

who will champion peace (i.e., disarmament) rather than nuclear buildup, and who will work for economic justice (i.e., socialism) rather than free-market inequality. Certainly, no sensible person would deny churches or pious individuals the right to bring their convictions to bear on contemporary political issues. As Peter Hinchliff, a chaplain at Balliol College, argues in *Holiness and Politics*, Christians in democracies cannot conscientiously ignore politics by merely "submitting to the powers that be." As office holders and as voters, they must do their part to insure humane government. What is distressing about the current clerical emphasis on political commitment, however, is that it is often a substitute for, rather than an expression of, religious faith. The ministers chanting the political slogans and leading the demonstrations in Christ's name do not seem particularly disturbed by the fact that few in the throng that they have joined believe in or obey Him. Something is gravely wrong when churches thus respond to widespread scriptural illiteracy, declining worship, and moral and social disintegration by calling primarily for more political involvement. The only possible result of such a strategy will be not holiness and politics but rather a radical and degraded politics *instead* of holiness.

To his credit Mr. Hinchliff recognizes utopianism as contrary to Christian doctrine, finds liberation theology unconvincing, and warns against allowing "the pursuit of a political programme . . . to become an absolute good." Nonetheless, by refusing to take a firm stand on Christian doctrine, he renders this warning meaningless. What is absolute good to a chaplain who can passively observe that some theologians have "seriously questioned" the very notion of eternal salvation without un-

equivocally asserting his own position on the issue? Languidly acquiescing to "the process of modern secularization," Mr. Hinchliff seems far more intent upon persuading Christians to enter politics than upon converting those in politics to Christianity. Though he dismisses as "too simple" the belief that rejection of traditional Christian doctrine leads to adoption of leftist ideology, his own sympathy with left-liberal dogmas appears to owe much to his theological nonchalance. While making it quite clear that he regards capitalist America as horrid, collectivist England as wonderful, African terrorist groups as worthy of church support, and Soviet Russia as perhaps not so bad as to be opposed with nuclear weaponry, he avoids taking sides on the most fundamental of creedal questions. When, in passing, he

declares that he is "closer" to those who believe in eternity than to those who do not, the reader cannot but recall King Agrippa's pathetic response to the Apostle Paul's testimony: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a



Christian." Unless the scriptural account is in error, Paul was not particularly comforted by the prospect of an almost-Christian shaping politics on the highest earthly levels. (BC) □

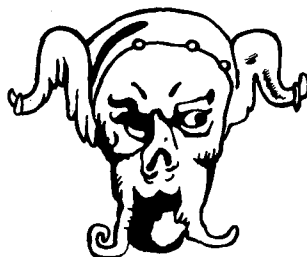
Mixed Drinks & False Faiths

William Kirk Kilpatrick: *Psychological Seduction*; Thomas Nelson; Nashville, TN.

Stephen T. Davis: *Logic and the Nature of God*; William B. Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, MI.

Nicholas Wolterstorff: *Until Justice and Peace Embrace*; William B. Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, MI.

To a world of parched souls, Jesus Christ offered the Water of Life. Unlike club soda, however, this Water is not a good mixer: in



order to refresh, it must be taken straight, and on the Rock. For centuries, men have attempted to concoct heady new "Christianity-and-" brews, but the disappointing result is always temporary intoxication, not lasting rejuvenation. Lately, one of the most popular cocktail-cum-medicinals among the semipious is Christianity-and-psychology. William Kilpatrick, who imbibed the mix for several years, has now gone on the wagon. In his intelligent and insightful little book, he explains in terms accessible to the layman why psychology is so attractive to the modern mind, why it fails so dismally, and why unadulterated Christianity better meets human needs. Because it is made of less weighty stuff than Christianity, psychology always rises to the top, like a layer of oil, whenever the two come together. Hence, everyone without a long straw gets only psychology out

of the combination, leaving him drunk yet still thirsty.

Stephen Davis's effort in *Logic and the Nature of God* is not so much one of recombination as it is of repackaging. By applying rigorous analysis to traditional doctrine, he seeks to give Christianity a clearer logical consistency and a "philosophically defensible" form. But since, as Dr. Davis concedes, the content of Christian belief is ultimately known through divine revelation and not through human syllogism, the new intellectual bottles are hardly an improvement over the old scriptural ones.

