took her into custody, then transported her to Juvenile Hall.<sup>63</sup>

Stories like this prompted the need for much explanation by York to the sponsors of the Free Church. A two page single spaced "Director's Report on the Case of Miss Robin Delucca" countered this particular Gazette story from the "high priests'" perspective. In the



Report York explains the whole story step-by-step. He recounted the time Robin Delucca came to the Free Church, and a permission slip from her mother was obtained for her to work at the Free Church. He recounted the fact that she was baby sitting the night before she was arrested, sleeping at the York's home after baby sitting to avoid a curfew violation. He recounted the fact that she was picked up by the police on her way to catch a bus home in the morning. Other portions of the Report illustrate York's perspective more.

...At the station...A matron searched her, asked her to undress, and searched her again. She was placed in the detention room, and left alone for about 45 minutes. Robbie was crying at this point. Finally officer #22 came by and Robbie asked him if she could make a telephone call. He gave her permission to do so, and she called me. She was crying and asked me to bring her purse and permission slip to the station...

...I arrived at the Berkeley Station with Robbie's purse and permission slip, only to find that they had already taken her to Juvenile Hall. The officers at the desk took the purse...and the purse was searched... Robbie has prescriptions for all pills which were in her purse.<sup>64</sup>

After being given a temporary release by the Juvenile Hall, Robbie and her mother visited York at his home.

...we three went down to the station to get the purse... Finally officer Coyne, #25, took us into a small conference room (Greg Mack was also along). He said her purse would be returned, but the pills were being held for analysis. He then launched into one of the most brutal and uncontrolled verbal attacks on Robbie which I have ever witnessed. Very little, if any, of it had to do with points of law---rather it was a "sermon" on immorality, on Robbie's immaturity, etc. By this time Robbie was in tears again...<sup>65</sup>

Two days later at Juvenile Hall York was able to read the police account of the incident, written by officer Coyne. York made these comments:

It had many inaccuracies, including two paragraphs dealing with the Free Church, calling it an "unsavory place" for any youth. The fact that she was associated





with the Free Church seemed to be used as evidence that she was in danger of leading an immoral life.

In conclusion, Robbie's case appears to be dismissed. The testimony of her mother showed that she was under proper parental supervision, that by staying at our house that night she in fact acted wisely, that it was past sunrise when she was picked up (curfew 10 p.m. til sunrise) that no charges are being made against her or her mother and that she is not being placed on any kind of probation.

The article in the Gazette, "Her Refuge at Hippy Church Ends," is a gross misrepresentation of facts, based no doubt [on] police reports.<sup>66</sup>

It was this kind of interaction with the police that made "Relations with the Berkeley Police Department" a major section of all future Director's Reports. In his end of October Report York concluded:

We consider police relations with the youth of the South Campus Community to be one of the primary problems. Unnecessary harrassment, and unwarranted pick ups and apartment searches are frequent and compromise many of our legal cases.<sup>67</sup>

### VIII

Relations of another sort, but rooted in the same problems with established institutions such as the police, were to be a bigger problem for the Free Church. As the Free Church became more and more a champion of the rights of street people and less and less a mere Christian presence, the backers of the Free Church became uneasy. As the politics of the Free Church became clearer, questions concerning financial backing were immediately raised. Following a "board meeting" with the sponsors, just before the Assumption Festival, York made the following observation in his journal.

[They] felt "Free Church" was a stab at the Established Churches, who were giving \$...Greg suggested that hippies don't feel free in established churches. If they made us change name now, I would quit. It



would kill everything. Things are lining up--- support and control as always are the two sides. 68

Then August 14, two days after the Festival, York wrote after another board meeting:

They are really panicked---so far behind us. They never have established goals etc...Will recommend the Board set up goals committee, Fund raising committee, and that I submit interim program until goals and money can be raised to support full recommendations...

Also, their discussion of Assumption thing was so strange. Their middle-classness [was] hard, and doesn't let them see what really happened.

The two words which were frequently used tonight: rehabilitation and reconciliation, showing real colors. The first word never used before. The second to be only a secondary goal.<sup>69</sup>

Board member Greg Mack, who referred to himself as the "token hippie," also felt the board was "slowing up" York's work. At the end of August he made these comments:

In the beginning they said they would be only support. I really became suspicious because they always had unanimous votes---nobody can have unanimous votes and be constructive...Dick is director of the committee. The committee doesn't respect what I say to them about what they are doing. I can't be really explicit; I cannot make any direct allusions to their sluggishness.<sup>70</sup>

Buteyn, in his early paper which outlined his ingredients for the South Campus Community Ministry, addressed the issue of the role of the "representative governing committee"---i.e. the board:

...whose role shall be less governmental than suggestive, and...shall seek to add to the understanding of the leadership, insights that might otherwise be missed from their always limited vantage point.<sup>71</sup>

The internal organizational conflict resulted from both structural contradictions and the conflicting streams of thought. With greater publicity about the Free Church's controversial work on the Avenue, opposition from the local sponsoring churches began to develop. In order to counter this "outside" opposition, the inner conflicts had to be resolved. York,



as mentioned above, was at least partially successful on the ideological level, but just as significant were the structural problems. These problems centered on such issues as membership, power and authority in the organization. To some extent, they were problems that only arose due to the evolution of the ministry beyond just a social service ministry to the developing congregation, the hippie church. The "family" that actually did the day-to-day "serving" wanted a voice in their ministry.

Officially, the only guidelines on the question of who controlled the South Campus Community Ministry was the by-laws drawn up prior to York's hiring, and the above quoted comment by Buteyn on how (or the spirit in which) the governing authority should rule. The by-laws were not of great service in this controversy. The membership criteria in the by-laws, besides being defined only by money, made no allowance for the emerging street congregation. Article III of the by-laws described two types of members:

1. Corporate member: a pastor, or representative of a church making a regular and current contribution to the budget; an owner or member of a South Campus firm making a regular and current contribution to the budget.
2. Individual member: any person who pays an annual and current membership fee.<sup>72</sup>

Though the ruling board was restrained by Buteyn's notion of being "less governmental than suggestive," it was clear that its suggestive power was great enough to intimidate Greg Mack into saying that the board "didn't respect what he had to say." Greg Mack and other volunteers felt that the board was, at best, paternalistic, and paternalism was at odds with the community gathering at the bottom tier of the organization. But the board members had to acknowledge the existence of this emerging con-



gregation, even if they didn't approve of it or agree with its ideas. These unforeseen developments of a "hippie worshipping church," and the work load carried by the volunteers, though the by-laws still remained, revealed that SCCM was an organization structurally divided into two parts. York expressed his predilections in the direction of an emerging congregation and grass roots church, when he skillfully maneuvered, at the end of 1967, to hold the two parts together by consolidating the bottom tier of the ministry. However, this consolidation was ambiguous, for it allowed him to both challenge the paternalism of the board and create a power base for himself without eliminating the hierarchical board. The new power York gained for himself created a new structural problem which became clearer as the Free Church evolved: the power and paternalism of the Free Church paid staff (such as York) over against the ever-changing "clientele" of the Free Church.

As I will document later, the splits between the leadership (the staff) and the board were replaced with a different sort of organizational dilemma. This dilemma would be more concerned with how the board increasingly looked to the staff for direction and became isolated from the day-to-day activities of the staff. The Free Church board would eventually function as a support group for Richard York's ministry. This outcome was partially rooted in these early sensibilities of Buteyn that were made formal in the by-laws. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the organizational model of a "support" board was conditioned by Buteyn's own Presbyterian practice.<sup>73</sup> But in the summer of 1967 the reality of this model was not so evident. The early difficulties of the Free Church staff and Buteyn's own problems with his congregation would





provide a test for this model of ministry. The outcome was in the balance for several months and into the first part of the next year.

It was not just the internal "flack" over the Festival that had to be dealt with. Buteyn was coming under fire from his congregation, particularly his trustees. All the criticism of the Free Church, brought to a head with the Festival, eventually merged into one issue which threatened the future of the ministry itself. The First Presbyterian Church had to make a decision about the future use of the renovated house they were allowing the Yorks to live in. Staff and board difficulties within the Free Church had to be shelved in order to unite against a common enemy, local pressure against "their ministry."

Just ten days after the Festival, on August 22, York received a letter from the Business Administrator of the First Presbyterian Church, Reverend Wayne Walker:

Dear Mr. York,

In the absence of Rev. Donald Buteyn and at the insistence of several of our congregation, may I draw the following to your attention.

...I remember distinctly that when you met with the Session the question was asked if this [the renovated house the York's lived in] would be a dormitory or flophouse arrangement, and your answer was that this would definitely not be the case.

May I request you then abide by your agreement...

May I say also that when Mr. Buteyn asked me if you might use the parking lot for your "Happening" he assured me that there would be no damage. I would like to request that the paintings and the clutter be removed at your earliest convenience.

I want to cooperate with you in your activities, but by the same token I fully expect you to cooperate with me in my responsibilities... 74

This restrained letter was only the tip of the iceberg of the First Presbyterian Church's response to the Festival and a growing



concern about the use of the church property (the renovated house) "to aid criminal elements." Buteyn referred to the Festival as "blowing the lid."

When [news of the Festival] hit the press and reports came back, that caused the resignation of our trustees in mass. They all three resigned. Our Session, God bless them, simply replaced the trustees and we went on.<sup>75</sup>

The Festival was only the beginning of the battle. The York family eventually moved out of the house and it was converted solely to provide space for the expanded Free Church programs such as the switchboard and counseling. The "all out war" between supporters of the Free Church and the First Presbyterian Church was to happen over the continued use of the house. The Presbyterian Church was planning to tear it down in six months and replace it with a new building. The Free Church wanted to use it for these six months. The original agreement was to run out January 1. The Division of Evangelism grant had been renewed and an additional \$5,000 from the local Episcopal Diocese assured the Free Church's existence for another year.

The showdown over the house was widely publicized by Episcopal priest Lester Kinsolving, then the San Francisco Chronicle religion editor. Kinsolving, now a nationally syndicated columnist on religion, became a very helpful ally from York's viewpoint. The Session approved the use of the house but the road to this decision was rough. In a Berkeley Barb article entitled "Room at the Inn" York describes the process.

"No room at the inn...it happened 2,000 years ago and it almost happened again," says Reverend Dick York with a smile.

"But we won! We got our Free Church building after all."



...the night before the session was to vote on the Free Church's right to have the Haste Street house, the Trustees called a special meeting, from which they barred all Free Church staff.

Instead they invited Police Chief Beall, FBI member Donald Jones, Deputy District Attorney David Dutton and Lt. Johnson, Chief of the Juvenile Bureau. These guests were at liberty to show evidence against Free Church activities. But, Reverend York observed, the material he had sent to the meeting was hastily banned.

The Trustees voted that night to recommend that the Session not allow the Free Church to have the building.

But at the Tuesday night session meeting, the Presbyterian Church voted to give Dick York the house...

Explaining the victory, he said, "we had the poison pen of Lester Kinsolving, priest and Chronicle reporter, on our side. The opposition used secrecy, we counteracted with full publicity..."<sup>76</sup>

According to the Chronicle article the day after the decision, December 12, the Free Church also had an ally in John S. Martel.

...Martel, a San Francisco lawyer carried the day by saying: "Jesus did not abandon any of His ministry because of fear of tangling with the police. I would hate to face our Lord and say we did not feed the least of these, your brethren."<sup>77</sup>

York had more in mind for his Free Church in 1968 than "feeding his brethren." In the same Barb article he gives us a portent of 1968.

He[York] speaks with sparkling eyes about the "revolution in the church." "Our mission is to turn on the establishment church...[we] will convert the church to real Christianity."

"The real church is in the hippy movement, the street, the ghetto civil rights movement, the peace movement---that's where God is doing his thing."

Are the people of the church going to be servants to the world, or servants to the establishment, he demands.<sup>78</sup>

York, his anti-establishment position further solidified and his hippie-underground church funded for another year, was certain he was out doing his thing with God.



NOTES

Correction: The documents are no longer held at the CRRE Historical Archives, but as of 1995 are in the Graduate Theological Union Archives, Berkeley, CA.

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fornia.

August 1967.

<sup>2</sup>"Parish Register of the Berkeley Free Church," Free Church Records, Community for Religious Research and Education (CRRE) Historical Archives, Berkeley, California. p. 122.

<sup>3</sup>Anonymous Poem, "twenty six august sixty seven the assumption of the virgin happening" [sic] 8 September 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>4</sup>"Free Church Rocks," Berkeley Barb.

<sup>5</sup>Anonymous Poem, "twenty six august."

<sup>6</sup>"Richard York's Journal for the South Campus Community Ministry, June 18 - August 26, 1967," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>7</sup>"Interview with Free Church Volunteer by Richard York Regarding Haste Street House 1967," Berkeley, California, September 1973, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>8</sup>John Pairman Brown, "Christianity and Tribal Religion, An Examination of the Free Church and its Celebration of the Feast of the Assumption," CRRE Historical Archives, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup>Richard York, "Homily on St. Francis of Assisi, 4 October 1967," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>10</sup>Richard W. Slater to Richard York, 26 July 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>11</sup>Richard York, interview, Berkeley, California, 22 September 1976. Richard York's biography prior to attending seminary is included in this interview.

<sup>12</sup>Joy Bol, interview, Sebastapol, California, 20 November 1975.

<sup>13</sup>Richard York, "Temple of Mars," Liberation An Independent Monthly XI, 11. (February 1967) p. 19. "Rifles in the Sanctuary of God," WIN, Peace and Freedom Thru Nonviolent Action III, 5 (March 10, 1967) p. 3.

<sup>14</sup>"An Incident in Grace Cathedral," San Francisco Chronicle, 23 February 1967.

<sup>15</sup>"Killers in the Cathedral," Berkeley Barb, 23 February 1967, p. 3.





<sup>16</sup>Canon Dr. Enrico S. Molnar to Richard York, 5 June 1967; W.B. Parson Jr. to Richard York, 29 March 1967; The Rev. W.B. Murdock to Richard York, 28 March 1967; Chester Mott to Julian Bartlett, 27 February 1967; Lane W. Barton Jr. to Richard York, 28 February 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>17</sup>Philip S. Hensel to Editors of WIN re: Richard York et al, 23 March 1967; Frank Beaver to Richard York, 3 April 1967; Gwen Reyes to Richard York, 29 March 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>18</sup>Lane W. Barton, Jr. to The Right Reverend C. Kilmer Myers and The Very Reverend Julian Bartlett, Good Friday, 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>19</sup>Julian Bartlett to Reverend John P. Brown, 11 May 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>20</sup>"Petition to the Right Reverend C. Kilmer Myers, Bishop of California, 22 February 1967," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>21</sup>Sherman Johnson to John Pairman Brown, 24 February 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>22</sup>Richard York to John Pairman Brown, 3 April 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>"Proposed By-Laws for South Campus Committee," 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>25</sup>Donald P. Buteyn, "A Tentative Sketch of Basic Ingredients for an Ecumenical Ministry by the Churches to the South Campus Community of Berkeley," 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>26</sup>Donald P. Buteyn, interview, Hollywood, California, 30 December 1975.

<sup>27</sup>Robert A. McKenzie, "The 'Free' Church of Berkeley's Hippies," The Christian Century An Ecumenical Weekly LXXXV, 15 (April 10, 1968) pp. 464-66.

<sup>28</sup>John and Emily Brown, "Christmas Letter 1967," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>29</sup>Brown, "Christianity and Tribal Religion," p. 6.

<sup>30</sup>York, "Journal."

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Some of the basic resources for the topic of religion and the counter culture include: Theodore Roszak, The Making of a Counter Culture, Reflections



on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition, (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1969); John Charles Cooper, The New Mentality, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969); Myron Bloy, Jr., ed., Search for the Sacred The New Spiritual Quest, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1972); Robert A. Evans, Belief and the Counter Culture, A Guide to Constructive Confrontation, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971).

<sup>34</sup> Richard York, interview, Berkeley, California, 8 December 1975. The glorification of Mack's motorcycle escapades is put into perspective by Mack's wife, Charlene Meredith. Mack, according to Meredith, was only on the fringes of the "biker" subculture. Charlene Meredith, interview, Berkeley, California, 29 February 1976.

<sup>35</sup> York, "Journal."

<sup>36</sup> Richard York, "COCU: Last Stand or Church," The Witness 52, No. 13 (March 30, 1967) pp. 10-12.

<sup>37</sup> Documentation on the ecumenical movement in the 1960's is legion. However, a historical overview of the various manifestations of ecumenicity has yet to be written. Perhaps the most crucial happening to signal the importance of ecumenicity was the work of John XXIII and Vatican II. There was also: local parishes merging; seminaries "Clustering," such as GTU or Boston Theological Institute; ecumenical theology and the work of the National and World Council of Churches.

<sup>38</sup> John Pairman Brown, "Toward a United Peace and Freedom Church," The Underground Church by Malcolm Boyd, ed., (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968) pp. 7-30.

<sup>39</sup> Boyd, The Underground Church, pp. 3, 6.

<sup>40</sup> York, "Journal."

<sup>41</sup> Richard York to C. Kilmer Myers, December 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>42</sup> Brown, "Peace and Freedom Church."

<sup>43</sup> John Pairman Brown, "A Call to Covenant," CRRE Historical Archives, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> York, "COCU: Last Stand." p. 12.



50 Ibid.

51 Robert A. McKenzie, "The 'Free' Church of Berkeley's Hippies," The Christian Century. 85, No. 15 (April 10, 1968) p. 465.

52 Richard York, "The South Campus Community Ministry, An Analysis of its Stance and Direction," p. 3.

53 Ibid., p. 4.

54 Ibid., p. 7.

55 Minda S. Graff to Donald Buteyn, 17 August 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

56 Bol, interview.

57 York and volunteer, interview.

58 "Glee Bishop's Report," 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

59 Glee Bishop, "History of Switchboard and Service Center," 1967, CRRE Historical Records.

60 Richard York, "People I Know," October 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

61 First Presbyterian Church, Berkeley, California, "Study of the Immediate South Campus Community," Berkeley, California, 1966, CRRE Historical Archives. Isabel G. Weissman, "Memorandum; Mental Health Services and the Hippie Community," 12 December 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

62 Richard York, "South Campus Community Ministry, Director's Report," 31 October 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

63 "Her Refuge at Hippy Church Ends," Berkeley Daily Gazette, 2 October 1967.

64 Richard York, "Director's Report on the Case of Miss Robin DeLucca," 1 October 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 York, "Director's Report," 31 October 1967.

68 York, "Journal."

69 Ibid.

70 "Meeting to Explore Needs of Telegraph Avenue Community," 31 August 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.



71 Buteyn, "Tentative Sketch."

72 "Proposed By-Laws." p. 1.

73 It is very common in mainline Protestant Churches for the congregation's "ruling committees" to see their function as little more than support for the "pastor's ministry." See the following two sources for documentation on this fact and its consequences: Charles Y. Glock, Benjamin B. Ringer, Earl R. Babbie, To Comfort and to Challenge, A Dilemma of the Contemporary Church, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967) and Pierre Berton, The Comfortable Pew, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lipponcott, 1965).

74 Reverend Wayne Walker to Richard York, 22 August 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

75 Buteyn, interview.

76 "Room at the Inn," Berkeley Barb, 8-14 December 1967.

77 "Hippies can keep Their Church," San Francisco Chronicle, 6 December 1967.

78 "Room at the Inn," Berkeley Barb.





## Chapter III

### THE UNDERGROUND CHURCH

1968

#### I

"Good morning fellow public servants: 1) Why did you, Mayor Johnson, Chief Beall and 15 officers enter my church on Saturday night without warrant and search it? 2) Why was my church, a first aid station, tear gassed repeatedly Friday and Saturday? 3) Why was Father John Brown of our staff brutally beaten on our property while helping the injured into our door, in spite of identifying himself? 4) Why was our Church first aid station at Cody's gassed out? 5) Why were two other clergy who were assisting with corporal acts of mercy on the streets beaten? 6) Why all this when Chief Beall invited us to explain ahead of time what arrangements for first aid Free Church was making so the city could cooperate"?<sup>1</sup> York dramatically began his address before a special meeting of the Berkeley City Council with these questions. After demanding an investigation of these police actions and giving his interpretation of the events of the past few days he concluded with a series of "battle cries": "Give Tely to the kids. Lift the uncalled for curfew. Resignation of Chief Beall. The Liberated Zone is at hand. The Radical Jesus in Winning."<sup>2</sup>

The events York was referring to were the street demonstrations and police riots staged June 28 through July 2 in solidarity with the French student and worker strikes in Paris the month of May. The most volatile Berkeley event since the Free Speech demonstrations in 1964,



the French Solidarity protests became known as the "first battle for Berkeley." Some also called it a "struggle for ghetto self rule."<sup>3</sup> It was different only in degree from other "territorial imperatives," "liberated zones" and "liberated buildings" of the late 1960's---whether at Harvard, Columbia, Chicago, San Francisco State or Viet Nam. In the case of the first battle for Berkeley, all of Telegraph Avenue adjacent to the University of California was demanded. The sub-society of street people and political radicals, mostly white and young, wanted more than a free speech plaza; they wanted to control their home. The Avenue had become just that for many, it was literally home for hundred of individuals. The symbolic importance of Telegraph Avenue as a new home was also felt by thousands of youth in the Bay Area. But these were only some of the many interpretations of the events of the summer of 1968. Obviously the Free Church and York had their own special interpretation of these events. We must discuss at some length the background leading up to these events to understand what York meant when he stated that the liberated zone was at hand and the radical Jesus was winning.

## II

The year 1968 had its ups and downs for the new left and particularly for the "peace wing" with which the Free Church most visibly allied itself. During the year there were indications of stronger reprisals against draft resisters with the indictments of Dr. Spock and others; but there were also signs of a growing movement of people against the war. York sought to ally the Free Church with the Episcopal Peace Fellowship (EPF). This alliance became well publicized as York received



and New Testament was for a period of two years, beginning July 1, 1965. I am sorry to tell you that the Trustees, at their meeting on February 23 voted not to renew your contract.

The reason for this action is that the plan of having you teach Christian Ethics in this seminary has not worked out successfully. The failure of students to enroll in your courses is an indication of this.<sup>21</sup>

Brown made some unsuccessful behind-the-scenes attempts to negotiate with Johnson. On March 7, in a San Francisco Chronicle article by Lester Kinsolving, Brown's "dismissal" became public. The same day, under York's leadership, the Inter-Seminary-League for Academic Freedom was formed to fight for Brown's reinstatement. The battle culminated in one year's severance pay for Brown. It is interesting to note that the Yorks and the Bishops were never disciplined by the Cathedral or Seminary authorities.

The associations and awarenesses that were solidified in the course of the three month struggle were important for the eventual work of the Free Church and York's ministry. From the very beginning of the League, York enlisted the help of his friend at one of the affiliated seminaries of the Graduate Theological Union, Anthony O. Nugent. Nugent was a seminarian at San Francisco Theological Seminary and also active in the Anti-War movement. This was the year that clergy began to be very critical of the war in Viet Nam. This criticism reached its symbolic apex in October when the Berrigans poured blood on draft records in Baltimore, Maryland. Nugent and York met while doing Alinsky-style organizing together in West Oakland. York, Nugent, Darrow, Bishop and others were, in effect, getting course credit for their League work. They were all taking a course on Alinsky-style community organization by Bill Grace. Grace was the local Presbyterian Synod's executive responsible for urban min-



istries. He understood the importance of keeping people like Brown on the Seminary faculty, and he therefore encouraged the work of the League as a class project. Grace eventually played a crucial role in the political direction of the Free Church. Along with the Bishops, Nugent and others, York waged an intense fight on behalf of Brown.

