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Defending Orthodoxy in Massachusetts 1650-1652

Timothy J. Sehr

During the 1640s the religious and political leaders of Massachusetts Bay colony looked hopefully but fearfully at England. Their hopes arose from the millennial expectations they attached to English events; a number of ministers saw the occurrences in the homeland as portents of the rule of the saints predicted in Revelation.¹ They feared that England would lose its opportunity to play an important role in God's design by imposing a strict presbyterian state church; that would be a mistake because in the colonists' view presbyterianism was not the church order described in the Bible. In response to this threat several New England divines produced treatises defending and defining the New England Way which was congregational in church polity.²

In the 1650s, although the power of the presbyterians declined in England, Bay leaders became increasingly less optimistic about the implications of English events. They became more critical of English policies, more didactic in their communications with the mother country. Doctrine and the role of government in enforcing religious orthodoxy became more important than the debates with presbyterians over polity. Bay ministers played down congregational independence by emphasizing the necessity of saintly cooperation, and they wrote treatises explaining basic truths. They also spelled out a rationale for government involvement in the suppression of heresy. Colonial political leaders acted on this rationale in prosecuting William Pynchon and three Baptist missionaries between 1650 and 1652. In moving against Pynchon and the Baptists, the civil authorities were conscious of providing a model for those in control of the English government. Bay leaders wanted to demonstrate how magistrates should be "nursing fathers" to religion.

According to several New England ministers in the early 1650s one of the great mistakes of the times was the belief that magistrates had no right to interfere in religious matters, that governments had to tolerate a variety of religious opinions. The policy of toleration drew particularly sharp rebuttals from John Norton of Ipswich and Thomas Cobbet of Lynn. Both of these divines were wary of the state's influence in religion; their English experience had made obvious that governments could be corrupt and so suppress rather than support true religion. Overweening secular power had to be avoided in Norton's view: "Unity in judgment is to be en-

deavoured as much as is possible, because truth is one and indivisible, yet some difference touching the truth must be endured, because of the weakness of men. To tolerate every thing, and to tolerate nothing are both intolerable." He urged that a distinction be made "between errors held forth by an erroneous conscience and a contumacious will; between persons peaceable in Israel and disturbers of the State" ³ Cobbet made similar distinctions in *The Civil Magistrates Power* in which he argued that neither governments nor churches "may curb, or punish, a mere supposed Corruption in Religion, but [only] that which is so really and manifestly appearing [to be so] from grounds of the Word[.]" He added that neither churches nor the state should punish even real corruptions until they break "forth into outward expression." Finally, clearly reflecting Puritan experience in England before 1640, Cobbet denied that the state may use "any external violent means, as by Oathes, *ex officio*, close Imprisonments, wracks, Strappadoes, and other preposterous ways in Inquisition, to bring under Censure" errors which are only suspected and not yet public. ⁴

Magistrates and ministers had to work together to determine and maintain the truth. Civil rulers, to quote Cobbet, "as they are ministers of God, [must] indeavour the exact knowledge of his Law, Word, and Rules; as other under-Rulers, are to know the lawes of their Sovereign" Magistrates, then, must be conscientious saints who know orthodox doctrines. If the magistrates are not sure about religious matters, they, "in purer times of the Church, must call for the Counsell of Churches, at least of the Officers of the Churches under their Jurisdiction" The determination of such synods on religious questions should be "Ecclesiastically Authoritative Counsell," which the civil powers must follow. Ministers are to be helpful to the government by expounding "the whole Counsell of God to their people," especially on matters for which the state intends to pass laws. ⁵ Norton put the relationship succinctly: "The Magistrates need the Ministry to fix them in the Consciences of men, and the Ministers need the Magistracy to preserve them from men that have no Conscience, or worse" ⁶

Both Norton and Cobbet asserted that magistrates must suppress religious errors because heresy undermines the social order. "Confusion is not far from every evil work" according to Norton. The challenge was to define a middle way "between Papacy and Anarchy, Babylon and Babel." Those who rejected the magistrates' rights in religious questions tended toward anarchy; there was a "constant Antipathy between Dogmatists and Order." ⁷ There can be no set policy of tolerating all ideas, Cobbet contended, when the subjects of a state were "grosly erring, and contemptuously and pertinaciously holding" those ideas. "Such a toleration . . . is a toleration of that which woundeth a State body, in the very Continuity of it; of that which directly tendeth to breake the peace of each societies (of which the regulate Magistrate is the preservour) and of that which breaketh the very Hedge and walls of a state" ⁸ Religious error is inherently disruptive and anarchic; therefore, the state has the right to suppress it.

