

ing of him, "He has violated the law. Now he must pay the penalty." Although I suspect that what really irked Mrs. Forer was Dame Rebecca's disrespect for that self-effacing patriot, the ostensible ground of her criticism is the English writer's deplorable ignorance of law in supposing that for every offense there is a fixed and mandatory penalty. I am quite sure that Dame Rebecca supposed nothing of the sort: She was simply using a common English idiom.

Judge Forer feels that affluent, educated lawbreakers should go to prisons just as unpleasant for periods just as long as poor, black street criminals. This is undoubtedly true if what we want is retribution, and I do myself feel rather vindictive about embezzlers, securities swindlers, and corrupt officeholders. But as a general proposition the incarceration of such offenders is not necessary to the public safety: Most of them cease to be dangerous when they are exposed, though the stiff sentence imposed on Michele Sindona is likely to have a salutary effect on other high financiers who may be tempted to similar acts of fraud and larceny.

The fact is that Judge Forer seems not to know much about white-collar criminals, who probably do not appear in her courtroom very often. She accepts unproven and unprovable assertions with naive credulity. Here is a specimen:

Corporate and white collar crimes cause infinitely more havoc, misery and death than street crimes. These crimes cost at least \$400 billion a year. . . . One should include in this category of crimes which are largely unreported and rarely prosecuted a number of other white-dominated groups [sic] such as manufacturers of machinery which is unsafe and causes mutilation and death to countless people; the owners and managers of improperly constructed and operated nuclear plants; and violators of pure food and drug laws whose products cause cancer, physical and mental deformities, and other diseases in tens of thousands of people.

She cites no authority, not even Ralph Nader. If these crimes are largely unreported, how does she know that there are countless, or even tens of thousands of, victims? Wild rhetoric, which she would be too shrewd to believe if it were directed at street crime, she eagerly gulps down when it is directed at Caucasian businessmen.

It may be noted in passing that she quotes Gunnar Myrdal for the proposition that "Negroes [sic] do not commit white collar crimes." (Her use of "[sic]" apparently reflects the hyper-liberal notion that the word "Negro" is somehow a racial slur.) The observation was not entirely true even in 1944, for black swindlers were by no means unheard of. But Judge Forer ignores the fact that blacks have in the last couple of decades moved into white-collar crime. The Mafia is not an equal-opportunity employer, at least in its upper echelons, but there are black tycoons, who display considerable administrative and merchandising ability, in the drug, gambling, and prostitution industries. It may also be noted that she seems to know almost nothing about corporations (except that they are evil) and corporation law. "The law permits a corporate officer to reap profits from inside knowledge or from division of stock into different classes so long as there is 'disclosure.'" In the first place information which is disclosed ceases to be "inside." I infer that Judge Forer has managed to remain ignorant of the landmark decision in *SEC v. Texas Gulf Sulphur Co.*, which held that a corporate officer (or anyone else) who buys or sells securities on the strength of inside information violates Section 10(b) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and must at a minimum cough up all his profits and perhaps pay damages to every investor who lost money by buying or selling without knowledge of the inside information. The meaning, if any, of the second clause of her sentence, that huge profits can be made by dividing stock into different classes, is beyond me, although I have been teaching corporation law since 1957.

In short, whenever Judge Forer leaves the firm ground of her judicial experience, she is likely to indulge in liberal piffle of the most preposterous variety. One final example. She is outraged by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's use of the phrase "benign neglect," which she says is "like every oxymoron, as Webster's dictionary declares, 'pointedly foolish.'" Not my Webster, which gives as examples of the oxymoron two phrases which are far from foolish: "thunderous silence" and "sweet sorrow." I suspect that Mrs. Forer,

like most liberals (not, however, including Justice Brandeis, who said that "the right to be let alone is the right most valued by civilized men"), believes that it is sinful to leave other people to their own devices, when she obviously knows what is good for them so much better than they do.

