

Correspondence

"Belfast Blues"

To the Editors: Richard J. Neuhaus's "Belfast Blue" (*Worldview*, November and December, 1973) is a penetrating and insightful report on the conflict in Northern Ireland as it enters a new constitutional stage of power-sharing and outreach to the Republic. As he is aware, the new chapter is itself controversial, especially from extremist viewpoints. Neuhaus offers insights into the sources, complexities and options which are often absent in the American media's stress on the pathological and political violence and the "religious" aspects of the struggle.

Among the helpful insights are those dealing with the Catholic clergy's lukewarm support of unification, the less than shocked outlook on Paisley of élites in both communities, and the lack of Protestant concern with economic justice for the minority.

Neuhaus's analysis of causes, however, is arguable. He is convincing in rejecting class war as basic, but he moves too soon to dismiss nationalism and settler/native explanations of the conflict. Adopting Conor Cruise O'Brien's dubious thesis about the persistence of "religious states" in Ireland, Neuhaus fails to notice that all of these variables are involved in Northern Ireland's conflict. The "religious" should be given the least weight. Few are debating the Council of Trent and Calvin's teachings, though doubtless the heritage of earlier debates and associated violence is present. "Catholic" and "Protestant" should be written as "nationalist" and "loyalist" to give a truer picture.

In addition Neuhaus overidentifies Irish nationalism with the Sinn Féin-IRA, especially the Provisionals, and implicitly goes beyond this error to expect Irish nationalism to testify against itself by accepting the veto power (the majority consent doctrine) of the Northern loyalists on unification.

Perhaps this expectation is basic

to the New Ireland movement of O'Brien, the policies of the Heath and Dublin governments and the stand of the few Northern liberals. If this is the case, the prospect of protracted conflict (not necessarily violent) should be included in realistic appraisals of the gloomy scene Neuhaus portrays for us. Ireland is still an instance of incomplete decolonization and nation-building.

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The Virgin of Zeitoun

To the Editors: Thank you for one of very few U.S. published articles about the Virgin of Zeitoun which was printed in the September, 1973, issue of *Worldview*. Virginia Nelson has done a creditable job of describing the events—the awesomeness of which most of us still can hardly comprehend: that the Virgin appeared, was clearly and photographically visible to thousands, Copts, Muslims and unbelievers, not for a few minutes but off and on for over a year; that cures which have taken place have been documented with before-and-after scientific tests like X-rays, lab tests, etc.; that she did not speak, so the meaning and significance are imbedded deep in the hearts of each who has seen Her.

Having known about the Virgin's appearance for a number of years through Egyptian friends who immigrated to the United States and through some who revealed their experiences in the company of people who would listen and not label them "mentally unstable," it amazes me that more people in the world don't know of this powerful happening which has turned thousands in the Middle East to God, be they Christian or Muslim. Ms. Nelson has captured another important aspect when she points to the various meanings attributed to Her appearance. In the time of Christ's appearance the people had various understandings of His mission. Today there are many about the Virgin of Zeitoun, political, economic, religious, sectarian. In

the years to come we will understand more fully, and the significance may simply be to turn the hearts of all humans to the Source of our Being, by whatever cultural name we call it.

Jean C. Goodrich

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The Peace Prize

To the Editors: My first reaction to the announcement that Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and North Vietnam's Politburo member Le Duc Tho had been awarded the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize was that someone had pulled off a marvelous joke, Taoist style. Someone had succeeded in bringing about a hilarious contradiction in order to reveal the naked truth of a tragic situation. I laughed, then laughed again—this time at my own laughter. . . . I even suspected that Jon Sannaes, who initiated the nomination, was a secret Taoist who wished to come out from the cold by way of an expensive international laughter. The apparently absurd statement by Mrs. Aase Lionae, chairwoman of the Nobel Committee, that "the accord—the 1973 Paris agreement—brought a wave of joy and hope for peace over the entire world," added to my suspicion. But there was no dancing in the streets of Washington, Paris, Saigon or elsewhere, as I recall.

My second reaction, a day later, was one of profound sadness (and, I must confess, some suppressed anger) when I read Dr. Kissinger's declaration: "When I shall receive the award together with my colleague in the search for peace in Vietnam, Le Duc Tho, I hope that that occasion will at last mark the end or symbolize the end of the anguish and the suffering that Vietnam has meant for so many millions of people around the world, and that both at home and abroad it will mark the beginning of a period of reconciliation." Coming from a person who approved of the Christmas B-52 blanket bombing of Hanoi, the statement recalled Tao Te Ching's words: "truthful words are not beau-

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The Concept of Peace

by John Macquarrie

(Harper & Row; 82 pp.; \$4.95)

Hebrew, Greek and Oriental notions of "peace" are compared in lectures by the professor of divinity at Oxford. In part this is in the biblical "word study" genre, in part it is a homiletical exercise. We wouldn't pay \$4.95 for this little tract, but it is not likely to do any harm, and, for those not familiar with the nuances within the idea of peace, it might do a great deal of good.

