

class, "is basically committed to controlling the content of its work and its work environment, rather than surrendering these in favor of getting the best wage bargain it can negotiate," it "embodies any future hope of working-class self-management...." The last is what Gouldner regards as *true*—as opposed to *state*—socialism. This does not mean, however, that the New Class is consciously pursuing either state socialism or workers' self-management, or that workers' self-management would be any more indulgent of "pointy-head" élites than monied élites.

As for the immediate future, more probable than a Kristolized polarization between the old capitalist class and the New Class is mutual adjustment. Capitalism doesn't usually like to risk everything in a head-on confrontation with its challengers; it would rather buy them off. In this sense, Kristol's call for business to battle the New Class may be retarding capitalism's natural development. The New Class is not a mortal threat to capitalism, and even certain forms of workers' self-management can be accommodated within capitalist institutions, as the West German experience with *Mitbestimmung* is showing. So, capitalism may be wise to let the New Class enjoy its guild advantages.

Even if Kristol's anxiety about the likelihood of socialism is overwrought, his anxiety about the decline of religion and traditional morality raises interesting questions about the conservative's affinity for religion. Kristol's primary value is freedom—not religious truth, not salvation, not equality. Fundamentally, he is a defender of capitalism because he thinks it an indispensable prerequisite of freedom. It is because he cherishes freedom so much that he displays no significant qualms about the unequal distribution of wealth and income in which capitalism necessarily results. Indeed, his major criticisms are saved for those who seek to meliorate that distribution. Kristol frets about various plans for "punitive action against the rich" and faults élitist intellectuals for hypo-

critically using the issue of equality to promote class war against the business élite. The intellectuals are really interested in their own power and status, says Kristol, not equality. Yet, when the common people make egalitarian noises on their own, he readily denounces their "populism." While Kristol may occasionally doff his hat at the common people for resisting the blandishments of the New Class, it should not be thought that he is interested in being a tribune of the masses.

One is reluctantly forced to read Kristol's pacans for religion and tradition with some skepticism. Does Kristol yearn for their revival because he perceives them as the ultimate good—the only things which deserve three cheers—or because he knows they can be reliable means for the preservation of freedom (and privilege) and for defusing populist furies? Does he believe in the back of his mind that Marx was right in seeing religion (and the morality produced by it) as the opium of the masses? This is an ambiguity Kristol—like so many religious conservatives—never confronts head-on. He ought to confront it, for he must know that a manipulation of religion for worldly purposes—however nobly conceived—is hardly pleasing in the eyes of God. I suspect Kristol is interested in more than a preservative use of religion, but it would be nice to hear him say it loud and clear. It is at least fortunate that he is willing to give capitalism only two cheers; if there were more socialists who refused to give their "ism" the ultimate cheer, we would be living in a saner and safer world.

As the neoconservatives discover the virtues of capitalism and religion—and do so simultaneously—I can hear the Marxists in the background saying, "See, we told you so. Religion is the opium of the people in class-ridden societies." Since I am a Christian, that prospect depresses me. It will be tempting for beleaguered traditional believers to look to the neoconservatives to buttress their position. But, just as it is treacherous to cozy up to the Marxists and let them set our agenda, so it may be perilous to let the neoconservatives set our agenda, locking us into an alliance with the vested interests they are so assiduously courting. [WV]

The Education of Carey McWilliams

by Carey McWilliams

(Simon & Schuster; 363 pp.; \$11.95)

James A. Nuechterlein

Carey McWilliams is, by all accounts, an independent and courageous man, and there is no reason to believe that he is not a decent and honorable one as well. Yet he has produced a memoir that disappoints by any measure. It does not reveal, it does not illuminate, it does not charm; worst of all, it is possessed of an ideological spirit so crude and ten-

dentious that one wonders whether, in the course of his political education, Carey McWilliams has learned very much at all. McWilliams's years with the *Nation* (1945 to 1975, the last twenty as editor) were dominated by the cold war and its effects, and his view of the cold war is so partial and distorted as to make him a most unreliable witness to

the times. One concludes this book with a rueful understanding of why the post-war *Nation* has so often spoken with such a strident and implausible voice.