All this said, most of *Criminals and Victims* is entertaining, not very heavyweight, reading, and some of it is instructive. I assume that the ordinary reader will not have much trouble sorting out the intelligent parts from the pishposh. □

JIMMY CARTER
IN SEARCH OF THE GREAT WHITE HOUSE
Betty Glad / Norton / \$19.95

Fred Barnes

John B. Anderson, the clean-fingernail presidential candidate, mused early in the fall campaign that Jimmy Carter would soon be "unmasked in all his glory as just another fellow who is using any tactic that he can to hang on to a political job. I think people will catch on that he's not the sweet, little, sanctimonious fellow that he's always wanted people to think he is. He's really a rough, tough, gut-fighting politician."


Well, don't get your hopes up, John. Carter has been unmasked before, with all his petty maneuverings and palpable inadequacies bared, and it has come to naught. He has slithered to safety every time, only to return with a new mask or persona and, to borrow Ronald Reagan's slogan, a new beginning. And for those willing to slog through 546 pages of Carteriana, Betty Glad will reward you with convincing documentation of this, along with a lode of piquant details (for starters, try Carter's recollection of meeting Otis Redding in the 1970s, though the black singer died in 1967). Her book is at once the most impressive of the dozen or so volumes written about Carter—none of the others was a tough act to follow—and a very depressing chronicle indeed.

How, after all, has Jimmy Carter managed to pull off so many escapes? Glad, a professor of political science at the University of Illinois, has a

Fred Barnes is a national political reporter for the Baltimore Sun.

compelling explanation. Carter, in her view, has "an almost uncanny ability to influence how people interpreted him." In 1976, both journalists, especially liberal ones, and voters proved to be susceptible to Carter's forceful personality, goody-goody morality, and uplifting but ambiguous campaign themes. Out of this they projected "fantasies" (her word) about what a great president Carter would be. Hunter Thompson, Tom Wicker, Anthony Lewis, and Norman Mailer were all successfully courted by Carter. Wicker assumed Carter shared his concern for the downtrodden, if only because he and Carter came from small Southern towns. "I feel reasonably sure that I can detect in Jimmy Carter what I long ago recognized in myself—an indelible class sense, ingrained in us while growing up in the South during the Depression, and fundamentally unaltered by later affluence," Wicker wrote. That's not an insight Wicker is likely to boast about these days. Nor is Mailer likely to recall fondly his conclusions after a summer 1976 visit to Plains: "His [Carter's] aura was hardly the same as other people's. Happiness came off him. It was as if he knew that God had given him intelligence and good work that would make sense, and so he could give his strength to the world and get new strength back."

Carter's stance toward opponents had a strong and favorable impact on voters in 1976 and again this year. "For liberals and Northerners, he was the moderate Southern alternative to Wallace—the man who could defeat the Alabaman on his turf and



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remove him as a factor in national politics," Glad writes. "For others Carter was the Southerner who could win and carry out some of the good things Wallace stood for, such as reforming the government in Washington, making it more responsive to the people." Against Teddy Kennedy this year, it was enough for Carter to present himself as a man of "unquestioned character" and unparalleled devotion to family. In the fall campaign, he and his image-makers are flogging the idea that he is brainy, prudent, and tireless. Guess who is dumb, reckless, and lazy!

What is most depressing in all this is the déjà vu aspect. Vague themes and blurred images were the hallmarks of Carter's gubernatorial campaigns in 1966 and 1970, with Carter running as a more-or-less liberal in the first race and as something of a conservative in the second. Glad spells out the dirty tricks and low-road rhetoric of the successful 1970 campaign, but these details are old hat. They were brought out in a famous *Harper's* piece in 1976 entitled "Jimmy Carter's Pathetic Lies." The article threatened to ruin Carter's presidential bid, but he squirmed free by cleverly making the author's credibility and motive the issue.

Just as his Georgia campaigns foreshadowed his presidential drive, so did his mediocre gubernatorial performance presage his White House years. There was a frenzied though meaningless push for government reorganization. There was the breakdown in relations with the legislature. And there were the wildly exaggerated claims. Carter, who purports to be the most successful president this century in getting Congress to vote his way, insisted he pulled more from the Georgia legislature than any other governor. When his reorganization measure passed in dramatically revised form, Carter said it was 95 percent of what he had sought. That statement was as far from reality as Carter's claim as president that the energy bill altered beyond recognition by Congress provided 60 percent of what he wanted.

