

Yet while Hook is most interesting in recounting his own experiences—a short encounter with the evolutionary socialist Eduard Bernstein in 1929, a revealing debate with Herbert Marcuse, and years of association with John Dewey—it is unfortunate that most of this small book is devoted to the exegesis of Marx's thought. If this were merely a descriptive enterprise, the endeavor might be worthwhile, but Hook seems obsessed with showing that there is only one legitimate interpretation of Marxian thought: his own very selective reading. He presents Marx as a defender of the modern concept of individualism, fully prepared to endorse a peaceful transformation of capitalist society into socialism and firmly opposed to any kind of political dictatorship. True, these lines of thought can be found in Marx's works, but so too can a number of contrary sentiments—the concern for the collective, the impulse to violent revolution, and a definite antidemocratic strain. It is precisely because of such ambiguities that Marx's thought has been historically so appealing. (Hook himself once wrote a book about Marxism entitled *The Ambiguous Legacy*.) Why, then, should one even want to come up with a single interpretation devoid of contradictions?

In Hook's case the answer appears to be his anticommunism. For example, it is evidently not enough for him to denounce those among Marx's epigones whom he dislikes. He also feels compelled to save Marx from them, even to rescue him from the ugly face of communism itself. Thus, rather than merely criticizing Lenin for his adaptation of Marxism to revolutionary Russia, Hook simply writes off Lenin as "non-Marxist," and along with him, apparently, all of Soviet history. One may respect Hook's opposition to communism and still wonder whether his subsequent definition of the nature of Marxism is not so hopelessly narrow as to deprive the doctrine of much of its long-term historical significance.

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#### Newly Published

*Choices in Modern Jewish Thought*, Eugene B. Borowitz's "Partisan Guide" to "the thinkers who responded to the unprecedented challenge modernity issued to Jewish faith," has just been published by Behrman House, New York (xi + 305 pp.; \$9.95 [paper]). Rabbi Borowitz, a teacher at Hebrew Union College and Editor of *Sh'ma*, is a long-time member of the *Worldview* Editorial Board.

#### **POLITICAL TERRORISM: THEORY, TACTICS AND COUNTER-MEASURES**

by **Grant Wardlaw**

(Cambridge University Press; xiii + 218 pp.; \$29.50/\$9.95)

#### **TERRORISM, LEGITIMACY, AND POWER—THE CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

edited by **Martha Crenshaw**

(Wesleyan University Press; 167 pp.; \$17.95)

#### **INTERNATIONAL VIOLENCE**

edited by **Tunde Adeniran and Yonah Alexander**

(Praeger Publishers; xvi + 269 pp.; \$29.95)

*William H. Brill*

Violence has always enforced history. It has been used to make revolutions and to consolidate them. Even in democratic states it sets the boundaries of acceptable political dialogue and behavior. Violence has introduced political change more often than new constitutions or elections. Elections work when relatively little is at stake and the losers can afford to accept the outcome. This is not so when the issue is a new political order. Such stakes usually generate violence. Only later, when violence has determined who is in charge and what values are to prevail do milder forms of decision-making emerge. That is why proposals to hold elections in El Salvador probably don't make any more sense than similar suggestions did in China during its civil war—especially if the party calling for them (in both cases the U.S.) is also aiding one side.

The pervasiveness of violence—or the threat of it—makes it a difficult subject to study in a systematic and detached manner. This is especially true of specific aspects of violence, such as terrorism, the topic of the first two books under review. All of the contributors to these volumes struggle with the problem of defining terrorism. They approach it in widely divergent ways. Some attempt to categorize it into such classes as agitation or enforcement; others simply admit a normative bias and say that they are talking about unjustified violence against a democratic state. One writer attempts to escape from the problem of definition by urging us to judge terrorism on two levels: the morality of the ends and the morality of the means.

For the most part, the authors seem to agree that they are talking about acts of violence directed against legitimate governments by small groups whose purpose is to reach beyond the immediate victims to influence the broader population. The terrorist act is intended to intimidate the broader population, undermine the existing government, and draw attention to the fact

that a determined and dedicated alternative exists.

This kind of definition is useful as far as it goes, but it tends to obscure the role terror plays in other situations. Surely one of the major reasons for the dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan was to intimidate the Japanese population. The same was true of the bombing of Germany in World War II. And none of our authors includes Germany's bombing of London. Presumably, if you get big enough, and are able to insulate yourself from your victim through the application of large-scale technology, you can escape being labeled a terrorist.

