

## The People: Growth and Survival by Gerhard Hirschfeld

(Aldine; 239 pp.; \$7.50)

Irving Louis Horowitz

It is no simple matter to attempt, much less to execute, a work of universal history and culture such as *The People*. The temptation to applaud the effort as noble is partially offset by an inclination to criticize it as futile. But beyond that, the attempt to compile such macroscopic wisdom sets one to thinking about those essential properties of a universal history of culture. Whether one is dealing with Condorcet and his stages in the progress of human consciousness, Marx and his stages in the transformation to a classless society, Toynbee and his series of successful and unsuccessful challenges and responses of civilization, or Spengler and his notions of cyclical and geographical declines and inclines, all these writers on anthropological history in the grand manner have in common both a basic thesis about the nature of social change and social structure and a basic vision about the moral imperatives that either accelerate or hold back the floodgates of history. Whether they are pessimistic or optimistic depends on whether they approve or disapprove of the present state of affairs in terms of their own analysis.

If one carefully examines these writers on universal themes, the specificity and particularism of their vision is also clear. There is an exactitude about the writing of Condorcet, Marx, Toynbee and Spengler that adds flesh to the dry bones of schemes and scaffolds. Universal history is illustrated by particular events. In this respect the work of Hirschfeld is especially disappointing.

For while he offers a basic thesis about the immense role of leadership in history, and while he provides a somewhat standard vision of world federalism, he does not come up with specifics. Random remarks from random events in history abound, but no real corpus based on a discipline or data to make his package meaningful or convincing.

Discussions about Mankind, its present and its future, which is the subject matter of this book, can be characterized by the differences enunciated by Kant and Hegel. For Kant, the idea of universal brotherhood and a constitution of man was central to the realization of the fullest aims of being a moral being. He was a true child of the Enlightenment and merely carried the bourgeois vision of universal *brotherhood* to the next logical step, universal *nationhood*. Hegel, coming one distinct generation later, in the wake of the Napoleonic wars and the collapse of the Enlightenment vision onto a spattering of nationalisms, saw the State as the ultimate repository of real power and authority and, hence, the source of law and decision-making. In one sense Kant was postulating an ideal condition of human survival, whereas Hegel was postulating an actual condition of human society. Yet strangely, despite 150 years of scholarship, we seemingly have not gotten beyond their formulations. Indeed, Hirschfeld's volume can be said to be a step backward insofar as the real and the ideal, the empirical and the valuational, are quite thoroughly confused rather than intertwined.

We are dealing not just with a

book called *The People*, but with a promotional hard sell: a special plenary session at the International Anthropological and Ethnological Congress; a foreword to the book (an uncomfortable series of qualified phrases to be sure) by none other than Kenneth E. Boulding; publication by a major United States social science publisher; a very decent and gentle additional note by Sol Tax, Chairman of the Council for the Study of Mankind and, of course, the inevitable listings of the Board of Directors and Board of Advisors of the Council for the Study of Mankind, Inc. Thus we can better appreciate the magnitude of this production and why it deserves vigorous commentary. This is a packaged promotion of a theme, more than an anthropological or social treatise.

From the outset of the present century there have been two tendencies within world federalism: a benign position which emphasizes the need for world peace and leaves open the question of basic sociopolitical forms for its realization; and a militant tendency which sees world peace as deriving from an international superstate and considers the main danger to human survival to be the nation-state. Hirschfeld clearly represents the latter tendency. For him the shibboleths of the nation-states are simply enlarged to include the world as a whole. The need for world peace is a grudging second to the requisite of world order. His favorable, if passing, observations on war as the mother of technology and invention can hardly reassure those of us who perceive in this militant tendency within universalism a militaristic trend.

The basic problem in this book, as with all hard-line forms of federalism, is how one should operationalize this thirst for federalism. Given the power of racial, international and ethnic concerns, given the relative indifference of ordinary people to schemes predicated on Platonic élites, how does one bring about this new one-world order? The impulse toward fanaticism has always proven more glaring at this vital point than any-

where else in the vast abstract armor of the contemporary federalists. This is also the case with Hirschfeld, whose élitism is both transparent and overbearing.