Nicholas Wolterstorff pours a few drams out of Scripture into his *Until Justice and Peace Embrace*, and the truths they contain are important: God is on the side of the poor, not the powerful, and profit-lust is a form of idolatry that leads to oppression. As too many desiccated materialists have forgotten, to be a capitalist first and a Christian second is not to be a Christian at all. But the few drops of sacred revelation Dr. Wolterstorff offers have been so diluted and perfidiously vitiated by the addition of leftist politics that they barely tinge the resultant liquor. After tipping a few at the bar of liberation theology, Dr. Wolterstorff has such blurred vision that the United States, where worship is freely expressed, and the rigidly atheistic Soviet Union are "almost indistinguishable from one another" and thus equally responsible for global suffering. His thinking, too, has become so clouded by indulgence that he blames the blight in Eastern Europe on, yes, *capitalism*, since true socialism has yet to emerge. Memory fails the besotted professor as he forgets that Jesus taught an individual righteousness impelling generosity but never sanctioned any "rights" justifying compulsory or violent wealth redistribution. His speech becomes slurred as he glides over terrorism as a

"struggle" against "unjust social structures." He falls onto the floor in D.T.'s when censuring Israel, not the Arabs and the PLO, for violating the vision of *Shalom* given in Jewish Scripture. And doctrinal caution fades into blank stupor as he urges believers to act "fundamentally the same way" as Marxists, oblivious to the fact

that Christian lambs have become mere belches when these lions have taken over. Indeed, although Dr. Wolterstorff concludes by inviting other Christians to join in the renewed devotion defined by his new synthesis, they must turn away: the cup he proffers is not a sacrament but a poison. (BC) □

WASTE OF MONEY

Cape Cod Babble

Thomas H. Cook: *Tabernacle*;
Houghton Mifflin; Boston.

In his last novel, *The Orchids*, Mr. Cook wrote about nazis. His latest production, *Tabernacle*, concerns itself with a group of people he evidently finds just as awful: the Mormons. A resident of Cape Cod, Mr. Cook obviously hasn't spent much more time with Mormons than he had with nazis, so his portrayal of them is even more superficial and inaccurate. He does know that Mormons once denied ordination to blacks, and he's about as horrified by that as by the Holocaust. He further knows that the Latter-day Saint Church takes doctrine and institutional discipline seriously, even excommunicating on occasion, and he finds that about as depressing as what has resulted from *Mein Kampf* as a message and from Auschwitz as its materialization.

Were Mr. Cook a devout Baptist or Catholic, we might suppose that he is opposed to the specific teachings of Joseph Smith and his successors. But his quarrel with the Mormon prophets is actually a repudiation of faith itself. Like the protesters who frequently show up bearing swastikas when conservative leaders, secular or religious, are speaking, Mr. Cook evidently suspects

that *all* order—moral and existential—is protofascist. His protagonist—a New York detective who has moved to Utah—believes only in "his life, all he had, and beyond which, he knew, there was nothing." This skeptical cop dislikes "the wholesome cleanliness" of Salt Lake City and longs for "a s[---] New York neighbor-



hood where everybody shot up, skinned their neighbor, and worked the streets like their own private crap game." Fighting his way through rampant fanaticism and official hypocrisy, he proves his antitranscendent goodness by being killed in the Mormon Tabernacle by the murderous Brigham Young University professor he's been trying to stop. With this revelatory conclusion, Mr. Cook, according to the dustcover, has reached "the dark heart of the Mormon faith." The book cautiously avoids speaking about any darkness of mind—mind you. □

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and said to me with a strange combination of casualness and bitterness, "That's where the Russians waited while we Poles were dying." So Orwell might have overrated the ability of a totalitarian state to repress that "revolt within the skull." Perhaps it is because although most people's grasp on reality is often weak, the harshness of life in Eastern Europe has given the citizens of those states a stronger sense of the real world (and here is the paradox) than that of much of the intellectual class in the West.

But the key to it all is Orwell's "doublethink": "To know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies . . . above all, to apply the same process to the process itself—that was the ultimate subtlety: consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed. Even to understand the word 'doublethink' involved the use of doublethink." Orwell's assumption was that to produce this malfunctioning of the reasonable mind would require the efforts of an omnipotent, omnipresent, all-intrusive state. But in my extensive travels in the countries of the Warsaw Pact (admittedly long after both Orwell's and Stalin's death) I have encountered vulgar hypocrisy, obtuseness, embarrassment, lying in all its multifarious forms, and sustained bursts of honesty depending on the year and country. But I am not certain I have ever encountered doublethink. Where I encounter doublethink regularly is in the West, where large numbers of the intellectual, semi-intellectual, and pseudointellectual classes—totally uncoerced by party, state, or even public opinion but accomplishing feats of self-hypnosis—routinely give themselves over to monstrosities of doublethink. The ladies of Greenham Common, in England, have convinced themselves that if the West will only disarm, the lion will lie down with the lamb. The admirers of Jonathan Schell's *The Fate of the Earth* accept his judgment that a nuclear holocaust can be avoided only by some nebulously defined form of "world government" while a few hundred yards east of his office are the headquarters of the miserable remains of the most recent attempt at world government, the United Nations.

The predominant tone in American journalism today is persistently, if woozily, utopian. There are almost no survivors of the late Senator Jackson's school of cold-war liberalism. Nor, to be fair, are many newsmen directly under the influence of the "hard left," i.e., *The Nation* or the Socialist Workers Party or William Kunstler. Instead, with shining eyes, the media representatives look for a world without conflict, poverty, or hate, and take up a pose of contemptuous moral superiority toward those who tell them that the world is, in fact, a dangerous place, where the strong quite habitually take advantage of