

a terrible condition. "In almost every apartment house," Bellow writes, "the neighbors tell you of a war widow who is trying to bring up her children. The treatment of young widows and parents who have lost their sons is, I am told, a new psychiatric specialty. Israel is pressed, it is a suffering country. People feel the pressures of enemies as perhaps the psalmist felt them, and sometimes seem ready to cry out, 'Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth.' Still, almost everyone is reasonable and tolerant, and rancor against the Arabs is rare." One wonders, Bellow hopes. Some Israelis share his hope.

Laced with fine vignettes and charac-

ter sketches, *To Jerusalem and Back* records the multiplicity of views among leading politicians in Israel and key Jewish intellectuals outside of it. From these views Bellow does not draw a clear, cogent solution to the Palestine problem. He fails to argue the merits of the varied positions; he merely asserts them as composing that mosaic of will that reflects the emblem of the Israeli state. Still, Bellow is compassionate and concerned. If his compassion, from a Palestinian point of view, is elusive, his fundamental concern is not. Simply stated, that concern is in minimizing, to use his words, "corpse-making" in the Middle East.

ing further fuel for atheism itself.

Of special interest too is the extent to which the search for atheists and the debates about God were related to politics and political theory. The atheist-hunters were especially fearful of any traces of influence by Hobbes and Machiavelli—according to Redwood, the two most feared and hated writers of the time. Above all, these well-established clerics feared revolution and thus feared every new idea and treatise they thought might upset their position of orthodoxy and power.

In this exhaustive and sometimes exhausting study there are entire chapters devoted to the Trinitarian controversy, the "causes" of atheism, the nature of reason and the reason of nature, the Encyclopaedists such as Cudworth and Berkeley, the impact of science, witches, and ridicule, but two of the chapters promise more than they give. There is really little new or interesting on the intriguing topic of witches and other supernatural phenomena. The disappointment is even greater with respect to the chapter on ridicule, since the book's title leads one to believe that ridicule is to be a major topic for discussion.

Readers will want to know whether the fears of the atheist-hunters were justified or whether the controversy was really little more than sound and fury, with no basis in reality. Was atheism as prevalent and dangerous as the tract writers and pamphleteers feared? These and other questions are raised but not clearly answered by Redwood. At points he suggests the need for further study, but more frequently he psychologizes the problem, referring to what he calls the "psychology of dispute," and thus reduces the combatants to petty clerics eager only for job security and promotion, squabbling among themselves for no good reason. Assuredly, there must have been some who entered the fray for the sake of nothing more than personal aggrandizement. Assuredly too, there were others who honestly feared the intellectual challenges that pressed upon them. In point of historical fact there was a revolution in progress, and while in retrospect we may see it as progress, there is little reason to suppose they could have seen it as anything less than the end of their reality and a threat to their very being. The winds of change blow icily on those who feel the blast

Reason, Ridicule and Religion: The Age of Enlightenment in England, 1660-1750

by John Redwood

(Harvard University Press; 287 pp.; \$12.00)

J.T. Moore

England of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was a cauldron of controversy. New ideas in science, philosophy, and religion clashed with the old, and the repercussions are still felt today. It was a crucial turning point for England as vestiges of the medieval world painfully gave way to the modern world. An age of enlightenment for some, it was also an age of fear and sadness for the many who tried desperately to hold onto the past.

This dynamic period in the history of religious thought has been the subject of many excellent studies, but none with quite the perspective of this new work by John Redwood. It is Redwood's contention that most, if not all, of the controversy of the period centered around a single problem: the existence and nature of God and how people related to God in the truly Christian community. In particular, Redwood focuses on the fear of atheism and examines the ways in which each new idea was subjected to intense analysis to determine its theistic truth in conformity with established beliefs.

It is Redwood's emphasis upon the

lesser known and now virtually forgotten figures—the "minute philosophers," as he calls them—that gives much of the freshness and value to this book. Such major figures as Newton, Cudworth, Locke, and Berkeley are given due and generally adequate attention, but it is with the soldiers in the trenches that Redwood spends most of his time. These were the tract writers and pamphleteers who waged the campaign against atheism and who carried the controversies on and on for a hundred years.

Redwood demonstrates that these lesser academics and clerics saw the threat of atheism everywhere. No intellectual area or endeavor, not one word, was exempt from their scrutiny. A writer was held directly responsible if his work had even the slightest hint of atheism, or if it could give even indirect and unintended support to its cause. For example, Cudworth's masterpiece against atheism and materialism, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, was condemned by some because, in detailing so much of the atheistic view it sought to refute, it was felt to be provid-

directly and immediately.