The author assures us that "in a pluralistic society, which a Mankind system by its very nature would have to be, there would be room for more than one interpretation of freedom." Regrettably, he does not tell the reader the opposite side of the coin: whether the achievement of such a Mankind system would permit the retention of pluralism. That is, after all, the central nerve of things: not whether in a free society there is room for crackpots, but whether in a crackpot society there would be room for free men. And on the basis of the evidence provided by this book, the answer must be recorded as a resounding nay. This volume is, rather, the latest eclectic conglomeration of inherited wisdom and error (in an unexamined proportion) about the future of civilization writ large. It moves counter to tendencies in advanced industrial countries for authentic plural identities at the expense of fixated civilizational concepts. Nationalist concepts, ethnic factors, racial considerations and class competition must be viewed as universal in their own right.

The power of the small community is often great enough to overcome such conceptual abstractions; while at other times different forms of general considerations compete with each other. In any event, the best guarantees for pluralism are precisely those tendencies running counter to the ideal of Mankind and its monolithic insistence on the unitary world State. What is offered is no less fanatic and no less binding than the narrowest sort of nationalism which Mankind, Inc., is presumably dedicated to eradicate.

The work has an inherent pretentiousness, as if relating all basic issues to the idea of Mankind illumines all branches of learning. This is transparent nonsense. People have interests in individual affairs, community activities, family life, national systems, ethnic identifications, etc.

that by no means culminate in anything. They simply coexist in a mosaic of life itself. The flatulent assumption that the scale of a vision can alone resolve our pressing, parochial and particularistic concerns is a blatant form of authoritarianism. It is the problem and not the solution.

The study of mankind is certainly a significant activity, but no more so than the study of social classes, national structures, racial attitudes, etc. What constitutes the "highest" principle at any given time is not an abstraction called Mankind, but that unifying principle or collective myth that generates significant actions and changes. It might be less noble to be motivated by matters of racial injustice and class inequities instead of the universalist codes of Mankind, Inc., but nobility is in the eye of the beholder. And social scientists are properly concerned with the grounds for action, while philosophers are properly concerned with the moral justifications and rationalizations for such actions. Simply to assume that Mankind is by definition the foremost single principle or a unifying premise is as naive as contrary assumptions that Civilization, Race or Class must necessarily, on *a priori* grounds, be a supreme organizing principle of universal governance.

One of the more bizarre aspects of this book resides in the title: *The People: Growth and Survival*. In point of fact, this comes as close as any volume in my recent memory of fitting the description: blaming the victim, who turns out to be "the people." Social Darwinism (the principle of natural selection among the human race); the principle of exploitation ("Leadership keeps ahead of the people who in turn readily follow leadership"); the Principle of Conflict ("War creates the emergency which creates the need and the market for new aspirations, ideas and energies"); Leadership Principles or the Precept of the Great Man ("... great men have basic traits in common without which outstanding achievement would hardly

be possible"); New Opportunity promotes new leadership classes, lack of opportunity destroys leadership classes, etc. Rebellion and revolution are wastes of time ("It has never changed the relationship between the people and their leaders, never lessened the people's dependence upon the leaders for their livelihood"). The peoples of the Third World are urged to rely on food-growing economies. Why should they engage in industrialization just to gain the misery of advanced peoples?

Here we have a book on the people, counseling the dreariest sort of passivity. The book is a veritable catalogue of reactionary sentiments and banalities that make Eric Hoffer seem a paragon of democratic virtue. A more appropriate title might have been *The Principle of Leadership: How to Acquire, Maintain and Defeat Adversary Claims to Power*. At such a level the premises of the book, however questionable, could at least have been dealt with in conventional terms of organizational theory. As it is, to call a book *The People* while enunciating every anti-populist prejudice in the corpus of modern reactionary thought, from James Burnham to Oswald Spengler, is to raise serious doubts as to the sobriety of the author.

The final chapters, of works on mankind previously written, end with a chapter on God, religion and theology, or an amalgam of all three. Now that we are in the sophisticated age of disbelief, macroscopic works often end with directly political appeals. This work is in the new genre. And here, too, we receive a crossed word between the American Constitution in the realm of platitudes and the authoritarian one-party states in the realm of reality. The United States Pledge of Allegiance is enunciated in terms of Mankind and the World Community, not just with "freedom and justice for all," but with "freedom, *order*, justice and peace for all" (emphasis added). National, racial, tribal, ethnic and group considerations are said to be "limitations" that have to be "transcended." None of these "special in-

terests" must be permitted to be "carried to excess which would be harmful to Mankind." All of this would be cared for by a Mankind Political Party (not parties in the plural, note, but *one* party).

