

representatives amount to solid "accords," with no hint by the author that these usually require prolonged subsequent negotiation to convert into actual contracts. Russia, she assumes, probably has the world's largest petroleum deposits and some 60 per cent of the world's coal. Already International Harvester has been "pulled out of the red by a Soviet order." Russia, she blithely adds, "was eager to participate in any American-sponsored reconstruction program" after World War II "short of one that required dismantling its social system."

Despite her pique at the Russians and Chinese for extending the death throes of American capitalism, Kolko has hope that the "unshakable constancy

in the fundamental motivations of capitalist behavior" may yet galvanize the "potential social movement of the working class in the industrial world whose actions . . . could transform the social system."

Authors who want to change the world might well take another look at Lenin's 1916 book *Imperialism*—not just for its theses, but for its scholarship. Granted that Lenin had axes to grind, at least he read carefully what the opposition had to say. He cited the opposition and read primary and secondary sources in at least four languages. All this while in exile and trying to organize a revolution—and while compelled to write in Aesopian language to get by the Czarist censors.

The Prophetic Clergy by Harold E. Quinley

(Wiley; 370 pp.; \$14.00)

Dean M. Kelley

This volume is one of the Wiley-Interscience publications, and it reports (with numerous statistical tables) on a survey of 1,580 parish clergymen of nine Protestant denominations in California conducted in 1968. Subtitled "Social Activism Among Protestant Ministers," its primary focus is on three social issues that were salient at that time and place: the churches' opposition to Proposition 13 (which repealed California's fair housing laws by a 2-1 majority), support for Cesar Chavez's effort to organize farm workers, and opposition to the war in Vietnam. In them it sees the high-water mark of ethical activism among "the new breed clergy," and records the resistance and frustration they experienced.

Through several chapters, each of the variables in a rather extensive questionnaire is plotted against others, and we discover the not-very-surprising phenomenon that "new breed activists" have "modernist religious beliefs" and "liberal but not radical political views," and that they belong to denominations that tend to encourage and reinforce these qualities. Little fault can be found with the instrument or the

methodology, which are described at length in the appendix. If the book were confined to objective reporting of the data it would be a workmanlike, though rather parochial, monograph. But about half of the content is devoted to generalized interpretation, discursive philosophizing, and proactivist homilies that are not necessarily derived from the data and may actually falsify it.

One of the main arguments of the book is that the "new breed clergy" are trying valiantly to make the Church "relevant" to the ethical issues of the day through their social activism, but that they are balked at every turn by rigid, hostile, conservative laity who try to prevent them from engaging in social action and punish them if they do (by withholding contributions, etc.). Repeatedly and dolefully, Quinley announces, "The conservatism of Protestant laymen constitutes a major obstacle to parish clergymen who wish to pursue an active role in public affairs." How does he know? The clergymen told him. What did the laity in question have to say? *He didn't interview any laity.* Instead, he relied on a study carried out a few years before in the same area by Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark as well as on a nationwide political survey of 1968 (which shows that Protestant laity do tend to be politically conservative).

Quinley also reports that a number of the "new breed clergy" lost their situations because of their social activism. At least the clergy in

question *attributed* their difficulties to the laity's opposition to their "prophetic" leadership; some clergy even felt they were falling down on the job if they did not arouse a certain amount of turbulence. ("Being in disagreement with one's parishioners—'being on the cutting edge,' in the words of several of our respondents—may become a sign of one's social relevance and prophetic actions.")

It may well be that the Protestant laity is politically conservative, and the more active in church work, the more politically conservative. But it does not necessarily follow that they are opposed to the social activism of the clergy and determined to punish them for it, as Quinley gratuitously assumes throughout. On the contrary, there is another explanation that would vitiate the whole thrust of this book, and it is supported by extensive interviews (not just questionnaires) with a random sample of 2,344 lay church members throughout the nation during 1969-71 (in the North American Interchurch Study reported in *Punctured Preconceptions* by Douglas W. Johnson and George W. Cornell, 1972).

