

harsh policies have succeeded in subduing the population have not received the author's attention. The Vietnam war is largely a study of atrocities of U.S. and ARVN troops, with numerous quotations from J. Schell's *A Reporter at Large*. Readers may find it a surprise to see only one small footnote referring to the ungentlemanly activities of the Viet Cong. If the book was meant to be just an attempt to analyze the Vietnam war by reference to world history over two millennia, then it proves little or nothing. Simply by taking Westmoreland as an example, Mr. Fair cannot prove that all products of West Point are bound to fail. The Second World War was not unknown for its West Point successes.

However, readers looking for inspiration on the last World War are likely to feel very deprived, since little space has been accorded to it, and Japan is not even mentioned. What there is is mainly devoted to German savagery inflicted on the civilian populations.

The book's title is taken from its lengthy assessment of General Ambrose Burnside, who, in Lincoln's words, wrested defeat from the "jaws of victory" when he failed to press home an attack on Antietam. Later on, at Fredericksburg, with an almost total disregard for human life, Burnside sent wave after wave of Union infantry to their slaughter by the Confederate artillery. Similar tragedies were enacted by the British and French in the First World War.

At this point perhaps Mr. Fair should have done more than just raise the moral issue as to how hard a general should think before he commits infantry to any frontal assault in which a very large proportion are bound to die. The price of victory in war has often been too high, but some generals pay the price and fail. The great victories of history have often been won by brain power and with remarkably little cost. *From the Jaws of Victory* is a well-written book, often quite absorbing, but unlikely to prove the standard work on military stupidity, if only because Mr. Fair has attempted too much with too little.

Women Under Socialism by August Bebel

(Schocken Books; 379 pp.; \$3.95)

Sexuality and Class Struggle by Reimut Reiche

(Praeger; 175 pp.; \$6.95)

Nancy Schwartz

For the women's liberation movement, "the personal is the political." Politics is no longer seen as an occasional act of participation "out there," in an election or a seizure of state power, but the constant activity of becoming free and equal "back here," among personal friends and enemies. The recognition of unfair male power in small groups, in the family, in couples, and even in our own heads, has taught us the lesson that politics begins at home.

But wherever politics begins, it encounters power relations which are rooted in larger structures of society and history. For women, as for all those who suffer from oppression, it is less important to locate a first cause, a single primary contradiction, than it is to identify the continuing relations that uphold the system of domination as a whole.

That sense of totality has been too rare. Marxism might seem to offer feminism a broader perspective, but for the most part Marxists have been hostile to women's movements. Many have considered interest in "the woman question" as only idealistic rambling in the realm of superstructure or as dabbling in petty bourgeois politics. Recently, radical feminists have returned the compliment by ridiculing male Marxist leaders for their failure to create a mass base, pointing by contrast to the vitality of a movement based on small groups which lead, in turn, to broader forms of interaction.

Such disputes are important, for they have grown out of real, though different, historical situations and political choices. But it now appears

possible to hope for a synthesis, or at least a complementarity, between Marxism and feminism.

August Bebel hoped for such a synthesis in 1883 when his *Women Under Socialism* was first published. Focusing on the place of women in capitalist production, Bebel observed that relative to men, in the sphere of private production (the household), and relative to society, in public production (industry), women were exploited labor-power, working harder and longer than was socially necessary to earn enough to reproduce themselves. To be sure, in public production this also occurred to male wage-laborers, but the condition of women was worse. Then, as now, women worked for lower wages and served as a reserve army of the unemployed, pulled out of the household when the exigencies of capitalist production require it.

Bebel's argument depends, of course, on the labor theory of value, a crucial but problematic assumption which he does not examine because his book is a political tract aimed at the masses. It had many foreign language editions and was also required reading for new members of the American Socialist Party. I find it difficult to understand its political success, for it is very long and filled with details concerning the brain sizes of males and females, the many uses for manure and new inventions such as the carpet cleaner displayed at the Chicago Exhibition of 1893. Some women readers were apparently inspired by his vision of society that included them as equals, but today we are dissatisfied at a dis-

cussion of a new society which speaks only of generic "man" and looks to technology as a savior.

