

specific international problems. On the surface, of course, there appears to be at least one major exception to this generalization: considerable attention is given to the "politico-military" aspects of low-level wars. A closer examination, however, reveals that this usually refers to the use of military organizations in non-military (non-shooting) activities. It does not refer to detailed studies of the political effects of military weapons.

If one looks at large-scale strategic plans, one must be struck by the remarkable discontinuity between the political and military sections of the plans. Each plan usually contains a political "scenario" written by a military planner who probably has an advanced degree, and he produces suitably urbane prose about the political shape of the world in, say, 1975. Ultimately, this reduces itself to the question of "Who is the enemy?" and the remainder of the plan is devoted to catalogs of the U.S. military force needed to destroy that enemy's force.

It is paradoxical to see such a dichotomy between political and military activities in a country that has been so lavish in its education of military leaders. And

the overall military result equally reflects the paradox. The U.S. ends up with a military force (especially the missile force) that is much larger than it would be if the political characteristics of the force were adequately considered. And this, in turn, takes money out of the more humanitarian programs that sorely need it. Once again, then, the nuclear obsession produces wholly unintended results.

Space does not permit the comparison of this aspect of the nuclear obsession with the parallel problems which often engage the readers of this journal, e.g., chemical warfare and torture. Some distinguished military analysts, notably Liddell Hart, have argued for years that some forms of chemical warfare would be preferable to what we call conventional war, because the chemical weapons would be more humane. Questions pertaining to the legitimacy of torture are in a similar category and subject to similar analysis. Without taking a stand on the use of nuclear weapons, chemical agents, or torture, let me observe that any sophisticated analysis must include both the military and political characteristics of any weapon or any methodology.

## The Experts, The Critics and Public Opinion

*Nuclear War: The Ethic, the Rhetoric, the Reality*, by Justus George Lawler. Newman Press. \$4.95.

by John K. Moriarty

A book such as Mr. Lawler's induces in me a mixed reaction. The subject matter is clearly of compelling importance; the author's writing style is fluent and often entertaining, if sometimes undisciplined; and I find myself in agreement with the general thrust of

most of his views—to the extent that they are explicit, which often they are not. But Mr. Lawler is so intemperate—indeed almost irresponsible—in his accusations, his approach is frequently so personal rather than analytical, and the implications of his views are so inadequately developed, that it is difficult to take this book seriously. This is truly a pity, because liberal, articulate American Catholics with the courage and the will to examine U.S. military policy critically are entirely too few.

In *Nuclear War: The Ethic, the Rhetoric, the Reality*, Mr. Lawler has set out with the primary purpose of rebuking his fellow Catholics for their insensitivity to the moral horrors of present U.S. nuclear strategy. As a secondary objective, Mr. Lawler attempts to establish the claim of the theologian, the humanist and "the utopian" to a role in "the elaboration of for-

eign-policy programs" and in the assessment of "large questions of national strategy." If one should grant that both objectives are soundly conceived, their practical feasibility and even their desirability are not demonstrated by Mr. Lawler.

Let me state first what I believe are the strengths of this book—and there are strengths. In the first place, the author aims at a proper target when he excoriates the unquestioning acquiescence, the frequent chauvinism and the not-infrequent outright bloodthirstiness of so many American Catholics in their attitudes toward their country's military policies. Whatever the sociological, historical or religious reasons, Catholics have by no means led the United States, or even significantly influenced it as a unique group (as opposed to merely constituting one additional element in an already developing

---

Dr. Moriarty, a political scientist and a former colonel in the Air Force, was special assistant to former Atomic Energy Commissioner Thomas E. Murray and politico-military affairs analyst with the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Dept. of State. He is presently working for the Institute for Defense Analyses.

consensus), in applying the moral principles of their religion to their society. Among those Catholics who lay claim to some "expertness" in political-military matters, there has, as Mr. Lawler charges, been a predominant tendency to support the party line on national military policy and to demonstrate their Catholicism by involved manipulation of the "just-war" doctrine. It is indeed time for Catholics to begin to think for themselves, not only within their own confession but within the larger political communities of which they are members.

