

dead, Marxism is a mummy; Lenin's "updating" left only the skin. Lenin found Marx's views on the inevitability of revolutionary class consciousness among the proletariat to be in error. This is the root of the Vanguard Party. But if Marx was wrong about class dynamics, what is left? And yet must not Christians try to help clean up the uglier wounds of the human race? Of course, but why through an alliance with communism? Because the Communists are serious about stamping out poverty and ignorance? Good—but seriousness of purpose and efficacy of method are not the same thing. Besides, they also seem serious about stamping out Christianity by one means or another. Shall we join them in that endeavor too? And can one separate the two aims if communism should finally triumph? Thus we come to the problem of how intrinsic or necessary to communism is atheism.

Participants in the dialogue like to get around the question of atheism by looking to the "Young Marx," who seems less a determinist and militant atheist. "But," says Vree, "according to the orthodox Soviet view, the young Marx was a romantic aberration from the normative Marxism of the mature Marx (and there is evidence that this is exactly how the mature Marx and Engels themselves regarded the matter)." We are stuck with the Old Marx, and, for Vree, atheism is essential to his thought. "Some Christians assume that if Christians were to promote rather than impede the social liberation of humanity, then Marxists would no longer have any justification for their atheism." This is dead wrong. Marxism is atheist a priori. Marx was an atheist "because religion subordinated man to a creator-God, thereby denying man's full dignity, independence, and

freedom of action." Besides, "even if there were a God he would have to be an evil God to have created and sustained such a wretched world." The revolutionary "cannot repudiate the world without repudiating its God." For Marxists, atheism is essential to a totally committed this-worldliness necessary for revolution. This life is the only life, injustice must be stamped out here, now, for there is no possibility of atoning for it anywhere else. Hence, "Marxism's Promethean atheism is indispensable to its revolutionary energy and dynamism, its messianism." Then, when it turns out that the churches really have sought to drape their robes over the ugliness of human exploitation and misery, this is not the cause of Marxist atheism, only "the proof of the pudding."

But suppose atheism is not intrinsically necessary to communism, would the Communists let it go anyway? Would they in effect agree to share power with Christianity? Why should they? What has Cox, what has Gutierrez—what have any of them—got that Communists perceive themselves to need?

Unfortunately, Vree felt unable to treat, even in passing, the dialogue in Italy, the very heart of the matter. Granted the author set out to write an examination of the intellectual roots and bases of dialogue, not of its chief political ramifications, but one hopes a work on the Italian situation will be forthcoming, written with the same clarity of thought and expression employed here by Dale Vree. It is hard to see how any serious English-speaking "dialogical Christian" will be able to proceed in the future without coming to grips with the problems raised in *On Synthesizing Marxism and Christianity*.

## The Distant Drum: Reflections on the Spanish Civil War edited by Philip Toynbee

(David McKay; 192 pp.; \$9.95)

### Samuel Hux

Philip Toynbee's *The Distant Drum*, fortieth-anniversary reflections by diverse hands on the Spanish civil war, is not a scissors-and-paste job. Most collections of views and memoirs of Spain 1936-39 contain snippets of Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, a chapter from Malraux's *Man's Hope*, pieces of Dos Passos reportage, a poem by Spender celebrating the Republicans, a poem by Roy Campbell celebrating the Nationalists, and editorials of hard-won objectivity. The contributions to this volume are originals. Still, *The Distant Drum* has the feel of not being a book at all, and for that one must hold editor-

contributor Toynbee responsible. The volume does not impress its significance upon the reader by its own weight; the reader must *know* the volume is significant because the Spanish war was significant. Since I am little short of obsessed with 1930's Spain, I found surprising the labor required to be impressed.

Most of the contributions are worthy enough in themselves; a couple are stunning. What is needed is an organization that shows this job of editing was undertaken seriously. One feels Toynbee has spent a few days in a library reading pieces in different magazines as

he finds them. Lacking is an intellectual context, which indicates the subject was taken with sufficient seriousness by the man who invited the contributions.