Just how McWilliams developed his ideological biases is not clear, apparently even to him. He makes some effort to describe the ideas that have moved him, but gives no adequate explanation of

why they came to do so. At the end he confesses that he has "never fully understood" what made him into an instinctive "rebel-radical."

His childhood (he was born in 1905) seems in many ways to have been idyllic. His father ran a prosperous cattle ranch in Colorado, and even though a post-World War I bust in the cattle industry wiped out the family fortune, McWilliams's sketchy account of those years provides no hint of what, if any, personal effect that event had on him. By 1922, his father dead, McWilliams was living in Los Angeles, where he worked his way through undergraduate and law programs at the University of Southern California.

As a student and young lawyer with literary interests during the 1920's McWilliams was, by his own account, "rebellious" but not particularly political. He routinely credits the Depression with nudging him into radical politics, but several references to his lack of interest in his law practice make us wonder. By the mid-Thirties he had grown, he tells us, "irredeemably bored" with his work, and he found social activism "a wonderful anodyne for the pain of boredom." If emphasis on such comments seems unfairly to trivialize McWilliams's political commitments, it can only be said that his own account is so offhand and unreflective that the reader is forced to provide, from the inadequate evidence presented, his own interpretations.

In any case, the question of motives need not preoccupy us. For whatever reasons, McWilliams in the Thirties and early Forties entered vigorously and wholeheartedly into a broad spectrum of reform activities. As a lawyer, journalist, and public official (he became head of the California Division of Immigration and Housing in 1939) he got caught up—or caught himself up—in the problems of migratory farm labor, trade union organizing, racial prejudice (in particular, the program of Japanese removal from the West Coast during World War II), and anti-Semitism.

Whatever negative judgments one finally finds oneself making on McWilliams the ideologue, it must always be kept in mind that he did, in the course of his career, fight a whole series of unpopular, unfashionable, but necessary and good fights. If his definition of "social justice" strikes us as insufficiently complex or as open to ambiguity, we

have to remind ourselves that the conditions in which it arose—massive economic collapse at home and fascist threat abroad—made it seem natural, even necessary, to reduce to simplicity the moral outlines of the social struggle.

Such justification does not hold, however, for McWilliams's attitudes toward the cold war and the Communist question. In the postwar era most Americans, whether of Left or Right, came to understand that Stalin's Russia was as odious a regime as Hitler's Germany and as assiduously to be combatted, but for McWilliams anticommunism was nothing more than a mask for reaction "under cover of which American capitalism might expand to the far corners of the earth." The Popular Front mentality of the Thirties and war years, which could conceive of no enemies on the Left, gradually gave way among liberals after 1945 to the realization that, in historian Alonzo Hamby's formulation, the critical political division occurred not between fascists and antifascists but between authoritarians and antiauthoritarians. McWilliams never saw that.

McWilliams would have thought the question of collaboration between conservatives and fascists a matter to be decided simply on a tactical basis.) McWilliams's decision to stay with PCA and the popular front took courage, in that it went against an emerging anti-Communist consensus. But courage is not the highest virtue; if his decision was brave, it was also politically and morally blind.

Little in McWilliams's version of the cold war era can withstand serious analysis. As with so many "revisionist" writers, he locates the cold war's origins almost entirely in American attitudes and actions, as if there were no other side. He does concede at one point that the Soviet Union often acted "provocatively" in the postwar years, but the attention—and the blame—in his account fall overwhelmingly on the side of the United States. The monstrous evils of Stalinism, either at home or in Eastern Europe, never come in for consideration. To McWilliams, America was the "more intransigent" of the two powers, and it was the "aggressive policies" of the U.S. that "predictably" produced a "strenuous Soviet response."

