accepted—and even Jacobs sees little immediate chance of this—the human prospect is frighteningly gloomy. The high priestess becomes Cassandra.

Jacobs's viewpoints are presented with absolute conviction and some clarity. They are reinforced with ample, although selective, historical evidence. Here we must ask the critical question: How valid is her analysis and her prescription? In general her approach is unconvincing for several reasons. First, Jacobs is very much the prisoner of her thesis. Everything, it seems, happens or can happen because of cities: business cycles, stagnation, recessions, regeneration, development or the lack of it. Other causations are ignored in a single-minded dash to establish this premise. Unfortunately, the world of economics is not quite so unidimensional, and things often take place through the interplay of many different pulls and thrusts.

Second, Jacobs's answers run in the face of political fact. Three centuries of deeply rooted nationalism will not dissolve into separate economic quality circles, quasi-independent city-states with their own monetary systems. Third, Jacobs's focus ignores considerable progress made through policies of government intervention in the economies of many nations. All aid and all assistance are not transactions of decline! The ethic of economic intervention, spawned in its own way by the policies of Roosevelt in America and Stalin in the Soviet Union, have had significant successes in the past five decades. Their historical utility may be challenged by Reaganauts and other warriors of retrenchment, but they cannot be dismissed. There is still much that they have to offer in the context of economic development.

Despite these and other tangential flaws, including its conceptual construction, *Cities and the Wealth of Nations* performs a useful service. Jacobs opens a new line of thought and evokes an unusual vision. While her theses are unrealistic and her answers largely unsatisfying, her concerns are timely and welcome.

**THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF JOURNALISM**
*edited by Robert Schmuhl*

(University of Notre Dame Press; 160 pp.; $13.95)

**THE KENNEDY CRISIS:**
*THE PRESS, THE PRESIDENCY AND FOREIGN POLICY*

by Montague Kern, Patricia W. Levering, and Ralph B. Levering

(University of North Carolina Press; 290 pp.; $29.00)

*Raymond A. Schroth*

Journalism is certainly the most self-critical of professions. Seldom do doctors or lawyers attack one another publicly for their high fees or for failure to put public good over private ambition. And the American Association of University Professors usually aims its fire at university administrators rather than at the incompetents within its own ranks. But one can easily imagine the tragic acquisitiveness if, after the last edition has been put to bed, the ghost of H. L. Mencken were suddenly to appear at the pub across from any city room in the country and carp at the reporters at the bar: "The journalist can no more see himself realistically than a bishop can see himself realistically." "Most of the evils that continue to beset American journalism today, in truth, are not due to the rascality of owners nor even to the Kiwanian bombast of business managers, but simply and solely to the stupidity, cowardice and Philistinism of working newspaper men." No one would give him an argument.

A few years ago there were few more intellectually exciting events in New York than the *More* journalism counterconventions, staged at the Roosevelt-Biltmore, while the publishers association was convening across town. They allowed working journalists, including stars like Seymour Hersh, John B. Oakes, Anthony Lewis, and others, to talk for three days, mostly about what journalists were doing wrong. *More* died, but the *Columbia Journalism Review* and the *Washington Journalism Review* have persisted.

When George Will coached Ronald Reagan in the debate prepared with filmed Carter documents and then praised Reagan's performance on ABC's "Nightline" commentary, fellow journalists, particularly Jimmy Breslin, were quick to bold his feet to the fire. When the *Wall Street Journal*, which had recently run a front-page exposé on itself, revealed that a *New Yorker* writer, Alistair Reid, admitted that he often rearranged "facts" for effect in his reportage, the columnists and the editorial writers were quick to brand him a transgressor. All this is not just because journalists are more self-righteous than doctors, lawyers, and professors, but because they know the extraordinary degree to which their professional reputation hangs on a general public perception of their collective integrity. There is a reputation constantly under fire, not just because American journalism is full of holes, but because it is the moral center of the establishment itself. It must, for self-preservation, keep cleaning its house in public. That's why journalists are often the most interesting people to talk to, and why books about journalism's mess-ups have more than a 50/50 chance of being interesting.