On the whole this is a fascinating study of a time rich in exciting controversy. It was indeed a "God-ridden" age, as Redwood states in his preface, and one that can instruct us about our own time. Despite a few stumbles here and there, Redwood tells the story well, and his chase through the thickets of atheist-hunting is well worth the effort of the pursuit.

CONTRIBUTORS

JERI LABER frequently writes about human rights. She is Executive Director of the International Freedom to Publish Committee, Association of American Publishers.

SUHAIL HANNA is Associate Professor of English at Sterling College, Kansas.

J.T. MOORE is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Phillips University, Oklahoma.

ANNE YAROWSKY is Research Editor at *Worldview*.

Briefly Noted

We Must March My Darlings by Diana Trilling

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; 315 pp.; \$10.00)

These essays come to us in most cases several years after the facts. But the passage of time is of minor significance for two major reasons: We shall never tire of reacting to, mulling over, and reassessing the events Diana Trilling has commented upon; and Trilling's words and high-minded wit promise to endure despite the bulldozer effect of history.

Included in this collection—the essays have appeared in various publications over the years—is the piece that recently caused some furor, some name-calling, and lots of publicity when Trilling's previous publisher, Little, Brown, decided to drop her book because it contained certain references to another client of theirs, Lillian

Hellman, and to her new book, *Scoundrel Time*. Trilling rebounded with a new publisher and a long scolding footnote addressed, in anything but conciliatory tones, to all parties concerned.

In this, as in all her essays, Trilling commands a political self-possession that informs her writing with a special—and crucial—device of commentary. Call it moralizing: She will hardly take offense. Indeed, as she writes, it is the critic's function "to ask questions about the worth of the codes which are being offered us." Unlike other contemporary critics, most of whom she feels have shirked this responsibility, Trilling will not allow herself to be seduced by art, by Timothy Leary, D.H. Lawrence, the student rebellion at Columbia, *Easy Rider*, Feminism, JFK, or even by her alma mater, Radcliffe, without examining each against tradition, reason, and reality. Nowhere is this more eloquently stated than in the exchange of letters with Robert Lowell that appeared in *Commentary* following publication of her much debated essay, "On the Steps of Low Library." In this essay Trilling finds the acts of violence by the students against the Columbia administration unconscionable, even if she also finds some measure of their cause just. Lowell takes her to task, however, admonishing her perspective on the affair and adducing her lack of idealism and courage to confront the wrongdoings of a university—more, of a country in the throws of a violent, unfair war in Vietnam. His words conjure poetry while hers in response are so stark and reality-infested as to seem unduly harsh.

One of the most fascinating essays in this collection is "Celebrating with Dr. Leary," in which Trilling tells of her attendance with her husband, Lionel, at one of Leary's Psychedelic Celebrations in New York's Greenwich Village. The wide-eyed innocence and love filling his turned-on followers are matched in intensity by Trilling's horror as she witnesses an auditorium full of people who openly encourage their young children's experimentation with hallucinogenic drugs and express, simultaneously, deep concern for the benighted children of Vietnam. Here are those who, in her words, "obey the dictates of culture rather than of reliable feeling."

These essays provide good reading, even the second time around. For al-

though Trilling's is a voice one may not always agree with, it is one not to be easily ignored.

—Anne Yarowsky

Warning to the West by Aleksandr 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.

Utopia and Revolution by Melvin J. Lasky (University of Chicago Press; 726 pp.; \$35.00)

The coeditor of *Encounter* magazine has graced us with a remarkable volume aimed at advancing a simple purpose in most elaborate fashion. The simple purpose is to argue that social change has for centuries been afflicted by numerous fanaticisms, left and right, that have resulted in the tragedy of "the excluded middle." Since Lasky definitely views himself as a man of the middle, the story he tells is, for the most part, a sad one. What is remarkable is Lasky's insatiable appetite for collecting instances of political madness, from Giordano Bruno, through John Milton and Karl Marx, up to the revolutionisms of the student Left in Western Europe. Lasky amply demonstrates that the key ideas of utopia and revolution have not changed substantively since the late Middle Ages, although the monumental consequences of those ideas in the modern world are without precedent. One significant difference between the utopias of Thomas More and Francis Bacon, on the one hand, and contemporary revolu-

tionary thought, on the other, is that revolution today is more an end in itself, is less amenable to being checked by any notion of the ideal society. The book uses generous quotations throughout; indeed, it is really a reader of stunning diversity and comprehension. It will be valued less as a theoretical statement than as an anthology. As an anthology, it is uncommonly valuable.