The image behind the ministers' assumption was that of Münster in Germany in 1533-34 when extremism in the name of religion ran rampant. ⁹ For Puritans the example of Münster was ever present; any desertion of scripture led to a belief in direct revelation which in turn led to another Münster. Because the covenant of grace theology could so easily take some professors beyond it to a belief in direct revelation, New England Puritans remained constantly vigilant. The episode with Anne Hutchinson in the mid-1630s provided a recent example of the danger. ¹⁰ The rise

of sects in England increased the fears of Bay residents; England verged on producing another Münster. Cobbet pointed to the “sad fruits” of “Anabaptisme in Germany, in John of Leyden and Cnipper Dollings dayes,” and lest England miss his intent he added a contemporary example of the danger. Remember, he advised, “when the better part of the Army were sent down towards Oxford (as I remember) to suppress the stirre raised by the Levellers, and I wish that might have been the last of the destructive, turbulent, seditious, or trecherous designes of men grosly corrupted in their Judgments, in matters of Religion.”¹¹

New England Puritans associated religious heterodoxy with social disorder; conversely, order in churches, when based on God’s commandments, produced order in commonwealths. Allowing the propagation of errors invited the growth of seditious parties, and so the state had a stake in upholding religious orthodoxy because it was upholding itself. This argument against toleration was not new in 1650; what made the colony’s position notable was that Bay authorities held to the argument fiercely while some men in England were seriously questioning it.¹² Bay allegiance to the idea went beyond defending it in the writings of a few ministers. In the early 1650s the government of Massachusetts Bay moved quickly when heresy appeared. So long as dissidents kept their views private they had relative peace, but when they made their dissent public the government took action. The quick response to heresy appears to reflect the concern of the colonists to prevent sects from arising in America as they were in England and to demonstrate to England how to deal with religious heterodoxy.

The Bay government’s adherence to the position of Norton and Cobbet appeared first in response to a book by William Pynchon, a colonial magistrate and the founder of Springfield. In October of 1650, Pynchon’s *The Meritorious Price of Our Redemption* arrived in Boston from England. In *The Meritorious Price* Pynchon dissented from New England orthodoxy on the question of how Christ atoned for man’s sins.¹³ Orthodox opinion held that Christ bore all the guilt of our sins and suffered God’s wrath for them. Our sins were imputed to Christ who alone could bear God’s punishment for them; Christ paid the price for mankind’s redemption. Christ’s sacrifice freed the man of faith from having to suffer the torments of hell, and so Christ’s righteousness was the basis of man’s justification, of his salvation. Because Christ had suffered, the saints did not.¹⁴ Pynchon did not challenge the belief that “devine wrath is fully satisfied for the sins of the Elect, by the merit of Christ’s Mediatorial obedience,” and he agreed that Christ had to come to mediate between God and man for man to be saved. However, he argued that “Christ did [not] suffer God’s wrath for our sins, by suffering the extremity of his wrath; neither did he suffer the torments of hell, neither in his body, nor in his soul, nor any degree of God’s wrath at all.” Christ paid for our redemption by his obedience to God and not by his suffering God’s wrath. The Son did all that the Father asked of him and suffered all “that his Father did appoint him to suffer, in all circumstances, just according to the predictions of all the Prophets . . .” Christ was tried by suffering on earth, suffering which culminated in death on the cross. Pynchon summed up his differences with most New England ministers this way: “They place the price of our Redemption in his suffering God’s wrath for us in full weight and measure, as it is due to our sins by the curse of the Law: I place the price of our redemption in the merit of his Mediatorial obedience, whereof his Mediatorial sacrifice of Atonement was the Master-piece.”¹⁵

THE
MERITORIOUS PRICE
OF

Our Redemption, Iustification, &c.
Cleering it from some common Errors ;

And proving,

- Part I. { 1. That Christ did not suffer for us those unutterable torments of Gods wrath, that commonly are called Hell-torments, to redeem our soules from them.
2. That Christ did not bear our sins by Gods imputation, and therefore he did not bear the curse of the Law for them.
- Part II. { 3. That Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law (not by suffering the said curse for us, but) by a satisfactory price of attonement; *viz.* by paying or performing unto his Father that invaluable precious thing of his Mediatoriall obedience, wherof his Mediatoriall Sacrifice of attonement was the master-piece.
4. A sinners righteousness or iustification is explained, and cleared from some common Errors.