Contrary to the Glock-Stark-Quinley hypothesis, it reports that "88 percent of the clergy and 71 percent of the lay people in the United States feel that their denominations should speak out on current social issues such as civil rights, the war and other pressing problems," while only a tiny minority (6 per cent) said they had ever withheld contributions from the Church because of

dissatisfaction, and most of these did so for nonideological reasons ("wastefulness," "putting maintenance ahead of charity," and so forth). When asked "What is the most important thing the local church does?" the lay people ranked its activities in this order of priority:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| A | } | 1. Win others for Christ |
| | | 2. Worship for members |
| | | 3. Religious instruction |
| | | 4. Ministerial services
(weddings, funerals?) |
| | | 5. Provide sacraments |
| B | } | 6. Help the needy |
| | | 7. Support overseas missions |
| | | 8. Serve as social conscience of the community |
| | | 9. Provide fellowship activities |
| | | 10. Maintain facilities for congregation |
| | | 11. Support denomination |
| | | 12. Support minority groups |
| | | 13. Influence legislation |
| | | 14. Build low-cost housing |

These activities could be grouped into two parts: Group A, numbers 1-5, are the activities by which the meaning of life, the Gospel, is imparted and appropriated; Group B, numbers 6-14, are those by which the Gospel is embodied and expressed after it has been acquired (my grouping). The reason for some lay people's dissatisfaction with some clergy (the "new breed" perhaps) is *not* that they were engaging in social activism (Group B), but that they were not getting the Group A activities accomplished! (Quinley shows that his social activist clergy spent as much time in calling and counseling as did conservative clergy, but "time spent" does not necessarily equal "job done," and the social activists may have had less ultimate meaning to offer people in trouble, no matter how much time they spent at it.)

Johnson and Cornell portray the peculiar paranoia of "the new breed" in rather gentle terms:

"While the lay people want a

church that deals first and foremost with definitive proclamation of the faith, its extension and their nurture in it, they're not as uptight as the clergy about 'social involvement' if there is time and money left for it. . . . In short, it's a matter of priorities. . . . It's the inadequacy of dealing with the first concern that chiefly turns people off, and not, as the clergy tend to imagine, dealing with the second."

If this is indeed the view of many church members (and from my own experience as a pastor for thirteen years I think it is), then it is a self-justifying rationalization for clergymen to accuse lay people of mindless opposition to social activism when what the lay people really object to is being given a stone instead of bread. What Quinley has written is an elaborate apologia for purveyors of stones.

This is nowhere more apparent than in his uncritical use of the Glock-Stark dichotomy that religion can either *comfort* or *challenge* (*To Comfort and to Challenge*, 1967). Then he attributes to "laymen" the desire for "comfort" over challenge, and proceeds to excommunicate anyone so crass and selfish as to want religion to provide mere comfort. As an added fillip, "challenge" loses a few letters and becomes "change," and anyone who has any other expectation of churches than that they are to lead the way to social change is little better than one of those incorrigible comfort-loving "laymen." Thus my own work is misinterpreted by Quinley:

" . . . recent assessments . . . by Kelley . . . also conclude that the church's appeal to laymen lies in the comfort it provides amidst the daily traumas of life, not in its function as an agent of social change."

I said no such thing, and I resent being pressed into the Glock-Stark categories. It is not the function of religion (in my view) either to comfort or to challenge, nor to act as an intentional "agent of social change," but to "explain" the meaning of life to people in the most ultimate terms so that they can find hope and purpose. Sometimes it may produce comfort

and sometimes challenge, and even, sometimes—as an unintended by-product—social change. But to judge a church or its leaders or its followers by whether they seek or find comfort or challenge in their faith is to weigh them against standards that are really irrelevant to religion.

It is both arrogant and pathetic for this kind of literature to stand in judgment on the faithful lay people of the churches, castigating them for not following obediently the leadership of "new breed" clergy who have little to offer but strident demands for "social change." It is not "comfort" they want but a faithful and confident proclamation of the Gospel, whichever way it cuts, and I suspect that is not what they have been getting.

**The Pulse of Freedom:
American Liberties:
1920s-1970s**
edited by Alan Reitman
(Norton; 352 pp.; \$12.50)

R. D. Gastil

There are surprisingly few good books on the history of civil liberties. Aside from technical legal discussions, most work in the area is both journalistic and partisan. For this reason alone one approaches *The Pulse of Freedom* with high hope. A follow-through to the editor's earlier collection, *The Price of Liberty*, it intertwines the history of the American Civil Liberties Union, founded in 1920 and of which the editor is an officer, with the more general history of civil liberties in America since that time.

Each decade has been assigned a different author, an authority on either the general subject or the period in question. Unfortunately, despite the impressive credentials of the essayists, the book turns out to be less interesting as history than