An insight into York's politics and theology is given in a letter he wrote to Brown during the struggle for Brown's reinstatement. York explained where he was coming from and how the events of the last few years had changed him.

...---a little of my philosophy of revolution and how I came to adopt it. As you know, I came to CDSF hot on the priesthood and hot on "learning" the Church and its ways. I also came on some kind of Spirit-trip with something deep inside pushing, plowing me, stirring me to something in the future which I could not make out clearly. I still feel like I'm on a big trip---I've pretty much stopped worrying about where it is taking me. That after all, is not in my hands anyhow---is it?

PII [Peralta Improvement League, York's work in West Oakland] came along and I found, upon returning to CDSF, that much more had changed. I was much less a part of that place---but much more myself. Then came other "trips"---the latest of these being the EPF [Episcopal Peace Fellowship], peace movement, Grace Cathedral sit-in, etc.---again a feeling of more separation from CDSF, and more unity within myself.

Now comes your situation. This has really done it. I have now been able to say that I will take dismissal from the school if necessary. I'm free to say that and mean it. But still there is the priesthood thing, the deep-down pushing, the knowing. (This is all hard to explain.)

From these things I draw this: Whenever we stand on the brink, on the outer edge of life, on the front line of newness and creation, we feel separation from the old, from the secure and the established---yet at the same time we feel more truly ourselves. I feel doubt, insecurity, loneliness, like I don't really belong out here---and yet its the only place I can be free, the only place I can know what "God" means.<sup>22</sup>

York's posture toward the society he was born into and could have gained success in was now well developed. He carried this anti-





good media exposure for the peace events with EPF. The Free Church began to see itself as part of a large national movement within the churches. On January 13, for example, eight national church journals attacked the U.S. Government's Viet Nam policies. The draft resistance movement, largely church based, was gaining national prominence with the active support of such people as Dick Gregory, Benjamin Spock and Robert McAfee Brown. A Sproul Plaza rally at the University typified the kind of peace actions for which York was getting media coverage. York spoke in solidarity with a draft resister from the San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS). The Daily Californian, the student newspaper, covered the event featuring the article with a photo of York in his Free Church clerical garb.

Dick York, long-robed minister of the Free Church in Berkeley commended clergymen like Gregory [the SFTS student] who refuse induction. "The men who are acting as real churchmen are the ones acting in accord with their Christian principles and doing the work of Jesus..." "I turned in my card and demanded the right to make the moral decision my parishioners out on Telegraph Ave. are making."<sup>4</sup>

The peace movement received an added boost from the "Tet offensive" begun on January 29 by the National Liberation Forces in Viet Nam. The military vulnerability of the U.S. and South Viet Nam was now apparent. And the U.S. justifications for the war were made even more vulnerable by the "dedicated" but inadequate statements of the Secretary of State Dean Rusk, in hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations to discuss the "Tet offensive." It was in this context that the Free Church itself, not just York, began to move into a more explicitly "political" direction, beyond its hippie roots, activities and image.

Besides York, the person becoming more and more responsible for



this direction was Jock Brown. Brown and York remained in constant contact through EPF work, through Brown's avid interest in York's ministry and through York's dependence on the wisdom and stability of Brown's counsel. Therefore, Brown was York's logical choice to deliver the sermon at his Ordination service in March. Throughout the sermon, entitled "God is Doing His Thing," Brown talked about two zones, an occupied zone and a liberated zone.

Palestine was occupied territory. Against an alleged threat of infiltration from the interior by guerrilla bands or foreign regulars, a military usurper had once called in the Western imperialist power. Its professional troops were now quartered on the countryside by a puppet administration, whose inner rivalries revealed its lack of base, and which was regularly bypassed by the foreign commanding general. The native clergy were subject to arbitrary house-arrest and desposition...<sup>5</sup>

Though at this point Brown was not explicit about the obvious contemporary analogy, the current debate at the time over the Viet Nam war was so familiar to those in attendance to make it unnecessary. But Brown did make the analogy more explicit as he continued.

The writing between the lines of the Gospels, as well as the plain words of other historians, shows that the rural North was the breeding-ground of a fanatical patriotic Resistance under Messianic claimants---slandered by a Diem regime as "brigand chiefs..." The majority of the Apostles were named by their daddies after Maccabean freedom fighters... Galilee was the impregnable stronghold of a National Liberation Front, the water that its fish swam in---impregnable because you couldn't ever find the resistance to put your finger on. The Twelve Apostles were born Viet Cong. The liberation movement also had a less stable urban base; if we change the scene a little we may envisage the rebels put down by the Roman police power under Titus as Black Power militants.<sup>6</sup>

For everyone at the service, and most of the nation at the time, "Black Power militants" referred to no other than the Oakland based Black Panther Party. Huey Newton was awaiting trial for the alleged



murder of an Oakland police officer, after a police attack that almost cost him his life. This was the time when repression against the Panthers was beginning to reach systematic proportions.<sup>7</sup> It was in this kind of volatile setting, this occupied zone, that Brown placed his main character, Jesus, the "radical Jesus."

Jesus is a child of the Galilaen Resistance; he rejects its tactics and goals; but he sticks to the death by its cry against injustice. The "Kingdom of God" was its [the Galilaen Resistance] name for the happening it wanted to see. Jesus adopts its name and its proletarian constituency; but he transforms both name and people. "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God." He says that the liberated zone they were hoping for wasn't future but present. Its theirs already simply by virtue of the fact that they were poor, mourning, hungry, persecuted---unable for the time being, to start the military action that their leaders were working towards.<sup>8</sup> [Italics mine]

I quote at length from Brown's sermon for it marked a turning point in how the Free Church was to understand itself---particularly the language it was to use to describe itself and what it saw happening in the world. The ordination service was the symbolic coming together of the politics of Brown and the hippie constituency of York's eight months on the Avenue. The title of Brown's sermon juxtaposed with its political content was an indication of the coming together. But the actual union was still a future thing, for the service itself was so colorful that the potency of Brown's political message was probably lost to many. The media helped to project a one sided view of the event. Pictures of the event that went out over the national wire services stressed the hippie attire and rock bands. Time magazine for example reported:

Instead of the traditional ecclesiastical garb, the moustached young man in their midst [York] wore a psychedelic chausuble festooned with yarn balls and tinkling



bells. In the background, a group called Martha's Laundry blasted out rock sellings of hymn tunes.<sup>9</sup>

How many in the five hundred plus crowd really understood the import of Brown's sermon can only be surmised. The San Francisco Chronicle indicated at least one person heard the political content loud and clear. "As the Rev. Brown compared President Johnson's Administration to the rule of Caesar, an elderly gray haired woman stalked out of the church muttering 'filth'..."<sup>10</sup> Brown was also catching the ear of York. In fact some of his final remarks were personally directed to York. After talking about Jesus' rejection of establishment violence and revolutionary counter-violence in favor of revolutionary nonviolence, Brown talked of York.

What we do this afternoon must be done. Still we can't expect Dick to be more learned or committed than we expect ourselves to be. Why do we ordain him then? Somebody has to preside here over the liberated community of love, it might as well be him as somebody else.<sup>11</sup>

The liberated community of love meant something specific to Brown. In his final charge to York he made clear his interest in the political component of the Free Church. Brown even politicized the early hippie concept, "free," with the new term liberated.

I think we agree that the hippy community isn't a flash in the pan; as people get older they will want to stay with it, perhaps in different forms as it has already absorbed the bohemianism of the forties and the beatniks of the fifties. The first priority is to help viable new patterns of family life emerge...The second priority is for the hippie community to become politicized: to translate its vision into effective organization, to make its rejection of meaninglessness and murder felt on the local and national scene.<sup>12</sup> [Italics mine]

Then in a very personal way, typifying their friendship, Brown concludes with:





Graphic 4  
ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD  
OF RICHARD YORK 1968



Episcopal Bishop G. Richard Millard (right) as he ordained bushy-haired Rev. Richard York (left) at St. Mark's Church in Berkeley yesterday. The or-

dinand wore a flaming, multi-colored robe. The tot watching in center was one of many who roved about the church during the ceremony.

—Examiner Photo

Source:  
San Francisco Examiner March 10, 1968



I am charging you not to neglect the study of those old books which you began in part with me; the time may well come when you find you haven't got any other anchor... Have me in your prayers, as I have you in mine, lest on our risky trip, after we've preached to others, we ourselves should be cast away.<sup>13</sup> [Italics mine]

The "risky trip" for York and Brown had begun with Brown's dismissal and was to continue through many storms and at least one lost anchor.

### III

The content for Brown's sermon was not something created just for the ordination service. He was rapidly concluding a manuscript for a book that brought together his religious convictions and his politics. This was a book that provided the Christian grounding for his political activities. The book was eventually published under the title The Liberated Zone, A Christian Guide to Resistance. The content, language, tone and direction of the book were largely drawn from Brown's anti-war activities prior to his dismissal from CDSP and specifically his trip to Hanoi in September of 1967. But these were just deepenings of this self-described "maverick Yankee Episcopalian," educated at Dartmouth College.<sup>14</sup> Prior to his teaching at CDSP, Brown was a fellow and tutor at General Seminary, an instructor at Hobart College and a professor at the American University in Beirut Lebanon, 1958-1965. He also served as an editor to The Witness, an Episcopal social action magazine which had roots in the turn of the century social gospel movement and the various labor struggles in the 1920's and 30's.

In the summer of 1967, however, Brown and his wife Emily "decided (with many others) one critical way we had to work for peace was draft-resistance."<sup>15</sup> This conviction led to sit-ins at the Oakland



Induction Center, and eventually to being jailed. This active resistance put Brown in the midst of the political underground. He was one of the U.S. peace representatives to a conference in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia. From this meeting with representatives of the NLF and North Viet Nam he was invited to Hanoi. This first hand contact with "the enemy" was a fertile experience which Brown cultivated conceptually in his writing and vocationally in the months ahead. "I went to Hanoi to find the enemy and what I found was the Church," stated Brown to a church group upon his return.<sup>16</sup> Brown spent much of his two and a half weeks in Hanoi visiting Roman Catholics. He concluded that the Roman Catholic Church had become a national church free of colonial influences. But it was the struggle of the Viet Namese people as a whole that provided the most profound theological lesson for Brown. It was the life in the "liberated zones"<sup>17</sup> that was described to him in Bratislava that Brown felt was the key to the whole Viet Nam struggle. At the time of York's ordination the liberated zone concept was fully grown, reaped by Brown not just for political struggle but total Christian resistance.

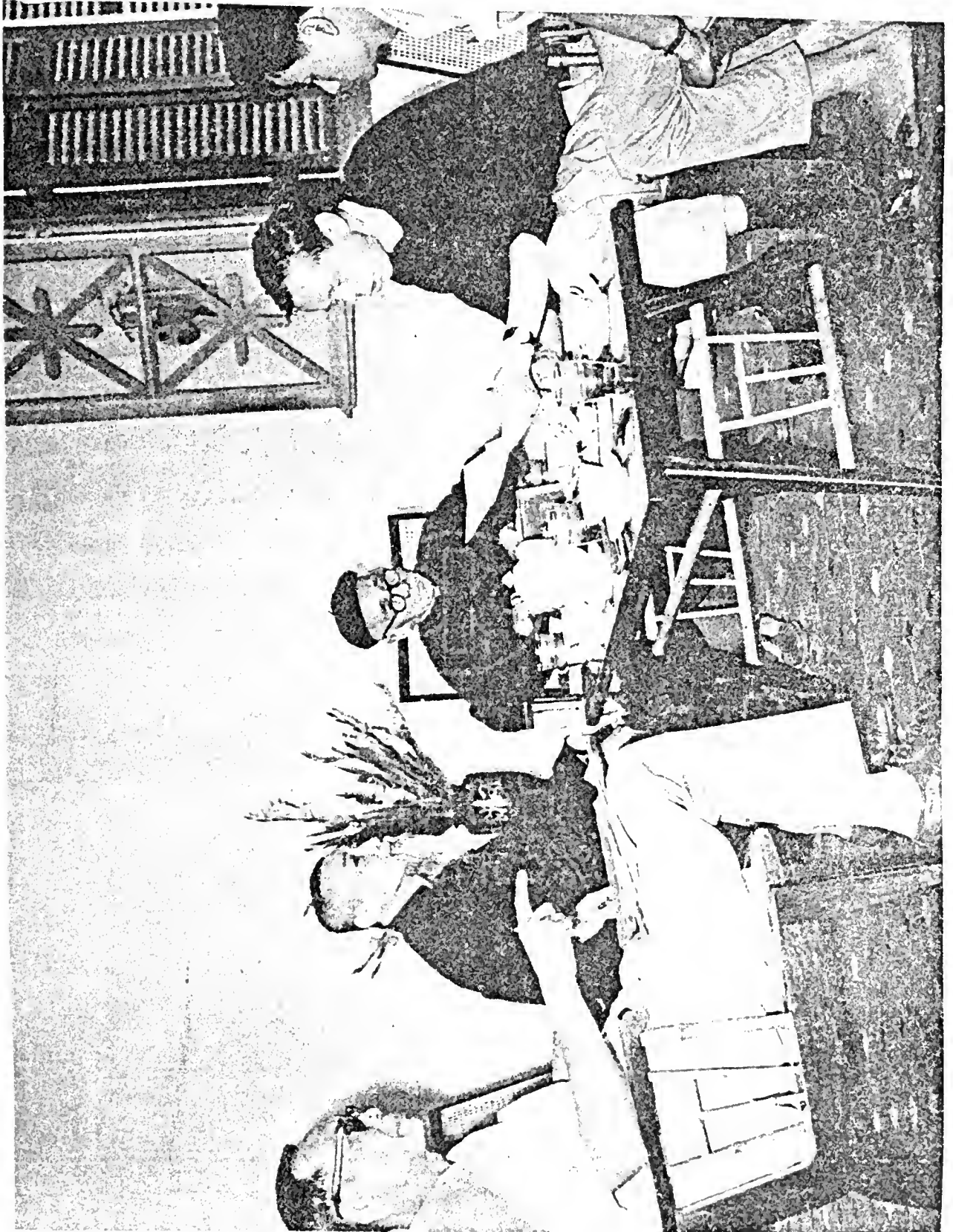
Also it would only be two and a half months from the Ordination that Brown made official his vocational choice, so intertwined with his recent political activities and his writings. In a letter to Bishop Myers May 31, 1968 he wrote:

Just yesterday I sent off to John Knox Press the final MS of The Liberated Zone. I think I am duty bound to try and realize the theoretical scheme which I block out there.<sup>18</sup>

He officially began as a staff member of the Free Church on June 1. His new vocation was what he called a "venture of faith." "I think necessity and conviction have to coincide: nothing else suitable has



Graphic 5  
JOHN PAIRMAN BROWN (reading)  
IN HANOI 1968



Source:  
Berkeley Free Church Calendar 1970





shown up, and I really am committed to the idea."<sup>19</sup>

Brown was no stranger to the Free Church by then. He began teaching "rap groups" on the radical Jesus in February for the whole Free Church community. Also early in May he was a constant representative of the Free Church, with York, in meetings with Mayor Johnson and Police Chief Beall. And, even though The Liberated Zone was not published until the first part of 1969, its influence on the Free Church staff, board and community was already apparent. The book was the Free Church's "bible" for the next two years.

As a guide to Christian resistance, the book built firmly on the notion of revolutionary nonviolence that Brown talked about in his ordination sermon. Revolutionary nonviolence provided a "third way," an alternative "to joining the Viet Cong or Black Panthers."<sup>20</sup> He was clear that this did not mean being outside the struggles of the Viet Cong or the Black Panthers; he wanted revolutionary nonviolence. Choices had to be made. Speaking about the churches, Brown put it this way:

The top-level consultants on church unity have sent out the cry for dialogue where people are at, for a grass-roots church. I hope they won't be offended if I testify that the thing they're asking for is already happening among those of us forced by history to take Jesus' words seriously once again...Bob Dylan reminds us "everybody's shouting which side are you on?" More and more of us from inside and outside all the denominations have had to surface and answer. With fear and trembling, I say that under pressure of the crisis of exploitation, the critical necessity of affirming the servant society, reunion is right now happening in our asphalt church.<sup>21</sup>

It was to his work with the Free Church in the "sweaty market place of reality" that Brown was committed to "melt the denominations from the bottom up."<sup>22</sup> This commitment was predicated on a clear under-



standing of the relationship and meaning of the two zones he talked about.

St. Augustine was wrong in making a contrast between the city of God and the earthly city. Rather the two societies are both features of the only history we'll ever know, they're engaged in guerrilla warfare on the one planet, which is at the same time the earth polluted and deforested by human folly, and the transformed earth of poetic vision.<sup>22a</sup>

No one took Brown more seriously than York. He followed Brown's writings closely, constantly receiving rough drafts of Brown's work. On May 26, less than a week before Brown joined the staff, York delivered a sermon at St. Mark's Cathedral in Seattle; the sermon was entitled "The Liberated Zone." This was one of a dozen or so speaking engagements that York made the first part of 1968. His publicity as the "apostle to the hippies" had put him in demand on the suburban church speaking circuit where "kids from respected families" were confounding their parents and clergy. York brought along more than just his hippie counter cultural talk now. The mode was still hip but the political content was more explicit.

...we all live in both zones. The Man and his Occupied Territory are as strong as ever today: look at riot troops occupying the ghetto. You know what the occupied territory looks like. Like its super-savage, slave trade, napalm jelly, IBM card machine mentality. Like its Hiroshima caught in a sea of flames on the Feast of the Transfiguration. Like its King with his brains blown out. Like its dead gooks and burning villages, its Dow Chemical and American industry controlling the Third World. Like its California growers putting Japanese in concentration camps. That's the Occupied Territory!

But the Occupied Territory is also us, when we bum-trip and exploit our brothers, when we do our ego-trips on people's heads when we push dope or use our chicks.

...[Jesus] said "the Liberated zone is at hand!" Its already here, baby. Blessed are you poor, for your's is the Liberated Zone. Like, you don't have to exploit



to hang on to your plastic possessions, because you don't have any possessions. You're closer to the Liberated Zone than you think.

...that is what the church celebrates when it worships. It celebrates the victory of the Liberated Zone over the Occupied Territory. That's subversive celebration...

The Liberated Zone is within you, all we have to do is start acting like it. Now let's celebrate it---  
 Man, the WAR IS OVER! THE LIBERATED ZONE IS AT HAND!  
 Amen.<sup>23</sup>

It was just this kind of oratory and language translation ability that prompted a Department of Speech Arts student at the University to write a Masters thesis on the Free Church.<sup>24</sup> But as successful as the Free Church was becoming in communications, "The Man and his Occupied Territory" were busy making 1968 into an ambiguous year for the Liberated Zone's victory over the Occupied forces in the "real world." By June the Free Church had a number of minor skirmishes with the Police Department over runaways. The national political scene had taken a more desperate turn with the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy.

The Occupied Territory's forces also struck York's personal life. He experienced the trauma of a divorce. It was just after his ordination that Joy expressed her desire to begin the divorce proceedings. After several weeks of attempted reconciliation the divorce became final.

Board members Fred Cody and Don Buteyn attributed the divorce to the exhausting demands of York's ministry and the difficult living conditions in that Haste Street house. The overcrowded and frantic living conditions certainly were not conducive to a stable relationship. However in a 1975 interview, Joy indicated that the separation was building prior to the frantic summer of 1967, and was inevitable. In



tune with the sexual experimentation of the counter-cultural sixties, Joy and Dick agreed to extra-marital relationships. As it turned out Joy's relationship with Dick's best friend in college, Richard Bol, proved to be more meaningful to her. The divorce was a difficult time for both of them. Joy lived for some time with her parents and eventually married Bol. Otto Smith, the Free Church's Chairman of the Board, explained in a letter to Bishop Myers how York's divorce had slowed down work at the Free Church. However, Smith stated that the Board had "re-affirmed their call" to York at the Free Church.<sup>25</sup>

Fortunately for the Free Church there were liberated forces also at work in 1968. Brown was now on staff. The Bishops still contributed to the daily operation of the switchboard. Two Conscientious Objectors, Mike Baxter and Glenn Clarke got their alternative status at the Free Church and added stability to the volunteer staff. And York's political ally from seminary, Anthony Nugent, accepted a "call" from the Free Church to become co-director with York. Nugent was actively recruited by York and received support and funds from the local Presbyterian Synod to take the job. Nugent decided to forego his own plans for an independent radical pastorate and join forces with York and Brown for a stronger church venture. Nugent, as an Alinsky-trained organizer, also brought more politics to the hippie Free Church. He officially became part of the staff June 15, even though he had been active in Free Church meetings since March. The month of June was busy, new strategies and many meetings. If the radical Jesus wasn't winning, he at least was laying great plans.

A new resolve, a new seriousness and even typed staff minutes,





thanks to Brown, typified the month of June. Also adding to the newness was the move to a new location. The Free Church rented a portion of the Lutheran Church of the Cross. The Haste Street location had been demolished for a parking lot by the First Presbyterian Church. The new location, now on Durant Avenue, was still only a few houses off of Telegraph Avenue and just one block from the main entrance to campus, Sproul Plaza. With excellent quarters in the basement, plus access to the sanctuary for large services, this was the most ideal location in the Free Church's history. It proved to be a strategic location for any activity planned for the street community and the South Campus in general. A new community center was organized under Nugent, called none other than the "Liberated Zone." Guerrilla church actions and a mass solidarity rock music worship service for the Berrigans, Spock and former Stanford Student Body President, husband of Joan Baez and draft resister David Harris were planned. Even new stationery was printed in June to officially reflect the new staff additions. It must have been with a great deal of satisfaction that York introduced his full staff at the solidarity service. The Free Church had come a long way in one year. His introductions give us a sense of the Free Church's newness in June of 1968:

Jock Brown, as most of you know from marching on the picket line with him, is the super-radical seminary professor of the Liberated Zone. He is responsible for this service tonight. He is the Free Church's resident ideologist, Greek scholar, tourist in Hanoi, organizer of other disorganized staff and hippie in disguise.

Tony Nugent, is the Presbyterian minister from Haight Ashbury. During the last year he has worked at Howard Presbyterian Church, directed the work of Hearth Coffee house there, and worked with the Resistance. He is, in fact, a member of the Resistance, having turned in his



deferrment card last Oct. 16, and then returned his 1A to the Seattle draft board in a Bible not so long ago.

...Glee Bishop has been with us since the Free Church began a year ago today (this is our anniversary also). She is a social worker: We call her our super-director of resources, volunteers and services. But then we change her title every week.<sup>26</sup>

With new plans and new staff the Liberated Zone's forces were ready at the Free Church to respond to impending events of the French Solidarity Strike, the first battle for Berkeley.

#### IV

The Berkeley Daily Gazette, June 29, in two inch red front page headlines dramatically announced the beginning of the battle:

POLICE ROUT DEMONSTRATORS AT TELEGRAPH AVE, CAMPUS<sup>27</sup>

The Free Church staff, June 30, in an introduction to a 30 page funding proposal, the product of June's busy month, added references to the battle:

The entire operation has passed through the crisis of siege by nightstick and gas during the nights of June 28 and June 29, which will probably modify its shape in as yet unforeseen directions...We are...persuaded that these events have validated our conviction that the Free Church idea is a viable pattern for any American community undergoing radical social change.<sup>28</sup>

The drama indicated by the Gazette's headlines, the Free Church's uncertainty of what lay ahead, on the one hand, yet on the other hand its certainty of its own validity, all provided the ingredients for what the Free Church would become in the remainder of 1968. But what happened in this first battle for Berkeley?

According to Mayor Wallace Johnson's 20 page report of the crisis, it all began 11:40 p.m. Tuesday, June 25, 1968 at a meeting of the Berkeley



City Council.<sup>29</sup> Peter Camejo<sup>30</sup> of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Young Socialists Alliance (YSA), spoke before the Council representing a coalition of radical organizations which had planned a demonstration for the next Friday night.