By *William Pynchon*, Gentleman, in New-England.

The Mediator saith thus to his Father in *Psal 40.8, 10.*
I delight to do thy will O my God, jea thy Law is within my heart: (viz.) I delight to do thy will, or Law, as a Mediator.
I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulness, and thy salvation: Namely, I have not hid thy righteousness, or thy way of making sinners righteous, but have declared it by the performance of my Mediatoriall Sacrifice of attonement, as the procuring cause of thy attonement, to the great Congregation for their everlasting righteousness.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *F. M.* for *George Whittington*, and *James Moxon*, and are to be sold at the blue Anchor in Corn-hill neer the Royall Exchange. 1650.

Title Page of Pynchon's *The Meritorious Price*, from the photograph collection of the Local History and Genealogy Room, Springfield City Library.

Pynchon dissented from Bay orthodoxy not on a question of polity or other external sign of religion, but rather on doctrine, on "fundamentals."¹⁶ The reaction of the General Court was sharp and quick. Pynchon's book arrived while the Court was sitting; it immediately took four actions against the work and its author. With six deputies dissenting, the Court ordered a written protest denying that the Court approved of Pynchon's ideas, called for a minister to write a rebuttal to *The Meri-*

torious Price, summoned Pynchon to appear at the next Court, and appointed the public executioner to burn all copies of the book. The Court acted quickly because it wanted its protest to go to England on a ship that was ready to sail from Boston. The Court felt it had to preserve Bay residents "in the true knowledge and faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of redemption by him" and to clear the Bay's reputation with the "Christian brethren and others in England."¹⁷ Writing a short while later, five Massachusetts ministers gave a slightly different reason for the Court's immediate protest. According to the ministers, the Court feared that Pynchon's book "being published in England might adde to the heap of many Errours and Heresies already too much abounding, and this Book being published under the name of a New England Gentleman, might occasion many to think, that New England also concurred in the allowance of such Exorbitant Aberrations[.]"¹⁸ The ministers made the Bay protest a condemnation of Parliament's failure to suppress heresy: New England would not allow such opinions to abound as England mistakenly did. In both the official actions and the ministers' letter the colonists showed an awareness of an English audience. This awareness suggests that the Bay leaders wanted their handling of Pynchon to be an example for the mother country.



The burning of Pynchon's book, from the photograph collection of the Local History and Genealogy Room, Springfield City Library.

The Court's treatment of Pynchon was bound to be respectful because of his position, but there was a carefulness in it beyond respect. When he appeared in May of 1651, the Court gave Pynchon the choice of conferring with all of the ministers present or with only those he desired. He met with Norton, John Cotton of Boston, and Edward Norris of Salem. After a conference Pynchon informed the Court that

he was “much inclined to thinke that [Christ’s] sufferings were appointed by God for a farther end, namely, as the due punishment of our sins by way of satisfaction to devine justice for mans redemption;” in other words, he was coming around to the orthodox opinion. Happily the Court then allowed him to return to Springfield, provided that he appear in October to satisfy the Court about his views.¹⁹ In the fall the Court granted him an extension to the May, 1652, session; the Court exercised “all patience . . . towards Mr. William Pinchon, that, if it be possible, he may be reduced into the way of truth, and that he might renounce the errors, and haeraesies published in his booke . . .” The Court was patient but determined. The extension set a one hundred pound bond for Pynchon’s next appearance and spoke threateningly of proceeding “to so great a censure as his offence deserves.”²⁰ The harsher tone perhaps indicates that Pynchon had retreated from his partial recantation of May.

