

tween the Thought of Mao and the hard realities of Chinese society makes it more than a little plausible that these achievements took place not because of but *despite* the Maoist ideology. In no area of Chinese society did Mao commit greater follies (as distinguished from its human horrors) than in the economic area. The climactic economic folly was the Great Leap Forward of 1958, which set China's development back for years. It was the reassertion of a measure of rationality in the wake of this fiasco that led to Mao's loss of power to the "revisionists," who were the target of the Cultural Revolution, unleashed by the dreamer who steadfastly refused to learn from reality. The real heroes of this drama are the Chinese people, one of the most enduring and productive in the world. It is they who have endured both the horrors and the follies of the dream, whose immense productivity will continue to bring about great achievements if given half a chance, and who will survive both the dream and the dreamer.

Mao's Thought and the power behind it have transformed China. The transformation will not be reversed. Yet, in this as in any other collision between dream and reality, it is reality that wins out in the end. The Great Leap Forward foundered on the realities of economic life as the Cultural Revolution foundered on the realities of politics. The Maoist experiment as a whole has not been able to overcome the perennial realities of the human condition and of human nature. Every push of the dream against these realities was followed by a period of sobering, of relaxation and of more pragmatic policies—after 1955, 1959 and again since 1969. In the last few years, while the Mao cult goes on, the Chinese people have been given some relief from the sacrifices demanded by Mao's way of "protracted struggle." Since the demise of the Red Guards there have been no new "movements" of terror; modest "material incentives" have returned to the economy; the peasants have been quietly allowed to cultivate their

small private plots and to live a reasonably traditional family life within the semi-militarized communes; and the rhetoric of world revolution has been muted by the détente with the United States.

No one can predict the future of China with any degree of assurance. But both books end with assessments that make it unlikely for the more murderous and more irrational themes of the Maoist dream to burst

out again in the near future. This is not necessarily a good thing for the peace of the world. A military-dominated China, with benevolent rather than terroristic policies toward its own population and with a growing economy pragmatically managed, may be rather bad news for some of its neighbors (not least for the Soviet Union). There can be no doubt that the fading of the dream is very good news for the Chinese people.

Grapes from Thorns by Dean Acheson

(W.W. Norton; 253 pp.; \$7.95)

Alger Hiss

Dean Acheson was, one can safely assume, on the lists of "enemies" of many important people. He had a rare gift for lasting friendships, but he was acerbically outspoken, even contemptuous, of those he considered opportunists, pious frauds or evildoers. However numerous the enemy lists he made, he was certainly on a much larger number of lists of those who regarded him as a dear and valued friend. Equally certainly, the latter group was much better company than the former.

This miscellany is a collection of his magazine articles, addresses, letters of occasion and other ephemera, mostly brief, written over the period from 1946 to 1969. Published posthumously, it was put together shortly before his death on October 12, 1971, at the age of 78. Dean Acheson's style, like that of most lawyers, was a bit stiff when he picked up his pen for public expression. We will have to wait for his personal letters to have a record of his engaging, warm, witty and playful manner at informal moments. Nevertheless, these pieces contain much of the style and flavor of the man and, more important, set forth details of his earliest influences, of his shaping years and of his abiding basic values.

It is a pleasurable task to review this volume of his lesser writings, not only for the pleasure it brings back of his winning person, but because there is little here of his later imperial pronouncements and beliefs. He is not in these pieces often engaged in assisting *le bon Dieu* in a new Creation.

We are reminded by his address of April 17, 1950, at the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Holy Trinity Parish at Middletown, that his parents were not American-born. His father came to Connecticut from Canada as an Anglican clergyman. (He became Bishop of Connecticut.) Dean and his brother and sister were born in Middletown and grew up there. "Out of this soil I grew," he said. "It has entered into me and is a part of me as I am of it." In this same address he spoke of his youthful recognition of "the path of duty" when "moral values were plain," a period of life which is for many of us "one of the few fixed points in the turmoil and confusion of the world today." In 1958 he revealed that as a boy T.R. was a hero of his.