Peter Camejo:...What we want is this. We want the City Council to inform the Police Department that it does not want them to bring police from outside of Berkeley into Berkeley, and secondly that it does not want any interference with the constitutional right of the demonstrators and the people holding the rally, and that therefore it would be preferable that they keep away from the demonstration. If you keep the Police away there will be no violence...If you bring the Police we can only therefore hold that you are deliberately provoking and creating a situation...This is your choice.<sup>31</sup>

After an exchange between council members and Camejo about his refusal to request a "parade" or "public assembly" permit, Camejo responded:

You see there is no requirement to have any other permit than the one we have (a permit to operate a sound truck) in order to have a street rally in this city and I am ready to test that any time in the courts, anywhere, that you can't go out into the street and speak to your fellow Americans without having to sit down and make applications for permission to do that. That is guaranteed us by the constitution. That's not something you apply for.<sup>32</sup>

Camejo then turned down a compromise suggestion to have the demonstration in the Sather Gate Parking lot, just off Telegraph Avenue.

It was this and a series of other confrontations that led the Mayor and the City Manager to conclude that the "purpose of the rally was ostensibly to express support for the French students" and "opposition to the repression" in France. City Manager William C. Hanley was direct.

I mean that the purpose of the rally was completely secondary to the central concern...It is my conviction that the whole performance was cynically contrived to create precisely the confrontation that ensued.<sup>33</sup>



# Police Gas Students at Barricades in Berkeley



*By Greg Peterson*

A youth at the Berkeley demonstration got ready to throw a rock at a policeman on the second floor balcony of the UC Student Union

Source:  
San Francisco Examiner June 29, 1968





Interpretations of what happened that Friday night were legion. One could choose from: the Pacifica radio station, KPFA; the newspapers, the Gazette or Barb; police reports; the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU); Mayor Johnson, who was on the scene of the crisis, for he believed in "going to the grass roots to find out for himself;" the City Manager Hanley; innocent bystanders or the Socialist Workers Party. The Free Church had its version too. The staff and board called it a "police initiated disturbance."

Hearing about the demonstration at the last minute, the Free Church made hasty preparations in the event violence was to occur. They set up two first aid stations, one at the Free Church and the other at Cody's Bookstore. Fred Cody, one of the original members of the Free Church board, was still a board member. They also activated their "violence intervention program." This program had been previously organized by York and Nugent for the Oakland Induction Center protests and more recently after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. It consisted of a "clergy phalanx" that juxtaposed itself between the demonstrators and the police. In addition to the phalanx, monitors with identifiable armbands were mobilized to patrol the streets for unnecessary violence. Ten clergy and twenty monitors, under the direction of David Allen, another C.O. to work with the Free Church, were on hand for the Friday night confrontation. The Free Church account of what happened:

...At 9:05 p.m., Friday, Chief Beall pronounced the rally an illegal assembly, and ordered the crowds on the sidewalks to disperse. About ten clergy left the rally and holding hands, walked up Haste St. to request permission to speak with the Chief. The request was denied---



changing staff and a changing street scene. As early as April, Buteyn and York reported to the Executive Committee of the Free Church that the "nature of the Free Church group is changing."<sup>35</sup> "People now [were] from High School, some U.C. [students], some Black Panthers---i.e. not just 'hippies.'"<sup>36</sup> City manager Hanley characterizing the "residents, transients and habitues" of the south campus on the eve of the demonstrations mentioned the following mix:

...hippies, or flower-children, essentially gentle and apolitical, though both their number and influence on the life-style of the Ave have declined noticeably in the past year...At the opposite pole there are the Hell's Angels ...The myriad of free association groups variously referred to as "family units" or communes"... the current intellectual and artistic counter part of the "Bohemians" of an earlier era...Tourists, teenyboppers, and kindred souls from all over the Bay Area...

Finally there are the numerous factions of a revolutionary Marxist or anarchist character.<sup>37</sup>

This cross-section of people constituted the parish of the Free Church. It was this traditional church concept of the parish that the Free Church took more seriously as the Free Church deepened its understanding of itself ecclesiastically.

Brown's presence was largely credited for further developing the "church" aspect of the Free Church. He did this through his rap groups on the radical Jesus, his sermons and his general theoretical writing. This development allowed a self understanding in broad enough terms to enable the Free Church to relate to the total and diverse constituency of its parish.

The Church aspect of our ministry has attracted to the Free Church other people long alienated from the churches: high school students, university students, young people and adults in the peace and liberation movements, and other church drop outs. Our ministry is to many more than just the Telegraph Ave hippies now.<sup>38</sup>



In the same staff memo just quoted, three phases of the short but active history of the Free Church were traced. The church phase was the third and most recent. However, a church component always existed in some form from the very beginning of the rapidly evolving service ministry. The evolution from spontaneous worship at the Haste street location to York's ordination and the first two Saturday night services in June, set the stage for the logical extension: a worshipping congregation. Brown and York had dreamed about their own "underground church," ever since their student-professor days at CDSP. A July 13 memo to the "membership" made the congregation official. With the worshipping congregation came liturgical experimentation and the plans for a Free Church Prayer Book. Again, Brown's influence was cited; the liturgies drew "heavily from Jock Brown's forthcoming book---which itself incorporated many insights from Dick, Tony, Glee and Bay Area friends."<sup>39</sup>

Besides the new church development, the switchboard, the first phase of the Free Church's ministry, was still going strong. It was now fully institutionalized, all the duties made routine. Twenty four volunteers, in pairs for four hour shifts, 16 to 24 hours a day, with four supervisors, plugged themselves and others into twenty other medical, legal, psychiatric and pastoral consultants. The switchboard was now considered to be the core of the service ministry. York and Glee Bishop shared much of the responsibility for this aspect of the Free Church's work. Bishop provided most of the technical leadership and York did much of the counselling and community follow through. York still, however, functioned as the director of the whole Free Church. This was even acknowledged in a staff memo when he was referred to as "the focus of unity of the whole community."<sup>40</sup>



The second phase of the Free Church's development, the community center, now the Liberated Zone, became Nugent's primary responsibility. With the location of the Free Church in the large Lutheran Church of the Cross, the Liberated Zone became a strategic resource for any happening on the street. It was the center of political organizing, social activities, art exhibits, first aid activities, arts and crafts, library resources and mimeographing of street leaflets for the whole street community.

The three components of the ministry---church, switchboard and community center---were never fully separable, in theory or practice. The theoretical fusion was provided by the understanding of the parish of the Free Church as a "white ghetto." The ghetto concept was a popular notion at the time, drawing its analogy from the civil rights movement's analysis of the oppression of blacks and the realities of ghetto life. A well circulated street pamphlet, "The Student as Nigger," written by Jerry Farber, a Hayward State professor, was one of the cornerstones of this analogy. York was even to apply the concept of "nigger" to the hippies. He saw them as a subject population that "fled the middle-class because they couldn't live up to its code of affluence and success."<sup>41</sup> Even though the white ghetto was seen as the symptom of a larger problem, in order to work on the larger problem, York, Brown and Nugent felt they had to have an organizing base from which to work. The white ghetto of the south campus, in all its diversity, became this base. Therefore, it directly followed that organizing in a white ghetto created the need for a church, a community center and a service center (switchboard). The switchboard provided direct access to everyday





street life and the church and community center sought to relate everyday life to the larger problems of society through political and religious organizing. How these three components are related can best be illustrated in practice. York reflected on the Free Church's activities during the French Solidarity protests and called them "fusion under siege."

Even under normal conditions the three phases of the operation blend into each other, and in crisis their unity becomes complete.

...The Switchboard became the one information center open in the crisis area, and first aid clinics were maintained in the Liberated Zone and for a while in Cody's Bookstore. The members of the staff were repeatedly gassed while getting back to the church and helping the kids off the street...As the basement quarters became uninhabitable and were being broken into by police, we opened up the main part of the church as a sanctuary. Although some gas seeped in and the police raids were made, we managed to maintain it all night for between 50-150 people and some dogs. Coffee was served, first aid administered, there was Bible reading and spontaneous prayer.

...the wartime scene in the sanctuary Friday night with the community simultaneously praying, feeding, administering first aid, counselling each other, struck us as the very definition of the church.<sup>42</sup>

## VI

The fusion under seige of the Free Church extended beyond its street activities during the escalation of the crisis. The behind-the-scenes meetings of the board and staff of the Free Church also displayed an important organizational fusion. The coalition of radical groups, for which Peter Camejo was the spokesperson, continued their demand to have a fourth of July rally at an all day Tuesday City Council meeting, attended by more than one thousand people. The day before, Monday, at a meeting at the First Presbyterian Church, local clergy and lay leaders



came to the conclusion that a closing of the Avenue would "cool things off." They reasoned that church leaders speaking in favor of the street closing would "take the wind out of the sails of the militants." After their Monday meeting, the clergy went to the Telegraph Merchants Association meeting to persuade them that the clergy's reasoning was correct. Before the clergy arrived, the merchants had already voted not to support the street closing plan being proposed by Camejo. It took some fast talking to convince the merchants. But with the spectre of violence only escalating with the present stalemate, and with the willingness of the clergy to act in a violence intervention capacity on the streets, the merchants were willing to go along with the clergy's strategy. It was also seen as the path of reconciliation on the part of many of the clergy.

It is hard to single out the individuals most responsible for the position taken by the merchants and clergy. Certainly within the merchants association Free Church supporters such as Larry Blake, Fred Cody and Eric Goodman should be given credit for representing the position of reconciliation and wanting to "cool things off." Also within the group of church leaders the voices of Bob March, Otto Smith and Ray Jennings were instrumental. March was a lay leader of Trinity Methodist Church and an executive in the Consumers Cooperative credit union in Berkeley. Otto Smith was active in St. Mark's Episcopal Church and a math professor at the University. He and his wife, Phyllis, had been active in a socially concerned North Oakland parish and were well steeped in community politics. Jennings was the month old pastor at the First Baptist Church in Berkeley. His Church was located just one block off



of Telegraph Avenue, across the street from the First Presbyterian Church. Glenn Clarke, one of the Free Church's C.O.'s, recounted how the events surrounding the French Solidarity demonstrations had a great impact on Jennings, a rather conservative Baptist minister when he arrived in Berkeley. Clarke recalled that during the first night of rioting Jennings came running into the Free Church explaining that he now knew how the blacks in the ghetto riots felt.<sup>43</sup> However, Donald Buteyn, more than any other individual, was responsible for the thrust toward reconciliation on the part of the merchants and clergy and lay leaders. His deep convictions of concern, involvement, reconciliation and fair play were decisive. These were the same convictions that led him to begin a ministry to the hippies.

Therefore, it was Buteyn, Jennings, Blake, Smith and York who addressed the City Council on Tuesday. They spoke on behalf of the street closing. The staff and board of the Free Church were united. But this well conceived effort was still not enough to convince the majority of the council; the request was denied.

However, united under seige, the staff and board were not to be denied. They called an emergency meeting at the Free Church Tuesday night and mobilized other local clergy once again. The meeting resulted in a petition signed by twenty two clergy designed to persuade two of the fence sitting council members to vote in favor of the street closing.<sup>44</sup>

July 2, 1968

City Manager, City of Berkeley, California:

We, the undersigned, clergymen [(sic) included one Episcopal Deaconess] serving churches in Berkeley, desirous



of finding a solution to the polarization that has marked our community in recent days, and to offer a creative plan acceptable to all involved, hereby petition for a permit to use Telegraph Avenue between Dwight Way and Bancroft Way, or a portion of it for a FOURTH OF JULY ALL-BERKELEY STREET PARTY between the hours of 12:00 noon and 12:00 midnight on that day, with the use of any sound amplification equipment to be curtailed at 10:00 p.m.

We further pledge ourselves and others we shall recruit to serve as monitors for the event.

We believe that such a party, with all the citizens of Berkeley invited could do much to alleviate the present stalemate and offer an opportunity for new beginnings in effective communications.

Signed:

Richard York, Free Church	George Tittman, Episcopal
Donald E. Ganoung, Episcopal	Anthony O. Nugent, Presbyterian,
James H. Carson, Methodist	Free Church
John S. Hadsell, UNITAS,	Tommy Derrick, Christian
Presbyterian	Jim Conway, Roman Catholic
Norman Mealy, Episcopal	Donald P. Buteyn, Presbyterian
Raymond P. Jennings, Baptist	David L. Stone, Episcopal
Samuel W. Garrett, Episcopal	Richard Hart, Methodist
John Pairman Brown, S.C.C.M.	James C. Smith, Presbyterian
David E. Green, Episcopal	Santon J. Bringer, Christian
L. William Youngdahl,	Arthur J. Abrams, Temple Beth El
Lutheran	Ester Davis, Episcopal
James M. Roamer, Baptist	
Norman Gottwald, Baptist	

Mayor Johnson, in a sub-section of his official report on the crisis, cynically entitled "capitulation," concluded the following: "It is now apparent that a major factor, if not the major factor in the persuasion that tipped the scales to a 5 to 3 vote on July 3, was the influence of 'the ministers.'"<sup>45</sup> At a 7:00 a.m. emergency city council meeting Wednesday, July 3, an "assembly permit" to close Telegraph Avenue on July 4, from 12:00 noon to 10:00 p.m. was issued to "Peter Camejo (Socialist Workers Party), Larry Blake (Larry Blake's





Restaurant), and Donald Buteyn (pastor at the First Presbyterian Church)."<sup>46</sup>

To most people the receiving of the permit was a victory. Camejo now felt the rally "would be peaceful because we got what was due us."<sup>47</sup> The purposes of the rally, Camejo said, "were to fight racial oppression, to protest the war in Viet Nam and the imprisonment of Huey Newton, and to express solidarity with student protest movements in France and all over the world." Other activists were less enamored with the council turnabout. In an anonymous street broadside, Barricade, Vol. I No. 1, an article entitled "Liberated Zone or Trap" voiced cynicism:

Now we've proven that merchants will pressure the City Council into letting us meet on Telly so that business can proceed as usual. The problem is that we don't want business to proceed as usual. Berkeley gotta change...There remains a possibility of making Berkeley a model, Berkeley is perhaps the only city in the country where radicals are truly like fish in the water'...We don't make trivial demands or petitions. We raise enough hell in this town to demonstrate our power to take control. This is our goal and until we have it, it is meaningless and dangerous to declare victory.<sup>48</sup>

## VII

It was this type of militance and politics of which the Free Church and its supporters made it clear they wanted no part. Even though the events had a politicizing effect on them, staff and board included, they could not identify totally with the radicals. Their politics were based less on support for the "radical elements" and more on their alienation from "the authorities"---the police and the City Council. Ray Jennings in a "Ministers' Monday Morning Missive" to his congregation made it clear that none of the clergy wanted "the radical elements (of Left or Right) to continue to polarize the community."<sup>48a</sup> He felt the



"big stick" policy of the city to run the "bearded element out of town" was not a solution. He wanted reconciliation.

Jennings was a good example of the new style Free Church board member. He had already been elected to the Vice Presidency of the board prior to the riots. Like Jennings, this was a board that was, more than anytime in the history of the Free Church, in basic solidarity with the Free Church staff. The early criticism of the staff that emerged around such events as the Festival of the Virgin had all but vanished. The unified effort to keep the Haste Street house at the end of 1967 and the symbolic coming together at York's ordination had been further consolidated in the events of June 28 through July 4. The basis of this unity was now more self-evident: it was a personal support of York's ministry. He was undeniably the focus of the whole Free Church community, a community that included staff, volunteers, board members and the diverse parish of the south campus. This fact is not to deny the crucial role Brown and Nugent were playing in the Free Church of 1968. However, York was the major figure because he took most of the risks publically and was charged with the ultimate responsibility of the Free Church's activities.

In order to arrive at this stage of staff and board cooperation it was necessary to deal with an undertow of dissatisfaction that surfaced at the beginning of the year. There was a strong disapproval of the constrictions that the hierarchical board/staff structure placed on the staff and the larger Free Church community. Staff minutes as early as January were calling for a democratic voting process within the whole community, "kids, staff, volunteers [and] the board."<sup>49</sup> Therefore, new



by-laws were drawn up in June (and eventually ratified July 10, after Berkeley calmed down) to give more control to the day-to-day workers at the Free Church. The changes allowed for the board members to be elected from the community at large and not be self-perpetuating as stated in the old by-laws. Thus, after the next election for the board, over half of its members consisted of staff and volunteers in the day-to-day work of the Free Church. This structural change institutionalized the process of greater and greater staff and board unity that had been going on in practice for the last six months.

Other organizational changes were made that continued the process toward greater institutionalization, mainly in the direction of becoming more of a church. New levels of accountability were formalized between staff, board and community, carrying over to the church funding agencies. For the first time staff meetings became regularized. Brown's theoretical work sought to provide the basis for this drive to institutionalize. The model he set forth was important for the immediate self-understanding of the Free Church. He understood the model of the Free Church to be the "classical form...by which an indigenous church emerges from missionary tutelage."<sup>49a</sup> Therefore, it followed that he understood the Free Church to be an emerging congregation, independent but not sectarian.

...the Free Church owes loyalty to no one denominational hierarchy or board, but rather to the emerging ecumenical church in America...The community should determine its own course---in harmony with the direction already being given it by staff and SCCM Board.<sup>50</sup>

Thus it is important to realize that the theological, organizational and political foundation was already in place prior to the riots. This fact made it possible for them to act as decisively as they did.



The old battles between staff and board over the Free Church turning against the churches that sponsored it seemed to be gone in the new spirit of solidarity and internal congregational self understanding. Also the politics, at least for the moment, seemed to be convergent. The "third way" notion of the radical Jesus' revolutionary nonviolence, allowing sufficient independence from the "radical street militants," appealed to the reconciliation politics of many of the board members. Thus, the politics and theology of reconciliation provided the basis for a common mind within the Free Church community in the early summer of 1968. This unity is best captured in the July 4th festival, largely the product of the efforts of the Free Church staff and board. A Free Church street flyer set the tone for the festival:<sup>51</sup>

#### THE AVENUE IS YOURS!

The people of Berkeley have won an important victory. Through our united efforts we have defended the rights of free speech and assembly. Today will be used to celebrate our winning of the Avenue. So enjoy!

#### PROGRAM

- 12:00 SAN FRANCISCO MIME TROUPE GORILLA BAND WILL 'OPEN'  
THE AVE
- 12:45 Welcome to the FREE AVENUE: by a student, merchant  
and clergyman
- 1:00 SAN FRANCISCO MIME TROUPE PLAY-in front of Cody's
- 2:00 ROCK BANDS-at Dwight and Channing
- 3:00 NOW THEATER-at Cody's
- 3:30 FOLK MUSIC-at Cody's
- 4:00 POLITICAL RALLY-at Cody's (speakers will be announced)
- 5:30 OPEN MICROPHONE DISCUSSION-at Dwight  
FOLK MUSIC or BANDS-at Channing
- 7:00 BANDS-at both ends of strip
- 10:00 CELEBRATION AT FREE CHURCH-2516 Durant  
Rock Mass and Light Show

BANDS THAT HAVE OFFERED THEIR SOUNDS: Mother Earth, Mad River, Purple Earthquake, the Phoenix, Morning, Summer-fallwinterspring, Bay Rock, Sky Blue.

There will be no police on the Avenue today.





An information table will be in front of Cody's.

The Free Church (2516 Durant) will provide first aid and lost and found services.

Free food and refreshments courtesy of the clergy and merchants.

the people  
the students  
the merchants  
the clergy  
of Telegraph-South Campus

By all accounts the 4th of July festival was a success. Police reports tried to highlight a few disturbances; but most had to agree with the press stories that heralded "Happiness in Berkeley," "Berkeley Street Crisis Ends with a Festive Day," or "Sunshine, Songs and Solidarity."<sup>52</sup> The crowd was estimated at 10 to 15,000. Most of the day was spent listening to rock bands and watching street theater. The political speeches, scheduled for 4:00, did not begin until 6:00. Eldridge Cleaver was on hand to drum up support for Huey Newton and the Black Panthers. Some people spoke of recalling the Mayor and City Manager. The San Francisco Chronicle ended its account of the day with:

Probably the most dismayed of the local establishment was restaurateur Larry Blake. Word spread that he was providing free beer...the management made clear that no such rash promise had been made.<sup>53</sup>

The clergy turned out in large numbers to monitor the event. There were 49 clergy, a dozen or so lay leaders and the entire Free Church community on hand to patrol the streets. The motivations for being there on the part of most of the recruited clergy were similar to those held by Jennings, that is, the general desire to cool things off. But Reverend James Comfort Smith of the St. John's Presbyterian Church



made it clear to his congregation where he thought most of the clergy stood. The festival was designed "not only to avert a real riot..., but to pull the rug out from under the political intentions of such left-wingers as Peter Camejo and his ilk."<sup>54</sup> He expanded on his negative feeling for Camejo:

...and I for one was dismayed to see our name tied to the dissidents' in the council action...

It should be clear to any observer that ministers in their suggestion [the petition] to the Council have no sympathy with the kind of political philosophy of the left which Camejo argues, and even less with his kind of threatened mob rule.<sup>55</sup>

Smith's attitude may have been more representative of the recruited clergy, for at the Free Church celebration climaxing the festival the talk was more militant. However, the militancy was still cautious and tempered by the radical Jesus and the "third way." The service was attended by over 1,000 people. York welcomed the congregation on behalf of those "who worked to get us the street." He then summarized the role of the Free Church in the events of the past few days. He asked why the Free Church had become the target of the police, his answer being:

...the Free Church is an underground church, a church for the avenue and its people, the pastoral medical and healing arm of the revolution for peace and liberation.

We know it! The Man knows it...that's why he bombed it with gas...<sup>56</sup>

York went on to express solidarity with the "cause of liberation and peace." The euphoria of victory bordered on apocalypticism when he concluded one of his sentences with: "...when the revolution comes, if it hasn't already."<sup>57</sup> He then repeated his litany of slogans:

This is our hour of celebration of ultimate victory



of [the] Liberated Zone...The Radical Jesus is winning, the world is coming to a beginning...the Liberated Zone is at hand!<sup>58</sup>

Nugent then preached a sermon, the band played, and the light show filled the sanctuary. The crowds dispersed quietly by 12:30; and the Avenue was "open" again.

### VIII

A high-water mark for organizational cohesion was achieved by the Free Church during the first battle of Berkeley. A sense of certainty, harmony and new direction is communicated in all the documents from this period. This new direction and harmony was particularly reflected in the formal documents announcing the existence of a new organizational structure. These documents went so far as to claim that in the new Free Church community "distinctions of old and young, hippie and straight, staff and clientele, male and female" had "disappeared."<sup>59</sup> The by-laws were revised and new membership criteria were outlined, giving credence, at least formally, to the new claim of unity. Article IV Section 1 defined "General Members":

General membership in this corporation shall be open to all persons who elect to participate in its work and program and attend its meetings, subject to such restrictions as may be imposed by regular meeting of the general membership.<sup>60</sup>

There still existed a board of trustees but it was no longer, at least officially, a board composed of the funding institutions. The new trustees were elected directly by the membership, which could consist of all of those bottom tier workers that staffed the switchboard or the new community center coffee house, and presumably all of those who attended or helped with



the worship services on a regular basis.

The old board members, the original sponsors and funders, were not, however, totally eliminated from the formal structure; they were given a new title, the "Advisory Commission." But their formal powers were eliminated. Though they were considered members like everyone else, and could be elected to the new board, they were seen to be only advisory, benevolent sponsors, such as those who might support a "missionary church." The "Free Church," now the official public name of the whole ministry with the new by-laws, was formally the Advisory Commission's mission church. And like all sponsoring missionary agencies, the sponsors would continue to support it until it could gain full autonomy. This mission church notion never caught on, nor did the Advisory Commission.