"So where was I, politically speaking, at the end of the 1920s? In joining the Mencken contingent I had rebelled against aspects of the dominant culture, and my reading of Bierce had provided an antidote to the brassy optimism not merely of the decade but of the conventional reading of the American experience. I felt alienated from the Main Street consensus but remained committed to the view that rebellion was a form of protest without specific ends. What does it mean to be a rebel? Alan Sillitoe's hero in Saturday Night and Sunday Morning has the answer: 'Once a rebel, always a rebel. You can't help being one. You can't deny that. And it's best to be a rebel, so as to show 'em it don't pay to try to do you down!'" —The Education of Carey McWilliams

The crucial moment for the American Left came in the winter of 1946-47, when the popular fronters formed Progressive Citizens of America and the non-Communist Left created Americans for Democratic Action. In McWilliams's curious account, the PCA-ADA division amounted to nothing more than a dispute over whether or not exclusion of Communists from liberal organizations would be an effective tactic against "red-baiting." He displays not the slightest understanding that liberal anticommunism proceeded at least as much from heartfelt principle as from momentary tactical advantage. (One wonders, though not for long, if

America's aggression originated, apparently, in the dynamics of the capitalist system. Even as certain early theorists of totalitarianism assumed too easily that the Soviet Union under Stalin must *by definition* be an expansionist power, so McWilliams quotes with approval Jules Henry's conclusion that American "expansion" issued necessarily from capitalism's insatiable need for markets for the export of surplus capital. In a similar vein, McWilliams congratulates revisionist historian William Appleman Williams for his "keen awareness" of the "bipartisan imperialism" that undergirded American cold war policies.

For McWilliams, the Soviet Union could not legitimately be perceived as a military threat as of 1945, and that is enough to prove that America's anti-Communist foreign policy was unnecessary, mistaken, and, at heart, little more than a cover for self-interested and sinister purposes. The argument that the Soviet Union posed no threat is both highly questionable in itself (the people of Eastern Europe *knew* that Russia was a threat, and those of Western Europe had good reason to assume it was) and also rather beside the point. Would McWilliams seriously argue that Franklin Roosevelt's antifascist policy only achieved legitimacy at the moment that Nazi Germany became a direct military threat to the U.S.? Decent men opposed both Hitler and Stalin because it was morally necessary to do so, and it was both reasonable and prudent for American policymakers to assume the worst about either dictator's intentions.

McWilliams is no better on the cold war at home than he is on it abroad. With an unflagging single-mindedness, he collapses all forms of anticommunism into McCarthyism. ADA or radical Right, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. or Joseph McCarthy, it's all the same, and it's all witch-hunts and red-baiting and nothing more. We know from McWilliams that "anti-Communist paranoia" was alive in 1948 because people actually gave credence to the "tall tales" that Whittaker Chambers began telling about Alger Hiss. McCarthyism, we learn further, was indistinguishable "in any fundamental way from the policies, programs and tactics of the Truman Administration." In time, it seems, McCarthy got out of control and went too far for the establishment's purposes: "So when he began to attack the Army and take potshots at Eisenhower and Chief Justice Earl Warren, the leadership decided to dump him, *the better to preserve McCarthyism*" (emphasis added).

America opposed communism, McWilliams informs us (quoting a report of the American Friends Service Committee), "not because it is totalitarian or dictatorial, but because it challenges the status quo." It appears no more possible for McWilliams to distinguish between McCarthyism and liberal anticommunism than it is for a John Bircher to tell the difference between a Trotskyite and a New Dealer. In his view, "the ghost of Joe McCarthy" is

not yet laid to rest; he sees it stalking the land in "the attacks directed against Lillian Hellman's *Scoundrel Time* and the concerted efforts to re-try and re-convict Alger Hiss."

