The ostensible similarities in background, outlook, and emphasis between Jimmy Carter and Woodrow Wilson have, of late, awakened new interest in Wilson. Some recent additions to the body of Wilson literature help to satisfy that interest and open the way to a more precise comparison of the style and substance of the two presidents.

Of special significance is the publication of volumes 24, 25, 27, and 28 of *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (volume 26 is an index). These volumes cover the period from the opening of the preconvention presidential campaign in January, 1912, through December 1, 1913, well into the initial year of Wilson's first term. Thus they supply material indispensable for comparing the campaigns and at least the early presidential experience of the two men. Of additional relevance is John M. Mulder's engaging study, *Woodrow Wilson: The Years of Preparation*. Mulder provides, at long last, a careful examination of the spiritual and intellectual background and development of Wilson's thought up to the point where volume 24 picks up the story.

As campaigners, as well as fledgling presidents, Carter and Wilson do share striking similarities, although the differences are equally impressive. Wilson, like Carter, was a Southerner and, in his formative years, a Georgian to boot. (Carter needs to be reminded of this. In *Why Not the Best?* he writes: "I live . . . in the Deep South, and no Southerner has been elected [president] in more than a hundred years.") During the 1912 primary campaign the *Savannah Press* quoted a letter from soon-to-be Secretary of the Treasury William McAdoo urging Georgians to support Wilson. Wilson was, wrote McAdoo, "the only Southern man in the race who has a chance for the nomination." McAdoo, himself a Georgian, emphasized that "although born in Virginia, [Wilson] was brought up in Georgia and is essentially a Georgian, as is also his wife."

On a campaign swing through Georgia in the same month Wilson held out his candidacy as a chance for the South to participate again in national affairs, and thereby to reverse the fact that "ever since the civil war the South has stood aside and looked at a development in which she took no guiding and leading part." Wilson resisted sectionalism as un-American and, undoubtedly for that reason, applauded the failure of the Confederacy. In fact, after the election he saw in the victory of "a man born in the South" an opportunity to demonstrate the irrelevance of sectional loyalties in governing the country. Still, Wilson retained a special pride in what he regarded as the distinctive idea of the South, the willingness in both the Revolutionary and Civil wars to stand for principle above material prosperity, and his Southern attachment influenced strongly his early proposals for cabinet and other appointed positions.

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On the other hand, in his attitudes toward non-Anglo-Saxons and women Wilson was more Southern than Carter. Mulder reveals that in his early essays Wilson held blacks to be inferior and unqualified to participate fully in political life. As president of Princeton, he perpetuated a discriminatory admissions policy. Moreover, although he gave repeated assurances to black leaders during the campaign that he would "know no black or white" and would protect the interests of racial minorities, including the jobs and job opportunities of black government workers, he actually extended segregation throughout the government. Wilson's complicity in this matter is routinely noted in a passage from the diary of Josephus Daniels, secretary of the Navy: "The President said he made no promises in particular to negroes, except to do them justice...but he wished the matter [of the employment of blacks in government] adjusted in a way to make the least friction."

Nor were Wilson's attitudes toward immigration without a racist bent. In his multivolume work *A History of the American People* (now out of print) he wrote with distaste about the "multitudes of [immigrants] of the lowest class from the south of Italy and men of the meaner sort out of Hungary and Poland, men out of the ranks where there was neither skill nor energy nor any initiative of quick intelligence." During the campaign these comments haunted Wilson, partly because his
attempts to modify them were so halfhearted. In the same context he had written somewhat more positively of Chinese immigrants, but in a telegram on the eve of the California primary he "clarified" his views by supporting the restriction of Chinese and Japanese "coolie immigration." "The whole question is one of assimilation of diverse races. We cannot make a homogenous population out of a people who do not blend with the caucasian race."

Wilson's attitude toward women's rights was also inferior to Carter's. In line with his Southern background, as Mulder says, Wilson believed that a woman belonged in the home, though throughout the campaign he cloaked his resistance to woman suffrage in procedural objections. In a heated exchange with a Brooklyn suffragette during the campaign Wilson anticipated the arguments of present-day opponents of the Equal Rights Amendment: "Woman suffrage, madame, is not a question that is dealt with by the national government at all," but rather, as he believed, by the states. Later in his presidency he yielded, reluctantly, to the growing pressure for a national solution in the form of the Nineteenth Amendment.