This new organizational shift did not just automatically jump onto the pages of the revised by-laws, nor did it totally break down old patterns or all of the old distinctions as it had claimed. However, there were crucial developments that did allow the new organizational shift to be partially successful and did help to create a formal document that seemed to break down the old distinctions. I have already alluded to these developments but to summarize them, they were four. First, there was the change in the nature of the South Campus youth ghetto; it became less hippie and more political. This change was reflected in the Free Church which now understood the South Campus to be its "parish." The Free Church gave voice to these more political elements, which were more in line with its leadership's (York, Brown and Nugent) notions of a peace and freedom constituency. Second, there was York's consolidation of the ministry under his guiding spirit; it became "Dick's ministry to the South Campus." The old sponsors were willing to either step aside, now that their work





was done, or to see themselves being replaced by a new breed of trustees more in line with the new politics and congregation model. Also, essential to this transition was the spirit of cooperation between staff and board and the politicization of both which occurred during the French Solidarity Strike in their joint efforts for the July 1st street closing. A unity and mutual respect existed from the bottom level of the organization to the top; everyone did their part according to the needs of the battle. Finally, there was a unified predisposition of the new leadership toward a new model for the ministry, a grass roots ecumenical Christian congregation. This model had germinated in the thought and practice of York, in the writings of Brown and in Nugent's youth church in San Francisco. Even before the street battle, the form of this church was well defined. And by June of 1968, just days before the street battle, the new church developments could be documented.

1. We are finding [regular services of worship and special liturgical events] to be a much more important part of the program: we find in fact that the Free Church is a church in every sense.
2. Several hippies and other youths have asked for Baptism...
3. We have at the Free Church now a developing theology or language of the Gospel which catches the imagination of the young people and makes explicit many of the values they have been implicitly acting upon: nonviolence, liberation, reverence for life, servanthood...
4. People are coming into the Free Church...not just for some help through our Switchboard, but for true sacramental and pastoral ministry of the church: weddings, funerals, Eucharist, baptism...<sup>61</sup>

This church development was undertaken, according to this document, "With some fear and trembling...[and] moving toward an old fashion evangelism and commitment---in a new idiom."<sup>62</sup>



But this "evangelism and commitment in a new idiom," was not without some of the tensions of the past nor beyond creating new conflicts. The unity and harmony initiating this new era of the organization was to quickly give way. Organizationally, there still existed the two basic tensions or contradictions of being funded by the established churches and the three tiered structure---albeit a new three tiered arrangement. These two contradictions were the source of increased conflicts as the Free Church became more identified with the "political elements" of the South Campus and more of an "alternative church." This evolution to more politics and alternative church status had sectarian overtones as the Free Church continued its criticism of the very churches by whom it was funded. These tensions set the stage for the solidification of the Free Church as an underground church in the last part of 1968, which carried over into 1969.

Another tension should be mentioned, even though, at this stage of the Free Church's development, it was less crucial, this was the unresolved relationship between the social service ministry and the emerging congregation. For most of 1968 the two were complementary as the service ministry took on the added component of a coffee-house organizing-center for street politics under Nugent's supervision. The large number of volunteers and subsistence-wage workers who staffed the coffee house and switchboard in 1968 were more politically and theologically sophisticated than in 1967. The new breed of workers, with the addition of some similarly sophisticated adult board members, constituted the "serving and worshipping congregation." Momentarily there was a fusion of all ministries; even the bottom tier was well represented on the new, more sympathetic board. But the fact remained that the board still existed and still consisted of diverse interests: local church sponsors, full-paid



staff, subsistence-wage workers and volunteers. For most of 1968 harmony and cooperation did prevail but divisions soon reasserted themselves in the form of an hierarchical organization "serving the youth," rather than being a youth or an alternative church---thus giving rise to the old distinction between social service ministry and an alternative church.

## IX

The events of this week of struggle and the Free Church's open solidarity with the militants of its street parish (though cautious on ideology and opposed to violence) were to be played out in the months ahead. In many respects the summer of 1968 was a dress-rehearsal for the spring of 1969, the second battle of Berkeley: "People's Park." The quarter of a million dollars that the first battle cost<sup>63</sup> would seem mild in comparison to 1969. However, the rest of 1968 was still to keep the Free Church busy. The new plans made by the new staff in June were still to be acted out in at least two key events late in 1968: solidarity demonstrations with the protesters at the Chicago Democratic Conventions and a Reformation Day Procession. Both of these events had symbolic importance for the Free Church's growing self-definition as an underground church.

Berkeley once more became a battle ground in September. A state of civil disaster was declared and a city-wide curfew was imposed. These drastic actions were taken in response to demonstrations that were officially planned to protest the police riot that took place at the Democratic Convention in Chicago. No doubt, however, there was some truth in the Berkeley adage, recorded by new left historian Kirkpatrick



Sale, that "the issue was not the issue."<sup>64</sup> The territorial imperative issue of the South Campus white, and we should add youth, ghetto played as big a role in these demonstrations as did the solidarity with the protesters in Chicago. The politics of resistance and street theater were rapidly combining with the politics of confrontation.

The Free Church was also becoming more identified with the politics of confrontation late in 1968. It was during the period of the imposed curfew that a Free Church liturgy was planned in defiance of the ban. This type of action was the logical outgrowth of its growing underground or guerrilla church self-understanding. It was also an extension of their liturgical emphasis, not just sanctuary liturgies but street liturgies. York and Nugent laid out the theory for these actions in an elaborate "Mission Design" document, early in the summer of 1968. They were asked to prepare the document by their two respective funding sources, the Episcopal Diocese and the Presbyterian Synod. The document contained their theological and political self-justifications. In it they spoke of "developing the 'crack team of the Guerrilla Church' just as the Episcopal baptism service speaks of 'fighting manfully under the banner of Christ'." Another self defining concept and symbol emerged just prior to their defiance of the curfew. It, too, deepened their understanding of the Free Church in the direction of an underground Church. The Free Church saw itself as the "submarine church." York recalls that he and Brown were searching for a symbol that would capture the liberated underground church nature of the Free Church. Somewhat prompted by the popular Beatles' song and movie of that time, "The Yellow Submarine," York and Brown reasoned that if the establishment churches were "ships





on the sea of life," the underground church was a submarine surfacing. A large yellow submarine sign hung outside the Free Church in September of 1968, and the street liturgy in defiance of the curfew was a production of this submarine church.

The liturgy was also announced as the anniversary for the Assumption of the Virgin Mary Festival. The Free Church was already developing its sense of its own tradition symbolically. Much advanced publicity for the liturgy was done. It was announced in a press release that stations of the cross would be celebrated and that a procession would proceed to Provo Park. At the park, just across the street from the city hall and police station, an ecumenical mass would be held. The participants were excitedly aware of their violation of the law. The curfew explicitly prohibited any "meeting, assembly or parade in or upon the public streets or highways or other public place...at any time during the presently proclaimed state of civil disaster."<sup>65</sup> The Free Church press release, intentionally designed to draw attention to their actions, quoted York and Nugent. York seemed to be taking a leaf out of the notebook of Peter Camejo:

We rely on the constitutional provisions that 'Congress shall make no law...prohibiting the free exercise of religion, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble' and therefore cannot be bound by the Berkeley City ordinance...<sup>66</sup>

Nugent's theater-like language was more ironic in tone:

...if a state of civil disaster does indeed exist in the minds of city officials then such religious pilgrimages and services are needed to reduce the level of mistrust and bring a new spirit of reconciliation to the entire Berkeley community.<sup>67</sup>

The procession went on without incident. I asked Nugent in an



interview, six years later, how he would characterize the politics that lay behind these type of activities of the Free Church. He responded:

Marxism or Socialism did not penetrate the Free Church at this point, it was the politics of confrontation, there was no thought of what would replace its anti stance. There was no strong ideological component and no answer to what the alternatives should be.<sup>68</sup>

But the important fact remained that for the Free Church to do its work, only this level of definition was needed; for the staff and board were unified around this anti stance. If this anti stance was a correct characterization of the Free Church's political component, certainly more positive things could be said about its religious component at the time.

The submarine church surfaced again on November 1, to tack 10 theses on the doors of the churches in the South Campus. It was All Saints day, the anniversary of Martin Luther's 95 theses. Bob March, the lay leader at Trinity Methodist Church and Free Church Board member from 1968 til the Free Church's closing in 1972, called this act the symbolic break with the established churches. It certainly was interpreted by the churches as a slap in the face. But it was clear by the flyer circulated to announce this Reformation Day event that it was as much of a spoof and pure theater as it was serious confrontation. Portions of the flyer read:

Out Demons Out!  
 The Demons are Exorcised  
 The Saints go Marching in  
 The Radical Jesus is winning  
 The Submarine Church is surfacing  
 Hallelujah  
 The Liberated Zone is at Hand

The Free Church invites all fairies, minstrels, priests, prophets, exorcists, angels, arch angels, wizards, sooth



sayers, nymphs, elves, hobbits, priestesses, and saints as well as other people of good will.<sup>69</sup>

However, on the other hand, it was also true that the Free Church was becoming more aggressively anti the established churches. The 10 theses posted were more poignant in this respect, clearly putting the Free Church in a position over against the established churches. The theses sum up what the Free Church had become, largely due to its political baptism in the summer and its deepening church development:

Reformation Day-All Saints Day  
November 1, 1968

The 95 Theses which Luther posted 450 years ago on this date were radical responses to the Exploitative and Oppressive Establishment of his time. But the Protestant Church to which he gave birth is now a foundation of this Establishment along with the Catholic Church.

But a new Spirit of Radical Non-Violence is moving in the land. The pace of the struggle is slow, but the Movement is winning. Love and peace shall triumph. The demons of violence shall be exorcised. The Liberated Zone is at hand.

The Churches must hear the cry of this Movement of spiritual renewal and rebirth which is occurring outside their walls. The Church must return to the revolutionary impulse of Jesus. The Free Church presents these following theses for a New Reformation in the Church to the Established Churches, not in a spirit of hostility, but in hopes that all of us together can learn to follow more perfectly the Way of Jesus:

1. Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." Yet the Churches which profess to follow him are timid and silent about the immoral aggressive war being waged by the American military in South Vietnam.
2. Jesus said, "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." Where are the poor, the homeless, the black, the young, and other oppressed people? Not in the churches!
3. Jesus said, "If my kingship were of this world, my servants would fight." Yet ministers and seminarians of the Churches carry special 4-D exemption cards, the indulgences issued them by the Selective Service System.



4. Jesus said, "Lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward shall be great." Yet the Churches are afraid to speak and act prophetically when financial pressure is applied by uptight members.
5. Jesus said, concerning taxes, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." Yet the Churches, as privileged institutions, pay no taxes for their vast income, and land holding.
6. Jesus said, "See these great buildings? There will not be left one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." Yet the Churches build magnificent and irrelevant offices while Humanity screams for food, shelter, and medicine.
7. Jesus said, "You hypocrites, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye." Yet the Churches are the seedbeds of white racism and prejudice.
8. Jesus said, "It is harder for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle." Yet the members of the Churches grow fat on Contracts for War and Exploitation.
9. Jesus said, "Sons will rise against their fathers and daughters against their mothers for my sake." The Churches should know that their sons and daughters are rising up against them for Jesus' sake!
10. Jesus said, "Love your enemies," and yet the greatest hate campaigns in the country are waged against Communists, hippies, blacks and other "unbelievers" in the name of God and Christianity.<sup>70</sup>

The shift to a more self-conscious underground church, as mentioned above, was rooted in the increased political direction of the Free Church; the Free Church was not just related to the counter cultural hippie. The political direction and underground church direction went hand-in-hand, they deepened and fostered each other. The theoretical resources for this politically oriented church at this stage of the organization were well





developed. Though the exact nature of the political and religious components were still evolving, the fact that they did go together were seen to be axiomatic. Brown's writings, in particular, gave expression to this relationship between the work of the Spirit in the new left and its meaning for a new kind of church. Brown was certain that in order for this new underground church to be a viable church alternative, it had to be modeled in the "third way of Jesus." However, the changing street scene did not always conform to theory, and the content of the "radical Jesus" was open to various interpretations.

Nonetheless, in 1968, Brown's understanding of the ministry permeated the whole organization and was largely accepted. The facilitators for Brown's thought were primarily Nugent and York. They interpreted the radical Jesus and revolutionary nonviolence to "straight" board members, to the lower level of the staff and to the bottom tier of the organization. Brown most systematically expressed his thoughts in Liberated Zone, but they were transmitted to the organization, for the most part, indirectly through worship services or other smaller documents, and most often not by Brown himself. I have already dealt in detail with Brown's sermon at York's ordination. This sermon was essentially the core message in Brown's Liberated Zone. As already mentioned, York expressed these same thoughts in his many speaking engagements. The "Mission Design" document, prepared by York and Nugent, outlining the nature of the Free Church ministry, for which they were seen by denominational funders as co-pastors, directly paralleled the Liberated Zone. The "Mission Design" prepared



late in 1968, is crucial in the understanding of what developed in 1969. I, therefore, will examine it in detail in the next chapter. Also worth mentioning again in connection with the prevalence of Brown's concepts was the naming of the Free Church's community center and coffee house "The Liberated Zone."

Brown's Liberated Zone is a classic book for anyone wanting to trace the emergence of a "liberation theology" that might be indigenous to struggles in the United States. His treatment of the Occupied Territory's violence is a capsule summary of most of the evils of modern society perceived by the oppositional youth culture.

Its the teen-agers who see through it, because they're the ones that have to enter it from outside. Brought up in those tough plastic bags up on the hill, with every lesson in playing the game of affluence, they're breaking through and becoming dropouts or activists. Neither the drug scene nor the street scene necessarily shows the way to a renewed society. But at least they're a finger pointing at the reality of violence here and overseas, a clumsy lunge beyond alienation. American society is being rejected by the most interesting of its youth. A cry has gone out for restoring contact with the past, the tradition embodied in the torch race of the generations.<sup>71</sup>

In the Liberated Zone Brown formulated more systematically the evils he had only outlined in his "Call to Covenant" of 1967: destruction of environment, manipulation of culture, colonialization, etc.

Brown's biblical scholarship in the Liberated Zone was groundbreaking in many ways. His hermeneutics were based on insights from liberation struggles and solid understandings of the sociology of biblical times.<sup>72</sup> He focused on the setting of Jesus' as one of political and social struggle of "colonialized" peoples within the Roman Empire. The



parallel to the struggles of the sixties and the U.S. empire and neo-colonialism was obvious and striking to Brown. The appropriate strategy for struggle was understood by Brown to be the one employed by Jesus. Jesus "fought" violence with nonviolence---the only tenable model for today. But Brown understood Jesus' nonviolence not as a timid or a noncommittal response to injustices; its was revolutionary. Revolutionary nonviolence "supported" "revolutionary counter-violence, as necessary" but saw the need to forge a "third way" that would help to transform revolutionary counter-violence into an agent for the liberated zone. Using the ethic of Jesus and his understanding of Gospel times, Brown developed his strategy for church renewal in the midst of the counter culture and new left. The Free Church, as the emerging underground church, was both his agent for renewal, as a confirmation of his theoretical model and an inspiration for its further elaboration.

Brown learned a great deal from York's ministry. His Liberated Zone was bound up with the immediate struggles he saw in the antiwar movement or York's ministry. Therefore, to understand the thought of the Free Church in 1968, the independent resource of York himself must be considered. Nugent's thought and influence was not yet a major factor for most of 1968. He still lived in Marin, on the other side of the San Francisco Bay, commuting to Berkeley only for certain days of the week. Also, from even earlier in 1967, Nugent was not as close to York's ministry as was Brown. He had some catching up to do to become fully integrated into the Free Church.

York was the individual who was daily involved in the total ministry---service and congregation. He made things happen. Brown's thought



was influential to York, but York in turn had an effect on Brown's thinking, and always gave his own "twist" to Brown's ideas. He had to; his audience was not the formal audience of Brown's writing. York's audience was the mix of the whole organization: the theologically and politically unsophisticated, the established church sponsors, the Free Church staff with competing interests, etc. York had to be the unifier, to deal first-hand with the internal tensions. The practice of the Free Church always fell short of the agreed-upon theories. In a sermon York delivered to the total Free Church congregation at the close of 1968, York illustrates his special twist to Brown's theories which were dictated by events. He addressed the growing internal dissension and the falling away from the ideals of an underground liberated church.

The Free Church has publically professed again and again to be the radically servant church (or at least trying to be that)---a church which gives a loaf of bread when a loaf is asked for, and not a stone; which gives a fish when a fish is asked for and not a serpent. Too often we have seen the sold-out establishment church give stones and serpents: wishy-washy ethical pronouncements when men faced with draft are seeking strong guidance and when men who want to act for peace want a peace church to support them.

Hundreds of Teley young people are asking for help: food, clothing, shelter, help with drugs, counselling, a place to celebrate the victory of the Liberated Zone (to worship)...

...But the Gospel is not just talking to the Established churches. It is talking to us too---and it has a lot to say...

The Free Church is trying---but we fool only ourselves if we pretend to have found it! We are not fooling the people of The Avenue, or of our own Community Center---and those are the people who are asking for bread and fish!...





The word is that we are, at least right now, just as hypocritical as our mother, the Established Church. Our staff has all but fallen apart in back-biting and back stabbing. We are not serving as a community of liberated lovers...

We are all pointing to the speck in our brother's eye, and forgetting the log in our own. The result is that those who come to us for bread and fish are receiving stones and serpents too---in the form of signs on the door saying we are closed, staff ears that are too up-tight to listen to people in trouble, staff ego's which are too defensive to sense and love and risk for the sakes of our brother's on the street.<sup>73</sup>

York's comments are an indication and reminder that the coherence of the thought of the Free Church was always partially limited by the unresolved tensions of the structure of the ministry. Even at the theoretical level these tensions began to emerge late in 1968. In order to fully understand these tensions the independent contribution of Nugent and the second stream of thought, still represented by some board members, will have to be addressed. This treatment will occur in the other chapters. For it was still true that, for most of 1968, this tension was covered over by a successful summer, new funding and a new organizational direction.

## X

This new underground church posture of the Free Church produced some raised eyebrows on the part of some of its established church Board members, particularly with its increasing orientation to confrontation politics. However, the attitude of such Board members as Otto Smith, Bob March, Jennings, and Buteyn was compatible in many respects with the Free Church's challenge of the local churches, most of which were



their own churches. Therefore, the board and staff unity remained intact late in 1968.

However, with the Free Church's broader circle of funders and allies, and more particularly with members of the local congregations, serious conflicts emerged. The alien and threatening language of its self description as the crack team of the guerrilla church could not be sold to local Berkeley residents. The Berkeley Gazette helped to fuel this conflict with stories that lumped the odd assortment of street radicals with the Free Church. The two-fold task of the Free Church to "'baptise' the Movement where it is timid or incomplete (the Gospel humanizes the New Left and politicizes the Hippies), and 'confirm' it when it is strong (moving the already committed from movement to organization),"<sup>74</sup> just did not speak to the local churchgoer. Toward the end of 1968 much of the staff and board time was spent in answering criticisms of its programs.

No one had a more difficult job in defending the Free Church to his congregation than Buteyn. A series of letters from members of the First Presbyterian Church, where Bueyn was pastor, illustrates the problems which beset him.

A parishioner irate at Buteyn's role in the Free Church wrote the following letter.

...I have withdrawn my interest in the First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley, at the present time. The funds which I was to receive from an Estate were received last week. These had been earmarked for the Church. They have now been re-directed to other charities.<sup>75</sup>

Claiming that the July 4th incidents, and Buteyn's role in them, were not the reasons for her decision to withdraw support, she went on to



enumerate "other recent occurrences in the church" which led her to her decision.

1. If a Black Panther speaks his opinions, I feel the necessity to listen for we can not be part of the improvement of these lines [of communication] without doing so--- if not agreeing!! However, this is a groups which preaches violence and hate. I do not intend to be asked to contribute to this cause!!!!
2. The bulletin board in the church library with the picture of the Oakland Induction Center last Fall with a book thumb tacked beside it on "How Students May Change Society---riot if necessary."
3. The meeting of the militants in the basement of our church.
4. The recent accusations of Dr. Buteyn of police brutality---in front of the militants. It backs up their philosophy of lack of law and order.<sup>76</sup>

The final two reasons dealt with York and the Free Church.

5. York---as the leader of the "Rebel Christ"---as quoted when he too was complaining of "police brutality."
6. And our participation in the Free Church with a man of the so-called cloth as this minister as its leader. We need mature men of moral and social stature to communicate with these young people for the betterment of society. We certainly do not need to add to the violence which is brewing or already exists, therefore, York should be put out promptly and immediately!!!<sup>77</sup>

However, the feedback was not all negative. Buteyn also received positive comments for his efforts. Another parishioner wrote:

We want you to know, for whatever encouragement we may give you in the midst of a diversity of opinion, that our family heartily approves and appreciates your wisdom and your courage in taking part as you did in the events surrounding Telegraph Avenue...

...Today we have made a contribution to the Summer of Sharing Fund, and wish you and those who are working with you in the program every success.<sup>78</sup>

The church was now polarized to the point of irreconcilable differences. In another letter written during the summer riots, the anti



Buteyn sentiment was made clear, and is representative of the growing sentiment within the churches at the end of 1968:

...I was shocked to hear a clergyman support and encourage the actions and position of young Camejo who openly admitted that as a socialist he would do all in his power to over-turn the economy and government of Berkeley...It was shocking to see you side with Camejo who represents the red flag of communism and the black flag of anarchism instead of law and order and the legal government at Berkeley. You are so wrong it is really sad.<sup>79</sup>

Technically, Buteyn was not forced to leave First Presbyterian Church. However, professional pressures and personal and family traumas made it easy for him to accept a "call," a year later, as the Moderator of the Seattle Presbyterian Synod. His Berkeley house was bombed, he received numerous threats, his children were tear-gassed at their schools and he had to periodically send his family out of town for their safety.

It was in this highly volatile and emotional environment that the Free Church had difficulty maintaining their early local financial support. The financial records show local business and church contributions budgeted at \$3,000 and \$4,000 respectively for 1968. By the end of the year the receipts from these two categories added up to less than half of the expected figures---also down from the previous year. Therefore, more reliance had to be put on individual donations and regional and national grants. The Diocese of California and the Presbyterian and Episcopal national offices were particularly looked to for help in this situation. And by the end of the year, three major grants had been negotiated to help out with the 1968 budget and for 1969. These sources prompted Mayor Johnson to accuse the Free Church of being funded by "outside radical sources."<sup>80</sup>

However, financial support for the Free Church became increasingly





problematic due to its militancy as an underground church. The local church, community and business polarization that existed in 1968 was to be extended to all levels of national support beginning in 1969. 1969 was an extension of 1968; but this was not a mere extension, it was a dramatic extension. 1968 was the dress rehearsal for 1969.



NOTES

Correction: The documents are no longer held at the CRRE Historical Archives, but as of 1995 are in the Graduate Theological Union Archives, Berkeley, CA.

<sup>1</sup>Richard York, "Speech before the Berkeley City Council," 2 July 1968, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Michael Rossman, "Claiming Turf in Berkeley," The Wedding Within the War, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Co., 1971) p. 315.

<sup>4</sup>Debbie Heinz, "Complicity in Resistance to Draft Urged at Noon Rally," Daily California, 10 January 1968.

<sup>5</sup>John Pairman Brown, "God is Doing His Thing," The Witness, 53 No. 13 (March 28, 1968) pp. 6-10.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Huey P. Newton, Revolutionary Suicide, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1973).

