

thorough assessment of this controversial debate.

The storm of controversy surrounding Arendt broke over the publication of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Her conclusion that Eichmann was unaware of his own wickedness, was just a normal bureaucrat following rules out of "sheer thoughtlessness" and was "neither perverted nor sadistic," struck many critics as unfeeling and abstract. Other of her facts and interpretations were questioned, and Whitfield in each case presents fairly both sides of the argument. He shares in the criticism of Arendt's charges that the Jews cooperated in their own destruction and that the Jerusalem court that tried Eichmann did so in a too narrowly Jewish context. But he defends her chilling portrait of Eichmann as a new kind of indifferent killer, one who could not disobey the order to slaughter people for whom he felt no great animus. "More so than any other observer of the trial," he writes, "Arendt sought to stretch the moral imagination, so that a new kind of danger to humanity might be recognized."

Into the Dark continues that amplification by shedding light on the important and controversial thought of an original thinker. It raises profound questions that it does not adequately answer, perhaps because those answers lie beyond intellectual imagining. [wvw]

QUEST: REFLECTIONS ON MEDICINE, SCIENCE AND HUMANITY
by René Dubos and Jean-Paul Escande

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; 128 pp.; \$9.95)

Kevin Morrissey

This book evolved from a series of interviews in 1978 between the noted microbiologist René Dubos and the French physician Jean-Paul Escande. The authors' stated purpose in subsequently editing and publishing them—first in French under the title *Chercher*, and now in English—is to promote the value of a broad, scientifically informed, and humanistic approach to contemporary world problems. The book easily achieves this goal. For those who haven't read his other books, it is a marvelous introduction to the phenomenon of René Dubos.

Quest has five divisions, each with a preface by Dr. Escande. Escande is skillful and modest in initiating the discussions, asking questions, and providing a variant perspective. He achieves the effect of sketching in the outline of Dubos's person and work, while allowing the color and vividness of Dubos's responses to flesh out the full tones of his intellect and character.

The first division is a brief autobiographical sketch from Dubos's high school years at the Collège Chaptal in Paris up to his mature years at the Rockefeller Institute in New York. A pattern emerges of life-long openness and willingness to adapt to chance and necessity—whether sudden good fortune, as in Selman Waksman's offer aboard an ocean liner enroute to the U.S. to have Dubos study microbiology with him at Rutgers University (Waksman later won a Nobel prize), or tragedy, as in the death from TB of Dubos's first wife, from which emerged his stunning research on tuberculosis and adaptation to infectious disease.

The second division, "Scientists," ranges over the history and philosophy of science as well as the interrelationships of science, medicine, and technology. The authors indicate the pitfalls arising from the American public's—and thus government's and private industry's—view of the utilitarian role of science in society, as opposed to a broader view of it as the exercise of a basic human need to understand our life situation. The Cartesian or logical reductionist mode of scientific investigation exemplified by Jacques Monod is assessed in relation to the intuitive or phenomenological approach, as typified by Dubos himself. Dubos feels that, despite the modern popular presumption that every problem can be scientifically dissected and solved, such "murder to dissect" fails to illuminate the complex interrelated phenomena of living organisms and society. Descartes's own statement that "Joy is the most important thing for keeping one's health" is used to support Dubos's conviction that even Descartes recognized the need for intuitive perceptions of human phenomena. Then in a marvelous comparison of Franz Hals's portrait of Descartes and Rembrandt's portrait of a physician, Dubos introduces his concept of the ideal physician: "a man who possesses a very specific knowledge but who knows that this very specific knowledge will never suffice for

understanding the unique problem posed by the individual patient. So he enriches his specific knowledge by attempting to perceive his patient's total personality, his family, and the way in which he lives."

The ideals and enlightened philosophy behind the founding of the Rockefeller Institute closes Division II and leads into Division III, "Physicians." The authors address the intangible aspects of the physician-patient relationship and the problem of defining health and illness. Dubos has noted that "people consider themselves to be ill when they can't do what they want to do, when they can't become what they want to become." In this context science is better seen as only one of many powerful tools used by the physician in approaching a given patient. The role of the physician remains, in Dr. Edward Trudeau's maxim, to "sometimes cure, often help, always console"—and, Dr. Dubos adds, "whenever possible, prevent." Medicine's future task, then, is not one of curing outright but, rather, of developing to the maximum the human organism's powers to recuperate and adapt.

Dubos broadens the definition of illness to include the failure of the individual or society to be happy in and adapt to changing surroundings. It is then a short step to apply his scientific approach to the day-to-day problems and longer-incubating illnesses of mankind that are discussed in Division IV, "Humanity." Here the crux of Dubos's scientific approach is evident: He avoids the eighteenth to twentieth-century presumption that "science discovers, industry applies, and man conforms" and seeks, rather, "to adapt industrial and technological advances to now clearly identifiable and persistent human biological needs." In a sweeping view of mankind since the Stone Age, Dubos demonstrates very convincingly that these needs are simply to enjoy life in a humanized countryside.

There is a breadth and easy development of ideas in this volume. The logic is self-evident without seeming tightly argued. Yet at the conclusion Dr. Dubos can exclaim triumphantly, "Think globally, act locally," and still fulfill the conditions of strict scientific method and broad human feeling. By the time one reaches the final division, "René Dubos, No Holds Barred," one realizes he could have started there or

anywhere in this amenable little book.

