

this impulse today than the advocates of liberation theology and those leaders of the World Council of Churches who bestowed blessings—and money—upon the black butchers of Rhodesia? Progressive as it may be, millennialism forms a volatile and potentially destructive strain within Christianity.

Robert Nisbet longs to bolster Americans' sagging confidence in the idea of progress. But should we not think twice before undertaking this task? Without siding with the no-growth advocates one can justifiably argue that the historic Western commitment to the idea of progress deserves a bit of chastening. The hungry search for knowledge does not necessarily bring beneficence, especially when it strips man of his sense of awe before the mysteries of the cosmos. When cast in the form of continual technological innovation, progress brings disruption and confusion, and an overriding emphasis upon economic growth encourages crass materialism. Since the onset of the industrial era the quest for progress has too often destroyed man's respect for the natural world, tied him to machines, and promoted a geographical and social

mobility that has disparaged tradition, gutted settled communities, and cut man adrift to wander through a world of atomistic individualism. Allen Tate, Donald Davidson and the other Southerners who wrote *I'll Take My Stand* fifty years ago realized all this, and their symposium remains one of the best guides to the traditionalist quarrel with the idea of progress. To question this idea does not necessarily indicate a desire to destroy Western civilization; indeed, only through such questioning can one adequately conserve the best of the past, enjoy the full fruits of the present, and lay a solid foundation upon which to build the future.

Despite my reservations, Robert Nisbet has performed a valuable service in charting the history of the idea of progress and in adumbrating what he thinks its demise will mean. The debate stimulated by such a thoughtful and intelligent book will not solve the problems that beset our society, but it will help us to approach those problems with greater clarity and insight and thus prevent us from lurching blindly into the future. □

The New York Times's Game of Colors

Harrison E. Salisbury: *Without Fear or Favor: An Uncompromising Look at the New York Times*; Times Books; New York.

by Lev Navrozov

Like any other social group, the *New York Times* staff (I mean those responsible for the final decision-making, of course) has social interests of its own which may or may not coincide with those of the American people as a whole,

Mr. Navrozov is currently finishing a book on the New York Times.

not to mention those of the nontotalitarian world. To conceal any possible discrepancy and pretend to speak always in the best interests of the United States or the West, the *Times*, like a chameleon, adopts whatever coloration seems appropriate.

Until the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939, the *Times's* Walter Duranty extolled Stalin's Russia. In fact, Stalin personally praised Mr. Duranty—not for his pro-Soviet stand, but for his purely Stalinist position. When Stalin executed the old Bolsheviks, Duranty duly described the victims as Gestapo agents who deserved whatever they got. Harri-

son Salisbury defines Duranty as an "eccentric conservative." Yes, being conservative was the *coloring* which he assumed, chameleonlike, because, except for the period between 1966 and 1975, it was important for the *New York Times* to be regarded as "a little on the conservative side," certainly not left-wing. But in his reports to the *New York Times* from Moscow, the conservative Duranty was a consistent and enthusiastic Stalinist. Thus, on the one hand, we have the social interests of the *New York Times*, which prompted it to accept Stalin's view of Stalin's regime (until 1939); on the other hand, we have the corporate interests of the *New York Times* as an institution which has always coveted a monopoly of cultural, hence political, power. Duranty was employed precisely because he could pose as a conservative, albeit a somewhat eccentric one, thus enhancing the credibility of the *New York Times* and widening its political base to include conservatives as well. After all, if Stalin and his regime were as good—at least for the Russian people—as the conservative Duranty described them, why should an honest conservative deny U.S. government recognition to Stalin's regime?

Between 1966 and 1975 it was more advantageous for the *New York Times*, for the sake of its corporate interests, to assume a liberal coloration—certainly nonconservative—and the *Times* vied with *Rolling Stone* in its leftward dash. What will be the best coloring for the 1980's? If the *New York Times* persists in its 60's and 70's coloring, it will destroy its monopoly of cultural and political power, because its corporate interests now demand a new coloring. The chameleon would destroy itself if it still looked red against a background which had turned green. Thus the *New York Times* is changing color again.

