had the better plan and that this business of the sealed train was, after all, amateurish! If he accepted it in the end, it was not without dozens of objections, pedantic conditions, considerations of all the factors involved, and mainly his own prestige.

The reader puts down the book, exhausted; Solzhenitsyn conducts the plot like Lenin the revolution: accelerating here, slowing down there, but always in a style of a hundred faces—irony, humor, melancholy tableaux, bonhomic, picturesque details. With a few brushstrokes there stands the incomparable pamphletist, Radek, the Swiss comrades somberly contemplating their mug of beer and listening, open-mouthed, to the Tartar from Siberia; and there Krupskaya, the self-effacing wife, a veritable viper after her husband-hero’s death.

One question remains. Has Solzhenitsyn gotten rid of his incubus through this book, through the trilogy whose Central Person is always Lenin? Or will he continue pursuing his character down the narrow streets of Zurich?

The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism
by Daniel Bell
(Basic Books; xxvi + 301 pp.; $12.95)

John P. Sisk

Let us suppose that the reader confronted with this title knows nothing about the author except that he is a professor of sociology at Harvard University (where, God knows, there is a variety of sociological opinion). Let us further suppose that this reader is a reasonably intelligent and well-informed person familiar with the polemical promise of the titles of books engaged with contemporary problems. Such a reader might well assume that this is one more attempt to measure capitalist society against a possible harmonious sociopolitical order that all men of good will have a right to expect, even demand. He might, influenced by the conventional metaphor of music, assume that any serious criticism of contemporary life must have as its end the elimination of contradictions in the interest of achieving something like a social symphony.

Such a reader would, of course, be misled. I cannot imagine anyone more aware than Professor Bell that in our time social symphony is an honorific synonym for totalitarianism—that such harmony as we achieve is a by-product of what we get in some measure if our efforts are well-directed and if we are lucky. Such an awareness guarantees an analysis of society quite different from that of a critic convinced that a society is good in proportion to the absence of conflict, tensions, and contradiction. For Bell society is “not integral, but disjunctive.” Against the holistic view (no less dear to what is already the old New Left than to Dostoevski’s Grand Inquisitor), he finds it “useful to think of contemporary society ... as three distinct realms, each of which is obedient to a different axial principle.” He therefore divides society analytically into the technoeconomic structure, the polity, and the culture. It is “the discords between these realms that are responsible for the various contradictions within society.” This methodological premise, as Bell points out in an important footnote, differs from that of Marxism and functionalism, both of which share the premise “that society is a structurally interrelated system and that one can understand any social action only in relation to that unified system.”

For the Marxists and functionalists, one might say, the proper social model is the work of art, that supremely compelling ecologial unit. For Bell, on the other hand, the proper model is the household, which he prefers because of “its sociological connotations of family problems and common living.” The metaphor of the household has particular structural importance in the last long chapter. Since, however, it is a humane metaphor (the work of art as model-metaphor can be notoriously and paradoxically inhumane with its insistence on the subordination of parts to whole), it proves to be an excellent facilitator for issues crucial to the book as a whole: the conflict between avant-garde and bourgeois; the conflict between individual and community and the related question of authority; the ascendancy of the secular over the sacred; the replacement of history by psychology; the question of the historic origin and value of privacy; the revolution of “rising entitlements” as wants replace needs; the problem of the separation of realms.

It is within the context of the household metaphor that the cultural contradictions of capitalism are clarified. Thus the Protestant work ethic, with its emphasis on the inhibition of sensual satisfaction and its tendency to delay sumptuary but not capital accumulation, in time produces the abundance that makes it difficult to reconcile escalating private and group wants with public needs—that, indeed, makes the satisfaction of private and group needs a priority of virtue. Hence the dilemmas we confront when we try to combine bourgeois appetites, a democratic polity, and an individualist ethos “which at best defends the idea of personal liberty.” Hence the New Left’s moralistic attraction to the totalistic (and harmonious) solutions of Castro and Mao on the one hand, and the modernist-inspired rejection of delayed gratification on the other.

The latter contradiction gets attention throughout the book, but especially in Part One, “The Double Bind of Modernity,” where Bell concentrates on the capacity of the Protestant ethic “to stimulate a demand for pleasure and play in the area of consumption.” So stimulated, capitalism in time produces Hugh Hefner’s Playboy much as Hegel produces Marx. More specifically, the ethos of the sumptuary life with its moralistic commitment to consumption and experience produces a rampant individualism that expresses itself best in the profanation of traditional values and in the spoliation of national resources. So we are confronted with the political contradictions that result when a liberal society set up to promote individual ends becomes so hedonistic that the very idea of a public household appears to be an American heresy.
For Bell the public household suffers above all from the transgressive spirit of modernism, which has made it difficult, if not impossible, to see the world as a separation of the realms of sacred and profane. As religion, "the conscience of society," is overcome by secularization, the Western dialectic of release and restraint breaks down, the portals of the demonic are left unguarded, continuity with the past is lost, the aesthetic impulses are no longer subordinated to moral conduct, and authority becomes rooted in the imperial self, which is then free to indulge in a Faustian cult of experience. Not, of course, that any one of these ideas is especially new; indeed, Bell has himself helped to make them familiar to us. What is memorable here is the richness, variety, and historic range of the context in which they are displayed.

The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism is made up of already published pieces, and although Bell has taken pains to cover them with an introduction and to weave them into a whole fabric, the pieces still show through, resulting in the inevitable repetitions. These are minor matters, however; the line of argument is coherent and powerful, and the repetitions reinforce important themes.

It is the themes and not the repetitions or the fact of prior publication that are most likely to be held against Bell. He is one of those writers it is convenient now to classify, if not write off, as a neoconservative—a term that often expresses little more than the user's reluctance to give up entirely those expectations the recent past has shown to be either premature or ill-conceived. "It was the hubris of classical liberalism, and of socialist utopianism as well," Bell observes in his last paragraph, "to believe that in each new generation, in a new social contract, men could start afresh, discard the past, and redesign institutions anew." His book is a full-scale analysis of this hubris. Where on the liberal-conservative scale others may locate his argument is not, I would imagine, a matter of much interest to him.

**Power Shift:**

**The Rise of the Southern Rim and Its Challenge to the Eastern Establishment**

by Kirkpatrick Sale

(Random House; 362 pp.; $12.95)

Dale Vree

Who says New Leftists are extinct? Kirkpatrick Sale, for one, is still going strong. In his latest book Sale surfaces as something of a New Left version of Kevin Phillips (the self-styled "New Rightist"). Both Sale and Phillips see a long-term shift in economic and political power away from Northeastern "yankee" interests and toward Southern and Western "cowboy" interests—although it should be added that Phillips noted the broad contours of the shift before Sale did (see Phillips's 1969 *Emerging Republic Majority* and his 1975 *encore Mediocrity*).

Although the empirical observations of political reality made by Sale and Phillips are roughly similar, their personal evaluations of that reality are strikingly different. Even though both Sale and Phillips are youthful anti-élitsists, it appears that were they forced to choose sides, Phillips would side with the cowboy élites, Sale with the Yankee élites. In short, while Phillips is encouraged by the "power shift," Sale is alarmed by it. Since it is customary to think of New Leftists as being vociferously antiestablishment, it is revealing to see Sale give aid and comfort to the most established establishment America has going for it: the Eastern Establishment. In truth, Sale's implicit defense of the Eastern Establishment is not surprising, for one has always suspected that—talk of generation gaps to the