Before the May, 1652, session of the General Court Pynchon returned to England, but his departure did not end the dispute. In 1655 he published a refutation of Norton’s rebuttal in which he concluded that Norton’s “charge of Heresie is but a paper shot, and a deep Charge of Error may justly be retorted.”²¹ More importantly, after he left New England a letter in Pynchon’s defense arrived from Sir Henry Vane, a one-time governor of the Massachusetts Bay colony. The Bay Council replied to Vane and reviewed and defended the colony’s actions against Pynchon. The Council was “much grieved, that such an erroneous pamphlet was penned by any New England man, especially a Magistrate among us . . .” The Court appointed Norton to refute Pynchon, the Council explained, so that it “might give satisfaction to all the world of [its] just proceedings against him.” The magistrates claimed that they “used all lawful Christian means with as much tenderness, respect and love as he could expect, . . . and he was then thereby so far convinced, that he seemed to yield for substance the case in controversy . . . [until] he received letters from England which encouraged him in his errours . . .” The magistrates’ horror at the source of authorship, their need to explain to the world, and their claim of success until insidious outside forces intervened suggest that their actions were meant for an English audience. Bay authorities could have saved Pynchon from his errors, in their view, if only the English government opposed heresies as did the Bay colony. The letter’s conclusion drove the point home: “The God of peace and truth lead you into all faith, and guide your heart aright in these dangerous and apostatizing times, and make you an instrument (in the place God hath called you unto) of his praise, to stand for his truth against all opposers . . .”²² God had called Vane to the Council of State; the Bay magistrates hoped that God would make the Council of State as zealous in opposing errors as He had made the Bay General Court.

Because his errors were public and touched a basic doctrine, the Pynchon affair met the criteria established by Bay ministers for the interference of the state in religious matters. The Council told Vane that Pynchon “might have kept his judgment to himself, as it seems he did above thirty years . . .” During that time he had not been persecuted; indeed, he had been elected to high office. The government moved against him only after he published his book “to the endangering of the faith of such as might come to read [it].”²³ Cobbet and others forbade the state to punish private opinions, and in the Pynchon case the state did not do so. Cobbet’s second condition was that magistrates only punish obvious errors. Pynchon’s error was not “either of doubtfull disputation, or of small moment” to the ministers of Massachusetts. Pynchon took upon himself to “condemn the judgment of most, if not all, both ancient and modern divines, who were learned, orthodox and godly,

in a point of so great weight and concernment, as tends to the salvation of God's elect, and the contrary which he maintain[ed] to the destruction of such as follow it." Had there been any doubts, five Bay ministers assured English readers, the Court members "would either not at all have declared themselves against the Book, or if they had; they would have stayed for some opportunity of previous consultation with the Elders . . ." ²⁴ Not only did the Pynchon case fit the conditions colonial clergymen established, but the colonial authorities used the occasion to instruct England how it should proceed in similar cases.

In July of 1651, while the Bay government endeavored to bring Pynchon back to orthodoxy, John Clarke, Obadiah Holmes, and John Crandall came to Massachusetts from Rhode Island. Their Baptist beliefs provided a second opportunity for the ministers and magistrates to counter error. The three men went to Lynn to counsel William Witter who also was a Baptist. On Sunday these four and several others held a worship service in Witter's house; the Lynn constable arrested the three Rhode Islanders and took them to the afternoon service at the Lynn church. At the meeting Clarke proclaimed that he could not hold communion with the church because it had not been properly gathered. Robert Bridges, the magistrate at Lynn, sent the three Baptists to Boston to appear before the Court of Assistants on charges of conducting private religious exercises and disrupting the Lynn meeting and on suspicion of propagating their views and re-baptizing one or more persons in Lynn. The Assistants found all three men guilty of the charges. Some of Clarke's friends paid his fine while Crandall posted bail, but Holmes was eventually whipped. ²⁵