<sup>8</sup>Brown, "God is Doing His Thing."

<sup>9</sup>"Episcopalians: Hippie Ordination," Time (March 22, 1968) p. 63.

<sup>10</sup>"Episcopal Rite, Hippie Enters Priesthood," San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle, 10 March 1968, sec. A p. 3.

<sup>11</sup>Brown, "God is Doing His Thing."

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>John Pairman Brown, The Liberated Zone, A Guide to Christian Resistance (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1969) p. 9.



<sup>15</sup> John and Emily Brown, "Christmas Letter 1967," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>16</sup> "Episcopal Priest Sees Hanoi," Catholic Voice, 29 November 1967.

<sup>17</sup> John Pairman Brown to Emily Brown, 7 September 1967, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>18</sup> John Pairman Brown to the Right Reverend C. Kilmer Myers, 31 May 1968, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Brown, Liberated Zone, p. 176.

<sup>21</sup> Brown, "God is Doing His Thing."

<sup>22</sup> "Christianity, Underground Manifesto," Time, (March 29, 1968).

<sup>22a</sup> Brown, "God is Doing His Thing."

<sup>23</sup> Richard York, "The Liberated Zone, A Sermon Delivered at St. Mark's Cathedral, Seattle, Washington, 26 May 1968," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>24</sup> CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>25</sup> Otto Smith to C. Kilmer Myers, 10 October 1968, Diocese of California (Episcopal), Urban Department Archives.

<sup>26</sup> Richard York, "Talk at Solidarity Service, 15 June 1968," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>27</sup> "Police Rout Demonstrators," Berkeley Daily Gazette, 29 June, 1968.

<sup>28</sup> "Unified Proposal The Free Church, July 1, 1968 - June 30, 1970," CRRE Historical Records, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Wallace Johnson, "The Need to Know, July 18, 1968," CRRE Historical Archives. Wallace Johnson was a candidate for Vice President of the United States in several primaries in 1976. His campaign was to protest increases in salaries by legislators without public approval.



<sup>30</sup>Peter Camejo was the Socialist Worker's Party candidate for President of the United States in 1976.

<sup>31</sup>Johnson, "The Need to Know," p. 2.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>33</sup>William C. Hanley, "Memorandum to the Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council, 22 August 1968," CRRE Historical Archives, pp. 2, 3.

<sup>34</sup>"Police Interference with the Free Church, June 28-30, 1968," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>35</sup>"Minutes of the Executive Committee of the South Campus Community Ministry, 10 April 1968. CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Hanley, "Memorandum."

<sup>38</sup>"Unified Proposal," p. 11.

<sup>39</sup>"The Free Church Becomes a Congregation," 13 July 1968, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>40</sup>"Unified Proposal," p. 16.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>43</sup>Glenn Clarke, interview, Berkeley, California, 24 June 1976.

<sup>44</sup>Petition to William C. Hanley, 2 July 1968, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>45</sup>Johnson, "The Need to Know."

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>"Leaders Meet to Organize," San Francisco Chronicle, 4 July 1968.





<sup>48</sup>Johnson, "The Need to Know."

<sup>48a</sup>Raymond Jennings, "The Minister's Monday Morning Missive," The Percolator, Berkeley First Baptist Church, 14 (July 24, 1968).

<sup>49</sup>Staff minutes, 9 January 1968, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>49a</sup>"Unified Proposal."

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>51</sup>"The Avenue is Yours," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>52</sup>San Francisco Examiner, 5 July 1968; San Francisco Chronicle, 5 July 1968.

<sup>53</sup>Chronicle, 5 July 1968.

<sup>54</sup>James Comfort Smith, "The Pastor's Pen, The Telegraph Avenue Issue," St. John's Call, 27 (July 10, 1968).

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Richard York, "Talk Delivered at Celebration Service, July 4, 1968," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>"Unified Proposal," p. 17.

<sup>60</sup>"By-laws of South Campus Ministry, Inc." 10 July 1968, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>61</sup>"Unified Proposal," pp. 10-11.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>63</sup>Hanley, "Memorandum."

<sup>64</sup>Kirkpatrick Sale, SDS, (New York: Random House, 1973) p. 435.

<sup>65</sup>"Press Release, September 8, 1968," CRRE Historical Archives.



<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Anthony O. Nugent, interview, Berkeley, California, 5 March 1974.

<sup>69</sup>"Reformation Day Street Leaflet," October 1968, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>70</sup>"Reformation Day - All Saints Day Theses, November 1, 1968," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>71</sup>Brown, Liberated Zone, pp. 38-39.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., pp. 49-86.

<sup>73</sup>Richard York, "Sermon: Text Matt. 7: 3-13," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>74</sup>Richard York and Anthony Nugent, "Mission Design of the Organizing Pastors of the Berkeley Free Church, January 1, 1969 - January 1, 1970," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>75</sup>Maryetta Gross to Donald Buteyn, 11 July 1968. CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Wenifred McLeod to Donald Buteyn, 14 July 1968. CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>79</sup>Anonymous to Donald Buteyn, 12 July 1968. CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>80</sup>Johnson, "Need to Know."



## Chapter IV

### THE RADICAL CHURCH

1969

#### I

"It is no longer sufficient to say that the police and the military have 'over-reacted.' With the approval of the Governor of this state and the Attorney General, the action taken against the students, the street people and many other citizens has assumed the character of a full-scale military operation replete with the strong-armed and brutal methods which I as a student observed in Germany in 1939." Thus began a statement by C. Kilmer Myers, Episcopal Bishop of California at the height of the second battle of Berkeley: the People's Park crisis. This was a struggle over a university owned vacant lot. The South Campus white youth ghetto wanted to build a park on the lot. The university wanted, first a soccer field, then student housing. At least, these were the surface issues. The 1969 slogan and strategy of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), "bring the war home,"<sup>2</sup> was more indicative of what was at stake in the Park crisis--for the war was brought home in Berkeley in the spring and summer of 1969.

The statement by Bishop Myers was read on May 25, to "concerned people in Berkeley at the Chapel of the Reformation, Pacific School of Religion" (PSR). The tension in Berkeley was still high when the statement was read. It was less than three weeks since the PSR chapel was bombed and only three days since the death of James Rector in the



People's Park battle. Bishop Myers' analogy to Nazi Germany made it clear where he stood in his interpretation of the crisis. However, he went even further to place the blame:

The Governor [Ronald Reagan] is the one who has unleashed the "dogs of war" in Berkeley. He has been aided and abetted by other members of our governing circles who maintain that law and order must be upheld. The charge of violation of the law, both civil and moral, must be laid at their feet rather than at the feet of the helpless. We remember that it is this same Governor who advocated paving over Vietnam. He is a war-monger in Southeast Asia and he is a war-monger in California. The system of violence which spawns persons like the Governor of California is all of one piece.<sup>3</sup>

Myers added his interpretation of the larger symbolic significance of People's Park.

...We all desire the return of peace. We must pray for it and work for it. Ronald Reagan will not join us in our prayer or work for our cause. Let us then call for help from the rest of the United States---the prayers and support of all freedom-loving people who wish to recover our entire land for the people.... I want America without war, without the draft, without a huge standing army, without control by the military in coalition with University research and the billions "sacrificed" by corporate industry....The People's Park is to me a symbol of the revolt against the demonic powers which threaten to destroy utterly our America in which men [sic] may grow into freedom and dignity. Brethren, let us reaffirm the events in the Garden of Joseph of Arimathea! Let us call upon our brothers [sic] everywhere to join in our Exodus and in our celebration of the death of alienation from life and love!<sup>4</sup> [Italics mine]

Myers' strong statement indicates that the Free Church had an ally; and it was a good thing. The Free Church was more and more dependent upon the support of church leaders such as Bishop Myers for their legitimacy and even more for their financial solvency. Myers certainly was on the Free Church's side in his analysis of People's Park; the blame belonged on Reagan and "other members of our governing circles." By taking this kind of stand Myers opened himself to criticism





and pressure too. According to Arch Deacon John Weaver, a key confidant and assistant to the Bishop, Reagan made efforts to get Myers to retract his statement. Reagan's proposal, according to Weaver, entailed Reagan consenting to meet with Myers if he would retract his harsh words. "I just never passed the message on to the Bishop,"<sup>5</sup> said Weaver. The Free Church also had a supporter in Weaver. Weaver had developed an early admiration for York's ministry and for York. Weaver, like York, had a Pentecostal, tongue-speaking background. Without the support of key people in key places, such as Myers and Weaver, the difficult year 1969 would have been even more difficult. They acted as "buffers" as repression mounted against radicals. They acted as interpreters and legitimators of the Free Church's growing identification with radical causes.

Myers and Weaver were not alone in feeling that responsibility for events such as People's Park came from "high places." In an important disclosure, seven years after the crisis, Free Church founder Don Buteyn also felt People's Park was used by Reagan. Buteyn was privy to inside information. Berkeley's Chancellor, Roger Heyns, was a parishioner and close friend of Buteyn. Heyns was an early supporter of the Free Church but during the Park crisis he was attacked by the Free Church staff and Board. Buteyn, seeking some vindication for his friend, explains the political situation like this:

...[People's Park] was not a local Berkeley issue...We all saw it coming. In the previous November I was out walking with Roger Heyns on the campus....We went over to the Golden Bear [Restaurant] to have a bite to eat and then took a walk....We walked off campus, down Telegraph Avenue a block or two...On the way back Heyns said, "That lot over there is going to be cleared. It is going to be a source of great trouble unless the Board of Regents has a change of heart and subscribes to the things I am asking them to do...."



He was asking them not to stop in mid-stream in the process of clearing the old houses off the property. He wanted them to move quickly to develop the land and not let it remain empty. He said it would be a focal point for a great disaster. Then he described in great detail the political dynamics that were going on in Sacramento in the Regents' and Governor's offices, over against the Berkeley campus in particular. He was no great lover of Governor Reagan...nor was I. He knew that in Southern California Reagan's political strength would be enhanced at every point if he could be recognized as the knight on the white horse who subdued the Berkeley campus. If there was an opportunity for the administration in Sacramento to rap the knuckles of the Berkeley administration or to embarrass Berkeley,...Reagan would do it.

Roger saw it coming....The property had been purchased as part of a master plan by the University....Houses, at that time, were in the process of being demolished, and the land cleared in order to begin construction. In order to begin building in the spring the Regents had to raise and allocate the necessary capital. What Roger feared Reagan would do was to persuade the Regents to deny the funds to the Berkeley campus as a means of rapping their knuckles for prior disturbances. Disturbances for which the Berkeley administration was accused of being responsible because they were not high handed or hard nosed enough.

So Roger was afraid the funds would be denied, and they subsequently were denied. The land lay fallow and people began squatting, sleeping, having shindigs on the land. And by April, for lack of a better issue, they began claiming the land.

Thus, Roger found himself halfway across the river with his rope cut...The land was on his hands and there was nothing he could do with it....He actually wanted the land to lay fallow and let the kids camp on it. He wanted People's Park to stand.<sup>6</sup>

Buteyn was probably right as far as he went. But it was also clear to others that even Reagan's efforts were only part of a larger national plan that in part came right out of the White House. Only due to recent disclosures, however, have these plans been fully documented. The systematic nature of state coordinated repression reached its peak in 1969.

There were obvious signs, even at the time, to lead many to speculate correctly on the degree of the repression. People's Park had



been preceded, early in 1969, by two "hard line" speeches on campus disorders, one by President Richard M. Nixon, the other by U.S. Attorney General John Mitchell. Their analysis and strategy was similar to Reagan's. The blame for campus disorders had to be shared by University administrators who "failed to act" and who should "stop negotiating under the blackmail threat of violence."<sup>7</sup> The speeches were drafted during policy consultations Nixon and Mitchell had with former FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. The speeches indicated that Nixon and Mitchell had received information from "investigations" which had been conducted on a "small core of professional militants." Reagan confirmed similar fact-finding attempts during People's Park.

I told you some time ago that we've been aware of meetings in which they've been discussing their strategy and how far they should go and what they should do to keep this alive and so I think this was just another outburst.<sup>8</sup>

The "outburst" Reagan was referring to was one of the many actions surrounding People's Park by people he considered as not having "outworn or outgrown their pink booties."

However, it is only in recent years that we have learned some of the details of these intelligence gathering missions on the part of federal and military agencies. The one that has become more and more publicized in connection with Reagan was the Army intelligence program "Garden Plot." The purpose of this plan was to quell urban disorders. Reagan indicated he was aware of this program and it is likely he was well informed about other such programs.<sup>9</sup> One aspect of the Army's intelligence work consisted in looking for the possible existence of a charismatic leader who could lead a major revolt. They feared the emergence of a leader in the black community with the stature and following of a Martin Luther King Jr. or a Malcolm X. Now it is also known



that Army intelligence had infiltrated a "network of religious youth movements."<sup>10</sup> Whether or not these intelligence programs made direct contact with the Free Church and its growing network is not known. However, 1969 cannot be understood without realizing this backdrop of "the war brought home."

## II

Over against this backdrop the Free Church increasingly depended upon people such as Myers, and to some extent Buteyn (even though he had retired from the board), to get its message across to local church people, and to "come to bat" for them with local and national funding sources. The funding from local organizations, churches and merchants in Berkeley became more and more tenuous as the Free Church deepened its identification with its "street constituency," the radical youth movement in all its manifestations---cultural, political, within and outside the churches. Therefore, the ties to national funders became crucial in order to cover its largest yearly budget of \$60,000 in 1969.

By 1969 the Free Church was still largely supported by monies from the United Presbyterian Church and the Episcopal Church. A new arrangement was negotiated in the first part of 1969 to cover Jock Brown's salary and additional programming. The money from the national offices was theoretically not contingent on local support, but without it, the funding would have been doubtful. For example, the Episcopal money that came in 1969 would not have been so generous without Bishop Myers' blessing of the Free Church program. One factor behind his support of the Free Church was its usefulness in indicating to critical liberals that the church was active and involved in the urban crisis.





No doubt there were other factors responsible for Myers' support. Certainly York worked hard at keeping Myers on his side. He was particularly successful in drawing parallels between the Free Church street ministry and Myers' early street ministry in New York.

However, the strategies of many national funders were increasingly at odds with local and regional church organizations, even to the point of undercutting their local support. Their interest was in putting the church "up against the wall," in really challenging the church to be the real church. In many cases in the 1960's, bureaucratic positions were created precisely for achieving prophetic witness within the churches. They were given large sums of money and much personal discretion. It was almost a sign of success if conflicts were created in local parishes.

For example, in November of 1969 Anthony Morley, the Executive for Experimentation and Development of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, wrote a letter of encouragement to "his" local projects in the Bay Area---of which the Free Church was one. The letter was sent in response to one of the "actions" of the Free Church's Guerilla Academy of the Revolutionary Church (GARC). GARC had just disrupted a meeting of the National Association of Episcopal Schools and Military Academies (NAES) at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. In a "Declaration of War," GARC charged NAES with "maintaining a system of military academies and other schools for the education of imperialist military personnel in church institutions, rather than training the cadre of the Christian revolution." <sup>11</sup> At the conference forty militants disrupted a worship service conducted by John Hines, the Presiding Bishop of the National Episcopal Church, to announce their demands, and



then "commandeered the building" for a peace march the following day.

The text of Morley's letter:

Fratres!

All encouragement to GARC and the revolutionary solidarity of EMHA-FCB [Ecumenical Ministry in the Haight-Ashbury---Free Church Berkeley] therein. Does Bishop Hines understand that his interrupters were 815 [number of national office in New York] grantees? HOW LONG WILL ANY INSTITUTION FUND ITS OWN REVOLUTION?

Yours in anticipation of future poverty, and a place to crash.<sup>12</sup>

For 1969, at least, the national agencies within the churches, with some regional collaboration, were willing to fund their own revolution. However, most immediate local support had dried up for religious radicalism, for which the Free Church was known.

Therefore, as a direct consequence of the Free Church's identification with the radical street scene, even prior to their participation in People's Park, the local church supporters had increased difficulty justifying their financial support of a "radical organization." However, some of the most serious local criticism was aimed at the Free Church because of its religious radicalism, that is, its challenge to the churches. To some people, as long as the Free Church remained a champion of street people's rights they were not concerned. However, when the Free Church's radicalization in the streets was connected with their church politics, many church leaders felt threatened. The threat became all the more serious when the Free Church could back up its actions with Christian tradition and its own sense of being the real church. For example, Brown Barr, the minister of Berkeley's First Congregational Church, in April of 1969 expressed his serious reservations about the Free Church ministry. He was concerned that



the Free Church had moved beyond a "street ministry" to become "institutionalized" and to "develop its orders and its liturgies and other paraphernalia of the established Church."<sup>13</sup> He was particularly concerned about the theology that he felt was responsible for the Free Church's shift to an "established church." He called it "neo-fundamentalism":

...it seems to us that the Church thus formed is committed to a neo-fundamentalism which we personally cannot accept. It may indeed be that the radical wing of the Church, both to the right and to the left, is correct and that the Church must possess and declare a specific political bias. Perhaps that is the form the Church must take. But that is yet to be proved.<sup>14</sup>

Barr then quotes from former U.S. Cabinet member for Health, Education and Welfare and the founder of Common Cause, John Gardner, on radicals, and concludes with a financial threat.

"As radicals move into the conflict that is often required to produce social change they tend to rigidify as individuals and to form themselves into highly dogmatic organizations, intolerant of diversity within their own ranks... They splinter because there is no reasonable way to disagree except by breaking up." The neo-fundamentalism of the Free Church differs only in objects of devotion from the neo-fundamentalism of churches which have made a patron saint of John Birch. Neither one of us wants our money to go to support either sort of operation. Furthermore, we do not believe that we can responsibly allocate the funds entrusted to us by our people to that sort of operation. [Italics mine]<sup>15</sup>

The radical "neo-fundamentalism" that jeopardized support of the Free Church from the First Congregational Church reached its apex in the People's Park struggle.



Complaints similar to Barr's came even from such an ardent supporter as Don Buteyn. He was beginning to question the direction and involvement of the Free Church. But he still felt loyalty to the experimental project he helped to bring into existence. Therefore, he just wanted, as he put it, "to share differences of viewpoint in love and peace with [his] brothers without holding over them the threat of withdrawal of either spiritual, moral or financial support."<sup>16</sup> The money from First Presbyterian Church was secure, at least for 1969. The differences that Buteyn wanted to share reflected his original rationale for the South Campus Community Ministry. Buteyn's position represented the parallel, at times complementary but usually conflicting second stream of thought that existed within the organization in the past. With Buteyn retired from the board this second stream of thought was more external to the Free Church, yet not without influence, especially as it was backed up by funding (\$1,200 for 1969 from First Presbyterian).<sup>17</sup> Buteyn's notions of "bridge building," "communication breakdown" and "reconciliation" were prominent in a letter written by him on behalf of First Presbyterian's Department of Mission. He summed up the basic difference in his final point:

We are concerned that public statements and inferences made by Free Church Staff and others related to the program have tended to break the bonds with the rest of the Body of Christ in Berkeley, to over-identify the Free Church with only one segment of the community, and to deprive





the Free Church of its most essential quality--- its freedom. The militant segment of Berkeley must be reached. If it is reached at the price of ignoring the rest of the community the process of reconciliation will be seriously hampered. Confrontations are definitely not the only way to the resolution of difficulties. To seriously implement the Confession of 1967 [United Presbyterian Church U.S.A.] every avenue for reconciliation must be skillfully employed.<sup>18</sup> [Italics mine]

These criticisms were to be expected by the Free Church after its involvement in People's Park. What was the role of the Free Church in the second battle of Berkeley?

### III

Three and a half weeks after the University of California-owned vacant lot in the South Campus had been "liberated" by local street people, a group of clergy led by York consecrated the liberated territory with an "ecumenical" religious service. Father James Conway of the Catholic Newman Center, an Episcopal Deaconess and a celebrant dressed in flowing eastern-style garb assisted York in the "blessing." The simple consecration liturgy was to evolve to a fully developed



guerrilla liturgy, later to be included in the Free Church's Covenant of Peace: A Liberation Prayer Book. The liturgy was called "Earth Rebirth." Writing in 1970, Brown and York refer to "Earth Rebirth" liturgy in the Preface to the Covenant of Peace:

...it evolved from the consecration of People's Park on 11 May 1969;...It is superficially syncretistic for a wide coalition with ecology activists. Thanks to Viv Broughton for "How shall we sing the Lord's song"; to Gary Snyder for "earth household"; to various straight sources for well known slogans; to Incredible String Band for the Benediction; and to Smokey the Bear for kind permission to reproduce his sutra free forever. 19

Portions of the liturgy give us a feel for the ability of the Free Church, particularly Brown and York, to translate secular movement themes into liturgical form. The ecology movement was beginning to blossom in 1969.

#### SLOGANS

Plant the world park  
 Let the world park  
 Give grass a chance  
 Liberate the park of your choice  
 Support your local garden  
 Dig up all asphalt...

Green is beautiful  
 Live invisible  
 Make love not war  
 Weave the great web  
 Replace wheel by feet  
 Smash consumer culture  
 Shut down machines  
 On strike shut it down  
 Planet on strike  
 Planet on strike



Graphic 7  
PEOPLE'S PARK DEDICATION  
1969



Source:  
Berkeley Free Church Calendar 1970



Planet on strike  
Plant the world park

## LITANY IN PROCESSION

(At streetcorners, when held up by cops, etc...)

Restore our earth household: Restore our earth household.  
All powers of being, restore our earth household: Restore  
our earth household:  
Sea of air, blowing out the smog of our self poisoning:  
...Stream and river, purifying the land's body:  
Deer and buffalo in cooperation with grasslands:  
...Insurgent Red Men, putting a new song in our mouth:  
Insurgent Black Men, putting a new song in our mouth:  
Insurgent Brown Men, taking over the vineyards:  
Insurgent Yellow Men, resisting patented poisons:  
...Spirit of John Muir, keeper of the garden, marching  
beside us:  
Spirit of Johnny Appleseed, planter of Eden, marching beside  
us:  
Yin and Yang, male and female principles of creation:  
Buddha the compassionate, surviving the cycle of dying:  
Adam and Eve, first parents in the paradise of Eden:  
...Refugees in the blackened ruins of the doomed city:  
Restore our earth household  
All who build a new world on the vacant lots of the  
old: Restore our earth household.<sup>20</sup>

"Restore our earth household," "Planet on strike," and "We are building a new society on the vacant lots of the old," are phrases that spoke to many "Free Churchers" and many others during the People's Park crisis. But what was People's Park all about? People's Park was the year 1969 in miniature, one dramatic scene. It was another battle for territorial rights of the South Campus subculture. At its best it was a symbol that had meaning beyond its surface contradictions. In fact, it was this meaning that allowed for a reconciliation of the various internal contradictions. People's Park was the height of mass protest in Berkeley; but People's Park was the height of mass repression in Berkeley. People's Park was the height of coalitional radicalism in Berkeley on a given issue; but People's Park was staged at the height





of factionalism in the radical community. People's Park represented the "Woodstock"<sup>21</sup> experience of 1969, fused with a deepening political-economic critique of U.S. society. Ecology and new life styles were held in tension with anti-capitalism and Marxist analysis; but People's Park also represented the deep divisions between cultural radicals and political radicals.

If People's Park was the year 1969 in miniature, the Free Church in 1969 was People's Park in miniature. Therefore, in order to understand the "radical" Free Church in 1969, some background details regarding the actual events of the Park battle are necessary.