The irony of all this is that McWilliams's consistent refusal to make necessary distinctions weakens our willingness to grant the compelling case that exists against the excesses of anticommunism both at home and abroad. We know by now that in the name of anti-communism America sometimes pursued policies that were foolish, counter-productive, and morally indefensible; and we have known for a very long time that McCarthyism constituted one of the saddest episodes in our history—one, moreover, during which many Americans, some liberals included, acted less nobly and courageously than they later would have wished. But in the face of McWilliams's gross distortions, our instinct is to forget the excesses and mistakes and defend with fewer qualifications than we otherwise would the fundamental anti-Communist cause. The entirely unintended effect of McWilliams's book is to remind us that for all the awful things that have been perpetrated in its name, anticommunism remains, for genuine democrats, a necessary principle.

Even where McWilliams's case is least vulnerable, he undermines it by avoiding inconvenient matters. He writes with proper eloquence and outrage about the victims of McCarthyism, but there were victims and victims, and some of them were by no means the heroic martyrs that McWilliams makes them out to be. After all, the McCarthyites were not always in error as to the facts; some of their targets were in fact Communists, and at a time when communism meant Stalinism, such people deserved the opprobrium they received for apologizing and even working for an objectively evil cause.

This is *not* to say that they deserved official persecution or private harassment. The investigations, firings, blacklists, loyalty oaths, and myriad other deprivations of rights cannot be justified even in those instances where their victims were morally culpable. But surely we ought to make distinctions in our allotment of sympathy and regret between innocent radicals unfairly smeared and those who were, in fact, Communists or Communist sympathizers. Again, the obvious analogy suggests



APRIL 7-11

Christian Witness to Muslims: Issues for Mission Today. Dr. David Kerr, Director, Center for Christian Muslim Relations, Selby Oak College, Birmingham, England; and Dr. S.H. Nasr, former Chancellor, Aryamehr University, Tehran, and President, Iranian Academy of Philosophy.

APRIL 14-18

Cultural Problems in Mission: Anthropology Where it Matters. Dr. Louis J. Luzbetak, S.V.D., Editor, ANTHROPOS International Journal.

APRIL 21-25

Announcing the Kingdom: Latin American Perspectives on Evangelization. Dr. Mortimer Arias, Exec. Sec., Latin American Methodist Council of Churches.

APRIL 29-MAY 2

Jesus Christ, Salvation, and the World's Religions. Bishop Stephen Neill, Oxford, England.

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itself: Does McWilliams truly believe that no blame or moral guilt attached to those who actively supported fascism during the Thirties? The moral issues here are far more complex than McWilliams even begins to suggest.

McWilliams writes of things other than the cold war, of course. We get a brief history of the *Nation* during his days there, as well as capsule summaries of a very large number of men and women of the Left he has known and worked with over the years. Disappointingly little of a personal nature appears, however, and the comments on individuals seldom probe beneath the surface. The book also provides a condensed history of the postwar years, but that is of little more than curiosity value in light of the author's ideological biases and eccentric judgments. (He suggests, for example, that during the Watergate crisis there was serious danger of a coup d'état.)

The precise ideology behind McWilliams's arguments is difficult to make out. He calls himself a socialist, but his definition of what socialism means is

something less than rigorous: "a more rational economy with a more equal distribution of power and responsibility and a more sensible use of resources." It is to his credit that he perceives that "democratic socialism" is easier to invoke as an ideal than to imagine being put into practice. As with so many on the American left, McWilliams embraces socialism mainly as a rhetorical weapon with which to criticize the workings of the capitalist system.

In the final analysis, he is happiest imagining himself as an independent radical. That self-definition indicates no small part of his ideological problem. Radicals, he says, "never feel part of the existing order and are invariably critical of it"; or again, "the radical is the perpetual outsider, the odd man (or woman) out, constantly critical of the power structure and of things as they are." But where, politically speaking, does one go from there? If one is not a revolutionary

(and McWilliams nowhere hints that he is) and if one has no positive vision of how things ought to be (and McWilliams never suggests a program of change), what does radicalism mean other than a chronic rebelliousness suggestive of nothing so much as a state of perpetual political adolescence?