•

Mr. Lawler also does well to ridicule the "professional snob-bism" and the "nuclear newspeak" of the defense research industry. It is certainly true that one does not need to be able to discourse learnedly on such matters as first and second strikes, withholds, kill radius, Circular Error Probable, Permissive Action Links, and weapons reliability in order to form a valid moral opinion on nuclear warfare. But Mr. Lawler himself appears to have been taken in by the self-advertisement of the "experts" in his castigation of the role of the RAND Corporation, the Hudson Institute, and such organizations. He should know that there are few real experts in nuclear strategy, that most of the genuine experts are authoritative only in certain specialized areas, and that the generalized strategic experts are so chiefly by contrast with the non-expert. No country has yet fought a nuclear war, and even the real experts are frankly guessing about many things. But because there are so few verifiable criteria of expertness, the way is open for all manner of people—military men, political scientists, clerics, physicists, economists, lawyers, psychologists, engineers—to read a few books, learn the proper jargon, join a defense research "institute," and set up in business as strategic experts." There is always, of course, the problem of

*factual* accuracy about weapons capabilities, military deployments, foreign intelligence, and the like, and this is a matter of special competence. Much of this information is available only on a selective basis to the experts themselves, however, and what is known to the bulk of them is also known (or available) to careful researchers in the general public. So there need be little awe of the arcane knowledge of the defense experts—though if one criticizes them he must at least do his homework.

Mr. Lawler probably makes his most solid contribution to the ongoing foreign-policy debate in his analysis and condemnation of U.S. policy during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. There are few if any Presidential moves in foreign affairs which have received the instantaneous, enthusiastic and mounting approbation which was accorded by the American nation and by most U.S. allies to President Kennedy's handling of the Missile Crisis. Second thoughts since 1962 have been few, while the new feeling of pride, power and confidence engendered by the outcome of the crisis has spread through all phases of the U.S. national policy process. Mr. Lawler, on the contrary, views the Missile Crisis as the "clearest illustration of the bankruptcy of our military policies and of the very real possibility of nuclear extinction." Basically he finds the U.S. actions wrong because they were in contravention of international law and of our commitments to the U.N., and because the so-called "brilliant gamble" might plausibly have ended in the deaths of scores of millions of people. He also questions the reality of the increased threat to the U.S. that would have resulted from the Soviet action, as well as the justice of the U.S. response in view of our own missile installations on the borders of the Soviet Union.

All of these—and especially his criticism of the "brilliant gamble"—are, I believe, justified points which have been largely ignored in American self-congratulations

on the manner of handling the crisis. I do not know of any responsible person who believes that the Soviets were emplacing medium-range missiles in Cuba with the intention of firing them at the United States. The U.S. was at the time already directly vulnerable to destruction from Soviet ICBM's, and the Soviet leadership had not shown before (or since) any inclination to begin a nuclear war which would result in virtual suicide. Yet the U.S. leaders, for reasons of essentially secondary importance, followed a course which they themselves were convinced might result in an all-out nuclear war with complete catastrophic consequences for the United States.

•

So much for Mr. Lawler's positive contributions to the nuclear debate. There is another side to the picture which, I believe, seriously flaws the possibility of this book's achieving the author's purposes. For Mr. Lawler either genuinely wishes to convert significant elements of U.S. public opinion to his way of thinking, or he has set out to amuse himself and those who already agree with him by demonstrating his moral and intellectual superiority to those who do not. Most of the writing of those Americans who are morally concerned about U.S. nuclear strategy—James Douglass, John C. Bennett, Thomas Merton, Gordon Zahn, Erich Fromm, David Riesman—engenders in me a feeling of sympathy and understanding, if not complete agreement. But Mr. Lawler writes in another vein. He is an angry young man who personalizes his differences, and who appears to be inordinately piqued that the "experts," the bishops, and the policymakers won't listen to him and to those in the academic community who think as he does.

Mr. Lawler further vitiates the effects of his efforts by an apparently uncontrollable weakness for involved humor, puns, unusual words and general cuteness. [Examples: the "cabalistic missile";

“neither Kubla nor Herman Kahn”; “augurs and augers—the latter only bore”; an outrageous page-and-a-half poking fun at Goldwater’s portrait.]