To display this new coloring is the real *raison d'être* of Harrison Salisbury's book. This does not mean that the *Times* has already assumed the full

intensity of the new coloration. But let us recall that Mr. Salisbury has always been the most chameleonic of the *Times's* editors. He was the first to jump on the left-wing bandwagon of the 60's, and he has now changed his coloring so quickly and drastically that it renders the observer dizzy and breathless. I have no doubt that the *New York Times* will follow his lead. The Soviet threat, which the *New York Times* has fantasized into a "Soviet-American friendship," will get worse with every passing year. And the public mood will change accordingly, no matter what the *New York Times* would like to do to stop this. Some events are so stark and obvious that even the *Times* cannot prevent their impact on the American population at large. Mr. Salisbury did not understand this at the time of our 1975 debate on television. Now he does.

Mr. Salisbury describes what he calls the "top echelon of the *Times*," which determined the political orientation of the institution as of 1971 (although Mr. Salisbury begins with several earlier decision-makers, evidently in order to demonstrate an unbroken tradition). Here are Mr. Salisbury's descriptions:

Turner Catledge—"His Ole Miss classmate had been John Stennis, as stalwart a hawk and military proponent as was to be found in the U.S. Senate." Once, McCarthy was accused of assigning guilt by contiguity. Now Mr. Salisbury proudly assigns conservative credentials by contiguity. Surely Catledge was conservative if his classmate was John Stennis.

Clifton Daniel—For God's sake, his father-in-law was President Truman, and "his political persuasions were close to those of his father-in-law."

Arthur Hays Sulzberger—He "warmly backed Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956," writes Mr. Salisbury enthusiastically. And Eisenhower advocated a roll-back policy vis-à-vis the Soviet regime, not just containment.

James Reston—"Scotty Reston was

an essentially conservative man who grew steadily more conservative as the years passed."

"Max Frankel . . . consciously modeled himself on Reston." "The same could be said of managing editor Rosenthal, who had emerged as the most conservative editor on the paper."

But nothing is perfect—or at least nothing is perfectly conservative—not even at the *New York Times*.

There was one major *Times* editor who was outspoken and vigorous in his opposition to the Vietnam War and to American policy in Indochina as carried out by Presidents Johnson and Nixon.

So there was *one* such editor. A black sheep. A rotten apple. An oddball. Who was that terrible maverick?

This was John Oakes, fifty-eight years old in March 1971, director of the editorial page . . .

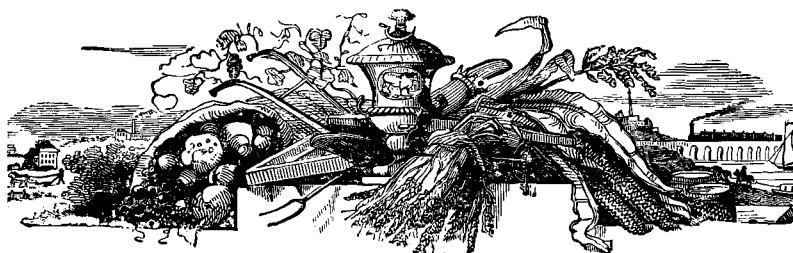
Surely we can assume that *he*, at least, was not a conservative. Oh, but he was, according to Salisbury: "Oakes was a member of X-2, the counterintelligence group of OSS, and among his colleagues was . . . James Angleton . . . who ultimately headed the counterintelligence branch of the CIA." However, from 1966 to 1975 the CIA was, as an institution *in toto*, as antidefense as the *New York Times*, and it is difficult to say which of them did more damage to the country. But Mr. Salisbury still banks on the good-old-days conservative credentials of the CIA. Also, we learn

that "Oakes had declared his total agreement . . . with Rosenthal's worry over what he perceived as the paper's trend to the left politically." Pinkos on the *Times*? Said Oakes: "I would fire some of those bastards." If Rosenthal was the most conservative editor, Oakes was the mostest. So what was wrong with this archconservative?

Oakes was a painfully honest, painfully principled man. There was no one more upright on the *Times* than Oakes but there was no one so totally lacking in humor. Oakes was dedicated to his opposition to the Vietnam war, dedicated in his general hostility to Richard Nixon . . .

I suppose Oakes was kept on the *New York Times* out of charity: the most conservative conservative, yet with a loose screw up there. To oppose the Vietnam War! It was simply a streak of madness in this dyed-in-the-wool conservative.

Mr. Salisbury drops references and allusions to the conservatism of the "top echelon of the *Times*" throughout the book. "Walter Sullivan, the *Times* science specialist, went to Yale with James Angleton," and "Sullivan, McGeorge Bundy and Angleton were on the board of the *Yale Literary Magazine* together, Sullivan and Bundy being literary conservatives and Angleton the radical." Abe Rosenthal "came in later days to describe himself as a 'bleeding-heart' conservative . . . sour on 'the liberal camp.' Rosenthal's close friend William F. Buckley, Jr., founder with Rosenthal of an eight-man marching-



and-chowder society . . . spoke of Rosenthal with awe as a 'terrific anti-Communist.'