However deficient is Carter's response to the concerns of women, it is clearly in advance of Wilson. Similarly, whereas Wilson's devotion to equal liberty for all minorities was less than constant, Carter's concern is strong. In fact, Wilson's deplorable record on government employment for blacks makes all the more remarkable, by comparison, the explosion of nonwhite participation in government, particularly at the upper levels, that has occurred during Carter's administration.

But in one respect there is a troubling similarity between the two men. After Wilson assumed office and his racial policies became clear, black leaders cried betrayal. "Have you, Sir," wrote a black journalist in August, 1913, "attempted in the slightest way to fulfill any of the pledges that you have made? Unfortunately up to this date those who have loyalty rallied to your standard and supported you have been cast aside. They have asked of you bread, you have handed them a stone instead...." Though the character and focus of black disillusionment with Carter is different, there is a related sense of disappointment. As campaigner, Carter advertised his dedication to easing the burden of the blacks and others by attacking unemployment as his first priority. As president, his understandable preoccupation with inflation has appeared to growing numbers of minority people to have diverted not only his attention, but also his commitment, away from the plight of the unemployed and the disadvantaged. Whether fair or not, Carter seems strangely indifferent toward abusing people of this perception.

Carter and Wilson are perhaps the most explicitly pious presidents the country has ever experienced. Again, there are interesting similarities and dissimilarities between the two men. The religious views of each manifest the same degree of unquestioning self-confidence. When Carter was asked during the 1976 campaign whether he harbored any doubts about himself, or God, or life, he responded: "I can't think of any. I obviously don't know all the answers to philosophical...and theological questions—the kind of questions that are contrived [sic]. But the things I haven't been able to answer in a theory or supposition, I just accept them, and go on....[D]oubt about my faith? No. Doubt about my purpose of life? I don't have any doubts about that...."

Wilson spoke in the same way. Well into his first term as president he was heard to say: "My life would not be worth living, if it were not for the driving power of religion, for faith, pure and simple. I have seen all my life the arguments against it without ever having been moved by them....There are people who believe only so far as they understand—that seems to me presumptuous....I am sorry for such people."

In both cases, personal piety reveals something important about public bearing. Different as their personalities and backgrounds are, they share an aversion to admitting complexity and tension in intellectual as well as in practical matters. Just as neither has much stomach for theological controversy, for raising and wrestling with matters of faith and doubt, so neither is disposed to acknowledge publicly the deep perplexities of making policy in twentieth-century America. Each conveys, in a period of great domestic and international turmoil and risk, a spirit of unruffled self-satisfaction concerning the foundations and direction of his administration. That is true even when policy diverges from principle, and performance from promise.

"I have never detected or experienced any conflict between God's will and my political duty," Carter told a Southern Baptist convention last year. Or, as he informed the Playboy interviewer, "I don't ever want to do anything as President that would be a contravention of the moral and ethical standards that I would exemplify in my own life as an individual." But the Bert Lance affair, the inconsistencies of the human rights campaign, and the loss of interest in fulfilling the preelection promises such as reforming taxes do place a burden of proof on Carter and his pious principles. At the very least, he needs to explain these discrepancies and thereby excuse himself, if he can, from his failure in certain cases to live up to his lofty standards. In doing so he would, at last, give evidence that he is capable of taking to heart the arguments against it. Whether fair or not, Carter seems strangely indifferent toward abusing people of this perception.

The same lessons apply, with some adjustments, to Woodrow Wilson. Wilson's religious self-confidence translated into political overconfidence. As Mulder shows, his view of himself as a "true soldier of the Cross" made of him, in his traumatic disputes while president of Princeton, "a pertinacious foe...by encouraging a sense of rigidity and self-righteousness." This spirit more or less prevailed throughout his presidency (intensified, no doubt, by recurring nervous disorders). In Wilson's view of leadership, the only authoritative interpreter of fundamental moral and political principle was the leader (that is, Wilson) himself. "This attitude,
writes Mulder, "in particular contributed to the cries of hypocrisy from liberals disillusioned by Wilson's negotiations at Paris and also explains how the seemingly principled President could be so adept in political dealings. However, once Wilson decided that basic moral issues were at stake, he became intransigent, and he too often forgot what he once described as 'the law of political life'—'the law of compromise—you must see things as others see them.'"