The organization he provides is: "Reflection and Reinterpretation," "Eyewitnesses," and a third part reserved to himself. But half the eyewitness recollections are obviously intentional "reinterpretations," and two of the four "Reflections and Reinterpretations" are essentially reflective eyewitness accounts. The two that are not—an essay by Hugh Thomas leaning slightly leftward and an essay by Brian Crozier tilting in the other direction—are the

closest things in the volume to a "context." But each is a relatively tired rehearsal of material the two have explored at great lengths before, Thomas in his *The Spanish Civil War* and Crozier in *Franco*. Neither piece is so much a contribution to this book as merely a précis of another.

So one is simply loose among the periodical shelves reading of life in the International Brigades, of how it felt to be a member of the German Condor Legion, of how one got to Franco's Malaga before the press was allowed in, of how one met a volunteer going to Spain "to fight against Franco and his bloody communists." Toynbee's piece, "Journal of a Naive Revolutionary," is an embarrassingly silly diary by Toynbee, the Communist student delegate on tour of Republican territories in December, 1936, and adult Toynbee in a slightly less silly explication de texte of his youthful naiveté. In addition there is something about how he moved from communism to pacifist anarchism and how the experience of Spain, although naturally of monumental consequence in itself, served to help him do that, and how (brutal though life may be, and where are the snows of yesteryear?) one knows that "Among the many bitter lessons of history one bland old truism retains its force: while there's life there's hope" (this latter, the last sentence of the book).

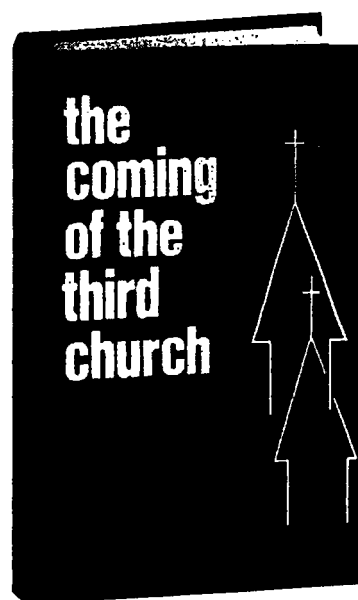
I do not mean to suggest that the only virtues of *The Distant Drum* are an occasional homely charm and the reevocations of an historical tragedy as felt experience. There is some intellectual stimulation as well, predictably of the "what-if?" genre. Contributor Claud Cockburn dismisses such speculation as "gossip," but I don't know how one could avoid it, or should, especially since the war was, as the Condor Legionnaire Alfred Lent put it, "heroic, pathetic and on the way out of history into legend." The sensing of a legendary quality and the compulsion to ask "what if?" are two forms of the same intellectually serious act of imagination, more than fancy: the recognition that something was of such human consequence that one is driven slightly mad trying to think into existence a recognizable world without it. And it is the most interesting thing in this book. Two instances, the first rather puzzlingly ironic, the second...well, I don't know

what to call it, maybe just sad:

Crozier asks (a question from his biography, *Franco*) what might have happened had Franco lost. Would Hitler have respected the borders of an almost certainly Socialist or Communist Spain staggering from three years of carnage? He wanted to pass through Spain to Gibraltar but yielded to Franco's No. Possessing Gibraltar, would Hitler have lost in North Africa? And so on. "All this of course is hypothetical, but there can be no doubt of the paradoxical consequence of Franco's victory [aided by

Hitler]: against all expectations, it contributed to the defeat of Hitler." Hypothetical or not, God is an ironist, and it's valuable to keep that in mind.

Toynbee's essay is partially redeemed by his briefly wondering what the Carlists and anarchists might have done if.... The matter is really more problematic than Crozier's question, much less possible to imagine. But pondering an unbelievable success by either yields some ironies about the war and some facts about Spain. Neither these reactionary, unorthodox monarchists on



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the Right nor these libertarians on the Left had much in common with their allies. The Carlists—in their hatred of centralization and fierce devotion to their *fueros* or regional liberties and their self-sacrificing fanaticism—were so far Right they almost met in some places above historical event the anarchists. The anarchists—in their hatred of government and devotion to local roots and militant abandon—were so far Left they almost turned the bend, although it's beyond expectation that these reactionary Catholics and millennial atheists could ever have cooperated. These bloody romantics shared kindred fates, and what happened to them is symbolic somehow of what the civil war meant, and would have meant even had the

