

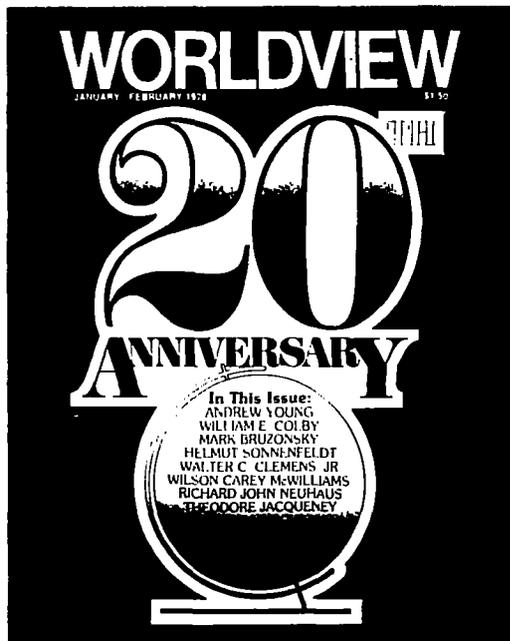
EXCURSUS I

James Finn on Twenty Years of *Worldview*— Why We Continue

This issue of *Worldview* marks its twentieth anniversary. Not an overwhelming figure—we will not attain our majority for another year—but a respectable age in a field littered with publications untimely born or prematurely dead.

Anniversaries are, of course, of different kinds and arouse different emotions. The two hundredth anniversary of the founding of this nation, for example, inspired some honest reflections, much sentimentality, and a great deal of huckstering. The first anniversary of the Carter administration inspires distinctly mixed feelings and the urge to tot up successes and failures, to weigh accomplishment against promise. The seventh anniversary of one's marriage, one's twenty-fifth college reunion, one's fiftieth year—all such anniversaries impel one to look back, to reassess, to see the path one has taken in order better to discern where one is headed.

One of the things that emerges from looking back to the *Worldview* of 1958 is the disquieting truth in



the epigram, *le plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. For what we are most aware of in the Seventies are the vast changes to which we have been subjected in the late Sixties and early Seventies—the stunning debacle of our Vietnam venture; the forming of OPEC and our own failure to shape a sound energy policy; the demand for a new international economic order and America's uncertain response; the global consequences of another Middle East war after that of 1973 and our inability to contain it; the opening to the People's Republic of China. The list could be extended. And they add up,

we are constantly informed, to a new world.

These are changes, it must be admitted, of large proportions. Yet what is surprising, looking back, is the continuity in what has engaged *Worldview* from its first year. In 1958 Henry Kissinger is quoted as saying that the U.S. must develop nuclear weapons of "fine-discrimination, less destructive power and greatly reduced fall-out." Does that sound to anyone like the neutron bomb? Hans Morgenthau stated twenty years ago that "What we call the U.N. today is not what the U.N. started out to be." The reasons: The General Assembly has replaced the Security Council as the dominant political agency; the composition of the U.N. has been affected by the admission of many new members and the development of "a new U.N. diplomacy." Almost yesterday's headline.

In the first year of *Worldview* Roger Hilsman discussed the role of the military in our national life; Michael Harrington warned that the major challenge we faced from the USSR was not military in nature but political; Kenneth Thompson analyzed the relation between morality and politics; William V. Shannon insisted we direct more serious, sustained attention to Latin America; Martin Marty reviewed John Bennett's book *Christians and the State*, and Robert Lekachman reviewed John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Affluent Society*. Familiar names, familiar issues.

Some quotations will lend even sharper focus to this backward glance. In an assessment of George Kennan's political attitudes William Pfaff wrote in 1958: "There is a widespread sense both of frustration at what actually is happening in the world and of disillusion with the failure of two decades of American enthusiasm to make the world measurably better than it was." And in 1978?

In his favorable review of Galbraith's book Lekachman wrote: "If the book is incomplete, it is because its author has assumed rather than justified the social ethic which gives the bite and the drive to his indictment. It would be pleasant if Galbraith were as good a theologian as he is an economist." An observation that applies not only to that book of Galbraith's, of which we continue to get installments, but to a number of other contemporary economists.

And, from an early editorial: "Surely the pathetic dream of Western hegemony, of a continued colonialism, has become the besetting utopianism of those who cannot yet see what is *the* political-social phenomenon of our century: the revolution of formerly dispersed peoples of Asia and Africa. Because it is this phenomenon which, more than any other, may influence the course of history for centuries ahead—if all of us together are not blown up before other centuries dawn."