So the Carter beat goes on, lies and all. Glad suggests that there are a series of untruths which Carter has been spouting over the years. His assertion, in a speech to the American Legion, that his father was a second lieutenant in World War I appears to be false, she says. Nor was Carter a finalist in the selection of Rhodes scholars in 1947 (he lost at the state level), 59th in his class academically at Annapolis (he was 60th),

the recipient of an endorsement in 1970 by Senator Richard Russell (Russell vigorously denied it), or heir to a Georgia "plantation" (modest farm is more like it).

For all the clarifying of the Carter record, Glad makes a few minor mistakes of her own. Richard Moe, not Robert Moe, is Vice President Mondale's chief aide. James Fallows

becomes Robert Fallows in the source notes. Eleanor Clift is not a *Time* magazine reporter from the South; she is from New York and covers Carter for *Newsweek*. And Greg Schneiders, the former White House aide, did not work for Carter as governor. More serious is Glad's reliance on the silliest and most fawning book about Carter, *How*

Jimmy Won by Kandy Stroud, for insights on Carter and his presidential campaign. Better she should have turned to *Dasher* by James Wooten, the best Carter book next to hers. Wooten depicts a Snopesian Carter who is, above all, a hypocrite. Glad leaves one with a stronger word in mind to encapsulate Carter—fraud. But a successful fraud. □

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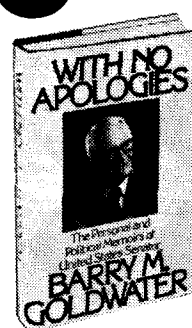
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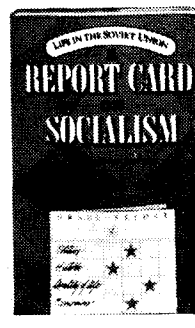
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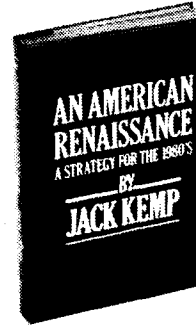
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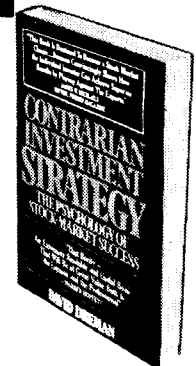
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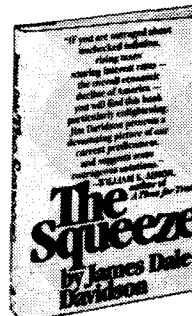
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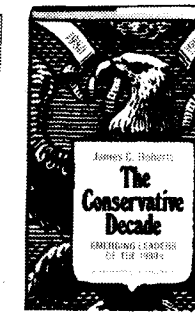
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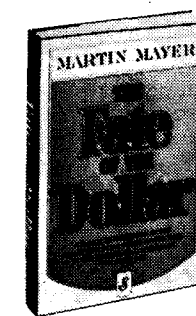
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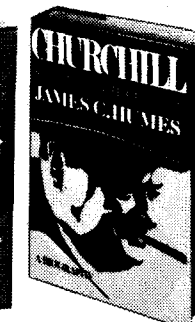
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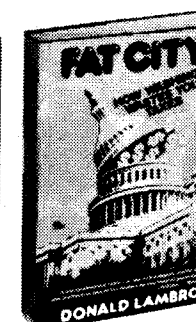
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Mark T. Lilla

If reading the reviews and articles in *Dissent* or the *New York Review* may be likened, at times, to wading in shallow and rather muddy waters, then finding a piece by Michael Walzer in one of these publications is like stepping off a sandbar. On those occasions when I have unexpectedly found myself in these deeper waters, I have had to regain my footing and start all over again, only slower and with more care. I looked forward, then, to the challenge of reading his new collection of essays, most of which were originally printed in the aforementioned journals, and I have not been disappointed. Walzer is unquestionably a man of the (old) American Left, but he is one of the very best it has produced; he is a careful and thoughtful scholar, and heterodox enough to avoid being

Mark T. Lilla is Assistant Editor of the Public Interest.

strident or humorless. The reader may not share his "radical principles" (as I do not), but he will surely profit by reading them expressed so well.