So William F. Buckley, Jr. was overawed. Is this why his magazine became anticommunist too? "Richard Clurman, another friend and club member, felt that Abe's political roots lay in the cold war." A real anticommunist cold warrior at the helm of the *New York Times*. But who was more rigorously anticommunist, the *New York Times* or Joseph McCarthy? Mr. Salisbury cites a letter Arthur Sulzberger wrote to General Lucius D. Clay in the late 40's:

I asked my associates yesterday what their views would be if we suddenly found ourselves at war with Russia. They agreed instantly that all of these persons [communists or former communists], plus those who were even suspect, would be out. Then I asked them if a state of peace existed now.

Of course it did not. The Soviet regime eventually engineered the Berlin blockade, and later, North Vietnam's conquest of South Vietnam and Cambodia—hardly a state of peace. Sulzberger was right!

The line which Arthur Sulzberger drew in the letter to Clay and the position taken in the editorial 'We have a Right to Know' [i.e., to know who on the *New York Times* was once a member of the American Communist Party] did not differ greatly from the expressed attitude of the Eastland committee. Both positions were vigorously anti-Communist but while the Eastland committee and McCarthy sought to sow general distrust and hatred of the press, Arthur Sulzberger was fighting to preserve the press and protect it against contamination [by the communists]. He expected his editors to guard vigilantly against tainting of the news . . .

So Sulzberger was a McCarthy (or an Eastland) of the press, so to speak, fighting within the press against communist contamination and guarding vigilantly

against communist tainting of the news.

How will Mr. Salisbury and the *New York Times* really change now that he has announced that it has always been so conservative, prodefense and anti-communist as to awe even William F. Buckley, Jr.? We can get a hint from Mr. Salisbury's article, "A Boon for the KGB" (*New York Times*, January 31, 1980). According to Mr. Salisbury, the "whole Soviet economic system might simply collapse." What could possibly make that happen? According to Mr. Salisbury, the Olympics would bring about this terrible destruction of the Soviet regime, and President Carter

"The *Times* is a great newspaper—a national treasure . . ."

—*New York Magazine*

prevented it by his boycott:

What dynamite items the Olympics would introduce into Soviet culture probably will never be known if, as President Carter wishes, the boycott succeeds.

This is why the U.S. boycott of the Olympics is a cause for rejoicing among Soviet secret police—it is a "boon for the KGB." By the same token, it can be claimed that détente, SALT, the sale of technology to the Soviet military machine, American unilateral disarmament, and unopposed Soviet conquests have all been detrimental to the Soviet regime: it is odd how the latter has survived.

The question is: If the Olympics were dynamite for the Soviet regime, while the boycott was a boon for the KGB, why did the Soviet rulers struggle for Moscow to be the site of the 1980 Olympics, and why were they protesting the boycott so fiercely? The only explanation is that they forgot to consult Mr. Salisbury as to what might dynamite their regime. In other words, Mr. Salisbury and his newspaper are still pursuing the same goals as in the 60's and 70's; only their coloration is different. In 1980 Mr. Salis-

bury argues against any tough American moves in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan:

There is, we should understand, a flip side to American policy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. There is a hawk faction in the Soviet Union just as in the United States. Each tough Carter move will evoke a tough one within the Soviet Union.

Thus speaks the conservative Mr. Salisbury in his conservative newspaper in 1980. But didn't we hear exactly the same argument from 1966 to '75 from the liberal Mr. Salisbury and his liberal newspaper? Surely all Soviet aggression

in those days was also explained as a response to American toughness. Should the United States surrender today, the conservative Mr. Salisbury would explain that the act of surrender was too tough, and hence the Soviet rulers have to be tough in response.

What is the rest of the book like and why is it subtitled "An Uncompromising Look at the *New York Times*"? When a courtier of Nicholas I of Russia was asked what he thought of His Majesty's Russia (where serfdom still flourished), the courtier first maintained that he was not born to be a flatterer or time-server, that his look at His Majesty's Russia would be uncompromising, that he was wont to speak the truth without fear or favor, no matter how unpleasant to His Majesty it might be. "Your Majesty," the courtier finally said, "the past of Russia is glorious, the present is magnificent, and the future surpasses any human notion." Substitute "*New York Times*" for "Russia" and you have Mr. Salisbury's uncompromising look at the *New York Times*. No, not a single compromise—the unvarnished, unbiased truth:

The *Times* [as of 1971] was by every

objective criterion the most thorough, most complete, most responsible newspaper that time, money, talent and technology in the second half of the twentieth century had been able to produce.