While all this must have been great fun, and is guaranteed to put in stitches that tiny and already convinced audience which agreed beforehand with the author, it will have little or no effect upon the large group whose opinions Mr. Lawler presumably is seeking to change.

And finally, in spite of the author’s criticism of Herman Kahn—and others—for delivering a “great number of broad judgments in [fields] which his own training would not warrant,” he is himself willing to deliver judgments on a wide variety of subjects on which he is not qualified by training or by familiarity with the relevant literature. Thus, on p. 9, Mr. Lawler speaks of the warheads for Minutemen and Polaris as “morally targetable”—on what basis I cannot guess, since the yield of these weapons at the time to which he was referring was some 500,000 tons (compared to a 20,000 ton Hiroshima weapon), and the context of the sentence concerned tactical nuclear weapons. On the same page he speaks of the “absolute certitude that renewed testing would result in the death or the maiming of thousands of infants in generations to come.” One cannot accept statements of this sort without at least some documentation. On p. 15 he announces that Russia is emerging into a “state-dominated capitalist society”—which is surely a loose, if not completely inaccurate, description of what is taking place in the USSR today. More decentralized—yes; bourgeois—very likely; profit-motivated—possibly; but *capitalist*?

On p. 86 Mr. Lawler declares that the Soviets have “maintained a full capacity for fighting a controllable conventional war.” This is incontestably wrong; some six or eight years ago the Soviets began to reorganize their ground forces in Europe to accord with a doc-

trine of blitz-krieg nuclear war. If anything, they boxed themselves in with a “massive retaliation” strategy to a greater extent than the U.S., and some of their own military writers in the past few years have criticized the Soviet capability to fight under less than all-out nuclear conditions. On the same page Mr. Lawler states that “NATO is superior to the Warsaw-Pact nations in industry, wealth, and *population*” (emphasis in original), and quotes Assistant Defense Secretary Enthoven to the effect that NATO is also superior to the Warsaw Pact in “men under arms and even foot soldiers in active army forces.” But even Assistant Secretary Enthoven, who was attempting to demonstrate what the NATO nations could achieve, if they tried, in developing a *future* capability to fight a conventional war, would not assert that NATO (with many of its Western European divisions at sixty to seventy per cent strength and inadequate logistical support) has been superior all along to the Warsaw Pact on a conventional war basis—which Mr. Lawler seems to imply. On p. 119 Mr. Lawler declares that the West German Federal Republic “has consistently, though not publicly, agitated for nuclear weapons.” How Mr. Lawler knows this, when no one else knows it (other than the Soviets), I cannot say. The reader of a purportedly serious book simply cannot be asked to accept, on no basis other than the author’s assertion, statements of profound military and political import.

•

It is my personal belief that the world may be approaching a crisis more serious even than Mr. Lawler and those of his persuasion surmise. For where they see the problem, I believe, chiefly as one of immoral or ignorant men in high places flirting callously with nuclear war and its resultant carnage, I see a spirit gradually spreading among “decent people” in the United States that the world must

be brought to heel or we will force it to do so. And the irony is that the larger this militant group becomes and the farther the country moves toward accepting its policies, the more convinced are its adherents that American power is being flouted all over the world and American prestige is at its lowest international ebb because of our weakness, our softness and our internal divisions. The \$100,000,000,000 defense budget is, I would prophesy, not too many years in the future. When one realizes that the greatest part of the build-up in U.S. military forces and the increase in American aggressiveness has taken place in a period of relative détente with the Soviet Union and comparative weakness on the part of the Chinese Communists, it is difficult to be other than pessimistic now that the Soviets show signs of wishing to redress the strategic balance and the Chinese are beginning to develop a genuine nuclear capability of their own. So far one looks in vain for what Walter Lippmann has called “the ultimate good sense of the mass of the people” to assert itself.