Why this monism? The answer Hirschfeld gives us is that "To be effective, this demand must be backed by Mankind education, Mankind motivation and Mankind discipline. The only means of creating, developing and maintaining such support on a substantial scale is through a tightly controlled party system." There would be the inevitable Platonic ruling élite, called a Mankind Philosophy, and the Party would set up a "special advisory group to plan the formation of a Mankind Philosophical Council." There is something for everybody, Thomists, Marxists and fascists alike, so long as they remain "Believers" organic to the "Party Teams" having liaison with "anticipated collaborators outside the Party." The issues taken up would have to "submit to the leadership group for its decision," and they would have "routine activities," all relating to "service for Mankind." In this way, we would witness the triumph of Mankind (in another age called the Triumph of the Will) and realize a society of "justice, order and peace," in which the people, who on earlier pages are declared insipid and downright cowlike in nature, "could live in security and equality, in freedom and dignity." The work ends in this *Götterdämmerung* of intellectual pretense. What does not end is the lingering suspicion that this intellectual pretense disguises a bankrupt demand for universal order not far removed from the dreams of tyrants of yesteryear.

Scratch this book, even gingerly, and one finds a fascist tract for our times. I realize, of course, that even suggesting that a civilized person who writes a book in the English language is capable of subscribing to, much less prescribing, a repugnant ideology is somehow unthinkable, an exercise in hyperbole on the part of this reviewer. It is far nicer and more convenient to de-

scribe a work as controversial. However, this *is* a fascist text. It overtly argues on behalf of élitist principles; it asserts the worth of leadership principles as above good and evil; it conceives of all real interests, national, racial or cultural, as limitations; and it argues for a world order that is fixated in heavy bureaucratic rhetoric. The political manifesto of "Mankind" carries behind it a fanaticism and a dogmatism no less dangerous than any doctrine based on the *uebermensch* principles.

This volume utterly confuses, and has contempt for real interests or ideas other than universal interests. It denies that community themes, local issues, ethnic considerations, racial views and religious differences do not so much have to be overcome but rather orchestrated. This book is, in short, a mighty assault on democratic politics and a desperate search for certainty that

is bound to be picked up precisely as the militaristic framework gains ground on a worldwide basis. In short, the book is profoundly bureaucratic in tone, design and content. It is more a reflection of the malaise of malcontented individuals feeding off the tarnished status system of academic life than a serious coming to grips with the desires and dreams of mankind—a word which, by the way, needs no "Inc." to make it an object of respect and research.

(Under no conditions or circumstances is this review to be incorporated in any future editions of *The People*. All rights to this review are reserved by the author. This note is made imperative by the publisher's alarming statement that "this book is being published in a first-cycle edition. . . ." My review is expressly prohibited from appearing in any second or subsequent "cycles" of Hirschfeld's book.)

## Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT by John Newhouse

(Holt, Rinehart & Winston; 302 pp.; \$7.95)

## A Farewell to Arms Control? by Elizabeth Young

(Penguin; 256 pp.; \$2.25 [paper])

### Michael Mandelbaum

At the beginning of his remarkable account of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks John Newhouse cites the motto that a British civil servant between the two world wars displayed on the wall behind his desk: "If you know what you think, you don't understand the problem." It is difficult to know what to think about SALT because the talks took place in strict secrecy. Only a few cryptic official announcements and an occasional tidbit leaked to the press gave the public any glimpse at all of what was happening.

Now, through "innumerable private conversations," Newhouse has managed to reconstruct the course of events from SALT's origins in the Johnson Administration—inspired by Robert McNamara's growing distaste for an unchecked arms race, and spurred by the initiative of a young defense intellectual then serving in the Pentagon named Morton Halperin—to a ceremony in St. Vladimir Hall in Moscow on May 27, 1972. There Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev signed what turned out to be the next-to-last draft of a