As I studied Mr. Salisbury's book, I found only one accusation that he failed to hurl in the face of the *New York Times*: that all the female employees are the most beautiful women on earth, while the men constitute the greatest assemblage of cool elegance ever gathered.

Like all experienced flatterers, Mr. Salisbury has created a cloying fantasy and called it an "uncompromising look" at the object of his adulation. The intermittent references to reality, such as the publishing of the Pentagon papers or Watergate, are intended only to illustrate how the conservative upper echelon of the *Times* won genuine freedom of the press (for the *Times*, that is, the American people, of course). Mr. Salisbury fantasizes that this, the most perfect of newspapers, has always been, apart from its other virtues, strictly conservative, vigilantly anticommunist, tirelessly prodefense. For this is the public mood these days, and so Mr. Salisbury projects his mimicry into the past of the *New York Times*.

Another noticeable aspect is Mr. Salisbury's announcement that a "New American Revolution" has taken place, as a result of which the *New York Times* (not the press, mind you, but the *New York Times*) has become the "fourth coeval branch of government." Indeed, the *New York Times* rules the country to a greater extent than either the president or Congress. If New York Times, Inc. does not like the president, the president will go. Those who do not identify New York Times, Inc. with the American people should heed this aspect of Mr. Salisbury's tribute to his beloved institution.

Characteristically, *Without Fear or Favor* resembles an anniversary album.

On the left-side front page we read:

To Give the News Impartially without Fear or Favor Regardless of any Party, Sect or Interest Involved.

—Adolph S. Ochs/1896

On the right-side page we read the dedication to the "only child of Adolph S. Ochs," including due mention of all the interrelated founding fathers, mothers, wives and in-laws. "Quintessentially," Salisbury explains in his preface to the book, "it [the story of the *New York Times*] is the story of . . . a struggle against what the poet Robert Bly once called the 'American system of hypocrisy,' the seamless belts of lies (as Bly put it, 'the ministers lie, the professors lie, the television lies, the priests lie')." Where did Mr. Bly's unique gift for truth-telling come from if everyone else lied? Obviously, its origin was not environmental, but genetic and defying all environment, from television to profes-

sors. According to Mr. Salisbury, the institution called the *New York Times* received the same unique ability at its inception. Its triumphs of truth-telling in a country (or a world?) of seamless belts of lies "flow out of the continuity of the *Times*, of its rebirth under Adolph S. Ochs." The preface duly ends with another variation on the same theme: in the world of the "BIGS, Big Government, Big Bureaucracy, Big Spying, Big Interests, Big Labor, Big Business," the *New York Times* is "carrying on the task as Mr. Ochs promised, 'without fear or favor.'" Curiously, Mr. Salisbury forgets that on the next page he boasts that the *New York Times* was (as of 1971) one of the 500 biggest American corporations. He repeats the founding father's behest throughout, and ends with the same, displaying the perseverance of those Soviet truth-seekers who explain that Lenin's pledge to make mankind free and happy is now brilliantly realized. □

Direct Clarity & Elliptical Subtlety

Louis Auchincloss: *The House of the Prophet*; Houghton Mifflin Co.; Boston.

Shirley Hazzard: *The Transit of Venus*; Viking Press; New York.

by Stephen L. Tanner

The title of Louis Auchincloss's *The House of the Prophet* derives from Matthew 13:57: "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country and in his own house." The prophet in this case, Felix Leitner, is not a religious man at all. He is a prophet of humanism and rationalism, an admirer of the late-18th century vision of human society

Dr. Tanner is professor of English at Brigham Young University.

run by reason and equity. As a distinguished lawyer, an influential author of books on constitutional law and international politics and a celebrated columnist, he has achieved prophetic stature by his apparently uncompromising quest for intellectual truth. His loyalty to truth takes precedence over loyalty to any person, group or organization with whom he might associate. Such commitment to rational truth, so admired by the public, often bewilders, unsettles and antagonizes those close to him.

As Felix reaches the end of his career, his long-time assistant and protégé, Roger Cutter, gathers material for a biography. The novel consists of this material, which includes, in addition to Roger's own recollections, those of Felix, his two wives, a law partner, an