*The Responsibilities of Journalism* grew out of a 1982 conference at Notre Dame on the moral dimensions of contemporary journalism. Collections of conference talks often make nonbooks, but Robert Schmuhl has provided a good historical introduction to journalism's self-examination, covering the publication in 1947 of *A Free and Responsible Press* by the Commission on Freedom of the Press, chaired by Robert M. Hutchins, the various codes of ethics, and today's "ombudsmen," who write columns passing judgment on the goof-ups in their own papers. The talks display a certain uniformity in their evenness of tone and in their almost ritualistic listing of the same examples of press perfidy: the Janet Cooke Pulitzer fraud at the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times Magazine*'s faked on-the-scene report from Cambodia, the *New York Daily News*' composite stories on Northern Ireland.

Edwin Newman's talk is amusing in its exasperated mockery of the ace communicators who can't handle the English language: NBC's "Today" show announced that "Brezhnev will lay in State," and the *Oklahoma Journal* ran a photograph of a nurse with a physician "in whom's office she worked." The weakest chapter is by John E. Swearingen, chairman of the board of directors of the Standard Oil Company, who laments that the oil companies are persecuted by the press. It is a windy blast, which I suspect was ghosted by a public relations man. If part of the conference had included a case study on the coverage of the energy crisis, Swearingen might have had a role; but by itself his chapter is just a free ad for the oil business. The last five chapters do present a case study, a relatively easy one about an ambitious investigative reporter tempted to print a story that con-
tains not quite enough evidence of wrongdoing. Analyses by three theologians and the editor of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette follow, but the editor makes the proper practical distinctions and shows what part of the story can and should be used.

In The Kennedy Crisis, a political scientist, a library scientist, and a historian combine their talents to examine the interaction between the press, the president, and the political leaders as JFK, relatively untested and unskilled in international diplomacy, tried to deal with the 'crises' in Laos, Berlin, Cuba, and Vietnam. The case study method is, to a degree, effective in this book, but it suffers from the bromidic effect of a social science apparatus getting in the way of a journalist's tale. The authors base their study on content analysis of representative influential newspapers—the New York Times, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, and San Francisco Examiner. They count not just the number of stories, columns, and editorials on each phase of each crisis but also the sources for each story—whether foreign, official U.S., domestic political, interest group, etc.—and whether the story appeared on the front or an inside page.

With its cautious conclusion that the press played a reflective rather than an adversarial role in influencing foreign policy during the Kennedy administration, this study makes no headlines: "Like sunlight focused through a magnifying glass, political forces reflected in the press lens may be powerful enough to start a fire, to put constraints on the president, or conversely, to assist him in the elimination of his opposition and the acquisition of power," but political factions actually determine how the issues are defined. Nor, in showing us the chief executive reacting to each stimulus by more intensive manipulation of the media, does it enhance Kennedy's reputation for leadership or the press's image as an independent political-moral force.

The good story struggling to escape the "social scientists" slips through in the interviews that enrich this account of the Kennedy crisis. Joe Alsop describes JFK at dinnertime the night he got word of the Cuban missiles—"It effectively started at my house, you know." Alsop's wife was distracted by gossip about what the President really wanted to do with women." JFK was "in a thick brown study," constantly taking Chip Bohlen off into corners; but Chip broke him out of his mood after dinner with a hypothetical conversation about the "at least even" chances of a nuclear war within ten years. And there are some fresh insights into the Saigon press corps during the Buddhist demonstrations leading up to the overthrow of Diem.UPI correspondent Neil Sheehan argues that he and the New York Times's David Halberstam, both anti-Diem as young reporters, saw the issues more clearly because they did not view them in the light of World War II. Veteran Keyes Beech, of the Chicago Daily News, replies that because he had seen a lot of dead people in World War II he was not sucked in by the "coldly cynical" Buddhist self-immolations.

If one moral image emerges from these two books, it is the biblical image of Jesus in the desert, tempted to turn stones into bread or to cast himself off a cliff to be snatched up by angels. The temptation of the press is to use power selfishly or frivolously. Jeff Greenfield, in the best essay in Responsibilities, warns that the downfall of the press may be its own arrogance. It seems to think it can "act with precisely the same motives as any other business, even if a marketing philosophy completely negates the 'mission' which supposedly justifies its behavior." But as long as journalists continue to censure journalistic arrogance in the light of the journalist's mission, we can hope that journalism will continue to do its important work. **WY**