Republicans won. Franco yoked the Carlists to the Fascist Falange, thereby politically neutralizing Spain's most radical traditionalism. The increasingly powerful Communists exterminated as many anarchist leaders as they could get their hands on, thereby neutralizing (?) Spain's most traditional radicalism. At war's end Spain became *España!* instead of *las españas* as it had been in truth through most of its craggy history. It was no more an imperfect accommodation of restless regions and villages, of Basques, Catalans, Galicians, and "Spanish" subcultures. In a curious way Spain entered the twentieth century in 1939 by ceasing to exist. We'll soon find out whether or not the curiosity is permanent.

the American family has been fundamentally transformed during the past century, and that this transformation had very negative effects. For example, the home has become little more than a boarding place for individual family members; the family is unable and increasingly unwilling to care for its young; parent-child relationships have been disrupted, and perhaps are beyond repair. Bane's demographic data show there is little foundation for believing the American family is breaking up. To the contrary, although there has been a significant decrease in the size of the family, the structure has not changed much over the past century. What structural change there has been would seem to go in the opposite direction. That is, there is an intensification and prolongation of the bonds between parents and children. More children than ever live in their own families and do so for longer periods, under parental care and watchfulness. Although many more mothers have joined the labor force, there is no evidence that this has materially affected parent-child relationships, nor has the quantity or quality of mother-child interaction been basically altered.

## Here to Stay: American Families in the Twentieth Century by Mary Jo Bane

(Basic Books; 195 pp.; \$11.50)

### Brigitte Berger

Mary Jo Bane argues, as the title suggests, that the American family is alive and well; all indicators point to its being around for some time to come. The message may further confuse the confused reader of the avalanche of published rubbish on the related themes of family and females. The family is clearly out of favor with the opinion-makers. Predictions of the ultimate demise of the family have contributed profoundly to the mood of societal decline rampant in America today. In *Here to Stay* Mary Jo Bane dissects such prophesies with the cold, impartial knife of the experienced researcher. In the process she exposes as myth much of what is widely accepted to be the "new reality." These myths in turn, she demonstrates, serve as a basis for public policy. The astounding misconceptions underlying present policymaking processes on the family, women, and children motivated Bane to undertake this study. It is good to have this book at a time when the country presses toward a national family policy.

Bane's credentials are impeccable. As an associate director of the Center

for Research on Women at Wellesley and coauthor (with Christopher Jencks) of *Inequality* and *The Inequality Controversy*, she can hardly be accused of conservative bias. As an experienced survey researcher, she relies heavily on demographic indicators and the interpretation of quantitative data. Contrary to her own initial expectations—as she reports in the introduction to the book—it soon became evident that the staying power of the family has been grossly underestimated. Men, women, and children continue to be committed to the family; marriage as an institution continues to be central to Americans; wider family ties have not weakened; and American families are no more or less isolated from communities and wider society than at other times in history. Since these findings are contrary to what we have been told for so long, it is worth considering in some detail those widely held convictions about the sad state of the modern American family that Bane succeeds in debunking as "myths."

*Myth I. The Disrupted Family.* There is wide agreement that the structure of

*Myth II. The Decline of Marriage.* It is currently argued that America's young are increasingly unwilling to enter into the "oppressive relationship" of marriage. Increasingly, it is said, they prefer a single life to that of a permanent state of degradation, exploitation, and unhappiness. Those who are caught in the marriage "trap," the argument goes, are with increasing frequency trying to break free of it. Against this persuasion Bane demonstrates that marriage continues to be a perduring part of American life. Ninety to 95 per cent of Americans marry at least once, and those who divorce (and one could reasonably expect that they at least have learned their lesson) tend to remarry promptly. Although the proportion of singles has risen slightly, this proportion remains, in historical perspective, very small. What is more, married men and women are in general (to the extent this can be measured) "happier" than the single, divorced, or widowed. The death rates for married men and married women are significantly lower than for their unmarried counterparts at all ages. Undoubtedly, the divorce rate is up, and there are clear indications of increased conflict and tensions between husband and wife, but