

Mme. Weil was full of energy and love and comedy, always scheming for the happiness of her loved ones, sensitive and responsive to anything that interested them. One spends so much time blaming other parents for not being like these two that one sometimes asks, What happens to the children who actually have such a father and mother, who grow up in a Garden of Eden, with everything done for them that can be done? The answer can be seen here. The Garden of Eden turns into the battlefield at the world's end, where there is no rival, no test, no foe worthy of your steel but Juggernaut, but Leviathan, but Apollyon.

And what happens to the parents? They become aides-de-camp. At least that was true of Mme. Weil. The father, in the last part of the book, is referred to more often as "the doctor," and we hear of how upset he was when the police came to search the apartment. Simone and Mme. Weil sent him away because the situation would be too much for him. On the ship going to America Simone was writing in a deck chair; her parents' part was to occupy the chair

whenever she got up, to keep it for her. Perhaps the most poignant detail is Simone changing luggage with her mother before a customs inspection. "People always distrust me. They'll never open your bag." That is what Mme. Weil had bought by *her* life-style—to be trusted by her daughter's enemies.

And then the brother, Dr. André Weil, the distinguished mathematician, still at the Institute for Advanced Studies, Princeton, consulted by Lévi-Strauss for his structuralist theory, what can *he* make of being Simone Weil's brother? At a recent MIT seminar he said that he was a mathematician as totally and finally as she was a saint. There was never any question, for either one, of whether or not. It was a fate. But that still leaves me full of questions. Being a mathematician cannot account for all one's life. For instance, André Weil learned Sanskrit and read the *Bhagavad Gita* when very young; when war broke out in 1939, he was in Finland and declined to return, repudiating his military duties. And then he tells us that Simone had a philosophic mind, while

his brain had no trace of that. Surely the philosophic mind is to be compared with the mathematical. Sanctity is quite a different matter. And yet everything this biography tells us indicates that all these people's relations with Simone were affectionate, high-spirited, humorous, guiltless. Perhaps the ordinary ones performed in that style out of consideration for the saint, as much as vice versa. But they were not, after all, ordinary. Set beside Gandhi's family, or Tolstoy's family, Simone's comes out of the comparison very well.

As for the book itself, it is written by a close friend and bears the imprint of Simone's friendship. It is written with a remarkable naïveté of style and form and organization; it is all-inclusive, and it is egoless. Simone Petrement is a Ph.D. and a Doctor of Letters trained in that French tradition we think of as so much more arrogant than our own. And yet this is pure transparency. Can this be the France of Lévi-Strauss and Barthes? It has the strengths and weakness of that naïveté. But surely every reader will feel these weaknesses a moving tribute to the force of the subject.

Political Violence Under the Swastika: 581 Early Nazis by Peter H. Merkl

(Princeton University Press; 716 pp.; \$10.95)

Warren L. Mason

After all that has been written on the Nazi movement and its adherents one would not expect to encounter an important new work based on "fresh" data, but that is exactly what Peter Merkl has created. The work is based on a new analysis of 581 autobiographies entered in an essay contest organized in 1934 by the Columbia University sociologist Theodore Able. These life histories represent the immediate recollections of the movement's minor officials and rank and file on the eve of the consolidation of the Third Reich. Dr. Merkl has returned to this data source with the insight and analytical sophistication of the contemporary social sciences. The result is one of the most useful and refined works to emerge on the internal

structure of the Nazi movement. The author is well aware of the problems presented by the data with which he is working and only poses questions on which this limited set of autobiographies can shed some light. The answers unfold in a painstaking, quantitatively based analysis that goes beyond the personal truth of any individual respondent to probe the tendencies of the entire sample.

Merkl begins his analysis with three sections in which he examines the conventional social, cultural, and historical influences upon the early Nazi movement. A careful evaluation of his autobiographies and a statistical probing of the data derived from them provide little support for such broad-brush ex-

planations for the emergence of the movement as "lower middle class revolt." The disintegrating Weimar society does not appear in the light of this study as a single social upheaval, but rather as a network of social fractures into which the lives of diverse individuals fell. What appears to be simply a decade of Nazi political violence, for example, emerges from the analysis as a series of discrete phases involving distinct social groupings with different sets of apparent motivation and attitude.