None of this should make us forget the valuable, even heroic, contributions McWilliams has made in specific areas of public policy. But if we follow him in political theory, we are led to a style of permanent rebellion that makes no more sense, in the end, than Trotsky's vision of permanent revolution. His is also a prescription for a politics of endless self-hatred. By refusing even the possibility of coming to terms with his own necessarily imperfect society, McWilliams demonstrates as well as anyone could the fecklessness of so much of the native American radical tradition. [WV]

hysteria and demagoguery.

Gary May's book is extensively researched, fully documented, and convincingly organized. It depicts a highly competent American citizen who chose the Foreign Service as a career, and Chinese affairs as his field of specialization, during the turbulent period of China's transition into the modern era. John Carter Vincent began his Foreign Service career as a young vice consul in China in the agitated 1920's, studied for two years in Peking to qualify himself as a China Service officer, served in various China posts during the period of Sino-Japanese conflict that began in 1931, and in 1942 became counselor of the American embassy in the Nationalists' wartime capital of Chungking. In late 1945 he was made director of the State Department's Office of Far Eastern Affairs. John Carter Vincent, as evidenced by the record, was eminently qualified as an American Far Eastern expert.

However, as Gary May notes, Washington during wartime had already developed the habit of "ignoring the realities of Chinese politics." His book depicts a foreign affairs apparatus moved by forces other than expertise. It gives examples of lack of bureaucratic coordination between the White House, the State Department, the War Department, and the embassy at Chungking. The White House and War Department are shown as often making foreign policy in flat disregard of the recommendations of the State Department's area specialists. The president's special envoys and political appointees, such as Patrick J. Hurley, the American ambassador to Chungking during the final critical year of the war, commanded sympathetic attention in the Executive branch for laudatory expositions about the strength and stability of the Nationalist regime, while the more knowledgeable appraisals of career diplomats were all too often downgraded or ignored.

As director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs, Vincent consistently opposed deeper American involvement in the Chinese civil war that began in 1946. This brought him into collision with the Pentagon view—and of course also with that of the China lobby, which had become active in support of the Nationalist cause. May recounts how, in June of 1947, the Joint Chiefs of Staff argued in a Pentagon study that the Chinese Communists "should be re-

China Scapegoat: The Diplomatic Ordeal of John Carter Vincent

by Gary May

(New Republic Books; 370 pp.; \$15.95)

O. Edmund Clubb

Speaking in May, 1978, in Peking, American national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski asserted that the American approach to relations with present-day China was based upon three fundamental beliefs: "that friendship between the United States and the People's Republic of China is vital and beneficial to world peace; that a secure and strong China is in America's interest; that a powerful, confident and globally engaged United States is in China's interest." In December of last year President Jimmy Carter announced with obvious pleasure that the United States was severing ties with the Nationalist regime on Taiwan and establishing normal diplomatic relations with Peking, effective January 1, 1979. And now there are those who view China as the natural ally of the United States against the Soviet Union and would arm the Chinese with modern weapons.

It wasn't that way thirty years ago.

The cold war had begun in 1947, prominent political figures purported to perceive a threat by "international communism" to the American way of life, and the Chinese Communist overthrow of the Nationalist regime in 1949 sparked the rhetorical question in the American political arena, "Who lost China?"

The question as phrased betrayed a deep ignorance of the revolutionary convulsion that had occurred in China, but it had a domestic political effect—which was of course its purpose. It was leveled at the Democratic administration in office, and someone had to pay. In the nature of things, where first incompetence and then pro-Chinese communism were suggested, the culprits were to be sought in the State Department and its Foreign Service. The case of John Carter Vincent, as set forth in Gary May's *China Scapegoat*, is outstanding for its revelations regarding American political life in an era of