The magistrates treated these three Baptists with little of the civility and patience they had exhibited toward Pynchon. On the contrary, their actions reflected very little in the way of Christian charity. Shortly before the Court sentenced the three men, Cotton allegedly affirmed in a sermon "that denying Infants Baptism would overthrow all; and this was a capitall offence; and therefore they were soul-murderers . . ." Influenced by the sermon Governor John Endecott supposedly said that the three deserved to die and that "he would not have such trash brought into their jurisdiction." Holmes accused John Wilson, Cotton's colleague at the First Church in Boston, of striking him and cursing him as he left the courtroom. ²⁶ Although Cobbet would deny each of these charges, the impression of the Bay leaders' contempt for the Baptists remains. ²⁷ They charged Holmes with obstinately choosing to be whipped even though his friends had offered to pay his fine. If "his suffering of stripes was any worship of God at all," Cotton argued, "surely it could be accounted no better than will-worship." He went on to an incredible conclusion: "The imprisonment of either of them [Clarke or Holmes] was noe detriment. I believe they fared neither of them better at home, and I am sure Holmes had not been so well clad for many yeares before." ²⁸

Pynchon's position as a magistrate and the Baptists' status as Rhode Island residents partly explain the differences in treatment. The Bay leadership found Holmes particularly obnoxious because he had gone to Rhode Island after being excommunicated from a church in Plymouth colony. But beyond the differences in their social standing, there was a crucial difference in the nature of their ideas. Pynchon's views on atonement had a certain novelty about them while Baptist thinking immediately activated Puritan memories of Münster. As Cobbet phrased it, "if such as you are to be let alone unrestrained and [un]punished, both civill Government and State and Churches here, would soon be blown up, and we should

become a very Chaos.”²⁹ The necessarily subversive tendencies of Baptist ideas precluded the need for ministers to meet with them as they had met with Pynchon. Clarke actually sought to dispute his ideas with Bay elders; he wanted a public forum to debate the doctrines of baptism, the liberty of believers, and the power of churches and government to enforce an orthodoxy. The magistrates would allow only a private conference, which Clarke rejected. Both sides realized that a public debate would have given Clarke an opportunity to spread his beliefs; that was why he was being punished.³⁰ The speed with which the magistrates acted reveals their fear and hatred of the Baptists. Clarke’s arrest, conviction, and release all took less than three weeks.

No explanation was sent to England by the Bay government, as there had been in the Pynchon case. It became a trans-Atlantic issue only after Clarke published *Ill Newes from New-England* in 1652. In a sardonic preface dedicated to the Massachusetts authorities, Clarke ridiculed the idea of a colony being a paradigm for English policy. He felt that the magistrates should not be offended by his pamphlet because his prosecution “was not done in a corner, is the fruit of your zeal, and that wherein I suppose you glory and count your selves herein a worthy pattern for all that fear the Lord, to follow you, and with all their might to be conformed to . . .” He did them a favor by saving them labor and furthering their design, but the colonial leaders failed to appreciate his services.³¹ The colonial government reacted with an aggressive defense of its policy.

At the urging of the magistrates, Cobbet wrote a point-by-point refutation of Clarke and appended it to *The Civil Magistrates Power* which in itself constituted a rejection of Clarke’s argument. The Lynn minister took up all four of the points which Clarke had desired to debate with the Bay elders, but Cobbet dwelt on the last, the indictment of the coercive power of magistrates. Cobbet added little to his discussion of the state’s power in religion which is in *The Civil Magistrates Power*; however, he did charge Clarke with factual errors and with casting aspersions on Parliament “privily and implicately.” Cobbet attempted to convince Parliament that it had always assumed that the state had a role in religious matters by pointing out that Parliament prohibited episcopacy in England and had passed a heresy act in 1648. Clarke’s denunciation of the Bay government’s conduct was, therefore, also a denunciation of Parliament.³² The minister argued that Clarke’s proposal for toleration was the innovation and that Parliament should not follow false new ideas to the detriment of truth. Part of Cobbet’s argument seemingly looked forward to the rule of the saints on earth. True peace, he wrote, “is not while the Nations walk every one after their own God and are divided and loose in Religion But the times rather of this peace of the Nation is, when they come to be resolute, and unanimous in the true paths and wayes of the true God”³³ The path to saintly rule, to the millennium, requires the suppressing of errors and the upholding of truth.