People's Park, as Don Buteyn observed, was something that everyone close to the Telegraph Avenue scene could see coming. However, to date its origins precisely would be difficult. Was it 1956, when the site of the Park, which included many charming Berkeley residences, was designated for University expansion? Was it 1964, when it became obvious that Berkeley had a subculture at odds with the business-as-usual policies of the "town and gown"? Whenever one chooses to begin the story, the summer before must be seen as a portent. The French Solidarity strikes, riots and aftermath, when the Free Church won its battle stripes, was a beginning to People's Park. It was after this first battle for Berkeley that city and university officials had to take measures to head off future possible riots. Therefore, in the immediate aftermath of the riot they created an official city "fact finding" group, the Telegraph Avenue Concerns Committee (TACC). Ray Jennings, the pastor of the First Baptist Church and a Free Church board member, York, and other local clergy, merchants, university and town officials met to solve the problem of violence in the South Campus. The South Campus



subculture now was fully recognized as the extremely volatile youth ghetto it had been proclaiming itself. Therefore, one of the official recommendations of this committee was the development of a park and recreation center just off of Telegraph Avenue. They wanted to channel "the revolution on the streets"<sup>19</sup> into an organized community recreation program. Coincidentally, late in 1968, the future site of People's Park had been cleared of houses and was only being used for a dirt parking lot. The TACC recommended that the city of Berkeley purchase the property from the university. This recommendation lay buried in official city reports, known only to the small group of TACC members and never acted upon.<sup>23</sup>

It was not until April of 1969 that the Park became an issue. Depending upon one's sources the real beginning of the Park was: a logical outgrowth of the obvious needs of the South Campus subculture; a buffoonish event in the spring ritual of "What else is there to do"; or a contrived, calculated and sinister plot by the fascist pigs of Nixon-Mitchell-Reagan-Hoover or by the "Commie-Maoist-Marxist-Leninist-pinkos." At the time it was clear which one the Free Church chose. It is also clear by the public record of the event---which is not without contradictions---that the event itself became much more than its beginning, regardless which interpretation one wants to believe.

The Free Church, through the eyes of its street "clientele," volunteers, staff and board, saw People's Park much the same way Bishop Myers saw it in his PSR Chapel communique. It happened because it was needed---as the Telegraph Avenue Concerns Committee report indicated. York described the first few days of building the Park as "the best possible therapy" that could be devised for the street people that com-



prised his youth ghetto parish and for whom he was minister and counsellor. The building of the Park began as a spontaneous "freak" event that emerged from real human needs, according to York. He described the "organization" that went into the initial planting of the grass. "Super Joel," a local hip-street-freak figure, took it upon himself--- "with a little help from his friends"---to place an anonymous ad in the Berkeley Barb calling for the building of the Park. He purchased the sod, and made contact with other South Campus freak (1969 term for "hippie") organizations. The Free Church was contacted, since it was considered a legitimate freak organization with a large constituency. The desire for a large confrontation was not present in the minds of these self-proclaimed freaks. In fact, according to the radical factions on the street, the freaks or cultural radicals like Super Joel resented the student political radicals precisely because the political radicals would stage their revolution on the Avenue and the freaks would get their "heads busted." Therefore, regardless of what eventually happened, the Free Church's "myth of origin" of People's Park was clear: it was spontaneous and needed. The buffoonish, freaky and spontaneous origins of the Park were captured in Super Joel's Barb ad.<sup>24</sup> It was signed "Robin Hood's Park Commissioner."

At one o'clock our rural reclamation project for Telegraph Avenue commences---the expectation of beauty.

We want the park to be a cultural, political, freakout and rap center for the Western world.

...Bring shovels, hoses, chairs, grass, paints, flowers, trees, bulldozers, topsoil, colorful smiles, laughter and lots of sweat.

'Nobody supervises and the trip belongs to whoever dreams.'<sup>25</sup>

A letter to Chancellor Heyns by the Chair of the Board of the Free Church, Otto Smith, mathematics professor at the University,



further illustrates the Free Church's perspective on People's Park.

The construction of "People's Park" on university property was a spontaneous surprise, and a creative venture by university students, local residents, and the street community. Its existence demonstrates that it fills an important need.<sup>26</sup>

However, People's Park became much more, at least symbolically, than this "spontaneous surprise." The Free Church also became deeply involved in every facet of the struggle.

The major confrontation occurred on May 15, just three days after York's consecration of the Park. The University officials decided to fence out the builders of the Park, regain control of the land, and, in their terms, "reestablish the conveniently forgotten fact that the field is indeed the University's, and to exclude unauthorized persons from the site."<sup>27</sup> The events following the fencing-off are generally known and form part of this country's "legend of the sixties."

On May 15 at 6:20 a.m. the fence went up. At 12:38 p.m. 6,000 people marched to the Park and were met by California Highway Patrolmen and Alameda County Sheriffs. When the bottles, bricks, tear gas, fire hoses, and shotguns calmed, over fifty people were in hospital, one, James Rector, eventually to die, one blinded, and numerous maimed for life. The Free Church building was converted into a hospital to administer first aid. Teams of Free Church medics were sent to the battle zone. Emergency first aid supplies from the National Red Cross were released to the Free Church. A disaster alert and curfew were put into effect. The National Guard was called in. Hundreds of people were carted off to jail. May 15 was only the beginning, and even today the verdict is still not in on People's Park. Today the site remains undeveloped, half of it devoted to a parking lot and half to trees,





grass, and a makeshift community garden.

The frantic pace of the battle continued for the rest of the month and culminated in a Memorial Day march in support of the Park. The march was attended by over thirty thousand people. Over this period of a month, the Free Church's staff, volunteers, building and equipment were at the total service of the struggle for People's Park. The first aid medical teams operated for a month out of the Free Church building. York was appointed by the militants to serve on the People's Park Negotiating Committee. The church was the primary headquarters of the pro-Park movement. The mimeo machines were operated twenty-four hours a day---according to a Free Church quarterly report. Over a three week period, \$50,000 dollars was collected by the Free Church for the People's Park Bail Fund---which operated out of Jock Brown's home. York played a leadership role in most of the public events. Nugent's role in People's Park was to organize the local churches to support the pro-Park forces. This was an exhausting behind-the-scenes job, but crucial to the "public" effort of York, and the Free Church in general. The Free Church began the Memorial Day march with one of its guerrilla liturgies.

The Free Church was also instrumental in "liberating People's Park annex." Hoes and shovels were provided by the Free Church as people moved in to "claim" the vacant land cleared along Hearst Street in Berkeley by the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) for its subway system. York recounts this particularly dramatic episode, typical of the many events surrounding the People's Park battle:

We were very involved in this...I had the great honor and distinction of being the first person to stick a shovel in People's Park Annex soil.



By then we were helping to lead the battle. We provided the trucks and tools. On this big march, we were screaming run, run, dig, dig, and jumping off the trucks throwing the tools to people running beside the truck. The police were behind us and "millions" of people were pouring onto the land. They were starting to dig and plant like mad, while waiting for the cops to descend on us any minute, which they did. The National Guard and the cops immediately descended. They pushed us off the land and chased us through the back yards of nearby houses.

I remember hiding with Tom Hayden that day. After they pushed us off the land, they pushed us north of the Annex...heading into the residential north side. Hundreds of people, all running, would regather at intersections and stop traffic. The police would zoom in and club us all. I remember Hayden and I running together for our lives. We went over a fence into someone's back yard with four or five others. The police came running in after us... We all went over another fence, just went like monkeys, into another back yard. The police followed. So we went over another fence and ended up in a laundry room of an apartment building. Hayden and I were the only ones that made it into the laundry...But there was a window open with no glass...and this "pig" with a big club sticks his head in and looks at us and says, "no sanctuary"! "no sanctuary"! "Get out of here."

That "blew my mind"; that will stick with me forever. It was like the rules of the game. They were into the game as much as we were. It was a game mentality. It was like "hide and seek," when you say "home"! "home"! And he was saying that that was not fair to hide in there. So we got up and ran out the door, with him on our tail, out into the street again. We ran right into the arms of more clubs and cops. There was no sanctuary!<sup>28</sup>

#### IV

However, beneath the "fun and games" there were serious issues and developments. A large public outcry addressed itself to some of these issues. For example, there was the "closing down" of Berkeley with a state of disaster decree and the quartering of National Guard troops in the Park for over a month. This was seen by most people, even anti-Park people, as over-kill tactics by Reagan. He had the



power and authority to overrule local Berkeley officials, who felt the National Guard presence was aggravating the situation. The list of those coalescing against Reagan's Park policies was impressive, and included, besides church leaders like Myers, prominent figures such as poets Gary Snyder and Lawrence Ferlinghetti, the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen Workers, professors at the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Science in Palo Alto, and scientists at the Linus Pauling and Salk Institutes. Also, U.S. Senator Eugene McCarthy was a participant in a mass demonstration in Sacramento protesting the National Guard in Berkeley. The pro-Park solidarity was well mobilized on the other California state campuses. For example, 2,000 students marched at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA).

The Free Church did its part in focussing national attention on the People's Park battle. They sponsored benefit rock concerts for the Park bail fund and used their network of friends and contacts to raise more money. Nugent, attending a Presbyterian General Assembly in San Antonio, Texas, when the battle first broke out, sponsored an Assembly resolution in favor of the Park and against Reagan. It was passed.

This large and favorable outcry---though Reagan had his supporters too---buoyed the spirits of many radicals hopeful for new coalitions and alliances. The new alliances were not built just on negative Reagan sentiment. The struggle for such a human need as parks caught the imagination of many people. The "politics" of the Park battle allowed for the fusing of cultural and political radicals. A new coalition developed that was oriented to creative and positive issues, not just to the anti politics of confrontation. The effervescence of the early



civil rights marches seemed to be recaptured, at least for a brief moment. A new day was dawning. The Free Church now saw more hope for its agenda within the movement.

The Park, and the whole green revolution/ecology theme of it, had a beneficent effect on the Berkeley Movement: [it] humanized the violent political vibes and put ecology, for the first time, in the center of radical issues here. We, needless to say, are happy about both.<sup>29</sup>

But as much as ecology was a theme in the crisis, there were other themes that would prove more dominant. And as much as the Park was able to fuse political and cultural radicals, the underlying dynamic was too strong to keep the two groups together. Repression against and factionalism within the radical movement had gone too far to be overcome by one brief struggle within the history of the new left. Therefore, the real story developing in 1969 was the beginning of the end for counterculture radicals and the new left. The real stories were not effervescence and revolution but repression and factionalism. Berkeley City Manager Hanley correctly perceived the underlying issue that helped to create the polarized situation when he posed the following alternatives.

The basic issue, therefore, was and is whether public property is to be developed and controlled by a duly constituted authority or by any ad hoc group that chooses to assert rights and powers over it.

OR, as it was succinctly put in a people's handout on May 16, "control over that Park represented more than just a piece of land. It raised the basic question of who will control the institutions and property in this country and for what purposes."<sup>30</sup>

These were the same alternatives that disturbed many legislators. The new concern was no longer disruptive student radicals---it was the articulated challenge that went to the core of U.S. society.





The challenge had no chance of succeeding, but the fact that the radicals perceived the issue so clearly frightened many. The Movement was becoming increasingly anticapitalist. This position challenged the basic property rights of U.S. capitalism and resulted in increasingly repressive tactics by U.S. officials---tactics that the fun-and-games theater-like quality of the street battles served only to mask over.

But the downfall of the radical movement, particularly its political side, was not only the result of "outside" forces. The repression strategy was aided and abetted by internal Movement factionalism. No doubt there were outside agents helping along the factional disputes. But the new left factionalism could not be reduced to agents provocateurs. The most celebrated split occurred within SDS. The Progressive Labor Party (PLP) had developed enough strength within SDS to totally divide SDS into two distinct organizations. One was controlled by PLP, the other by the group that was to emerge as the Weather Underground. This split was a microcosm of the whole radical student movement nationwide. Numerous issues separated the two groups, some false and some real. Even though both groups had become isolated from early SDS constituencies at the time of the split, the division was a version of the cultural/political split in the whole radical movement: "life-style politics" vs. "seizing state power," "adventurism" vs. "real politics."<sup>31</sup>

Thus, a complex mixture of new analyses, coalitions, and hopes, with repression, factionalism and false hopes set the stage for the drama of which People's Park was only a brief interlude. And the Free Church mirrored all these elements of the 1969 scene. It had its own version of the division within the Movement, although its involvement

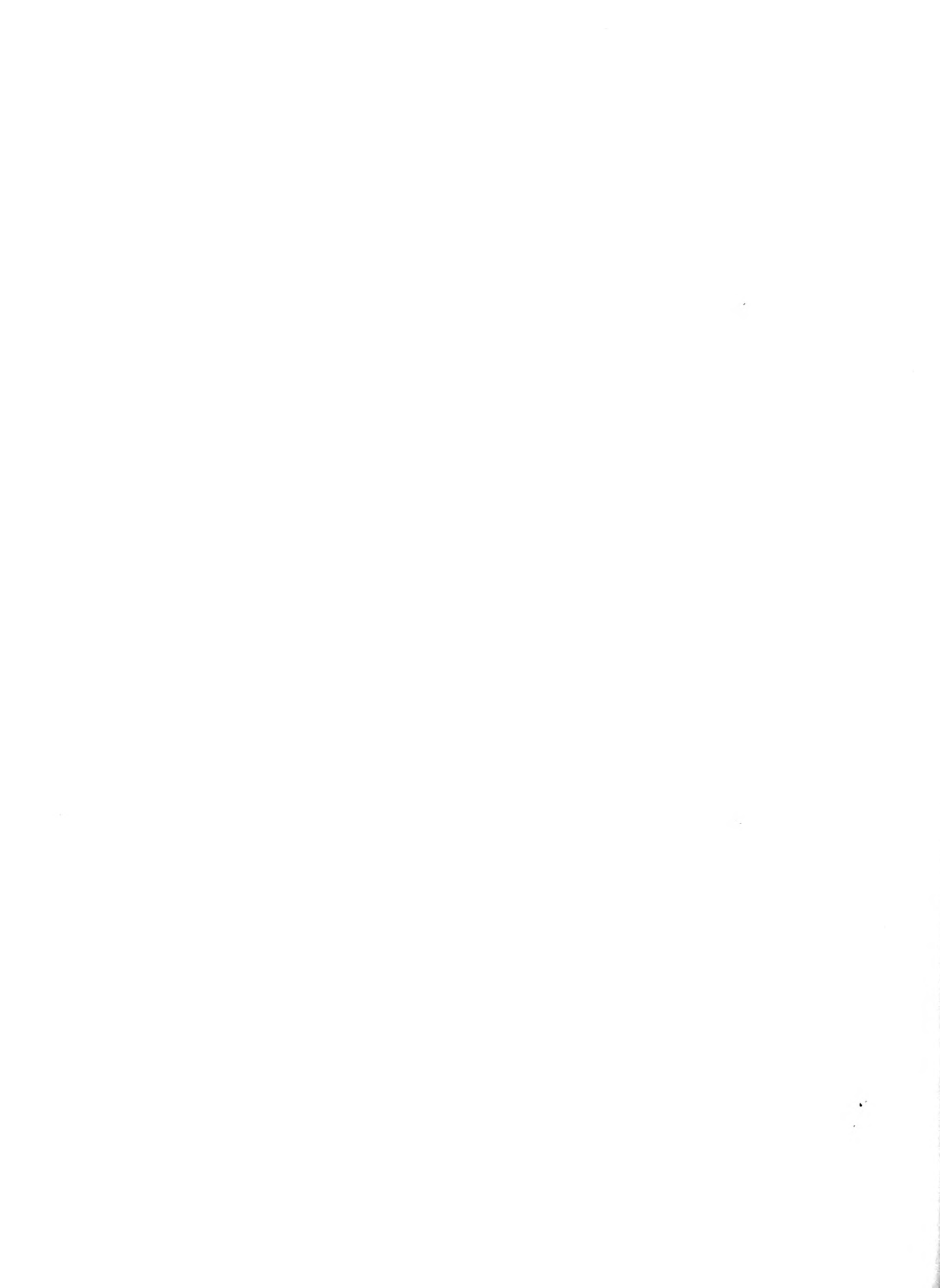


in the People's Park battle seemed, at least temporarily, to solve the problem. At one level, "the radical church," which the Free Church had unquestionably become, deepened its analysis and self-understanding. This was the level of ideology, or the "religious politics" of the Free Church. In 1969 the coherence of this ideology was made possible by the heavy cultural component of the People's Park battle, for it was in the realm of cultural politics that the Free Church excelled. The religious politics of the Free Church depended on a strong cultural component alongside its growing political component. In the Free Church, as in the rest of the Movement, this coherence was shortlived, overstrained by factionalism and repression.

## V

However, it was still easy for the Free Church to be hopeful in 1969. Much like the rest of the Movement, this was the year of one continuous "action" for the Free Church. And if one believed "actions" were important, one also had to believe that they were accomplishing something toward the new world one hoped to create. One could point to "facts." The radical church movement was growing. New national networks across denomination lines were formed. There was agit-prop theater. The People's Park liturgy, quoted above, was only one of many such guerilla liturgies to come out of 1969---they comprised a major portion of the Free Church's actions.

Locally, the Free Church helped to organize a two day "exorcism" of the Pacific School of Religion. And as part of draft resistance protests, the Free Church "exorcised the demons" at the San Francisco Federal



Court building. The Guerrilla Academy of the Revolutionary Church (GARC), mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, was another action that kept the Free Church visible and busy locally.

It was a national action that was the most significant theater staged by the Free Church in 1969. At a November meeting in Detroit of the General Convention of the National Council of Churches (NCC), the guerrilla-underground-radical-liberated-submarine churches formed a national coalition of "from the bottom up" ecumenists to protest the official "top down" ecumenism of the NCC. Dubbed "Jonathan's Wake" in honor of U.S. "free church" theologian Jonathan Edwards, the protest brought a coalition of radical church "youth" to Detroit to wage a full scale battle on behalf of a potpourri of radical causes. The Free Church was given the responsibility for its specialty, guerrilla liturgy. The liturgy they prepared bore the significant title "Jonathan's Wake: The Death and Transfiguration of the Jolly Green Giant." The implied analogy was obvious, or as the Jonathan's Wake protesters put it:

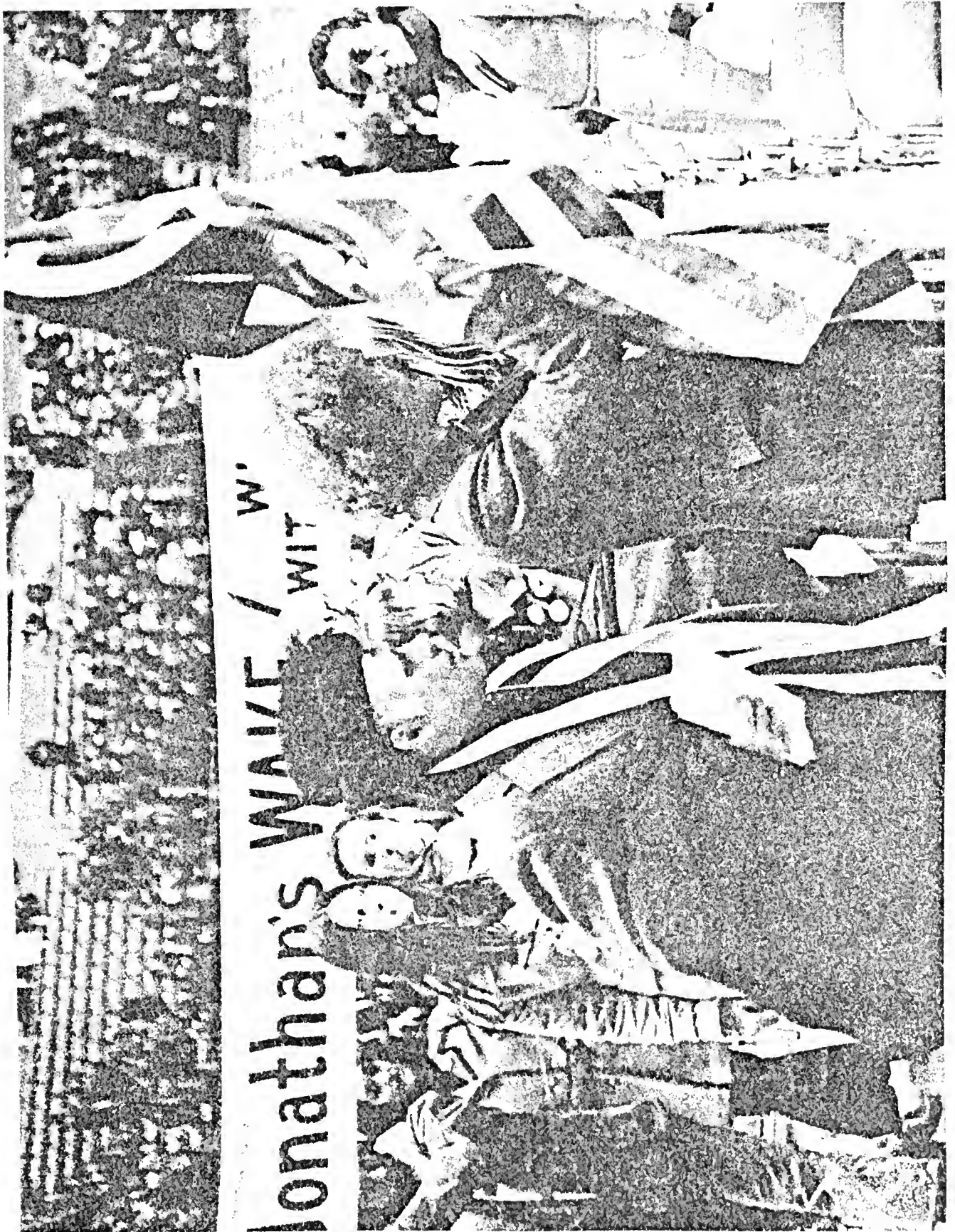
It comes to us from informed sources that a wake was originally established to watch over a corpse to make sure the body was actually dead. This was to avoid a premature burial. Now apply that formula to the National Council of Churches Triennial Meeting and you will see what Jonathan's Wake is all about.<sup>32</sup>

The first part of the "Death of the Jolly Green Giant" was principally performed by a large contingent of members of the Free Church headed by York, Nugent and Brown. Stephen Rose, editor of Renewal Magazine and main organizer of Jonathan's Wake, also participated in the liturgy. The liturgy communicates the flavor of the protest, and even more clearly the Free Church's style of church protest late in 1969.

(The Giant represents the church in complicity as coopted by the PIG.)



Graphic 8  
MALCOLM BOYD AND RICHARD YORK AT  
JONATHAN'S WAKE 1969



Source:

Berkeley Free Church Calendar 1970





Stephen: Ladies and gentlemen, the mayor of this city has asked me to announce---

Jock: (Whispers in his ear.)

Stephen: (Is flustered.) It seems there really is some disturbance, everybody should not say anything or do anything. Teargas is not harmful to you...

(Disturbances are heard outside. Enter blacks with Tony [Nugent] as MC: "The mother-fucking blue meanies are after us." Enter street people under Glen [Clarke]: "Heavy, Man." Enter VC under Melinda [Harley] with flags and guns: "Giai Phong.: The VC set up guerrilla outpost behind potted palms.)

(Enter Jolly Green Giant, blue meanies, Dick as World Pig. (TAPE Begins) "Jolly Green Giant to base. We see Berkeley. We see Auschwitz. We see Lidice. We see Pinkville. We see Watts. We see Greenboro. Shall we proceed with search and destroy mission? Over and out..."... Many of the militants are zapped...all fall dead, except PIG who escapes.)

Stephen: Ladies and gentlemen, I congratulate you once again for having said nothing and done nothing as you have done for the last two thousand years. (Feels his pulse.) No pulse. I hereby declare this church well and truly dead. (He dies.)