According to Bebel, women's inferior condition arises not only from current exploitation but from a political oppression that is pre-capitalist (though still economic) in origin. Somehow (Bebel is vague here, but presumably he is thinking of works like Engels's *Origin of the Family*), men were the first to control money exchange, women being left at home with the children. Thus men came to control the new system of private property, which destroyed the stationary economies of communal property which had often been associated with matriarchy. The economic and social oppression of women was then reinforced by a religious ideology which condemned them to the status of tabooed objects, desired but feared. Opposed to the anti-sensuality of established German Lutheranism, Bebel stressed the legitimacy and equality of sexual drives in both sexes. Whatever his limitations, Bebel had a good heart.

Bebel's weaknesses as a theorist, however, can be seen in his treatment of the nuclear family. For him, the nuclear family was not oppressive in itself but only insofar as it was based on exclusive father-right and on women's exclusion from public life. He advocated public kitchens and the mechanization of housework as a means of freeing women, and he insisted (and here his Marxism is fairly subtle) that women's activities and the family's consumption were parts of socially useful production, legitimate political needs. Nevertheless, the family was to be valued, Bebel argued, for its virtues of monogamy and nurturance. This was especially true of the proletarian family; in the bourgeois family, as Bebel saw it, promiscuity was the rule. Yet Bebel seemed to forget he had already demonstrated that the proletarianization of men and women in the work force, through poverty and exhaustion, was already destroying the family as a social unit.

Moreover, Bebel's socialism did not propose to change two matters

basic to the condition of women: the form of sexuality and the responsibility for child-rearing. Although Bebel argued that in the good society the satisfaction of the sexual instinct should be a private matter, he explicitly condemned anything other than heterosexuality leading to procreation. And women would retain the sole responsibility for raising children. These difficulties suggest a major limitation of Bebel's socialism: that he saw socialist society as a means of putting into practice the public ideals of bourgeois theory—freedom, equality and fraternity—but stopped short of applying them to our personal universe.

Later Marxist theories of liberation go far beyond these ideals. Marcuse's effort in *Eros and Civilization* to combine Marx and Freud, for example, rejects Bebel's ideal of the productive, useful socialist citizen, advocating that beauty replace productivity as the "reality principle" of civilization.

Compared to such speculations, Reimut Reiche's recent work, *Sexuality and Class Struggle*, is downright empirical. But it is more than this; it is strategic. Through studies of popular magazines and the sexual practices of different classes of the population in Germany, Reiche tries to show the class function of sex education. And on the basis of critical observations of the communes formed in the aftermath of the 1968 student struggles there, he assesses the possibilities for class action in the present.

Reiche is writing in the tradition of Marcuse and Wilhelm Reich in trying to combine the insights of Marx and Freud to describe the ways in which domination is internalized in people's psyches. Hence he considers the relation between the political economy and what, for Bebel, had been our most private of impulses, sexuality.

Reiche's Marxism, like Bebel's, is materialist in its approach to oppression, although Reiche emphasizes the realm of consumption where Bebel stressed the realm of production. For the lowest classes, Reiche agrees that their conditions of work

are enough to explain their oppression; but he is concerned with explaining the submission of the "new" working or middle class, whose conditions of work are better though still unfree.

Elaborating upon Marcuse's notion of "repressive desublimation," Reiche sees the oppression of men and women under late capitalism as maintained by an apparent sexual liberty. Erotic wishes, which in Bebel's Victorian era were displaced onto, say, useful work or devotion to Church and State, are now allowed more direct expression. Sexual instincts are encouraged to be attached to fashions and even to people as exchangeable commodities, but not to either of these as lasting use-values nor to claims which are irreconcilable with the system. Freedom beomes the liberty to treat other people as objects.

