

antideterrence, antinuclear protest movements, actions, propaganda, and initiatives. Facing the Soviet Union as we know it, those ideas and enterprises are one vociferous appeal for issuing a driver's license to someone who is armless, legless, and blind. □

Credit Where Due

In a recent *Time* article about widespread public hostility to the media, a former editor of the *Detroit Free Press* responded to conservative critics who allege that he and his colleagues distort the news to fit their liberal bias with a complaint of his own:

I find it particularly objectionable that none of our critics will give us credit for stupidity. To them, it is always a deliberate distortion.

Correction, please! We vehemently protest. We've spent five long years in fully acknowledging the mental capacities of liberal journalists. □

Madmen & Liars

Gary Deeb, a so-called TV "critic" for, among others, Gannett newspapers, formulated this "opinion" about the notorious ABC visual scam:

If there is one thing that's absolutely wonderful about *The Day After*, it's the possibility that it could be the first step in terrifying millions of people around the world into demanding an end to this nuclear madness.

Is he a dangerous simpleton or a simple liar? How does he want to present the movie to the millions in Leningrad, Murmansk, and Odessa, so that they will be smitten with video terror and so demand "an end" to whatever he thinks (to use the word loosely) should be demanded?

He is not alone in his efforts. The premier organ of American sleazo *gauchisme*, *The Nation*, links President Reagan to the ghost of old Joe Kennedy (the assassinated President's father) and concludes

in its editorial:

they share the same paranoia about the Soviet evil.

Paranoia? After what we know about 60,000,000 or more persons murdered in the Gulags and about all the other Soviet imperialist atrocities perpetrated

on neighboring nations? Did *The Nation's* editors diligently and obediently study psychology at those mental institutes around Moscow where the Soviet idea of psychiatry boils down to murdering human minds? Do they, by any chance, dream of putting their education to further domestic use? □

LIBERAL CULTURE

A Penny for Playboy's Thoughts

As is well known, people buy *Playboy* only for the interviews with Carter, Toynbee and William Buckley. However, when the editors of that periodical recently selected one Penny Baker as their 30th-anniversary Playmate, from among 7,000 eager contestants, they somehow neglected to ask Ms. Baker many questions except how fast she could remove the clothing obscuring the photographer's view of her physical boundaries. Fortunately, a columnist for the *Chicago Tribune* corrected this inexplicable oversight by ascertaining and publishing Ms. Baker's novel perspectives on morality, history, and aesthetics. In response to his question as to why she posed for the *Playboy* centerfold, she responded with subtle comparative casuistry:

I think it's really great what I did. I really like the pictures. I mean . . . I see gay magazines showing men nude on the cover—in full view. Really dirty stuff. So what I did is no big deal.

Countering the observation that 20 years ago most women would not have done such a thing, she displayed her firm grasp on *Playboy* historiography:

Gee, I wouldn't know about that. Twenty years ago I wasn't even born yet.

When the columnist boorishly pressed the issue, she explicated the interrelationship between mimesis and sexual ethics:

I think the photographs of me are really pretty. It's not like people are seeing me naked in person. They're seeing a photograph. That's different . . . So no problem.



Was Ms. Baker always possessed of such a keenly philosophic insight into her new profession? No, she admits that in high school, she "was shocked" by publications like *Playboy*: "I thought they were dirty." Since then, she has learned many things, including precise articulation:

I guess I matured or got wiser or however you want to put it.

As a final validation for her career decision, Ms. Baker invoked its ubiquitous popularity and explored the nuances of multiple personality:

Look, by this time there have been so many pictures of naked women in so many magazines . . . everyone has seen so many naked women! When I see the pictures of myself in *Playboy*, sometimes I don't even think it's me. Do you understand what I mean? There have been so many naked bodies, it might as well be somebody else's body.

By making this final piercing observation, Ms. Baker established her acumen as a new force in modern epistemology. She should be rewarded with the chair of philosophy of contemporary culture, preferably at some Ivy League site of learning and wisdom. □