

journalism in which precision is never divorced from knowledge. This tradition ran into an existential trap with the arrival of Joseph Goebbels on the German publishing scene: as we remember, several years of welding the sense of precision to the most vicious mythomania ensued—and the rest is history.

Periodicals like *Criticon* contribute immensely to erasing these sorrowful

memories from humanity's awareness. Writing about the press in Bundesrepublik, *Criticon's* commentator observes: "The freedom of the press [is] a fearfully preserved privilege of the left-liberal social caste. Nobody has more painfully experienced his privilege than the conservatives."

As with all sores, it is comforting to know that one's afflictions are universal. □

bon-vivant, when asked about child-molesting, asserts in an interview:

"What happens with free accord can be hardly called corrupt. As for what is a minor, my God, adolescents are going into puberty at 9, 10, 11 . . . I see nothing wrong with willing relationships between men and boys . . ."

He gets unexpected support from the Sunday family magazine *Parade* in which, true to its old counseling traditions, we read of late:

"If you take your child [who exhibits homosexual tendencies] to a psychiatrist or psychologist, choose one who is gay or specializes in counseling gays . . ."

Liberal Culture

Publishers

E.P. Dutton Co., a New York publishing house in business since 1852, has a long list of pro-communist and radical books on its record. Of late, the firm has decided to shed its rigid, doctrinaire, inhuman, overpoliticized image and assume a more relaxed posture, in keeping with the Liberal Culture's triumphs during the last decade. A representative item: *The End Product: The Last Taboo*—a treatise about excrement—is described by the publishers as "the perfect book for the bathroom." It carries an introduction by Abby Rockefeller, David Rockefeller's daughter, a celebrated authority on the subject. The *Washington Post* informs: "*End Product's* dust jacket shows an enamel cornucopia, a toilet overflowing with fresh vegetables and fruits. The jacket makes this point: excrement and nourishment are really the same thing."

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William Morrow Co., a younger and more enterprising company, also Dr. William Kunstler's (see Moral Leaders) publisher, has brought out *Sex Without Shame* by a Dr. Alayne Yates, a pediatrician and psychiatrist from Los Angeles. Dr. Yates strongly, even insistently, recommends masturbation for children from the first year of their existence, sexual initiation of toddlers, encouraging sexual activities in pre-school kids, parental and sibling incest as sources of joy and felicity. But liberal publishers

are not the only ones who seem to adore Dr. Yates, so do liberal journalists. A nationally syndicated one has interviewed her, and reports that she knows "a 4-year-old boy who had intercourse with a 6-year-old girl and neither seemed damaged by it," dutifully conveying this brilliant research to the millions of readers. How Dr. Yates knows what a woman will feel at the age of 30 by observing her at the age of six remains a matter of her own scientific standards. Even harder to understand is what she means by the word "damage." But the portrait of Dr. Yates, adorning her interview in the lib-cultural newspapers, discloses a sort of glimmer in her eyes which her colleagues, other psychiatrists, might find disturbing.

Gurus

Mr. Gore Vidal, famous author and

Moral Leaders

New Times, a libcultural organ, reports, with approbatory relish, on an idyllic scene from the life of Dr. William Kunstler, the professional conscience of America and the focal point of pro-communist emotions:

"He was sitting at home in his Gay Street brownstone, feeding his 14-month-old daughter, Sarah. He had been improvising a dinnertime story. 'Then the little girl did fellatio upon the lion,' he said, spooning more baby food into Sarah's mouth."

Polemics & Exchanges

The Fallibility of Meaning Well

by John Hastings

The embarrassment of Ms. Vanessa Redgrave's appearance at this year's Academy Awards was but one more instance of the muddle-headed pseudo-politico-ideological blubber to

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which we have been subjected for too many years. The tolerance Americans have for this kind of thing would seem to suggest that the half-baked is excusable if it's "well-meaning." Which is to say: ignorance is not merely acceptable but perhaps even to be praised if its heart has an ardent beat.

The fact that this form of public self-humiliation is far from new does nothing

to relieve its tiresomeness. One may ask, should it be tolerated?—and one can only, wearily, acknowledge that, as the price of “free speech” (which cannot be withheld even from certified morons), it should. That it should not be rebutted is another matter. And that it has not been rebutted with much effectiveness is but one more. One finds oneself burning to point out that Israel is still a tiny nation fighting for survival against tremendously powerful adversaries, of which the U.S.S.R. is merely the most powerful, and that the Palestinian cause has, say what you will, been converted into a weapon of annihilation against that small and vulnerable state. But such is probably fruitless effort. We would do better to spend the time improving our understanding of the international political circumambience in which so disheartening a spectacle as Ms. Redgrave’s is possible.