The author's skillful treatment of the Weimar youth revolt also produces fresh insights. Interweaving case studies and statistical analysis, he illuminates the role played by German youth organizations of all types in pro-

viding a kind of prepolitical spawning ground for young extremists, the most consistently violent elements in the Nazi movement. Curiously enough, the study finds that the violence of Nazi youth stands in inverse proportion to their anti-Semitic prejudice. Indeed, there is some evidence in the data that anti-Semitism, Nordic-German romanticism, and the Hitler cult were themes to which many young people responded *after* they had joined the movement.

After probing the relationship of these early Nazis to the culture and social framework of Imperial and Weimar Germany, Merkl's analysis shifts to political behavior. His concern is with the types and sequence of extremist and violent behavior, with the clusters of attitudes the emerging Nazis developed, and with the progress of their careers within the Third Reich. Of the many analytical schemes he develops one of the most interesting is a typology of anti-Semitic prejudice. Dr. Merkl theorizes that there is a progression from mild verbal projections, which he sees as a form of social conformism; through a transitional scapegoating and an anecdote-telling phase; to aggressive paranoia, "which drives the disturbed minds on to hectic political action." His conceptual and quantitative analysis gives a more complex and subtle insight into this central feature of the Nazi value system.

Perhaps the major weakness of Merkl's analysis stems from the very nature of the data with which he is working. It is not a representative sample of Nazi Party members, and, for lack of a control group, it cannot distinguish along any dimension between those who became Nazis and those who did not. Fascinating though it is to know the internal characteristics of the phalanx of Nazi faithful, it is the unanswerable question (in terms of these data) that continues to haunt the analysis: What was it that set apart these enthusiastic early recruits to the Nazi movement from the millions of their countrymen who shared their frustrations and objective circumstances and, very probably, many of their values and attitudes? There is, of course, no way in which Professor Merkl's data can yield an answer to that question.

It is also worth remembering that this is a study based on a collection of essays contributed in 1934 to a contest that

solicited "the best personal life history of an adherent of the Hitler movement" so that the American people might better understand National Socialism. While this reviewer is quite satisfied that the Merkl study is an enormously worthwhile contribution to the literature, some thoughtful readers may wonder if the nature of the sample really warrants the detailed analysis Dr. Merkl has provided. Are there characteristics about the kinds of people likely to respond to such a contest that hopelessly distort the findings? Does one really want to know how Nazi essay writers thought and behaved if there is reason to presume a substantial difference between them and the great mass of Nazis whose life stories never wound up in the files of Professor Able at Columbia University? It is an open question, which serious students of political extremism and the Nazi phenomenon will want to answer for themselves.

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Briefly Noted

Revolutionary Law and Order: Politics and Social Change in the USSR by Peter H. Juviler (The Free Press; 178 pp.; \$13.95)

The quest for law and order in Soviet society is described by Barnard College Professor Peter Juviler in his exploration of varying responses in Russia to crime—from the 1864 Czarist reforms and early Bolshevik handbills through the repressive purges of the Stalin period and into the present-day pragmatic age. With the aid of extensive statistical data Juviler analyzes the difficult questions facing Soviet legal authorities and the grim political, economic, and social circumstances they have had to consider in the formulation of policy.

With the success of the Bolshevik Revolution, Juviler says, Lenin used the law for what he referred to as "revolutionary expediency"—in reality a brutal tactic, which forced the Soviet populace to comply with the demands of "revolutionary law and order." Then came the New Economic Policy (NEP), which allowed such economic concessions as private commerce and peasant farming on a limited scale, and necessitated a detailed and consistent recodification of law. During this period cases of serious crimes against the state, persons, and property were heard, and the USSR Supreme Court assumed functions of national guidance, review, and first-instance jurisdiction in cases of all-Union importance.

Innovation ceased with the onslaught of the Stalinist purges. Juviler makes the point that although the repressive tactics of Stalin sacrificed personal freedom, they "whipped the country on." That is, the reaction to Stalin created a climate of liberalization and increased interest in criminology.

The bulk of the book discusses post-Stalinist attempts to solve the nation's increasing crime problem. Debates between biopsychologists and social theorists in the USSR as to how to decrease crime have occurred through-

out the century. Of late, more attention has been given to the social theorists. But both groups remain baffled when they attempt to apply classical Marxism—which states that crime must gradually diminish as a Socialist society evolves—to the problems of Soviet law and crime. Judging from Juviler's evidence, the Hobbesian belief that man exists in a state of enmity and requires law to restrict his actions applies with equal force in the Soviet Union.