Indeed, Wilson was singularly inept in the art of seeing things as others see them, and thus of participating in that rational discourse where the force of argument changes minds. "I am so sorry for those who disagree with me," he remarked once, "[b]ecause I know that they are wrong." To someone who pointed out to him that there are two sides to every question, he rejoined: "Yes, a right side and a wrong side!" Wilson's Mexican policy (1913-14), a matter to which much space is devoted in volume 28, is a particularly clear example of Wilson's uncritical and self-assured approach to problems. He consistently disregarded the counsel of informed people and clung stubbornly to a course in line with his own untutored intuitions. This course resulted in the abortive occupation by U.S. forces of Veracruz on April 21, 1914, and earned Wilson and the United States the enduring animosity and suspicion of the Mexican people.

That the religion of both Carter and Wilson was shaped by Southern Protestant piety makes all the more remarkable that, for each, religion is related to public life and responsibility. The Southern Baptist tradition out of which Carter comes is not noted for attempting to translate the Gospel into public programs of social amelioration. It has favored personal piety and individual salvation over "social action." Yet Carter makes no bones about relating his faith to the political order.

Similarly, the Southern Presbyterians out of which Wilson emerged had stood, since the time of the Civil War, for severing as sharply as possible the "spiritual" from the "temporal" kingdom. But on February 24, 1912, Wilson told the Nashville YMCA: "...[W]e should go back to the fundamentals and ask ourselves what it is that we depend upon for salvation; not of our individual souls, for sometimes that seems to me rather a petty business, but for our salvation upon the earth and the lives of the communities to which we belong."

Still, there are some important differences in the tone and content of their religious orientation. Wilson's religion was much more explicitly and elaborately public, even political, than Carter's. Wilson's was, after all, a Presbyterian; that is, he was a descendant of John Calvin who, Wilson claimed, "was superior to all predecessors and successors as an organizer of reform." Wilson praised the French Huguenots for their "participation in politics," something that was, he said, "an almost necessary outcome of their adherence to the faith of the great Christian statesman of Geneva...." In other words, Wilson's devotion to Calvin and to the brand of "reform politics" for which, Wilson believed, Calvin stood provided a model of political religion that finally displaced the personalistic pietyism of his Southern Presbyterian environment. Wilson discovered in the roots of his tradition the critical link between an intense religious commitment and a passion for politics, both for its organization and its operation. As Mulder brings out, he defined his vocation as the study and practice of political life, and he believed that vocation had the deepest religious significance.

Wilson's political ideals were shaped especially by the "Covenanter" brand of Calvinism out of which his Scotch-Irish ancestors came. He found in that tradition the makings of representative democracy designed to determine the collective will on the basis of free and equal participation by the membership. "Government," said Wilson in a campaign speech in 1912, "is nothing more nor less than organizing the general interest so efficiently that no special interest can dominate it." In Wilson's mature thought, politics, morality, and religion all find fulfillment in the creation and maintenance of a covenantal order in which individuals give themselves altruistically to the common good. As Wilson himself admitted, the old covenantal idea lay behind his unyielding devotion to the Covenant of the League of Nations, an organization that would, at long last, extend the ideal worldwide.

It is no mystery, therefore, why Wilson came back again and again to the interconnection of religion and patriotism, particularly patriotism toward the United States. More than any other country, the U.S. represented for Wilson the ideals of self-sacrifice and cooperation among free and equal partners for the common good. In 1915 he spoke of "a pretty fine analogy between patriotism and Christianity. It is the devotion of the spirit to something greater and nobler than itself....The reason I am proud to be an American is because it was given birth to by such conceptions as these...."
connections between politics and religion, Wilson came to
to express his intense religious passion directly through
political life. By contrast, however profound Jimmy
Carter's religion may be to him personally, however
pertinent he may feel it to be in his role as president,
there is in his bearing nothing faintly resembling the
religious passion for politics so characteristic of Wilson's
presidency.

During the campaign Wilson counseled that a nation
ought to cultivate among its citizens what he called "the
constructive and handsome passion" of patriotism. It is a
passion that "will lead us to forget particular interests in
the serving of the general interest...." It was that passion
that fired Wilson's imagination. He communicated it
with great effectiveness during the campaign of 1912,
and he was able to translate it into significant legislative
reform during his first year in office.

Wilson's campaign speeches were, by and large,
simply variations on a theme. Whether talking about the
need for tariff or currency reform, whether promoting
stricter antitrust measures, expressing sympathy for the
organizational aspirations of working men, or urging
governmental reform, the essence of the problem was
always the conflict between special interests and the
public interest. And the solution involved the firm exer-
cise of political leadership. "Government cannot take its
hand off of business," he declared to the Economic Club
of New York in May, 1912. "Government must regulate
business, because that is the foundation of every other
relationship, particularly of the political relation-
ship....The problem of politics is cooperation."

