

## WOMEN PRIESTS

THERE has been enough hot air generated over this matter to fuel Richard Branson's balloon three times round the world.

Dear old Apostle Paul's bones may be jiggling a bit as much of the discussion is probably due to his strictures on the position of women in the early Church. Without wishing to arouse still more hot air from dedicated Bible enthusiasts, and without disputing the inspiration of the Word, could we take a less jaundiced and chauvinistic view at things?

Firstly, we have got to take into account the complete male domination at the time. Just as the harshness of much of the "approved" punishments decreed in the Old Testament has been ameliorated by Christ's intercession (incidentally, why was not the *male* adulterer *also* brought before Him?), much of the then accepted mores of the time should be revised "wisely" (that is, by the Spirit).

Why should Paul have required women to cover their hair in church except to demonstrate that they were not ladies of the streets who naturally made the most of their crowning glory!

Why should Paul have required women to keep silent in church if only to stop them chattering together because they had been herded together and forced by male domination to be separated from the family unit?

Why should Paul have required women "to ask their husbands at home . . ." if only because they had for centuries been deprived of equal opportunities in almost everything except purely feminine matters? Would Lady Chatterley (if she had married her humble gamekeeper!) have had "to ask him at home . . ." everything (except perhaps gamekeeping)?

Men, for all their insistence on superiority in church matters, seem destined to lose the battle. If the church is in dire trouble whom can they blame but themselves? They are so backward in coming forward as churchwardens that women are forced (often against their wishes) to fill the male vacancy.

Judging by the lecture in doctrine that she delivered to church big-wigs some years ago, Margaret Thatcher might have made a splendid no-nonsense Archbishop (or was that lecture produced by some male cleric?).

## *The Human Condition*

### ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

HOW utterly fortunate (for the time being) is the great Noel Gallagher in being a lapsed Roman Catholic and not a Muslim, for if he had stated that he and OASIS were "mightier than Allah" instead of "than GOD", he would be joining Salmon Rushdie under fatwah. How fortunate that he did not live in Old Testament times, when he would have been stoned to death.

A recent interview of his great brother Liam appears to indicate that some of the apostasy might be due to the brutal behaviour of their father towards their mother. Truly, the sins of the fathers can be visited on the children! We do not read of any high-powered admonition by the Roman Catholic authorities; are they getting as soft as the C of E?

For the man in the street more concerned with his lottery chances and the fate of his football team, NOEL's immature blasphemies are of no consequence whatsoever. For Tony Blair and all in authority of some sort over human affairs it should make sufficient consequence to take some positive action. One of the single biggest problems of society has been, and increasingly is, the lack of and disrespect for authority.

The increasing claim of authority — from the mother of the baby to the father of the family, to the teacher in the classroom, to the police, courtroom, Parliament, international concerns — must end logically in an Ultimate Authority, beyond any dispute whatever. For some 3,000 years there have been many who regard this Ultimate (or Supreme) Authority as GOD.

Humanists, who, by definition, are most concerned with investigating the human condition (and rectifying where necessary), have removed this Ultimate Authority from their educational syllabuses, and are now desperately concerned with overflowing prisons and increasing disrespect for authority.

Since the myriad teenager followers of OASIS idolise, and absorb the maxims of, those "mightier than GOD", it would appear that Noel and Liam will have a great deal to answer for.