Erratum

An unfortunate error crept into A. James McAdams's response to Neil McCaffrey in the May issue. The skewed sentence correctly reads: "But if AH manages to sell ten thousand, even five thousand, of its books (at hardcover prices) every month. I'd say it wasn't doing badly at all." —Ed.

Correspondence

[from p. 2]

namese population. The cycle of violence did not begin with the American entrance in force into the Indochinese peninsula in 1954. In 1945-46 Vo Nguyen Giap, then Minister of the Interior, liquidated many Vietnamese nationalists. Later this systematic murder policy was applied even to those who were willing to cooperate with the Communists to fight against the French (such as Huynh Phu So, leader of the Hoa Hao Buddhists, who was killed at a meeting to which the Communists invited him). Concentration camps, such as the infamous Ly Ba So camp in North Vietnam, dated back to the very beginning of the first Indochina war. All this happened before any great power involvement in Vietnam and prior to any "collaboration" of the nationalists with the French and the Americans. Later similar camps were set up to imprison those who never collaborated with foreigners and whose only crime was being a landowner. I will give the names and addresses (in the U.S.) of some former victims of these earliest concentration camps to whomever wishes to interview them for fact-finding purposes.

To those Americans who do not dare to defend the unjustly punished Vietnamese because they are Americans, we would like to send this message: "You

should avoid publicizing your failure of nerve. If you continue in this failure, the peace you have advocated for your country is a peace with dishonor indeed."

Nguyen Ngoc Huy

Cambridge, Mass.

To the Editors: I have hesitated to make any response to "Fighting Among the Doves," knowing that making a response puts one in a position to receive one of several labels that seem to be thrown around so readily these days. How much better if we could simply relate our various experiences to each other as Christian brothers and sisters rather than feeling it necessary to try to destroy those we disagree with.

I am one of those people who had the experience of living in Vietnam under the old and the new authorities, and who also had the opportunity to return to Vietnam for a visit in January of this year. When we visited Vietnam, we went with the knowledge that we would probably be given a tour that would not allow us to see absolutely everything the new situation had created. We attempted to interpret our experiences in that light. I trust that those who are listening for the negative side of the situation remember that they too can be given a tour through the situation that is just as misleading and false. One might keep in mind that the 4 per cent of the Americans who fled America after the 1776 revolution probably wrote an account of that revolution that would make one shudder with horror.

The article mentions a letter written to Jim Forest by a longtime pacifist who now lives in Hong Kong. I too have read that letter, and feel that the quote mentioned in the article is rather taken out of context. As I understand what this particular pacifist is trying to say, unless we are seriously trying to clean up the mess we left in someone's house, our criticisms of the mess they *might* be creating in their house rings rather hollow and could seem downright ridiculous. The question of human rights is a very serious one, and one the Christian cannot ignore. But unless we accept the fact that we too are violating human rights in Vietnam and strive to correct that, we lose our basis for speaking about others' possible violation of human rights. It is a well-known fact that when America withdrew from Vietnam, it left behind thousands of tons of

unexploded munitions. These mines, grenades, bombs, etc. continue to kill and maim Vietnamese who are trying to return to their land to farm. Is it not the right of a human being to be able to return to his/her farm and till the soil without the threat of being blown to bits by an M-79 grenade or a Claymore mine?

An elderly member of a small congregation I occasionally attended returned to his farm after many years of living as a refugee. He had only begun to turn over the fallow soil when his hoe hit an M-79 grenade and he was instantly killed. We heard many reports of similar deaths. If we produced the munitions and put them there, do we not have a moral responsibility to take them out so the farmers can live? It is not only the Vietnamese who are saying "If you really believe in human rights, then give our farmers the right to farm."

Similar things can be said about the food and medical situation in Vietnam. The South was extremely dependent on the U.S. for food and medical supplies. Since the U.S. has refused to give any kind of aid to the Vietnamese people, the people must suffer serious shortages of these commodities. An unknown number of houses, schools, hospitals, factories, and churches were destroyed by bombings. I was told on several occasions by young Vietnamese students that it is common knowledge that those who destroy something have a responsibility at least to help rebuild it. Is it not the right of the Vietnamese to be able to have homes to live in, hospitals to receive care in, and schools to send their children to? If we helped destroy those structures, are we not violating the rights of the Vietnamese people if we refuse to help them rebuild those structures?

It seems to me that a constructive appeal for human rights requires many things. One is looking seriously for one's own involvement in the violation of human rights. Another is to know clearly that there is, in fact, a violation of human rights to make an appeal about. A third, perhaps, is to recognize that no government is 100 per cent good, but neither is any government 100 per cent bad. We can gain a lot of respect if we seek out, affirm, and lend support to those positive aspects of a people or a government. Not only might this encourage that people or government to strive for more positive actions