Jock: (Begins wake.)

How are thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer  
son of the morning.  
We had to destroy the city to save it.  
Oh my people, what have I done unto thee.  
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Deathless, have  
mercy upon us.

(Militants come to life and do refrain as indicated.)<sup>33</sup>

Jonathan's Wake represented a year-long attempt by radical Christians at strategizing and building networks and coalitions all across the country. The Free Church was playing a major organizing role at the national level. Under Nugent's editorship it published a newsletter, the Liberated Church Press, that served this national network of radical churches. Nugent was more and more responsible for this national focus. He was aided by the volunteer work of Emily Brown, who



was now playing a major role with Jock in the Free Church community. She was in charge of a resource directory called Win With Love, a national catalog of "liberated" or radical churches or church-related organizations. The national "liberated church" forces had gathered in "camp meetings" at least twice by the time of the NCC meeting in November in Detroit. The NCC convention, therefore, culminated almost a year of planning, and the enthusiasm was high. The Free Church had some right to feel hopeful.

The growing forces within the churches, to some extent, were also indicative of the nationwide Movement in general. Half a million people demonstrated against the war in October. "Earth Day" brought millions of people an awareness of ecology. Mass rock festivals were signalling new strength in the counter-cultural wing of the Movement. New forces were emerging, too. The women's movement was gaining momentum within radical circles. New alliances were being attempted between black and white militants. There were parallel developments within the churches. For example, a large portion of the Jonathan's Wake protest was in support of the "Black Manifesto" presented by James Foreman. However, the women's movement within the church was just beginning, and was not yet integrated into the coalitional politics of the radical church movement. In fact, the NCC convention marked the first time a major church convention heard the clear voice of the contemporary women's movement politics. Women delegates were mobilized against what they called a "white, middle class, over-forty convention."<sup>34</sup>

But the growing nation-wide radical church movement was congratulated, like the larger Movement, with repression and new forces of backlash. The Reagan side of the People's Park battle was only one example



in the 1969 drama of repression for the Free Church. There were two other events worth mentioning that illustrate the backdrop of revolutionary euphoria being dampened by repression and backlash in 1969. Eventually this repressive climate was to stretch and strain the internal organization of the Free Church. The first of these events involved civil disobedience by two members of the Free Church; the second concerned the Black Panther Party.

Sali McAllister and Charlene Pope, Free Church "parishioners," were convicted on charges that stemmed from civil disobedience in connection with the courtmartial of twenty seven Army men protesting the Viet Nam war at the Presidio in San Francisco. McAllister and Pope had sprayed the military courtroom with red paint. Soon after the incident, at their court appearance, they, along with other Free Church members, performed a guerrilla liturgy at the San Francisco Court House. During the liturgy paint was poured into the large Court House fountain. While police were arresting the two women, York blocked the passage into the Court House and was also arrested. The two women were convicted and released on bail. After they jumped bail the Free Church issued a press release in their support, signed by York, Nugent and Brown:

United States Commissioner Goldsmith's remark to the press to the effect that these women were in need of psychiatric attention reminds us irresistably of the Czarist policy in Russia, whereby critics of the regime, not falling under any provision of law, were adjudged insane. We rather think that it is the masters of war, the keepers of stockades, and the judges of injustice in this nation that are in need of psychiatric care.<sup>35</sup>

McAllister and Pope were later arrested when they sought symbolic sanctuary in a church. York's charges were dropped.

Civil disobedience protests such as these, however, were only minor flirtations with the repression of the time. One of the most



sinister plots by U.S. intelligence agencies, in cooperation with the Nixon administration, took place largely on the Free Church's home front in Berkeley. This was the repression against the Bay Area-based Black Panther Party. There were deliberate attempts in 1969 by numerous U.S. agencies to splinter or actually "wipe out" the Party. The Free Church developed close contact with the Panthers. In July, York was a speaker at the Black Panther Party-sponsored United Front Against Fascism. Ties with the Panthers were also strengthened when Earl Neal, an Episcopal priest, and the Panthers' "chaplain," joined the Free Church Board in 1969.

The local law enforcement agencies also got into the act against the Panthers. There was a Berkeley Police plan for the "annihilation" of the Black Panther Party national headquarters located on Shattuck Avenue in Berkeley. It was exposed, and later admitted by Berkeley police officials. York, in a letter to the new Police Chief Baker, registered his "strongest protest against even the thought of such a plan, much less the actual drafting of it."

I can no longer consider of any value such proposals as police-community workshops and public meetings aimed at bettering relations between police and the people. Who can sit down and talk with the mentality represented in this plan. Rather, it fills me with disgust, and then with fear and anger. Rather than talking, I believe that my church would do better to begin installing armor-plate on our own windows immediately. Let me put it more directly; do you have similar plans for the Free Church and other Movement headquarters? We are anxious to know...

I think I speak for the Free Church community in saying that we are a church which will support our brothers in the Black Panther Party with whatever resources we have. Documents such as this plan only confirm us in the belief that the Party is the cutting edge of the black man's struggle (and our own) for liberation of this society.<sup>36</sup>

"The Panther hunt," as columnist Nicholas von Hoffman was to call





it in a passionate article in December, had just achieved its most significant "rubout" of 1967: the murder of Illinois Black Panther Party chairman Fred Hampton.<sup>37</sup> The paranoia York expressed in his letter was based on cold cruel facts in the world around him. Also, the factionalism experienced by the Panthers in the face of repression had parallels in the Free Church. In order to understand the dissension brewing within the Free Church, more needs to be said about the structure and thought of the Free Church in 1969. A stable structure and integrated theology and politics was crucial for the Free Church to remain active and united in the volatile year of 1969. First, let us analyze the structure.

## VI

In keeping with the revision of the by-laws in June of 1968 and its loose concept of membership, an announcement for the annual board meeting in July of 1969 read:

Anyone who elects to participate in our work and attend our meetings may vote in the Annual Meeting (By-laws, Art. IV sec. 1). It is very important that you come. Please do.<sup>38</sup>

The minutes of the board meeting show that sixty seven people attended the annual meeting to vote in a new group of trustees and officers. Over half of the people attending were from the bottom tier of the organization. The "great new dynamic," that was acknowledged in the "First Quarter Directors' Report," was still going strong: "The hippie [a catchall word used in 1969 to refer to all the non-establishment youth] community is asserting itself at all levels of the project."<sup>39</sup> In fact, at the annual meeting another by-law revision was talked about to insure an even greater degree of participation for the bottom tier in the decision making process



of the organization. The major restructuring plan already in the process of being defined at the time of the annual meeting was referred to as the "collective plan." This plan was eventually outlined in the Free Church Collective Handbook, printed in January of 1970 but written the last two months of 1969.

The collective plan was largely a response to pressure from the strong bottom tier of the organization. It wanted a fully developed "use church," not one administrated by "outside" directors. The bottom tier workers did not want a structureless church that would breed chaos, only greater assurance that the people who did the work of the church had some control over its operation and policy. The loose definition of membership was challenged because it fostered a de facto criterion of membership which excluded many involved people. A person had to be a worker on one of the Free Church's service projects to be considered a "member." Many who were interested in the liturgical and congregational aspect of the Free Church were unable to secure a staff job or volunteer at one of the service jobs. Early in 1969 these people began demanding structural revisions which would better facilitate a worshipping congregation. On March 27, 1969 a petition was signed by people in various ways associated with the Free Church:

TO OUR CLERGY:

We, the members of the Free Church want a radical community that models its life and action on the example of our brother Jesus. To date, this community is non-existent. We see the following plans as the only means of achieving this:

1. That we have dialogue with Jock and Dick
2. That we receive Christian/Political inspiration taught by our resident theologian, John P. Brown, on the basis of the document The Axis of History, and The Liberated Zone, a Guide to Christian Resistance. (time will be left up to Jock and Dick)



3. that we establish monthly meetings of the worshipping congregation with clergy present.
  - a. to help organize special services
  - b. train lay readers
  - c. to help organize more congregation participation in our services.
  - d. to help organize guerilla theater
  - e. to help organize political activities
  - f. to help organize a day (this summer) of public witness, card turn in, people's liberation.
  - g. develop creative guerilla tactics.

To summarize, we want the clergy to spend as much time as possible helping us to develop a radically political community using the example of Jesus as our model.

THE PEOPLES' CHURCH IS STRIKING!  
THE GUERILLA CHURCH IS RECRUITING!<sup>40</sup>

Peoples Park arrived, demanding an adjustment in the timetable for this new restructuring. It was not until August that York once again put the restructuring at the top of his list of priorities in a directors report. He acknowledged that the current organizational structure could not "build community" and "at any given time only a certain number of people can be involved in any depth with the program."<sup>41</sup>

For example: a new young person, or a student or a drop-out clergyman comes and asks, "How can I get involved as an active member of the Free Church?" Our usual answer is: well, you can work Switchboard or help man the coffee house. We worship on Friday nights, and if you hang around...long enough, you might find some other way of getting involved. This will not longer do...

...Many feel the heavy lack of a sense of community here because (in part) of this terrible open-endedness.<sup>42</sup>

What York alluded to, and what was the case with those who signed the March petition, was that new kinds of people were active in the Free Church's work. They were not the "clientele" of the social service ministry



nor the average transient youth off the streets. They were drop-out clergy or well-educated politically active residents from the large community of Bay Area radicals. Many were seminarians dissatisfied with their theological education at the local Graduate Theological Union, looking for an alternative Church experience. The existence of this "new breed" of Free Church workers was reflected in the greater responsibility given to a growing group of "next in line" managers. These were the subsistence wage workers, now given full responsibility for the oversight of programs in the absence of the full paid staff. Counting additional work-study interns, this group of staff workers expanded to twelve people for much of 1969. But these workers were just part of the large number of new people now associated with the Free Church. They commanded more respect and less paternalism than the old bottom tier consisting largely of "clientele."

The collective plan being pushed by this new breed of workers was seen as a means to: better worship community, better membership definition, better representation for the bottom tier, and perhaps a degree of financial independence from outside funders. The plan called for spinning off numerous "collectives," also called "house churches," which would still be affiliated with the Free Church.

The second quarter directors' report outlined what the house church would consist of:

Each house church would contribute financially, worship, study, and participate in F[ree] C[hurch] program and action. Membership will be more defined...House churches will be tied into the larger Free Church by virtue of subscribing to the purposes of the Church...(a kind of Covenant)<sup>43</sup>

Collective discipline was eventually defined in the Collective Handbook.

A Free Church Collective in good standing is one which follows the following collective discipline





as a minimal rule of collective life:

1. It subscribes to the November 5 Statement.
2. It conducts weekly meetings of the collective membership.
3. Its members commit themselves to at least a six-month period of active collective membership. This covenant commitment shall be expressed by the signing of a role of members which shall be kept by each collective and made available to the staff.
4. Members shall contribute 5-10% of their income to the Church.
5. 10 hours of voluntary work per week is expected of the members.
6. The collective shall conduct weekly worship, the nominal form being the freedom meal.
7. The collective shall engage in regular study and reading.
8. The collective and its members shall participate in the Free Church program. Collective projects should be co-ordinated with the staff. Members should be given work assignments in FC and Movement programs.<sup>44</sup>

The collective plan, however, was largely a paper proposal and not a functioning reality for the Free Church. The by-laws were never revised to give the house church members the authority to vote as full members, thus, having a part in the election of the board. Therefore, without these changes, the board was still operating with unresolved internal tensions. Late in November of 1968, for example, when the collective plan should have subdued criticism about an unrepresentative and hierarchical structure, the board was criticized by individual bottom tier workers to be functioning, not for the bottom tier (or lower level staff) enlarged by new house churches, but "as a rubber stamp for [full paid] staff decisions."<sup>45</sup> The immediate consequence of this fact was grave:



the dissension that was growing between York and Nugent was not brought out and aired in the arena of a larger and more representative organizational form, but behind the scenes in maneuverings to get the necessary board votes.<sup>46</sup> Though the board, mainly sympathetic to the Free Church's more radical direction, consisted of many youths from the bottom tier, along with the adult community leaders, there still existed structural hold overs from a more hierarchical social service past. For example, in late July of 1969 it was discussed that staff should not vote at board meetings because of a "conflict of interest."<sup>47</sup> For an organization seeking to break down such distinctions as a congregation, these comments were odd indeed. In terms of structure the year 1969 is best characterized for the Free Church as a time of high expectations but unrealized new directions. Perhaps, there were just too many fronts on which the Free Church tried to attack to create something new. Time, resources and energy were limited in 1969. The Peoples Park battle and repression helped to deny the expectation for "all things to be made new."

The various factors of unfulfilled plans, limited resources and opposition could also be identified in programming and constituency building for the Free Church in 1969. Early in 1969, the Free Church moved to its Parker Street location (see map, p. 7 ), the building of a small defunct church, with the hope of being more deliberate and "programmed" in its activities, not having to react to every street crisis. Peoples Park did not allow this. The battle engulfed the whole city and with police crackdowns on loitering youths the Free Church became a haven for hassled young people precisely because it was located well off Telegraph Avenue. Therefore, security and discipline were hard to maintain and frequently broke down. Numerous instances occurred in this



atmosphere which gave the Free Church more bad publicity. One situation which was well publicized was when a young woman was raped at the Free Church by a man ostensibly offering to give her housing for the night. An inability to control events at Parker Street, less emphasis on a drop-in center and increased rent prompted the move to an Oregon Street storefront building which provided greater security. Also for a while in 1969 the business offices were maintained on the Northside of the campus in the basement of the Berkeley Human Interaction Center.

High expectations and unrealized plans also characterized the religious aspect of the Free Church's program in 1969. The Free Church was granted permission to hold its mass liturgies, for which it was becoming famous, in the sanctuary of Trinity Methodist Church on the South Campus. The services, though somewhat irregular, continued on a monthly basis until September. On the occasion of Ho Chi Minh's death, Nugent organized a memorial service to be held at Trinity. Eight hundred people, including Black Panthers with guns, attended the service and the subsequent procession to the rededication of a South Campus park in Ho's name. The service was a scandal to the Methodist congregation and the Free Church was refused permission to use the sanctuary again.

Therefore, under outside pressure and self-criticism, the Free Church began to withdraw from local confrontations such as the Ho Memorial and began talking more about developing disciplined and smaller organizational units rather than highly public mass liturgies. In this spirit the house churches or collectives were not just seen as an organizational change but also as a program shift. The coffee house was suspended and more effort was put into planning for the house churches. However, the house churches had to share the limelight with another "program emphasis"



that took valuable time and resources away from the house church's realization. Again, trying to usher in the revolution all at once, the Free Church began its big push toward national organizing within the radical church movement, as mentioned above. As a vanguard church within the radical church movement, it emphasized its publications efforts. The Liberated Church Press became Nugent's main job with the close of the coffee house. Brown and his wife Emily devoted most of their time to compiling the national directory of "liberated churches." Also, the whole staff spent much of 1969 on the road, attending various annual meetings of large denominations. The National Council of Churches convention in December climaxed this national effort.

In the midst of this flurry of activity, restructuring and planning, there still was the under current of staff dissension between York and Nugent. Therefore, the covert context for 1969 was the extent to which this split surfaced. The quarterly reports indicate that the split was an "on again off again" affair throughout the year. The restructuring and program shifts of 1969 often reflected the emerging differences between York and Nugent as we shall see below. Also the thought of the Free Church was not immune to the overactivity and dissension of 1969, to which we will now turn.

## VII

There was a functioning, coherent, and integrated theology and politics existing within the radical Free Church for most of 1969. It





had been hammered out by York and Nugent late in 1968, and it relied on much of the theoretical work of Jock Brown. Brown, now funded half-time as the "Theologian in Residence," was working on another book, Planet on Strike. Much like his Liberated Zone, this provided the framework for lively theological discussions, particularly within the staff; and there were more of these discussions now. In fact, part of Brown's job description was to work on a document that would reconcile the growing differences between York and Nugent. The volatile and repressive events of 1969 put a severe strain on the organization, which in turn raised ideological questions. Numerous Free Church reports and correspondence allude to this development. Writing to the main Episcopal funder in September, Brown responded to inquiries about the splits, now well known in radical church circles:

Our divisions were less ideological than personal--- and I truly believe were the reflection in us of the catastrophic Reagan blitz. Dave Allen completely freaked out and went back to Texarkana, many others have deteriorated.<sup>49</sup>

Even as early as April, a quarterly report was to characterize the basic ideological split; it was between "mysticism and action, accommodation and confrontation, utopian and revolutionary." It went on to report:

This split has been responsible for delaying the start of the Guerrilla Church Training Course, and for making



necessary a Confessional agreement between Dick [York] and Tony [Nugent], before it can begin. Its ramifications can be heard in discussions at the Church on how we should respond to student unrest all the way down to how we should enforce house rules at Church on drugs.<sup>50</sup>

The divisions cut across the whole organization. However, the most serious one was the one developing between York and Nugent. In many ways it represented the two major factions in the Free Church. At least, Free Church members felt compelled to take sides. York characterized the split as a struggle between Nugent's "hippie-street-freak" orientation and his "political-Panther" orientation. It was the cultural/political split that had characterized the whole Movement in 1969. It is not totally clear why they felt these two positions to be at odds with each other. The Free Church had carefully developed theoretical formulations that integrated these two perspectives. These formulations were widely circulated and discussed within the Free Church. In order better to understand this division, a closer look is necessary at some of these formulations and the other resources available to Free Church members.

There were four key "internal" resources for developing ideological/theological coherence in 1969. First, there was the constant writing and reflection by Brown. Second, there were the mutual discussions by York and Nugent that produced, late in 1968, a document called the "Mission Design of the Organizing Pastors for the Free Church of



Berkeley January 1, 1969-January 1, 1970." Third, there was the everyday experience of being on the front line of action. This experience was refining and developing the basic positions that were held by all the Free Church members. Fourth, there was the growing mythology of a two year old organization. The Free Church's "myth of origin" and evolution became a significant resource for self-understanding.

Brown's new book Planet on Strike was referred to by Brown as his book on sacraments. Its overarching framework was founded on three areas of human struggle---ecology, peace and liberation, and interpersonal sensitivity. This was the same framework that Brown was using for his attempt to develop a Berkeley Confession to house the unreconciled differences emerging in the Free Church. A twenty-three page document, entitled "The Axis of History" and sometimes subtitled "Draft of a Confession for the use of the Free Church of Berkeley, March 1969" or "Syllabus of Study in the Free Church of Berkeley, April 1969," was circulated for approval. The twenty-three page version never received official approval. However, a shortened version of one and a half pages was approved on November 5, 1969. It still followed the general schema of Planet on Strike:

The Free Church of Berkeley is a community within the revolutionary Movement which relates to the radical tradition of Jesus, the Prophets, and the Church of Liberation.

"I will make a covenant on behalf of my people with the wild animals, with the birds of the heaven and the creeping things of the earth." -Hosea 2.18



We recognize the Spirit of God at work in the movement of our brothers and sisters for the restoration and preservation of the ecological balance of our planet. We believe that uncontrolled production and consumption constitute violence against ecological law and order. We admit our complicity, individually and collectively, in the pollution of our environment by chemicals and radiation, in the exploitation of natural resources and wilderness, in the horror of over-population. Therefore we dedicate ourselves to working toward a life-style which holds a viable ecological order as a sacred and revolutionary priority.

"I will break bow, sword, and battle in the country, and make her sleep secure!" -Hosea 2.18

"I will make a covenant of peace with them; I will break their yoke and liberate them from their oppressors." -Ezek. 34.25-7

We recognize the Spirit of God in the movement for peace and liberation throughout the world. We join in the struggle for the liberation of oppressed peoples (the poor, the Third World, racial minorities, women and youth) from exploitation and racism at home and from imperialism abroad. We dedicate ourselves to serve the victims of force and oppression, avoiding the trap of the colonialist mission in perpetuating a corrupt system, and recognizing that the highest form of service is organizing structures which are just, humane, and participatory. We will resist institutions of war, conscription, racism, imperialism and injustice, and shall attempt to offer an alternative through the life of joy and suffering in our voluntary community of brothers and sisters.

"I will betroth you to myself for ever, betroth you with integrity and justice, with tenderness and love." -Hosea 2.19

We recognize the Spirit of God at work in the struggle of our time toward sexual intimacy, vocational creativity, psychic integrity, and interpersonal sensitivity. We resist those institutions of our society which dehumanize and destroy real interpersonal relations. We accept the imperative to develop attitudes and life-styles that are personally and communally liberating and non-exploitative. In celebration we will be freed to work towards the ecological and social revolutions. [Italics mine] 51





This document, though it reflected much of Brown's writing and particularly his latest book, was hammered out in a three week staff retreat in November. The document became the covenant to which all collective members were to adhere. The above mentioned discipline for the collectives was also the result of this retreat and included an additional criterion for the staff. There was to be:

No abuse of body or impairment of mind through use of alcohol, caffeine, stimulants, tobacco, or dope while on the job. No holding or dealing while on the job.<sup>52</sup>

The impetus for this added discipline no doubt came, in part, from the numerous complaints received at the Parker Street location. But more fundamentally non abuse of the body was essential to Brown's notion of a life-style necessary to combat the evils of our time. Brown's conceptualization of these evils became even more systematic than the earlier renditions in 1967 and 1968 where he usually outlined five. In Planet on Strike these evils were three basic ones and they conformed to the November 5 statement. The evils were defined as the destruction of: environment, human community and personal integrity. It was to this latter evil that Brown devoted most of his attention in Planet on Strike. It was only by a renewal of integrity, that is, an "inner revolution," that the renewal of the environment and community would occur. Though Brown saw this inner revolution as directly related to the struggles for the environment and community embodied in the peace and freedom and ecology movements, he often slipped into a non dialectical way of talking about this relationship, as in the following passages:



...The green revolution and the peace revolution are the most elementary tasks of housekeeping in our forest city.

And those jobs, far beyond our capacity as they seem are only the outer consequences of an inner rebuilding.<sup>33</sup> [Italics mine]

Brown here saw the "outer" and "inner" rebuilding jobs not as the consequences of each other like in his earlier "incognito church" formulation--- even though the incognito church was prone to reverse the relationship and slip into another kind of non dialectical formulation.

However, in defense of Brown, Planet on Strike was not intended to be a political book; his sole intention was to set forth a program for inner renewal. Perhaps just the weight of this limited purpose may have led him to violate his usual dialectical approach to total renewal. This book should also be seen as Brown's attempt to develop a more systematic theological framework for the liturgies that he and York were developing at the Free Church; Planet on Strike was his book on sacraments while Liberated Zone was his book on ethics. In the second half of Planet on Strike he outlines seven sacraments that coincide with biological turning points in people's lives. Brown formulates what is demanded of each individual at these turning points, given the planetary context of the three evils, but again with special attention to the inner revolution necessary in this context.

On the fixed biological groundbass of birth, sexuality, and death, a force going beyond nature and history is building each turning-point of our lives into a revolutionary sanctity. Our beginning is to formulate clearly the demands made by each period of life in the permanent new situation.

The demand for fidelity: a fresh start. As each individual in his birth repeats the birth of the species, by a symbolic rebirth he must take on the fidelity called for by history---from now on, a commitment to nonviolence.



The demand for love: sexuality. As sexuality continues the species, each person, through marriage or otherwise, takes on the job of building a few others into the most permanent possible example of stable community.

The demand for usefulness: vocation. As each person channels sexuality into creativity, we must redesign old vocations and invent new ones to push through the necessary tasks of the revolution.

The demand for justice: the problem of power. Aggression organizes people in a society of coercion, the State. Over against that imperfect justice, the individual must give a higher commitment to the principle of community through voluntary assent.

The demand to help: service. The most expensive form of community is availability to the needs of others. This universal ordination to human service, a waiting on table, is the most basic novelty of the New Testament.