Undoubtedly, Wilson had an extraordinary capacity
to communicate his ideas. For sheer rhetorical gifts only
Franklin Roosevelt was his peer among presidents of the
twentieth century. It was partly his literary sense and
academic background, partly his ability to organize his
thoughts clearly and simply around a central issue, and
partly his disarming lightheartedness. But of at least
equal importance was the conviction, dedication, and
purpose he conveyed so masterfully in his speeches.

What is most striking about Wilson, though—at least
the Wilson represented in these volumes—is his talent
for practical achievement. Within his first year as presi-
dent he had seen the Underwood Tariff Act through
Congress, an act whose most important feature was
perhaps its provision for a progressive income tax. He
strongly supported and labored for the passage of the
Federal Reserve Act, affecting currency and banking.
(There is much interesting material concerning these
two legislative accomplishments in volumes 27 and 28.)
In hindsight, we may raise questions about the efficacy
of these acts, but there is no doubt of the strong impress-
ion that Wilson left on his party and on Congress as the
result of his role in enacting them. He established
himself in his first year as an active, purposeful chief
executive. A cable of congratulation from James R.
Gray upon the passage of the tariff bill may be taken as
representative: "I cannot refrain from expressing to you
my profound admiration for the superb generalship
and infinite tact you have shown throughout this trying
summer of tariff and currency agitation....The country
applauds your masterful leadership...."

There is, then, no contest between Wilson
and Carter with respect to strong presi-
dential leadership. Although in the campaign of 1976
Carter and Mondale were promoted as "leaders, for a
change," and although Carter repeatedly drew attention
to the need for strong leadership, he has had a difficult
time in his first two years convincing his party, the
Congress, and the country that he is what he promised.
There are reasons for that that have nothing to do with
personalities. In 1912 the country was ripe for reform,
and the Congress had received something of a mandate
in the election of that year. In 1976, on the other hand,
the country was still skeptical of political power, thanks
to the abuses of Richard Nixon. And while it would be
a mistake to underestimate the gravity and complexity of
the problems that confronted Wilson's administration,
there is something about the difficulties Carter faces, as
well as about the pessimism of the country in meeting
those difficulties, that distinguishes 1979 from 1913.

Still, personal differences cannot be disregarded. Like
Carter, Wilson's elective experience was limited to one
term as governor (he was governor of New Jersey from
1910 to 1912). Accordingly, both men were "Washington
outsiders." But while Carter made a virtue of politi-
cal innocence, Wilson took charge from the start. Short-
ly before assuming office Wilson wrote that "so long as
[the president] is commanded to lead he is surely enti-
tled to a certain amount of power—all the power he can
get from the support and convictions and opinions of his
fellow countrymen; that he ought to be suffered to use
that power against his opponents until his work is done.
It will be very difficult for him to abuse it. He holds it
upon suffrance, at the pleasure of public opinion."

The fact that Wilson shared nothing of Carter's
equivocal attitude toward politics and political leader-
ship was, to an important degree, a function of Wilson's
unqualified passion for politics. While his predilection
for strong executive leadership formed gradually in his
mind, he undertook as a young man to study the lives of
great statesmen and to fashion himself in their image.
At age thirty, as a college professor, he declared "his
ambition to add something to the statesmanship of the
country, if that something be only thought, and not the
old achievement of which I used to dream when I hoped
that I might enter practical politics."

On balance, the strengths and weaknesses of Wilson
and Carter are quite different. When Wilson promised
leadership, he provided it. He had the bearing, the
oratorical gifts, the purpose, the personal energy, the
political "feel" for being a strong president. His
passions, priorities, concerns, and convictions were
clear. But if his passion inspired genuine leadership, it
was also the source of his shortcomings. For him,
harnessing political power to altruistic ends was an
uncomplicated affair, particularly for those, like him-
self, whose motives were largely virtuous. This belief
clouded his lofty vision. It impeded self-criticism and
flexibility and produced some disastrous policies, such
as the occupation of Veracruz. It prevented him from
recognizing the callousness with which he treated "the
Negro problem." It blinded him to the fact that his own
policies frequently confused the advancement of American economic interests with the promotion of human rights and constitutional liberty abroad, a confusion that recurs in these volumes.