All this leads one to wonder if the study of terrorism isn't really the study of losers—those who stalled on their march to political glory and who could not move past the stage of indiscriminate violence to gain political legitimacy or at least the chance to write their own history. Perhaps it is the case that one man's terrorist is another man's patriot.

The study of terrorism also suffers from a lack of data. There are probably very few terrorists, and they are outnumbered not only by the authorities who try to catch them but also by the number of people who want to write about them. The problem here is that most of the people who are writing about terrorism have never met a real live terrorist. As a result, motives are constantly ascribed to people who have never been interviewed or left much of a personal record. (One encounters this problem in other forms of research, but never as acutely. Criminologists do at least get to talk to criminals, psychiatrists to schizophrenics, and political scientists to voters before drawing conclusion about electoral behavior.) Maybe the subject of terrorism is best left to the imagination of the novelist.

All this gives—or should give—a heavy speculative glow to these essays. Few, if any, empirical findings are offered. Yet these selections do raise some important issues. The Crenshaw book, for example, contains a number of interesting essays on the effects

of terrorism on various regimes. Authoritarian regimes, we are told by Irving Louis Horowitz, are more likely than democratic ones to be destabilized by the assassination of a key leader. Most of the writers, however, seem to see terrorism as a grave threat to democratic governments. This may be so, but it is important to realize that despite the IRA, the Red Brigades, the Baader-Meinhof gang and our own terrible assassinations, terrorism has not forced today's major democracies to alter any of their basic policies or their democratic frameworks.

Wardlow's book has a more practical orientation than Crenshaw's, presenting sections on hostage negotiations and counterterrorism policies and procedures, as well as a good overview of the role of terrorism in revolutionary war. He also discusses the role of the media, positing quite correctly that a potential exists for a symbiotic relationship between the media and the terrorist. The media in an open society gives the terrorist access to the theatre in which he plays. At the same time, however, media coverage prevents the romanticization of the terrorist, inhibits the spread of rumors, and helps assure that the response of the authorities will not be overzealous.

*International Violence*, a collection of essays and papers from an international conference in Nigeria in 1980, offers a broader and somewhat more disconnected look at violence. In an opening essay called "The Parameters of Violence," Yohan Alexander, one of the volume's editors and someone who has written widely on the subject of terrorism, nevertheless runs afoul of the problem of defining political violence. In his case he elects to call it "an elastic, goal directed phenomenon that...is perpetuated to influence the behavior, attitudes or predisposition of its target(s)." He further states that violence "seeks to violate the organic connection that exists between the human condition and its echo in our imagination"—an observation as puzzling to the reader as it would be uninspiring to the terrorist.

The book includes a series of essays on the sources of violence, case studies of violence in various parts of the world, and perspectives on violence from various disciplines of the social sciences. In one essay an economist presents a theoretical model of violence that treats it as input into a "social production function" and assumes further more that the violent individual calculates marginal rates of utility for continuing to engage in violent behavior. In another selection, equally strange, a psychiatrist tells us that "violence in terror, civil disobedi-

ence and war is not an expression of unique psychological characteristics but a reflection of stereotyped, agitated tissue responses to stressful stimulus."

One of the most provocative case studies is offered by Ernst Halprin, who concludes an analysis of insurgencies in Latin America by stating that a "unified Central American revolutionary elite" has emerged that is working toward the goal of a "United Socialist Central America." Halprin sees this elite as far more dangerous than the Baader-Meinhof gang, the Weathermen, or the Italian Red Brigades, all of whose members he regards as pathological types. "These are not psychopaths acting out," he says, "but a political elite seriously and realistically engaged in the conquest of power, methodically and rationally employing terrorism as a means of struggle."

Although these books offer a wide array of views, opinions, and perspectives and, together with some of the work of Brian Jenkins and David Kupperman, would make a good library on terrorism and violence, it is unfortunate that some of the authors didn't focus on terrorism from the standpoint of what it can tell us about the con-

ditions under which individuals use violence, particularly about the role that organizational structure plays in it all. One of the remarkable aspects of our time is that organizations—be they terrorist groups, a secret police, or an army brigade—can get people to do so much. Perhaps we need to follow the terrorist's trail, not just to catch him but to find out what he can tell us—in his aloneness, his deviancy, his commitment to extraordinary behavior—about why violence can be so easily legitimized. For the terrorism that threatens us all may not be the bomb thrower, dangerous as he is, but the institutions that somehow legitimize acts of incredible destruction and cruelty.

### THE SOURCES OF MODERN ATHEISM

by Marcel Neusch  
(Paulist Press; 264 pp.; \$9.95)

Edward J. Curtin, Jr.

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