The crucible dates back many years even before Ms. Lillian Hellman, but Ms. Hellman would seem to have become the archetype for our time of this genre of rigidly pro-leftist partisanship. She was the first in a succession of female activists that has included, among many others such as Joan Baez and Shirley MacLaine, Jane Fonda and Ms. Redgrave—the ladies who could always see the horrors on one side but suddenly turned astigmatic when horrors turned up on the other. Soweto visible but never Gulag, McCarthy but never Stalin, Nixon but never Hiss, tiger cages in Saigon but never the decimation of village leaders ordered and committed by Hanoi and the Vietcong, napalm dropped on babies by American fliers over Vietnam but never hunger-and-death forced marches conducted by North Vietnamese conquerors, Watergate but never the Symbionese Liberation Front, and now, supposedly, “Zionist hoodlums” and not the PLO massacre of the innocents in a bus in Israel. This steely-stony one-track partisanship is more vicious than it-all-depends-whose-ox-is-being-gored dishonesty: it is intellectual travesty, moral bankruptcy and bone-deep philosophical self-perjury.

Think back to Lillian Hellman’s apologetics for the infamous Moscow Trials of the ’30s, her support of the Communist-controlled international Waldorf conference of ’49, her untiring efforts to exculpate “the Hollywood Ten” while scorning even to mention, much less be appalled by, the crimes of the totalitarian regime defended and promoted by the “ten.” But what would seem to typify Ms. Hellman’s intellectual integrity was her play, “The Searching Wind,” which some will remember from its brief run on Broadway in the early days of WWII. The principal message of it was that the rise of Fascism and Nazism was chiefly the fault of corrupt upper-class Americans in Europe. When one’s frame of mind is so rigidly doctrinaire it is perhaps no surprise that, with the exposure of one’s previous political statements as

fallacious, one would still continue to refuse to admit one was wrong. A trail has been blazed which was to be assiduously followed down the ensuing years by the sorority of which Ms. Lillian Hellman has been so liberally befogged a house mother.

A recently published posthumous book by Hannah Arendt bewails the prevalent absence in our society of creative thinking. Faced with the ilk of callow and narrowly partisan sententiousness, one can only echo the Arendt lament for our continuing ratiocinative failures by posing the question: Is it too much to ask of those who have reached prominence in public life to first take the trouble to inform themselves of the truth of what they would tell us and above all have the honesty to voice the whole truth? □

Civility in *The New Republic* and Logic that Shines from the *Washington Star*

A letter was recently sent to *The New Republic* magazine protesting a sentence in an article by Mr. Henry Fairlie, a distinguished English emigré. Mr. Fairlie stated that American conservatives, who by nature should have developed aristocratic instincts, turned out rather to be hypocritical populists, while American liberals, who for so long claimed to represent the soul of the people, wound up with a variety of elitist proclivities in their character. To make it clearer, Mr. Fairlie sketched a list of presently prominent neo-conservatives, and passed a judgment: “But these are honorable men.” As both conjunction and preposition, *but* is used here to assert that conservatives are, as a rule, dishonorable men with some exceptions. This assertion was protested in a letter. The letter was never printed.

There is a peculiar logic that regulates the use of the word *conservative* in the inclement environment of today’s media. Not long ago a *Washington Star* book reviewer, wishing to express disapproval

of Paul Johnson’s *Enemies of Society*, wrote:

“The pillars [of our civilization] he [Johnson] says are a brief in moral absolutes: the notion that . . . violence is always wrong; democracy as the least evil form of government; the rule of law; the importance of the individual . . . a healthy middle class; political and economic freedom; exactness in language; the trustworthiness of science; and, finally, the ceaseless pursuit of truth. All this may sound like pretty conservative stuff, but Johnson cannot be so easily categorized: he was the editor of the British liberal weekly *The New Statesman* . . . and he doesn’t fit into any of the traditional right-wing molds.”

Pretty conservative stuff indeed, no one would deny that. If not with political fortunes, the conservatives these days at least seem to be blessed with brilliant critics. □