Carter's strengths, such as they are, lie in the fact that in practice he does not suffer from Wilson's rigidity and supreme self-confidence. Day to day he adopts a more flexible, incremental attitude toward policy, and appears ready to subject his proposals to review and criticism. His policies may not inspire loyalty and devotion, but neither do they raise false hopes. He neither achieves nor fails as colossally as Wilson did.

But Carter is not able to leave it at that. Although he does not act like him, Carter talks like Wilson, and part of him, one suspects, thinks that way too. He proclaims some of the same high purposes and appears, in his way, to mean them. The problem is that he has not integrated his day-to-day style with his Wilson-like aspirations, and he does not seem to realize that. That is why his image continues to be "fuzzy." One side of him would be another Wilson; the other side won't go along. The reason for this, as I have suggested, is that Carter lacks Wilson's passion, a passion born of a political theology that harnessed intense religious conviction to public life. We would all no doubt benefit if Carter could find a way to combine his experimental pragmatic approach to policy with something of Wilson's sense of direction and perseverance.

American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur, 1880-1964
by William Manchester
(Little, Brown; 793 pp.; $15.00)

David McLellan

Manchester deserves the praise that has greeted his masterful biography of General Douglas MacArthur. It is enormously well researched, owing much, as Manchester acknowledges, to the work of D. Clayton James, whose three-volume work Years of MacArthur is still advancing toward completion. Further, Manchester writes with a verve and literacy that sustain interest through the book's 709 pages. Finally, it is about a figure of towering significance in contemporary American history.

The opening chapters concerning MacArthur's family and early career are bumbling for the light they throw on MacArthur's personality. Manchester eschews psychohistory, preferring to let the evidence of MacArthur's self-dramatizing and paranoid behavior speak for itself.

A hero at Missionary Ridge and in other Civil War engagements, MacArthur's father was breveted a full colonel in the Union Army at nineteen and became known throughout his home state of Wisconsin as "the boy colonel." (Douglas MacArthur, born in 1890, would be thirty-eight before he became the youngest general in the American army in France.) MacArthur's father was to emerge from military obscurity thirty-five years later, after a succession of posts in the American West, as military governor of the newly conquered Philippines. Unfortunately, like his son a half century later, Arthur MacArthur's arrogance and insubordination put him up against William Howard Taft, a civilian commissioner sent out to govern the archipelago. When Taft was elected president in 1908, the senior MacArthur's military career came to an end.

A more enduring force in young Douglas MacArthur's life was his mother, who spurred him to excell and remained an important figure in his life until he was well into his forties. When he entered West Point in 1899, his mother took up residence in a nearby hotel, from which she oversaw her son's career for the next four years. MacArthur was to say in later years that his mother ("Pinky") had pushed him too hard. She seems to have contributed early to a character trait that would become more and more marked, namely, a paranoia that attributed setbacks in his career to "enemies" out to deny him his full measure of recognition. In France it was the "Chaumont crowd"—the members of General Pershing's staff, among whom George C. Marshall figured as a brilliant subaltern; in the 1920's it was critics of the regiment at West Point, of which MacArthur was then commandant; in the 1930's it was Roosevelt and the New Deal crowd; in the events that led to the fall of the Philippines and his efforts to make the Pacific the principal theatre of war it was Marshall, Roosevelt, and those Republicans—Dewey, Wilkie, and Stassen—who would oppose him for the Republican presidential nomination; and in the Korean War it was Truman, Acheson, Marshall once again, and the whole iniquitous Washington crowd.

When insubordination darkened his reputation in Korea, MacArthur's ego had reached such a state that he viewed his recall as part of a global conspiracy to sell out America's interests to communism.

MacArthur does not seem to have grown much in personal depth or character over the decades. Manchester points us to "where personality and history really meet," and there MacArthur is always much the same despite the drama and scope of his career. His performance as supreme commander of the Allied occupation of Japan stands out as something of an exception, however. It was principally MacArthur's ideas on how Japan should be governed that converted Japanese society from feudalism to democracy. As Manchester observes, MacArthur seemed far less inhibited in bringing democracy (and even a trace of socialism) to Japan than in sympathizing with progressive forces at home.

As asked by President Hoover to clear the bonus marchers out of Washington but to permit them to camp on the other side of the Potomac, MacArthur, in brazen disregard of orders, had the bonus marchers routed from Anacostia and even a trace of socialism to Japan as well. He had a textbook conception of democracy that served him well in Japan, but also an innate hostility to-