Even though ideology is not emphasized by Soviet criminologists, it is impossible to erase almost sixty years of Marxist tradition. Juviler concludes: "...there is no end of ideology among Soviet social engineers and experts on crime. Rather there is a decline in the force of an official ideology as it touches crime fighting among other spheres of Soviet life."

The pragmatism presently holding sway in the USSR has increasingly permitted the Soviets to criticize their society, detached from ideological inhibitions. Despite this trend, Juviler is probably correct in stating that "an interplay of control and responses without complete takeover of either is a likely outcome."

—Steve Zurier

A New History of Portugal (Second Edition)

by H.V. Livermore

(Cambridge University Press; 408 pp.; \$29.50/6.95)

In the preface Livermore wrote: "I have taken it as axiomatic that the history of a nation deals with the life of a society and is concerned chiefly with the distribution of power and the use of it." In fact, this book contains little about the life of a society, but offers many dry facts about political and diplomatic events at the top. This edition has a new forty-nine-page chapter on Dr. Caetano and the Revolution of 1974, seen from the viewpoint of a partisan of the old regime.

Like Livermore's earlier, and practically impenetrable, *A History of Portugal* (1947), this book is useful for checking dates and events, but those interested in the subject would do better to turn to the *History of Portugal* by A.H. de Oliveira Marques (Columbia University Press, 1972). Much briefer,

and an easy read, is Charles E. Nowell's *A History of Portugal* (Van Nostrand, 1952).

—Lawrence Nevins

On Being a Christian by Hans Küng

(Doubleday; 720 pp.; \$12.95)

While the author regularly comes under suspicion from the Vatican for his "modernist" or even heretical views, within the context of "progressive" Christian thought today he obviously strives for a "balanced" perspective that sustains both respect for tradition and skepticism toward fads. This book is certainly not, as some claim, a *Summa* to be compared with that of Thomas Aquinas, and we rather doubt that, as others say, it will be an acknowledged "classic" ten years from now ("classics" should hold up for at least ten years). But it is a thoughtful, if frequently rambling, summary of one influential theologian's wrestling with what it means to be a Christian in the last part of the twentieth century. It is certainly accessible to the general reader, and that is a great merit. Troubling is the taking for granted of the idea that the religious question today is not that of "justification" or "salvation" as those terms have been understood, but of "social justice" and the "making of history." The linchpin of Küng's argument is that to be a Christian is to be truly human, and that true humanity is to be understood primarily, if not exclusively, in social-political terms. North Americans, unlike Europeans, may find somewhat tedious the long discussions of Marxism and its quite different understandings of what it means to be human. But then, the Marxist options seem much livelier—or deadlier, as the case may be—in a European context. Of the Latin American "liberation theologies" Küng is sympathetically critical, and here especially his understanding of the limitations of the social-political definition of history becomes evident. Neither in social theory nor in theology does the book contain major breakthroughs, but the relevant questions are put together with intelligence. To anyone looking for a fair and informative introduction to reflectively liberal Christian thought today, written from a frequently explicit Roman Catholic angle, this book can be warmly recommended.

Warning to the West by Alexander Solzhenitsyn

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; 147 pp.; \$7.95/\$2.95)

Detente: Prospects for Democracy and Dictatorship

by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn
et al.

(Transaction; 112 pp.; \$5.95/2.95)

Both small books include Solzhenitsyn's key public statements of the last two years. *Detente* adds brief comments, highly critical and highly enthusiastic, by Lynn Turgeon, Amitai Etzioni, Richard Lowenthal, Norman Birnbaum, Irving Louis Horowitz, and others.

Crooked Paths: Reflections on Socialism, Conservatism, and the Welfare State

by Peter Clecak

(Harper & Row; 206 pp.; \$10.95)

An intriguing follow-through on the author's widely acclaimed *Radical Paradoxes: Dilemmas of the American Left*. Clecak's argument for "a conservative democratic socialism" reflects a masterful, to the reader sometimes exhausting, knowledge of contemporary culture and political discourse. He is insistent about the continuing importance of ideology and about the cultural basis of political decisions. Most provocative, he takes seriously the religious character of culture and essays, all too briefly, the resources of the Jewish-Christian tradition for reconstituting the American social experiment. On the Left, Clecak, like Michael Harrington, will be criticized for "selling out" the Socialist ideal in excessive deference to democratic process and conservative cultural values. Clecak, to his credit, is not intimidated by the prospect of losing his leftist "credentials" in circles that, he is convinced, have little present or future in the reshaping of American public life. This is not an easy book to read. "Crooked paths" frequently describes the style as well as the proposal advanced. But

those who are prepared to have one more go at the tedious business of sorting out liberal from conservative from radical from Socialist, and then putting them together in a possibly new way, will find Clecak's reflections worth their effort.