In his book Mr. Lawler is quite scornful of the “oligarchy of experts” in our political life, and warns of the danger that these “can be purchased by any wealthy research organization . . . and can be seduced to arrive at the views of their employers.” In all humility I would like to suggest that virtually all the rationality, the moderation and the large-mindedness present so far in the U.S. policy has come from these experts, both in the government and out of it. Indeed, it is to this group, *as influenced by an informed, responsible and interested public opinion*, that I would look for whatever hope there is of injecting a more mature and realistic note into U.S. foreign policy while there is still time. Men of goodwill, like Mr. Lawler, whose instincts are right and whose capacity to influence others is potentially large, will be indispensable in generating such an informed U. S. public opinion.

**Nationalism and American Catholicism**

Dorothy Dohen, Sheed & Ward. 210 pp. \$6.00

Dr. Dohen has chosen six prominent members of the American Roman Catholic hierarchy at successive moments in U. S. history, and from their policies and pronouncements she documents "the emergence of nationalism in American Catholicism." The study includes a discussion of the "relationship of religion and nationalism from the time of the foundation of the nation."

**Vietnam: Lotus in a Sea of Fire**

Thich Nhat Hanh, Hill & Wang. 115 pp. \$1.25 (paper)

The author, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk who is a poet and a former professor of religion in Saigon, examines the nature and history of Vietnamese Buddhism and its encounter with other major forces in Indochinese history — Catholicism, nationalism, communism, and the U. S. presence. Nhat Hanh offers a "Buddhist Proposal for Peace," urging the formation of a new "interim government" representative of the major religious groups which would, he suggests, "serve to liberate the non-Communist Vietnamese who now follow the Front from the Communist leadership."

**America's Vietnam Policy: The Strategy of Deception**

Edward S. Herman and Richard B. DuBoff. Public Affairs Press. 123 pp. \$2.00 (paper)

This book is an attempt to "show in detail . . . that neither the [President's] Johns Hopkins speech of April 7, 1965, nor any subsequent peace move to the present time [Summer 1966], was *intended* to bring about a negotiated settlement in Vietnam. . . . In every aspect of their formulation and execution they show a purposeful *impracticality* as devices for bringing about a peaceful settlement of the war." Additional questions raised by American policies and goals in Vietnam are considered in a series of appendices.

**The Arrogance of Power**

J. William Fulbright. Random House. 264 pp. \$4.95

Senator Fulbright is concerned not only with illustrating his thesis that "gradually but unmistakably America is showing signs of that arrogance of power which has afflicted, weakened, and in some cases destroyed great nations in the past," but also with suggesting new directions in foreign policy. "Criticism," he asserts, "is more than a right; it is an act of patriotism, a higher form of patriotism . . . than the familiar rituals of national adulation."

*By special arrangement with the Foreign Policy Association, readers of worldview may obtain any book published in the United States (except paperbacks) from the FPA's World Affairs Book Center, at the publisher's list price. Post free for domestic orders only. Send orders with check or money order to Desk WV, World Affairs Book Center, 345 East 46th Street, New York, N. Y. 10017.*

volume 10, no. 3 / March 1967

WORLDVIEW is published monthly (except for a combined July-August issue) by the Council on Religion and International Affairs. Subscription: \$4.00 per year.

Address: 170 East 64th Street, New York, New York 10021

**EDITORIAL BOARD**

James Finn, Editor

A. William Loos

John R. Inman

William J. Cook

Editorial Assistant, Susan Woolfson

The C.I.A. and N.G.O's <i>Editorial</i>	1
In the Magazines	2
Selective Conscientious Objection	
An Explosive Principle <i>Gordon Zahn</i>	4
Moral Objection and Political Opposition <i>Michael Harrington</i>	6
The Nuremberg Precedent and Conscientious Objection <i>William V. O'Brien</i>	8
The Nuclear Obsession: IV. Military "Efficiency" <i>Jack Walker</i>	11
<b>BOOKS</b>	
The Experts, the Critics and Public Opinion <i>John K. Moriarty</i>	13
Current Reading	16

Opinions expressed in WORLDVIEW are those of the authors, and not necessarily of the Council on Religion and International Affairs. Copyright © 1967 Council on Religion and International Affairs.

worldview  
170 East 64th Street  
New York, N. Y. 10021

Return requested

*Readers are reminded that worldview welcomes correspondence. Letters may be specific comments on articles in recent issues or general discussion, but readers are requested to limit their letters to 500 words.*