In 1956, in a brief note about Justice Brandeis, whose law clerk he was when fresh out of law school, he exhibits the reserve and fastidi-

ous taste which also marked him. He refused to be drawn out concerning "LDB's inner nature" because of his [Acheson's] "repugnance to intruding upon that citadel of privacy he guarded so vigilantly."

To the employees of the State Department, who in October, 1951, were being subjected to the assaults of Joe McCarthy, he said elegantly: ". . . in his discourses Machiavelli says, 'Amongst the other means which ambitious citizens frequently employed to achieve power was this practice of calumniating.' Well, if this was a racket in the sixteenth century, it certainly had something of a revival in the twentieth century. But, as I say, the way to meet this is to meet it by doing our duty, and if we continue to do our duty, if we continue to hold our heads high, it will pass."

In the *New York Times Magazine* of October 11, 1958, there was a revelation of Acheson's belief that "salvation lies only in work." He was describing his meeting with Foster Dulles, invited "to arrange an orderly transfer of responsibility":

He told me that he was not going to work as I had done, but would free himself from involvement with what he referred to as personnel and administrative problems, in order to have more time to think. I did not comment, but was much struck by the conjunction of ideas. I wondered how it would turn out. For it had been my experience that thought was not of much use without knowledge and guidance, and that who should give me both and how competent they would be must depend on who chose, dealt with, assigned and promoted these people, and established the forms of organization within which they worked

Not included in this collection are words that he spoke in an interview with a journalist in the year before his death. Commenting, this time directly, on Senator Joseph McCarthy, he referred to him as a low, mean scoundrel, adding in typi-

cally Achesonian contempt for the contemptible: "To denigrate him is to praise him." This display of flashing scorn deserves to be preserved

along with the papers he had gathered at the end of his life as "grapes from thorns or figs from thistles."

The Politics of Nonviolent Action by Gene Sharp

(Porter Sargent; 902 pp.; \$24.95)

Michael Ferber

I wish I'd had this book four or five years ago. Around 1969 many of us in the nonviolent wing of the antiwar movement began to feel a pressure to escalate our tactics into a new "seriousness" or "revolutionary commitment." Even such dedicated groups as the draft resistance or the Catholic Left, who deserved to feel they had made an impact on the increasingly antiwar public mood, felt the demand to go "beyond" nonviolent tactics and take up street fighting, trashing, bombing, kidnapping and "armed struggle."

Some of the pressure came from kindred groups: The Progressive Labor Party relentlessly criticized actions like symbolic sanctuary in churches, and even draft refusal, as individualistic, bourgeois and "merely symbolic" forms of "pseudo-struggle," while the Weathermen insisted that if we were truly angry and truly brave, then we would be truly revolutionary and try to smash the state with Japanese street-fighting tactics and *plastique*. Some of the pressure came from the example of the Black Panthers, the Tupamaros, the Québecois, al Fatah and even the PRG of Vietnam, whose spectacular style and courage blinded us to the great differences in their situations, not to mention their failings. Some of the pressure came from the agonizingly slow way the massive campaign of the peace movement took effect, as one ousted villain was replaced by a greater villain, the troops dribbled home, the bombing went on and on, and our patience and resilience wore out.

And some of the pressure to take up violence came from our own ignorance of what nonviolence could do. So while we withstood the pressure, many of us felt demoralized, and we half believed the arguments we disputed: that we were not serious after all, but cowardly, and not political radicals but moralists, religious pacifists or (worst of all) mere liberals.

We would have been able to withstand the pressures better and continue our work in better spirits if more of us had known what Gene Sharp tells us in this enormous, encyclopedic study. Not that much of it was unknown before, but nothing as thorough, systematic and specific has been compiled until now. It is the fruit of over twenty years of reading and research, research that took Sharp to India, Norway and Oxford, as well as to jail (during the Korean War) for draft refusal.

The research is impressive, though it should be said that the critical apparatus rather weighs down the book: there are over 100 pages of notes, a 50-page index and a 20-page bibliography. Over one-third of the text is an exhaustive list of nonviolent methods, 198 of them, each with a name, number and historical examples, ranging from letters and picket lines to the general strike and the creation of a parallel government, and including such unusual tactics as "collective disappearance" and "Lysistratic non-action," the latter with two examples outside Aristophanes. There is some-