The further irony in all this, according to Reiche, is that most people are still in infantile stages of sexual development, the oral and anal stages, and are now pressured into a "genital facade" with which they are uncomfortable. He notes other societies where, for example, the oral stage of sexuality was stressed and therefore cooperative character traits predominated; and he also recognizes that today other forms of sexuality are pleasurable, such as masturbation and homosexuality. But he does not see these as sources of political liberation under capitalism; for now, they can only be the acting out of fears of genital primacy, which he sees as the highest stage of sexual development, the "freedom of spontaneity and control."

As in Bebel, the nuclear family is not seen as a cause or even a locus of domination (except for one reference to inner terrorism!). To be sure, it is the family that first establishes the need for authority in a child, but Reiche sees nothing wrong with this as long as the child can pass through the Oedipal state of ambivalent identification with the parents. He/she can then establish the capacity for autonomy and strong ego-ideals, which, for Reiche,

include class solidarity and party discipline.

But Reiche knows that the bourgeois family is disintegrating, no longer teaching its children even how to resist its own authority. Hence children are more prey than ever to outside modes of domination—state power, mass-media pressure, and socialization in the schools, factories and offices. The best political strategy, therefore, is to engage in what he calls “defensive action” against repressive desublimation, shoring up the nuclear family where possible and doing other things for young adults (here he is vague) to strengthen their egos and ego-ideals.

Reiche is fascinating in his attempt to detail how repressive desublimation actually works. But I see many problems with his analysis. His attempt to show that desublimation is consciously manipulated by a certain group in order to sell its products and keep its work force in order is unconvincing. And even where he alleges more impersonal systemic connections—“the rapidity with which he changes his fetish is ultimately a function of the rate of circulation of capital”—it sounds more like a bizarre metaphor than a causal relation.

Reiche is more successful in describing the ways in which desub-

limination is spreading. His description of the commodity nature of some personal relations, as in group sex touted by the media, speaks to the experience of many young women who were urged to act “liberated” as the pill became widespread. But in his effort to refute the claim that free love is the true path to revolution, he tries to prove too much—that all expansion of eros is repressive.

There is a certain humanity to Reiche’s position, for he is reacting against the extreme situationist demand that to make the revolution we must first remake ourselves, our very personalities. Reiche’s position is akin to that of the women’s movement, which involves consciousness-raising more than consciousness-changing. Women’s groups have tried to bring out the specific love and righteous hatred which already exist in their personalities and to direct such feelings toward their natural objects. But Reiche does not make this link to feminist consciousness, nor could he, given his analysis.

For Reiche’s major theoretical error is that he takes one element of the superstructure—personality development into genital primacy—and posits it as timeless and salutary. He forgets that this too depended for its development on a definite interaction with the environment—in this case emerging capitalism, as the

many studies of the (male) work ethic have shown. Because of this Reiche ignores the fact that genital supremacy has meant very different things for men and women. Thus it is not true that identification with the parent of the same sex by a little girl will inevitably lead to a strong ego and ego-ideals, for women have much self-hatred of their stereotyped, now ambivalent, roles.

Although he comments that males have always dominated in the realm of sexuality, elsewhere he casually asserts that male supremacy has been economically superseded, implying that its dissolution is inevitable and needs no human agency. Ultimately Reiche is deterministic and undialectical, ignoring the women’s movement; and his work clearly falls short of a synthesis of Marxism and feminism.

Such a synthesis could consider woman as laborer, in her production, reproduction and consumption, and take seriously the idea of “really free labor,” “sensuous practical activity,” as essential to woman and man. Many women, both in their theory and practice, are beginning to make these ideas true.

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Briefly Noted

They Can't Go Home Again
by Richard L. Killmer et al.
(Pilgrim Press; 118 pp.; \$4.95)

Killmer is a U.S. citizen who has worked with the U.S. and Canadian churches in a special ministry to American exiles in Canada. His brief overview of the situation of American draft resisters and military deserters in that country offers the basic facts and some illuminating case histories which can inform and humanize the current debate about amnesty, a debate that probably will not go away very soon. A brief section at the end attempts to draw some heavy theological and philosophical lessons from the exile phenomenon, all of which may be less than persuasive to some readers. But the case histories and stories, which are the book's chief value, do illustrate successfully the ironies and varieties of motivation among these exiles. Some of them no longer consider the U.S. "home," yet this little book should convince most readers that those who want to return must be enabled to return. No doubt Canada needs conscientious citizens too, but at this point in our history the U.S. has none to spare.