The United States and the Origins of the Cold War

by John Lewis Gaddis

(Columbia University Press; 396 pp.; \$12.50)

Intending to "go beyond" the revisionists, this study is more properly a counterattack. The author, who teaches history at Ohio University, underscores the complexity of causes—political, economic, cultural—that created the cold war and, while not uncritical of U.S. policy, places the onus on the Soviet Union.

Francis Marion:**The Swamp Fox**
by Hugh F. Rankin

(Crowell; 346 pp.; \$10.00)

The Sultans
by Noel Barber

(Simon & Schuster; 304 pp.; \$9.95)

The writing of popular history is one of the great arts, as Macauley knew. History has a mass, as well as an intellectual, audience; of the academic sciences of man, it is probably the most democratic in potential and, hence, the most vital for the great project of creating an informed citizenry. But if popular history can teach, it can also misinform, distort or pander. At its worst, popular history degenerates into a kind of obscenity, a twittering titillation with the past.

Hugh Rankin's biography of Francis Marion is partisan; it emphasizes

—despite Rankin's disclaimers—the romantic side of the hero's exploits. But it is also a judicious work of popular scholarship which illumines the Revolutionary War in the South, giving due attention to the fact that the conflict was a civil war of an extremely bitter character.

Noel Barber's chronicle of the Ottoman Sultans is a different matter. Barber, the dust jacket tells us, has written twenty-two books. This would be an achievement if it were not so obvious how (and why) Barber has done it. *The Sultans* reproduces every salacious story, every wives-tale explanation, every irrelevant cruelty and—when it is all over—proves to be vacuous and, in every significant sense, wrong. *Deep Throat* would seem, in comparison, a serious social commentary. Perhaps publishers should consider that they, as well as TV networks, have civic obligations.

Sources of Democracy

edited by Saul K. Padover

(McGraw-Hill; 402 pp.; \$15.00)

Subtitled "Voices of Freedom, Hope and Justice," this big anthology includes selections from Ancient Greece to Martin Luther King, Jr., and most everything—religious and secular—in between. Sometimes the choices seem arbitrary, and they are almost always too brief. But in general Padover is judicious in both his selections and his short commentaries. The emphasis is on sources of democratic theory, and, as anthologies go, it is a superior job.

After Yalta

by Lisle A. Rose

(Scribners; 216 pp.; \$7.95)

A young historian now at the State Department, Rose offers a generally irenic account of the beginnings of the cold war. Irenic, that is, in terms of the orthodoxy and myriad revisionisms that contend among students of the subject. It seems unlikely that Mr. Rose's job security at the State Department will be jeopardized by this book.

tiful, beautiful words are not truthful." Or, as Dr. Kissinger himself has admitted about his academic writings, it "confused obscurity with profundity."

I had sensed at the time that Le Duc Tho would refuse to accept the Prize, not because he does not consider Dr. Kissinger "an example of moral virtues" or because he once called Dr. Kissinger to his face "a liar" (*U.S. News and World Report*, October 29, 1973), but because the Just Cause he has been fighting for all his life has been materialized only on paper and not in the realities of the present situation in Vietnam. The decision to reject the award must have been difficult for Mr. Tho. For, traditionally, the Vietnamese always try to be very friendly with their former enemies. In the thirteenth century a Vietnamese general-poet (not an unusual combination there, Tran Quang Khai wrote a farewell poem to a Mongol general whom he had chased out of Vietnam: "I do not know when I shall have/a chance to see you again /So I can hold your hand/and share with you an intimate conversation.")

Some day, when the U.S. has definitely given up all its futile attempts to influence the internal affairs of Vietnam, especially in South Vietnam, Mr. Tho and Dr. Kissinger will surely have an "intimate conversation." In the meantime, to make a dynamic joke bearable, I would suggest that the Prize be used to create a chair of political science, effective in 1976, at Hanoi University, where Dr. Kissinger, free then from the dusty work of fame and fortune, would be the professor. The same chair should be created at Harvard, where Mr. Tho, on leave from his Politburo, would teach a seminar on "The Politics of the Just Cause." This idea was brought up once, I believe, in a moment of relaxed tension during the Paris negotiations. Many of us with many questions still unanswered would be pleased to go to Hanoi to audit Dr. Kissinger's class.

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