The continuity between 1958 and 1978 is clear. Not only are some of the writers, books, titles, and issues familiar, but so are the topics they discuss.

We still debate—and must continue to debate—the relation of morality to politics; realism versus idealism; optimism versus pessimism; conservatism, liberalism, and radicalism. We must continue to debate these issues not only because they are perennial but because each generation, apparently, must work them through anew. And each generation will discover that beneath these shifting terms lie the values to which we give our deepest allegiance.

And it is here that what is most distinctive about *Worldview* is most evident. Although it is not evident in every article or every review, *Worldview* is infused with a passion. There are those who fear passion and enthusiasm in political affairs because they have so often run amuck. Crusaders, we know today, have a bad name. And that bad name attaches not only to their goals but to the passion that inspired them. There are those who, having learned this lesson well, assert that a rational person will acknowledge that the world is a place of good and evil to be accepted with patience, endurance, and modest expectations. Some of these people contribute to *Worldview* on occasion, for even a rationalist will sometimes have reasonable observations and proposals.

But what is distinctive about *Worldview* is a vision, a passion that G.K. Chesterton, a still undervalued social critic, expressed thus: "For our Titanic purposes of faith and revolution, what we need is not the cold acceptance of the world as a compromise, but some way in which we can heartily hate and heartily love it. We do not want joy and anger to neutralize each other and produce a surly contentment; we want a fiercer delight and a fiercer discontent....No one doubts that an ordinary man can get on with this world: but we demand not strength enough to get on with it, but strength enough to get it on. Can he hate it enough to change it, and yet love it enough to think it worth changing?"

Passion is not enough. Hard political problems involve many quotidian and often unexciting details. The details, the facts, the nuts and bolts—these must be mastered. But the clanking political machine will not move without passion. Unless there is a fierce discontent with the colossal evils of this world and a fierce delight in opposing them we will rest in a cool stoic acceptance or sour frustration.

The vision, then, is of a world that is worth changing because it is worth loving. This is the vision shared by the editors, most of our contributors, and an increasing number of readers. Although the issues we cope with will present themselves under new guises, we will assert their relation to the values by which we will continue to assess them. This is the steady work, the sustained passion, the guiding vision of *Worldview*. It is carried on even as we acknowledge that the full realization of that vision lies beyond the purview of *Worldview*, or any other human agency.

EXCURSUS II

Peter L. Berger on The Third Jerusalem

Events have been moving rapidly in the Middle East and it may soon become evident whether Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem was indeed a breakthrough to peace or but another episode in an endless conflict. Yet the images that passed over the television screen during those momentous days will remain impressed on the mind regardless of the next turns in the political drama. They will do so for a variety of reasons: because of the intrinsic excitement of the visit, because of the powerful personalities of the men involved, because of the human poignancy of the hopes for peace that were made manifest. But there is still another reason why these images should be retained, and that is because they disclosed a vastly important religious reality.

One of the most beneficent aspects of the religious climate in this country has been a widespread and, at least in places, a deeper understanding of the commonalities between Judaism and Christianity. This understanding has been an important factor in the support given Israel by American Christians, and rightly so. It is impossible to grasp the phenomenon of the modern state of Israel without an understanding of the perennial Jewish dream of Zion. And, despite all the differences, this dream has an analogue in the Christian vision of Jerusalem. The city of David is also the city of Easter, as it is the focus of the eschatological expectations of both Jewish and Christian faith. What the unforgettable scenes of Sadat's visit have disclosed is yet another city—Muslim Jerusalem, *al-Quds*, "the holy one." It is a city sacred to Islam not only because it is from there that Muhammad undertook his journey to heaven, but because he did so from the rock on which Abraham almost sacrificed Isaac. In other words, the very reason why Jerusalem is a sacred place to Muslims points to the commonality between Islam and Judaism (and thus, implicitly, between these two and Christianity)—a commonality not just observable by an outsider but perceived, and indeed proclaimed, by Islam itself.

There is an ethical dimension to this, one that was reiterated a number of times during Sadat's visit. The God of Abraham is the God worshipped in common by Jews, Christians, and Muslims, and this God, who arrested Abraham in the act of sacrificing the innocent Isaac, even now does not desire the death of the innocent. He is the God invoked in the Muslim call to prayer, reiterated five times a day from all the minarets from the Atlantic Ocean to the China Sea—*al-rahman al-rahim*—the compassionate one, who has compassion. Thus a revelation of God's mercy stands at the beginning of what Muslims understand as the old covenant between God