

# 'The Square Revolutionary'

By LAURENCE MULLIN  
Religious News Service

New York—For many Americans the word "revolutionary" conjures up images of secret bomb factories, smashed store windows, bank burnings, campus riots, inflammatory rhetoric and blood-letting.

What, then, is one to make of a modern self-styled "professional revolutionary" who espouses radical change yet is firmly opposed to the use of violence.

What is one to think of a revolutionary who believes in "absolute values" of right and wrong, insists on the need for "absolute standards" of morality, and calls for "a revolution with an ethic"? A revolutionary who says that St. Thomas Aquinas, the medieval theologian-philosopher, should be made "relevant to today's revolution," and who opts for "belief in a Transcendent"?

There is just such a revolutionary active today.

Ed Butler is the author of a book, entitled "Revolution Is My Profession". He is 35, the first son of an old New Orleans family, an accomplished artist with two one-man shows to his credit, and a debater who tangled with Lee Harvey Oswald in a radio debate, a few short weeks before the slaying of President Kennedy in Dallas.

Butler is the chief spokesman for "The Square Movement."

He described it as one that propagandizes itself not by bloody confrontations with symbols of the ubiquitous enemy of all revolutions, "the Establishment"; not by taking to the streets in acts of civil disobedience; not by the irrationalities of gun or bomb; but through reasoned debate, through a glossy "mod-styled" quarterly, "the Village Square Magazine," through a campus-oriented newspaper, and — most effectively, Butler believes — through his syndicated TV show, "The Square World of Ed Butler."

Some people consider the square movement as a kind of intellectual front for rightists;



ED BUTLER

others regard it as a not-too-subtle mask for leftists. Butler insists it is neither right nor left.

"It all comes down to this," he said, "communism breeds tyranny. So does fascism. The real fight is between the tyrants and the believers in freedom," adding with strong emphasis, "the Square movement is anti-tyrannism."

"The Square World of Ed Butler," he explained, seeks to provide at least three view-

points: the right, the left, and the square. This latter is a synthesis of usable and relevant elements of the other two, plus the catalytic agent of "creativity," and the buffering agent of "an ethic."

"The Square World is constantly seeking ethical answers — especially in the all-important field of communications," he said, mentioning, for example, the vexed ethical questions involved in TV presentations of riots, mayhem, drug-taking.

There are still persons who respond to the name and emphasis on "square" by charging that the program, and the ideology it represents, must be "reactionary."

How "reactionary" is a program that one day features movie star John Wayne, and, another day, Yippie leader Jerry Rubin? they ask. Or how archly conservative is a program that includes stars of the rock musical "Hair"? Or that pits cartoonist Al Capp against a young revolutionary Communist? Or has actor-director James Earl Jones as its guest? Or lines up in a "square table" discussion on drugs, bitterly opposed points of view?

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