I am enthusiastic about the book because it drove home a point that was becoming more and more evident to me: It has become much easier to be a conservative intellectual. This is not to suggest that the ideas of the Left are widely held in disrepute, or that *The American Spectator* is selling out in newsstands across the country, but in intellectual circles where momentum often matters more than movement it is clear that the tide is turning and that a great number of creative and interesting political minds (both young and not so young) have been repelled by the Left. (Whether they are willing to be labelled conservative or neoconservative is another, and less important, matter.) The virtue of those who were instrumental in turning the tide, and who are now in their salad days, is that they were a product of a reaction

against an Old Left which was tough and intellectually rigorous, a Left which has all but disappeared in the intellectual diaspora that followed the eruption of the New Left in the late 1960s.

Younger conservative (or non-left) thinkers are less fortunate than older ones. Rather than having a worthy and august opponent in the Left, they are faced with an odd blend of esoteric Marxist scholasticism, "community organizing," California narcissism, innumerable "rights" groups, and the sort of confused counterculture (no longer so counter) that can be found on contemporary television and in Madison Avenue advertising. It becomes easy, as the last sentence makes evident, for these developments to blend into a *gestalt* which is often carelessly labelled "liberalism" or "modernism" and then quickly rejected. This reaction is understandable and, when paired with a good sense of humor, may be indispensable to surviving our times, but I don't see how it alone can produce the sort of minds and ideas we so desperately need. In one of his novels Walker Percy says there is nothing more dangerous than a Georgia Freudian; our problem is that the country is full of New Jersey Marxists and Missouri Marcusiens. The Left has become ubiquitous, but half-witted.

In Walzer the reader will finally find a worthy and challenging opponent

on the Left, one who should be read, not only because he puts his case well, but because he shares many of the concerns about the state of contemporary society that have been voiced recently by neoconservatives. Walzer here uses many surprising words, and uses them seriously: civility, republican virtue, citizenship, and patriotism. He is concerned, particularly in his later essays, with the damage that unfettered liberalism may have wrought on our culture. In the introduction he writes that many examples of liberation

inspire a bleak vision. I imagine a human being thoroughly divorced, freed of parents, spouse, and children, watching pornographic performances in some dark theater, joining (it may be his only membership) this or that odd cult, which he will probably leave in a month or two for another still odder. Is this a liberated human being?

As his writing matured, Walzer also became a vocal and effective critic of the New Left. He is sympathetic with many of its aims, but pointedly denies that any meaningful political action will come out of the barrel of a gun or that police officers are pigs, and during the late sixties and early seventies desperately tried to inject realism and civility into the "movement." To quote: "... the counterculture of the sixties was so much a matter of the head: it denied the deepest intimations of our political experience"; or "The prevailing tendency (among liberals too) has been to grant a kind of *carte blanche* to any 'oppressed' group whose militants adopt a radical rhetoric, as if there were no principles by which their particular demands might be judged." And, as gently as possible, he criticizes the "pastoral retreat" of the New Left from active, broad-based politics to self-serving community action groups and other disjointed populist causes.

If many of his concerns and criticisms are attractive, why is Walzer co-editor of *Dissent* rather than a writer for *Commentary*? Those who know Walzer and his writing may be amused by the suggestion, but for those who are unfamiliar with him it should be made clear how these common concerns can lead to radically different conclusions. Although this is a book of essays written over two decades, not a tightly written theoretical work, it is clear that his conclusions share a common over-emphasis on the importance of politics in everyday life and a permanent attraction to the socialist dream.

Walzer insists that the culprits who

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