The Massachusetts General Court offered a more general response to Clarke’s charges through a petition to Parliament. The Court denied that anyone had been punished for his religious beliefs though some had been prosecuted “for matter of fact tending to blasphemie & disturbance of the Government & Churches.” Prosecution of those offenses were imperative because “heretics and erroneous persons are the greatest & most dangerous enemies” confronting any state. The Court expressed the hope that Parliament would understand that it had this duty and that God’s favors to England in the recent past showed He had given it a special role in

history. God had given Parliament the power "to vindicate his cause[,] to recover his truth, to supresse all malignant power opposing it, to settle the liberties of his pure ordinances, [and] to free the true Saints & servants of God from their grievances . . ." Parliament's failure thus far to use this power was "to the provocation of [God's] indignation & wrath & highlie to the dishonor & reproach of the nation, . . . to the grievous scandall of the blessed Gospel of Jesus Christ & the profession thereof, and to the great grieffe & astonishment of all true Christian hearts that reverence his name & truth[.]"³⁴

Cotton presented a similar argument in answering a critical letter from Sir Richard Saltonstall. Massachusetts did not punish people for their beliefs, Cotton assured Saltonstall; in fact, some churches even had Antinomians, Anabaptists, and Seekers as members. So long as they dissented "privately and inoffensively . . . [they] are borne withall in much meekenesse." Moreover, he said that governments have a right to compel people to "attend the public ordinances" because even though such forced attendance may make some men hypocrites, it is "better to be hypocrites than prophane persons. Hypocrites give God part of his due, the outward man, but the prophane person giveth God neither outward nor inward man." England should not criticize New England; it should look to the colonial example. "Wee content ourselves with unity in the foundation of religion and of church order;" Cotton concluded, "Superstructures wee suffer to varie; wee have here presbyterian churches as well as congregationall, and have learned (through grace) to keepe the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; onely we are loth to be blowne up and downe (like chaff) by every winde of new notions."³⁵ He yearned for English presbyterians and congregationalists to agree on fundamental doctrines in order to bring peace to England. That peace would require Parliament to suppress errors, as had the Massachusetts General Court.

The Bay government did not set out to use its treatment of Clarke, Holmes, and Crandall as an example for England. It handled Pynchon more carefully and formally than the Rhode Islanders, whose errors seemed so obvious and historically so subversive that the leaders of Massachusetts did not expect anyone of significance in England to defend them. In 1748, Parliament itself had made it a crime to profess "that the baptizing of Infants is unlawfull."³⁶ When some Englishmen did protest Clarke's treatment the colonial leaders reacted in disbelief; surely things had reached a dangerous point in England when even Baptists received a respectful hearing. The Bay government's petition to Parliament, Cotton's letter to Saltonstall, and Cobbet's *Brief Answer* to Clarke all reflected a feeling of impending disaster. England still had an opportunity to play a crucial role in the advent of the millennium, but only if it reformed itself immediately.³⁷ By October of 1652, Bay magistrates and leading ministers shared a sense of crisis in the battle against Antichrist. By letter, petition, pamphlet, and example, they sought to rally England to the Lord's standard. In the long run, of course, the colonial leaders failed to get England to go along with them in suppressing error. Nevertheless, the colonial effort indicates the continuing ties between Massachusetts and the mother country and clarifies what the colony saw as its message to England.

NOTES

1. See Francis J. Bremer, "Puritan Crisis: New England and the English Civil Wars, 1630-1670" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1972), 88-118, 184-214. For an overview see James M. O'Toole, "New England Reactions to the English Civil Wars," *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, CXXIX (1975), 3-17 and 238-249.