The demand for hope: falling casualty. At another stage the tables are turned, and the waiter must be waited on. Our conduct when in casualty status measures the genuineness of that community which we claim is constituted by failure.

The demand for joy: the feast. Both the individual body and the body of the community are maintained and built up by the act of assimilation. In the context of the festival, all our phases and roles are celebrated in their final definition.<sup>54</sup>

The destruction of environment, community and integrity demanded a revolutionary response, but not one that was built on old strategies of violence, such as Marxism, according to Brown. A new strategy was needed that involved a renewed church, a church with a new call. This call had to recognize that the "planet was on strike" and that "the human race [had] issued a non-negotiable demand for life."<sup>55</sup> The new call would not invoke a community based on the Communist Manifesto, which, according to Brown, "sets mankind at war with itself." It would be the following call:

PEOPLE OF THE WORLD UNITE  
WE HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT DISTRUST



OUR BROTHERS ARE GETTING SMASHED  
 WE ALL HAVE A COMMON INTEREST  
 OUR SHARED LIFE ON THE PLANET  
 WE HOLD THAT LIFE IN OUR HANDS  
 A MAD POWER IS THREATENING IT  
 WE ARE CALLING A STRIKE FOR IT  
 THE ENEMY IS NOT PEOPLE  
 OUR FIDELITY WINS THE DAY<sup>56</sup>

Brown's emphasis on church was also seemingly less dialectical than his earlier formulations of the underground church. The church in Planet on Strike was not the "church incognito" in the peace and freedom movement but a self-conscious church along the side of the Movement. He was not longer advocating societal renewal for the sake of church renewal, but vice versa. Brown was more and more disenchanted with the new left and counter culture as a result of his experiences in Berkeley and with some activities of the Free Church. The counter-violence and hate of the "rebels" in Berkeley prompted him to write an important article for the national radical church movement called, "Who is the Enemy." He had often written in previous books and articles that the "enemy was also within us." He now expanded this insight. The volatile situation demanded it. Of particular concern to Brown was the way evil was too often just ascribed to "the enemy;" and more precisely, how evil was usually identified with individuals. A common example in 1969 was the identification of police officers with evil; they were "pigs." Brown understood Jesus to be constantly avoiding "identification of the transcendent Enemy with any one particular enemy."<sup>57</sup> Therefore, Brown insisted that we only talk about evil in the enemy.

For unless we can say in a secular way that the World Pig is in our enemy, then we must say in a secular way that our enemy is the World Pig. And then who can we be except God, or at least the Archangel Michael, spearing the Great





Greased Pig into the abyss? But when we start thinking that way the Enemy is closer to us than we realize.<sup>58</sup>

To a large degree Planet on Strike was an attempt to come to grips with this dual existence of the enemy. Brown's solution was an inner revolution by a renewed church. The "Axis of History" document, Brown's attempt to formulate a Confession for the Free Church, was only an early and related manuscript for what became Planet on Strike. Brown's seemingly undialectical emphasis on inner revolution and church was problematic for the Free Church and the Berkeley new left outside Brown's study. Brown's writings, what were once almost automatically accepted resources for York and Nugent, began to be replaced by others.

The second major resource, the "Mission Design" document, already alluded to in the previous chapter, was based on the lowest common denominator between Nugent and York. However, it was a coherent and well integrated document connecting the various dimensions of the Free Church---religious, political and cultural. It served York and Nugent well as a theoretical foundation to be refined in action. There was much of Brown's language and conceptualization in the document, but less the Brown of Planet on Strike and more the Brown of Liberated Zone. An examination of this document is important for it set the tone for 1969. It was requested by the funder from the Presbyterian Church. The document tries to explain in traditional church mission categories the social mission of the Free Church.



The framework of their "mission objectives" and "mission strategy" was provided by what they identified as a "crisis of exploitation" on four fronts: 1) ecological; 2) colonial; 3) racial; 4) generational. Within the Movement, which they considered their "organizing base," they felt that its response to these crises of exploitation was "timid and incomplete." There were two responses of the Movement, the "utopian and revolutionary." The utopian response, represented by the hippie, was considered by York and Nugent to be in search of "personal liberation in intimacy."

However, he falls into his own version of old exploitation: abuse of his body and psyche with drugs, disregard for personal health and hygiene, sexual abuse. He may run away from home or school or job, but he regrets the self-abuse of bourgeois society on the streets. He has failed to find an alternative vocationalism, political responsibility, and style of family life.<sup>59</sup>

The revolutionary, on the other hand, represented by the new left radical, seeks to "confront, disrupt and destroy the institutions of oppression in order to replace them."

However, he has too often adopted the worst of these institutions which he left: their violence. There is ultimately nothing revolutionary about violence in our society.<sup>60</sup>

The Free Church's response, according to the "Mission Design" document, to the crises of exploitation in the midst of the Movement, was "the Gospel." Therefore, their "mission objective" was to build an organization of "people who want to make a radical new start in community, as a response to this New Way brought into history by Jesus Christ, in order to effect the renewal of society."<sup>61</sup>

The Gospel is ultimately the only full and complete



response to the crises of exploitation. It proclaims that in Jesus something new happened in history, revolutionary non-violence. It proclaims that His way leads to life and liberation, as surely as violence and exploitation carry within themselves the seeds of their own destruction.<sup>62</sup>

Therefore, understanding the Movement (defined not just in terms of youth) as their organizing base, York and Nugent saw an "initial" twofold "mission strategy." First there was the task of "'baptizing' the Movement where it is timid or incomplete (the Gospel humanizes the new left and politicizes the hippie), and 'confirming' it where it is strong (moving the already committed from movement to organization).<sup>63</sup> They said they took "baptism" seriously. It must involve a commitment, just as strong as those in the Movement itself. It was in this context that they also spoke, as mentioned earlier, of "developing the 'crack team of the Guerrilla Church' just as the Episcopal baptism service speaks of 'fighting manfully under the banner of Christ.'" It was the strategy of the Free Church to work from this base, which was primarily oriented to societal renewal. They wanted to organize other "movement" churches with similar goals. These churches would in turn serve as a nucleus of radical reunion and renewal within the churches. The strategy for the renewal and reunion of the churches was considered the third phase of the Free Church strategy. This third phase was interdependent with their twofold task mentioned above. They explained it this way:

Therefore, the third phase of our strategy is to



build a church which will work for the renewal of society through the reunion and renewal of the denominations. As long as movement churches, like the Free Church, remain outside the denominational institutions, then radical ecumenism and renewed life, liturgy and action will not be taken seriously.<sup>64</sup>

It was this phase of the strategy that propelled the Free Church to play active roles in denominational assemblies and conventions, culminating in 1969 with the Jonathan's Wake confrontation. This phase of the strategy also called for "affiliation" with certain denominations. They proposed affiliation with, at least, the United Presbyterian Church and the Episcopal Church. They gained official affiliation with the Presbyterians but achieved only "voice representation" with the local Episcopal Diocese. The affiliation strategy was short lived. It became untenable as the Free Church became less a reform oriented movement church and more radical and sectarian in respect to the larger denominations. This untenableness was less the result of the Free Church theoretical position and more the result of the Free Church taking seriously its organizing base in the radical movement. This identification put the Free Church in direct conflict with many established church policies. They further alienated the churches by their confrontational tactics while trying to implement their overall church strategy. Therefore, perhaps the validity of the whole strategy was never given a chance nor adequately tested. Certainly the agenda of repression that faced the Free Church and the emerging internal splits were other factors that made problematic the "affiliation" strategy.





The concerted attempt to reconcile the differences by a Confession, and the seemingly well integrated religious politics of the "Mission Design" document proved to be no match for the third and maybe most crucial resource, the front lines of action. York and Nugent were now getting their cues from the streets in 1969. Brown, though actively informed about the street, was not involved in the day to day activities on the street, such as the Free Church Switchboard. In fact, many volunteers and people who considered themselves to be part of the Free Church congregation never saw Brown. It was only at certain liturgical occasions or for Free Church Board meetings that Brown was visible. Even the Board, which was similar in composition to the 1968 board, were not certain of what Brown was doing. However, it was precisely this relationship that was insisted upon by the Episcopal funders of Brown's salary: "the terms of his employment are not considered a regular staff member, but a kind of resident theologian who in no way is to meddle in the decisions or activities of York and Nugent."<sup>65</sup> Also by September of 1969, Brown saw his obligations outside the local Free Church.

For myself I feel that the collective to which I belong is more national, and I have closer ties with Rosemary Ruether, Tom Durkin, people like that than with most of the locals. I don't know how far they think so too. I am trying to get out a theological document which will say so.<sup>66</sup>

While Brown was identifying himself less in terms of his own organization and local community, Nugent and York, through the Free Church, were deepening their local radical community ties. Nugent, for example,



solidified his in such events as the organization of the Ho Chi Minh memorial service in collaboration with the Black Panthers and radicals such as Tom Hayden. He also began teaching a course at the local Free University, and became more involved in Berkeley collective and communal life styles, and community issues. Within these involvements and commitments Nugent functioned more on a tactical level as an organizer. However, as editor of the Liberated Church Press he was engaged in theoretical writing, though these writings were often either tactically oriented or reworkings of Brown's concepts with a more confrontational twist.<sup>67</sup> The Harper's Magazine account of the Ho Memorial was illustrative of the nature of Nugent's involvements, a service of "calculated scandalization."

Not long after the death of Ho Chi Minh, some two hundred youths gathered in Sproul Plaza, began a memorial march onto Telegraph Avenue, suddenly filling the streets with a booming "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh!" The cars of Friday night motorists were hopelessly moored among them for a moment, the faces behind the windshields grinning, or studiously empty. There was an iciness in the twilight now. Sweeping around corners, they finally began advancing on a church; there the church doors were unbolted and swung open and the demonstrators advanced into the sanctuary, spilling down the carpeted aisles--an infusion of alien disheveled primitives out of the subterranean grottoes and caverns of the American libido, into this muted Gothic California suburban cathedral of tans and browns, walnut pews and fluted stone columns and soft amber lights suspended from a high dizzy vaulted exaltation of a ceiling. But it was filled now with the glare of Vietcong liberation anthems played over the amplifier system, and pictures of Ho had been hastily taped to the choir rails and the elevated pulpits on both sides of the sanctuary; a marble aisle led to the altar where a communion of bread and jugs of wine had been set under a cross of epic dimensions hung against satiny drapery, to the foot of which had been thumbtacked another picture of Ho. It was a ceremony of calculated scandalization.<sup>68</sup>



What was once a unified stream of thought, the work of Brown accepted by York and Nugent, divided into three tributaries. Each branch of the stream was carving out new canyons for self-definition. Brown's tributary was trying to keep afloat the notion of inner integrity. Nugent's tributary was developing rapids of confrontation. York's tributary, for the moment at least, was still staying close to the source of the original stream, Brown's theories. A unified stream of thought still was needed in order for the organization to maintain its strength against oppositional forces diverting its flow. Though York took Brown's work seriously his main concern was to maintain a unified stream. Even if he had to carve out a new one. Therefore, his new stream had elements of Brown's inner revolution; it even had elements of Nugent's collectivization. But most importantly his new stream was an attempt to come to grips with the evolving history and vocation of the Free Church. It was in the Peoples Park battle that the new stream came together for York, at least for a brief moment.

The People's Park battle was a typical kind of "street event" which served as a resource to the whole Free Church. It is within this event that we see the refinement of theory and strategy "out on the front lines." We also get a glimpse of the fourth resource for Free Church self-understanding in the midst of the People's Park battle. In an address delivered at a community-wide emergency meeting May 25, York explained what the Free Church was at that moment in comparison to the Free Church's beginnings. The "myth of origin" and evolution were secure in York's mind and they provided the distinctions that became increasingly important in battles with the



local churches for support. This battle was now drawn ideologically in terms of a rejection of Buteyn's simple notion of reconciliation. Buteyn's stream of thought was no longer tenable and was denounced in this community-wide address.

York outlines two "discoveries" in the two years of the Free Church's existence, "two things which needed to be said to our sponsoring churches and to the Berkeley community as a whole."

(1) First, that a paternalistic service ministry was not enough. That the only effective ministry for the Telegraph Avenue population was the development of a community, a youth church. We discovered, mainly through the demands the kids made on us, that if the Gospel and the Church was good enough for them, it was good enough for us. And the Free Church had the gall to open up the Bible on its own, to start celebrating the Freedom Meal on its own, to pass its members through the waters of baptism. And the Churches cried: 'That is not what we intended you to do at all!'

We were a creation, it now seems, to salve the consciences of the Berkeley Church establishment, so they could say 'look how avant-garde we are: ecumenical ministry to hippies -- even hippies!'

But once a church grew up out of that -- a church full of people who looked like me -- they were horrified! The problem, you see, was that this new church, this Free Church, found in those very pages, a manifesto for human liberation, a radical Jesus, a Good News for its own problems.

The Free Church has demonstrated during this last week and a half by its actions and words, once and for all, that it is not (nor are its clergy) pawns of the Establishment Church; that it is not and never intends to be the Established Church's cork in the volcano of oppression on Telegraph, or among our youth in general.

We accept money from these churches -- but not in order to salve their consciences, not to buy off angry and alienated young people, not to say peace, peace when there is no peace; not to reconcile if reconciliation means silence in the face of more oppression.

This brings me to the second thing we discovered and that needs to be said:

(2) You cannot minister to alienated runaways, drug users, and street people without addressing yourself to the causes





of that alienation. And the causes are bigger than family problems. The causes are war, the draft, racism, police oppression, injustice and corruption in high office, exploitation and manipulation of personal freedom. We said this to the churches too, and they thought: 'Well, Dick York just has to talk like a radical peacenik in order to keep their ears -- you know, sound radical and win a few more spiritual scalps.'

But now, to their shock, they know we meant it. Our people, the people of the streets, the alienated kids, the students are an oppressed class, in every sense of the word.

(a) Every kind of selective and concentrated law enforcement is used on the people of my parish, just as it is in the black community.

(b) My people are called animals and are abused and treated as though they were.

(c) It is oppression to be forced to fight a businessman's war, especially one like Vietnam.

(d) It is oppression to be drafted or channeled into a profession not of your own choosing, but rather to the interest of national security.

(e) It is oppression to not be able to make decisions affecting your future, or your education.

(f) It was oppression last summer when my parish was unwarrantedly beaten and gassed on Telegraph; when our church and its clergy were also gassed and beaten.

(g) It was oppression again all last week: shotguns, gas from Army helicopters, mass arrests, loss of freedom of assembly and worship, brutality in prison.

(h) It was oppression to see the gas on Telegraph and campus, and not on Shattuck and Northgate. The South Campus is a white ghetto -- it is oppressed like Watts is oppressed. And both are little Vietnams.

And people still ask me to come speak in suburban churches on the "drug problem," adding: please don't get into the subject of war or racism.

On May 9th, this year, a week before it came down on us here, an article appeared in the Berkeley Gazette reporting on the Convention of the California Peace Officers Association in Fresno. It reports:

"The new Chief of Police of the University of California Police Department, Beall joined Berkeley City Manager William Hanley in telling law officers they should force agitators to 'overplay their hands'."

This was their tactic in Berkeley this week. So far they have failed and have come off looking like fools and fascists. This is oppression. And I charge our city, university, county and state officials with premeditated oppression of my parish last week in Berkeley.



In spite of all that happened here last week, again some of my fellow South Campus clergymen said to me the other day; 'You can't use the word oppression about white street people and students.' What was that then, that hit the South Campus last week anyway?

The Free Church took its mandate for ministry from the mother churches seriously. During this crisis we have headquartered medical teams, converted our building into a hospital, started the bail fund and run the legal offices. But that is not enough. Reconciliation between oppressed and oppressor does not come by just picking up and bailing out the beaten bodies of the oppressed. Nor does it come by calling for a peace which is merely a return to the status quo. Reconciliation can only come through struggle and conflict. The oppressed and the oppressor are reconciled when the oppressed have enough power to enable them to sit as equals at the bargaining table. And so to be reconcilers, we had to march with the oppressed (as did Martin Luther King with his), we had to violate the ban on assembly with them -- and we will have to again until the People's Park is the people's once more.<sup>69</sup>

#### VIII

With this speech York indicates that the "radical" church's self-understanding was taken very seriously. The political content of the Free Church, both in its analysis of society and in its organizational identification, was highly developed. But where was ecology in this speech? Where was the hope of the strategy of reunion and renewal within the churches? And if Sacramento's police state was responsible for the "oppression," and so effective, where was the hope for societal renewal? The answers the Free Church could give to these questions and problems depended greatly upon the solution of its own internal problems. The ideological split between Nugent and York, symbolic of the Movement as a whole and "movement churches" in particular, needed attention if the Free Church was to contribute positively to



its stated goals.

Within the People's Park crisis this split was temporarily bandaged with a common enemy. But the common enemy was sufficiently persistent and the split reopened. It is difficult to get a proper perspective on the real nature and cause of the split. The role of Nugent within the Free Church has to be more closely examined. Why did he join the Free Church? What did he do? Who was his constituency? Like York his mission strategy was constantly being refined and developed in the front line battles, and in respect to his own origin with the Free Church. What was a "radical church" in 1969 was rapidly becoming two "radical churches" in 1970 and 1971.



NOTES

**Correction:** The documents are no longer held at the CRRE Historical Archives, but as of 1995 are in the Graduate Theological Union Archives, Berkeley, CA.

<sup>1</sup>C. Kilmer Myers, "Statement Read to Concerned People in Berkeley at Chapel of the Reformation, Pacific School of Religion, May 23, 1969," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>2</sup>Kirkpatrick Sale, SDS (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 600.

<sup>3</sup>Myers, "Statement to Concerned People."

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>John Weaver, interview, San Francisco, California, 26 November 1975.

<sup>6</sup>Donald Buteyn, interview, Hollywood, California, 30 December 1975.

<sup>7</sup>"Nixon Campus Edict, End Violence by Radicals," San Francisco Examiner, 23 March 1969; "Attorney General, Campus Crackdown Call," San Francisco Chronicle, 2 May 1969.

<sup>8</sup>"Reagan, Daily Cal Condemn Radicals," San Francisco Chronicle, 16 September 1969.

<sup>9</sup>Ron Ridenhour and Arthur Lubow, "Bringing the War Home," New Times (November 28, 1975), pp. 18-24; "Army Tested Secret Civil Disturbance Plan at Wounded Knee," New York Times, 2 December 1975; "Army Disclosing its Role in Plans to Quell Urban Riots," Los Angeles Times, 26 August 1975; Bill Wallace, "The Army's Secret War," San Francisco Bay Guardian, 17 October 1975.

<sup>10</sup>John M. Crewdson, "Military Flouted Civilians' Rights, Senate Unit Says," New York Times, 17 March 1976.

<sup>11</sup>"Declaration of War From the Guerrilla Academy of the Revolutionary Church (GARC), November 13, 1969," CRRE Historical Archives.





- <sup>12</sup>Anthony Morley to Richard York, November 1969, CRRE Historical Archives.
- <sup>13</sup>Browne Barr to Walter S. Press, 8 April 1969, CRRE Historical Archives.
- <sup>14</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup>Donald P. Buteyn to the Board and Staff of the South Campus Community Ministry, 27 June 1969. CRRE Historical Archives, p. 1.
- <sup>17</sup>"Income Revised Budget for 1969," 1 January 1969. CRRE Historical Archives.
- <sup>18</sup>"Buteyn to Board and Staff," pp. 2-3.
- <sup>19</sup>John Pairman Brown and Richard York, The Covenant of Peace: A Liberation Prayer Book. (New York: Morehouse-Barlow Co., 1971) p. 12.
- <sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 191-202.
- <sup>21</sup>Abbie Hoffman, Woodstock Nation. (New York: Pocket Books, 1971); Sol Stern, "Altamont: Pearl Harbor to Woodstock Nation," Counter Culture and Revolution, edited by David Horowitz, Michael P. Lerner and Craig Pyles (New York: Random House, 1972). These references indicate how the mass rock festival in Woodstock, New York became a new symbol for the counter culture.
- <sup>22</sup>Richard York, interview, Berkeley, California, 22 April 1976.
- <sup>23</sup>"Memorandum to William C. Hanley from Telegraph Avenue Concerns Committee, October 28, 1968," CRRE Historical Archives, p. 3.
- <sup>24</sup>There is some dispute over who placed the ad in the Barb. My information comes from: York, interview, 1974. See also Stanley I. Glick, "The Forgotten Confrontation: The Story of the People's Park in Berkeley, California," (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee: History Department, August 1974), pp. 8-14.
- <sup>25</sup>Berkeley Barb, 18-24 April 1969.
- <sup>26</sup>Otto Smith to Roger W. Heyns, May 1969. CRRE Historical Archives.



- 27 "Statement by Chancellor Roger W. Heyns, May 13, 1969," CRRE Historical Records.
- 28 York, interview, 1974.
- 29 "Quarterly Report: April-June, 1969," CRRE Historical Records, p. 5.
- 30 Berkeley Daily Gazette, 19 May 1969.
- 31 Sale, SDS, pp. 511-99.
- 32 Renewal, 9 No. 8, (November 1969), p. 12.
- 33 "The Death and Transfiguration of the Jolly Green Giant," December 1, 1969," CRRE Historical Archives.
- 34 "News Release, General Assembly, National Council of Churches, December 1, 1969," CRRE Historical Archives.
- 35 "Free Church Press Release February 29, 1969," CRRE Historical Records.
- 36 Richard York to Police Chief Bruce Baker, 27 August 1969. CRRE Historical Archives.
- 37 Nicholas Von Hoffman, "The Panther Hunt," San Francisco Chronicle, 18 December 1969.
- 38 "Free Church Annual Board Meeting," 16 July 1969. CRRE Historical Archives.
- 39 "Project Directors' Quarterly Report: March 15, 1969," CRRE Historical Archives, p. 23.
- 40 "To our Clergy," 27 March 1969. CRRE Historical Archives.
- 41 "Director's Report and Strategy Proposals: August 12, 1969," CRRE Historical Archives, p. 2.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 "Quarterly Report," pp. 5-6.
- 44 "Free Church Collective Handbook," January 1970. CRRE Archives, pp. 13-14.



<sup>45</sup>"Regular Meeting of Free Church Board of Trustees, held at 1st Presbyterian Church, November 4, 1969," CRRE Archives, p. 1.

<sup>46</sup>Glenn Clarke, interview, Berkeley, California, 24 June 1976.

<sup>47</sup>"Annual Meeting of Free Church," 22 July 1969, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup>John Pairman Brown to Anthony Morley, 19 September 1969, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>50</sup>"Project Directors' Quarterly Report: March 15, 1969," CRRE Historical Archives, p. 24.

<sup>51</sup>"Statement Adopted by the Staff of the Berkeley Free Church: November 5, 1969," CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>52</sup>"Quarterly Report," p. 4.

<sup>53</sup>John Pairman Brown, Planet on Strike (New York: Seabury Press, 1970) p. 175.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 51-52.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>57</sup>John Pairman Brown, "Who or What is the Enemy?" Renewal (February 1970) p. 11.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Richard York and Anthony Nugent, "Mission Design of the Organizing Pastors for the Berkeley Free Church, January 1, 1969 - January 1, 1970," CRRE Historical Archives, pp. 1-2.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.



<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>65</sup>Robert R. Hansel to James Guinan, 2 January 1969, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>66</sup>John Pairman Brown to Anthony Morley, 19 September 1969, CRRE Historical Archives.

<sup>67</sup>Marshall Frady, "California: The Rending of the Veil," Harper's Magazine (December 1969).

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Richard York, "Address at a City-wide Meeting, Berkeley Theater, Sunday, May 25, 10:30 a.m.," CRRE Historical Archives.