A final remark of Dr. Dubos illuminates his anecdotal style, which so effectively engrosses the reader and develops the themes. "But I'll give you the finest example of all. In my opinion, Christianity took root not so much because of its truth but because Christ spoke in parables. In fact, he says just that in the book of Matthew: 'Therefore speak I to them in parables.' For only parables can express the full complexity of things. If you define your subject too precisely, you'll stifle its living richness, but if you tell a story, then your listeners will sense everything that the story may contain. I truly believe that this is the way to make things grow. In addition, I confess it's much more entertaining." **WV**

**FRIENDLY FASCISM:
THE NEW FACE OF CORPORATE
POWER IN AMERICA**

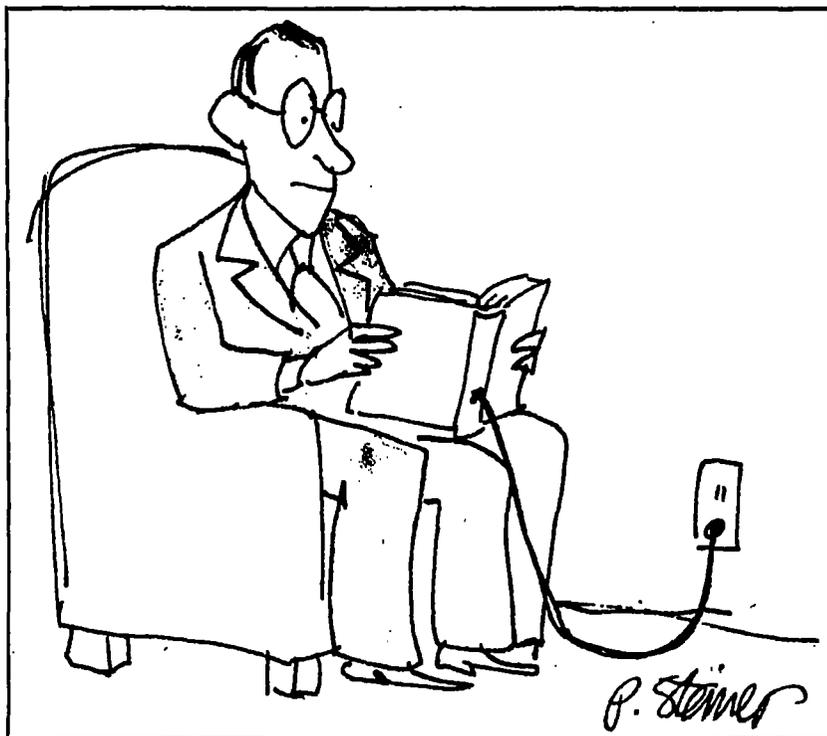
by **Bertram Gross**
(Evans, 410 pp.; \$15.00)

**THUNDER ON THE RIGHT:
THE NEW RIGHT AND THE
POLITICS OF RESENTMENT**

by **Alan Crawford**
(Pantheon, xv + 381 pp.; \$13.95)

Newton Koltz

Friendly Fascism, a long series of new variations on the theme that power tends to concentrate in the hands of those who already have too much of it, is a book you want to like and take seriously. It promises quite a lot: to blow the lid on the government-corporate collusion that threatens to turn this country into a *pleasant* police state—a scary, all too likely possibility. Unfortunately, the book delivers none of the punch one wants from it. Unless you are that rare individual who believes the oil companies' explanations of their mega-profits, it's unlikely you'll find any new revelations here. The problem with the book, I think, stems from the old academic delusion that *careful presentation, balance, and "fairness"* are equivalent to hard reasoning and insight. When you want probing questions and tough answers, it smothers you in balance and overwhelms you with waves of tedious facts, until in the end you are too numb to be frightened...which is not to say



that *Friendly Fascism* is a waste of either trees or time. Indeed, when our new Tom Paine sets out to write our new *Common Sense*, he'll surely find Dr. Gross's book essential background reading.

Thunder on the Right is a series of variations on a rather different kind of takeover theme: the story of how the well-organized, well-financed, well-promoted political network that has come to be called the New Right took control of America's right-wing establishment. It's often a sad book because Crawford, who thinks of himself as a conservative in the tradition of Edmund Burke, John Adams, and to an extent the Buckleys, is dismayed that the Right is no longer the dignified, exclusive club it used to be. Somebody let in the folks in leisure suits, white patent leather slip-ons, and bouffant hairdos. Crawford can't seem to accept the fate of an élitist intellectual in a democracy. Given the choice between an élitist who knows full well what the people *really* need and a tub-thumping, antiabortion, anti-ERA, pro-school-prayer rabble-rouser, the polyester people will go for the rabble-rouser every time.

Once you have become calloused to Crawford's sometimes whiny tone, however, the book becomes quite fun to read. It's an insider's book that's often both hard-hitting and feisty. I can report with pleasure that Crawford has

learned well from his mentors, the Buckleys, how to skewer his enemies without savaging them. (The most villainous of his enemies appears to be Richard A. Viguerie, the Mephistophiles of direct mail fund raising for New Right causes. There's not a good word for Viguerie in the book, I'm delighted to say.) More important, I think Crawford is correct about the danger the New Right represents for the Republic. For him the threat from these people—the single-issue groups, the fundamentalist churches, the Political Action committees, the "Moral Majorities," and all the rest—is not to the "political process," as so many liberals seem to be saying. "Why," they write, "do *these* people want to get involved now? Why are *they* participating in the process when after all they never did before?" (Liberal élitists can be just as whiny as their conservative counterparts.) The danger from the New Right is much more fundamental than that. They put their own will (often identified with some kind of higher law) ahead of the Law. Or, to put this in more concrete terms, the ayatollahs of the New Right—in the name of law and order—would like to make a revolutionary change in the American system of government. They want, simply, to make over the system in their own image, a catastrophe that would make living under a "friendly fascist" regime seem downright enjoyable. **WV**