2. See B. Richard Burg, *Richard Mather of Dorchester* (Lexington, Ky., 1976), 54-64 and his "The Bay Colony Retaliates: A Taste of Venom in Puritan Debate," *The Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, XXXVIII (1969), 281-290.
3. John Norton, *A Discussion of that Great Point in Divinity, the Sufferings of Christ . . .* (London, 1653), "Epistle Dedicatory" (October 15, 1651), [viii-ix].
4. Thomas Cobbet, *The Civil Magistrates Power in Matters of Religion Modestly Debated . . .* (London, 1653; reprinted New York, 1972), 15.
5. *Ibid.*, 46, 67, 68.
6. Norton, *Discussions of that Great Point*, "Epistle Dedicatory," [v].
7. *Ibid.*, [vii, vi].
8. Cobbet, *Civil Magistrates Power*, 86-93.
9. Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Messianism in Medieval and Reformation Europe and its Bearing on Modern Totalitarian Movements* (2nd ed., New York, 1961), 283-306.
10. See James F. Maclear, "The Heart of New England Rent: The Mystical Element in Early Puritan History," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLII (1956), 621-652. Philip F. Gura, "The Radical Ideology of Samuel Gorton: New Light on the Relation of English to American Puritanism," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., XXXVI (1979), 78-100, develops another example of what Bay leaders feared.
11. Cobbet, *Civil Magistrates Power*, 24-25. A brief account of the Levellers is Howard Shaw, *The Levellers* (London, 1968).
12. Perry Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts 1630-1650* (1933; reprinted New York, 1972), 281-283.
13. Substantial portions are reprinted in Henry M. Burt, *The First Century of the History of Springfield* (Springfield, 1898), I, 89-121.
14. The fullest expression of the orthodox position is in Norton's refutation of Pynchon. *Discussion of that Great Point*; for other contemporary statements, see Norton, *The Orthodox Evangelist . . .* (London, 1654), 301-306, and Richard Mather, *The Summe of Certain Sermons . . .* (Cambridge, Mass., 1652), 40.
15. Pynchon, *Meritorious Price*, in Burt, *History of Springfield*, I, 89-90. The "not" in brackets is a correction from the "errata."
16. John Cotton and John Wilson of Boston, Richard Mather of Dorchester, Zechariah Symmes of Charlestown, and William Thompson of Braintree saw Pynchon's argument as a fundamental doctrinal error. See "Letter of New England Elders to their brethren in England," in Norton, *Discussion of that Great Point*, [273].
17. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England* (Boston, 1853-54), IV, part 1, 29; hereafter cited as *Mass. Recs.*
18. "Letter of New England Elders" in Norton, *Discussion of that Great Point*, [272].
19. *Mass. Recs.*, IV, part I, 43, 49.
20. *Ibid.*, 72.

21. William Pynchon, *A Farther Discussion of that Great Point in Divinity the Sufferings of Christ . . .* (London, 1655), 438.
22. Massachusetts Council to Sir Henry Vane, October 20, 1652, Massachusetts Historical Society *Collections*, 3rd ser., I (1831), 35-37.
23. *Ibid.*, 36.
24. "Letter of New England Elders," in Norton, *Discussion of that Great Point*, [272]. For a narrative of the Pynchon case more critical of the colonial government, see Samuel Eliot Morison, "William Pynchon, Founder of Springfield," Massachusetts Historical Society *Proceedings*, LXIV (1931), 101-107.
25. The basic story is in John Clarke, *Ill Newes from New England . . .* (London, 1652), reprinted in Massachusetts Historical Society *Collections* 4th ser., II (1854), 27-65.
26. *Ibid.*, 56, 33, 47.
27. William G. McLoughlin, *New England Dissent 1630-1833; The Baptists and the Separation of Church and State* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), 2 vols., is now the standard account of the problems of the Baptists in New England.
28. John Cotton to Sir Richard Saltonstall, [1652], in Thomas Hutchinson, comp., *Collection of Original Papers Relative to the History of the Colony of Massachusetts-Bay* (1865; reprinted New York, 1967), II, 131.
29. Thomas Cobbet, *A Brief Answer to a Scandalous Pamphlet called Ill News from New England . . .*, bound with *The Civil Magistrates Power*, 40. The importance of social standing is evident in the General Court's patient handling of Henry Dunster, president of Harvard, who announced his opposition to infant baptism in 1653; however, it must be noted that Dunster did not publicly disseminate his views. See Samuel Eliot Morison, *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), 305-314; and McLoughlin, *New England Dissent*, I, 21-22.
30. Clarke, *Ill Newes from New-England*, 33-34, 36-37, 39.
31. *Ibid.*, 10.
32. Cobbet, *A Brief Answer*, 25-26; see 27-35 for his charges of Clarke's factual errors.
33. *Ibid.*, 19.
34. General Court Petition to Parliament, 1652, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Photostat Manuscripts.
35. Cotton to Saltonstall, [1652], Hutchinson, *Collection of Original Papers*, II, 133, 132, 133.
36. Charles F. Firth and R.S. Rait, *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660* (London, 1911), I, 1135.
37. For another example of this belief see John Norton's preface to *The Orthodox Evangelist*.