Correspondence (from p.2)

sions of the Detroit recommendations than he, and I would hold that other "tributaries" (Pax Christi, Catholic Peace Fellowship, Catholic Worker) were far more the source of those recommendations than any "revolutionary impulse from Latin America."

Be that as it may, however, a more careful reading of my article should have answered Holland's criticism. In my many discussions with fellow participants in the peace and antiwar movements I don't recall any who would justify the "neo-Fascist wave of terror" or the governments responsible for the excesses that are common knowledge. Nor have I encountered opinions that could be described as "tolerant," "permissive," or (perish the thought!) "approving" of such actions. Unfortunately, quite the reverse is true with respect to violence attributed to the forces of liberation—and, again, I am concerned with the movements and their supporters, not the theological precepts. Indeed, I have encountered individuals who would describe themselves as part of the peace movement who was quite indignant over any effort to criticize guerrilla tactics or terrorism by the "good guys."

If there have been open criticisms, they have not received much public notice. Perhaps the Center of Concern has gone on public record to protest some of the excesses committed in the name of liberation. If so, it would have strengthened Holland's case considerably had he made mention of the fact.

James Finn Responds:

There are so many misreadings packed into Joe Holland's brief letter that one is tempted to call them willful. For example, *Worldview* did publish a review-

article about Gustavo Gutierrez, but it has also published the work of Gustavo Gutierrez.

But to push on to my own article, Joe Holland has picked up a number of phrases that, in my text, are separated by many paragraphs. I did not intend to make a direct relation between liberation theology and strong pacifist positions. It can't be done. Currents of liberation theology did feed into the final recommendations in which, as I wrote in those neglected paragraphs, "there are few positive words about capitalism (even modified), free enterprise, or multinational corporations." However, to take liberation theology seriously is, for many people, to become an active agent for liberation. For some people that both Joe Holland and I could identify, this means opposing nuclear weapons systems (which are instruments of oppression), *but* to support armed liberation movements and associated guerrilla activities. Support for the strongly worded pacifist resolutions voted on in Detroit came primarily from members of the kinds of pacifist organizations Gordon Zahn has been associated with over the years.

Joe Holland's last paragraph is simply name-calling—for which I suggest he substitute rational discourse.

I am particularly grateful for Sister Maggie Fisher's letter, coming as it does from a representative of the National Assembly of Women Religious. With her observation that delegates at the conference often regarded their votes as "prophetic voices," I agree completely.

Multinationals and the Peace Movement

To the Editors: Gordon Zahn's "The Bondage of Liberation: A Pacifist Reflection" (*Worldview*, March) treats competently the issues of peace and liberation in the normal framework of the peace movement. His appeal for reinforcement of peace without violence, for not leaving the movement solely to those who would choose violence is moving and convincing.

The portion of the article devoted to the insidious nature of nationalism is a major contribution to the needed "conscientization" of those who now consider themselves liberated. This recalls

an essay by the late Professor Frank Tannenbaum in the *Columbia Journal of World Business* (March-April, 1968). Professor Tannenbaum stated eloquently the case for utilization of the natural emphasis of multinational corporations for the achievement of world stability and prosperity. He concludes that "the ultimate business of the world corporation is the people of the world, not the people of any one nation or of any one political ideology. Its ideology is the provision of abundance."

Exploitation has and can occur, but the correction must not be more control of the extranational activity of corporations by home governments. Each nation must be free to control all commercial and economic activity within its boundaries. International control must be accomplished through international institutions. The obvious cases of inappropriate action by multinational corporations will, upon close examination, be seen to result from an excessive linking of the economic power of the corporation with the political and military power of its home national government. I hope that Professor Zahn will reexamine his prejudices and join the cause not of abolition of multinationals but of appropriate global guidelines for directing their constructive attributes. They must be urged to go beyond the adolescent phase of asking for home country protection to follow them wherever they choose to go.

The "peace movement" has no more natural ally than the mature, globally responsible national corporation. The rejection of the multinational corporation as an ally is as debilitating for the movement as the excesses practiced in the cause of liberation.

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