Issues of Theological Warfare: Evangelicals and Liberals
by Richard J. Coleman
(Eerdmans; 206 pp.; \$3.45)

An admirably useful book delineating the differences between two conflicting streams in American Protestantism and, increasingly, in American Catholicism. Coleman, a Presbyterian, has wisely approached the issue of "social involvement" after devoting most of the book to the elemental questions of scripture, personal religious experience and faith, thus making clear the differing presuppositions by which styles of social engagement are shaped. Some readers may be uncomfortable with the categories "evangelical" and "liberal," feeling themselves only partially de-

scribed by either. But Coleman is probably right in believing they are the least inadequate referents to describe the current debate in the churches. He deals candidly with the contradictions on both sides in their advocacy of personal (evangelical) or corporate (liberal) social engagement, and concludes with the argument that the key and abiding issue is what Christians mean by the "Kingdom of God" and its relation to history. Altogether a sensitive and well-informed effort to arbitrate a much confounded dispute.

Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920's
by Otto Friedrich
(Harper & Row; 418 pp.; \$10.00)

Dr. Sandor Rado, head of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute during the Weimar Republic, is now eighty years old. "Why did the Nazis come to power?" Otto Friedrich asks him. After careful thought, Rado finally replies, "I don't know." *Before the Deluge* offers no more certain an answer to that crucial question, although other survivors of the period interviewed by Friedrich are not so reticent as Dr. Rado. One suspects that Friedrich, formerly managing editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*, distrusts all grand analyses of social and political phenomena. From time to time, his intuition of uncomfortable parallels between the Weimar Republic and current confusions of American society is made explicit, but Friedrich's aim is not so much to score political points as to tell a story of mystery and horror. He shuttles back and forth between theatre and the arts, politics and economics, psychology and science. As he tells it, it is primarily a story of personalities: Einstein, Brüning, Brecht, Dietrich, Weil, Goebbels, Hitler, Klee and Hindenburg. Although *Before the Deluge* makes no new argument and supplies little in the way of new information, it is an artful unfolding of a tale that must haunt this generation and others if we are to avoid the story's ghastly ending.

White House Sermons
ed. by Ben Hibbs
(Harper and Row; 216 pp.; \$5.95)

Billy Graham, Edwin Espy, Terence Cooke, Norman Vincent Peale, Louis Finkelstein, Charles Malik, M.L. Wilson, John Krol, Elton Trueblood *et al.* A small moment now and then, but, for the most part, see Jeremiah 5:13.

U.S. China Policy and the Problem of Taiwan
by William M. Bueler
(Colorado Associated University Press; 143 pp.; \$5.95)

Bueler, for five years a translator and intelligence officer on Taiwan, bemoans the lack of attention paid that island by U.S. scholars. Now that Washington and Peking are getting ready to go steady, the status of Taiwan is an embarrassment to both. The international heavies agree that Taiwan is part of China but, says Bueler, most Taiwanese are of a different mind. Given the choice, Taiwan would like to rule itself. Chiang Kai-shek claims the independence movement is the work of "Maoist-supported Communist agents," and Peking denounces the movement as a conspiracy by Japanese militarists and American imperialists. Chiang cannot force a union between Taiwan and the mainland, and Mao might not be willing to pay the cost. Meanwhile, Chiang's mainland colleagues buy "insurance" by having their children emigrate to the U.S. in the hope that, when the end comes, the parents will be able to follow them as relatives of American citizens. Although he wrote this small book before Nixon's big China switch of the past year, Bueler anticipated what was coming and offers a persuasive argument that U.S. interests lie with Taiwanese independence. Put us down as agreeing with Edwin O. Reischauer: "This . . . soundly reasoned book deserves wide attention."