

gives us an excellent short account of Franklin Roosevelt's deceptive tactics designed to involve the United States in World War II. I shall not discuss these, as our author's account resembles the more comprehensive treatment in Thomas Mahl's *Desperate Deception*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue. Unfortunately, he maintains that Roosevelt acted for "brave and far-sighted reasons between 1939 and 1941" (p. 17). He had to "escape the foreign policy handcuffs" (p. 72) in order to confront "the Nazi threat to civilization" (p. 17). Here Mr. Alterman casts his usual principles aside.

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Am I unfair to Mr. Alterman to criticize him for these remarks? After all, almost everyone except resolute revisionists makes an exception for World War II. But I have raised the criticism not to be mean—unfair readers will say not only to be mean—but to expose what seems to me the fundamental failing of Mr. Alterman's book. His ultimate commitment seems to be to democracy rather than to principled noninterventionism. Since the Nazi regime extended the boundaries of dictatorship in Europe,

was not intervention against it justified? If the American people mistakenly adhered to isolation, was it undemocratic to deceive them for their long-term well-being?

The foregoing, I freely acknowledge, is speculative: I may mistake Mr. Alterman's line of reasoning entirely. But, if I am right, he has made a crucial mistake. Once we allow that a president was right to deceive the American public in order to halt a threat to democracy, we have arrived back at Wilsonianism. Our author needs to take the message of his own excellent book more to heart in this instance. A closing note: readers should study Mr. Alterman's provocative remarks about American policy in the Mideast (pp. 140ff) and ignore his economic illiteracy about free trade (pp. 184–85). ♦

THE TYRANNY OF VALUES

*After Liberalism:
Mass Democracy in
the Managerial State*

PAUL EDWARD GOTTFRIED
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1999,
XIV + 185 PGS.

The key to Paul Gottfried's brilliant book may be found in note 44 of Chapter 4. Here he remarks: "This original

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Weberian notion [of a tyranny of values] is most fully developed in Carl Schmitt’s controversial essay *Die Tyrannei der Werte* [The Tyranny of Values]” (p. 161).

Professor Gottfried has long been a careful student, though not an uncritical disciple, of Carl Schmitt, a famous and controversial German political theorist. According to Schmitt, intellectuals today recoil from reality. Rather than base ethics on natural law, as the medievals had done, they exalt arbitrary values of their own into universal rules. Value, Schmitt contends, has its own logic: once someone elevates a particular value as preeminent, he will try to subordinate all else to it. Reality becomes quantitative: all other goods are reduced to units of the supposed

highest value. Schmitt, following a phrase he ascribes to Nicolai Hartmann, calls this process “The Tyranny of Values.” (Incidentally, Mr. Gottfried traces the phrase to Max Weber.)

Many readers, I fear, will have long since thrown up their hands in puzzlement. “What sort of murky metaphysics is this?” they will inquire. To my mind, there is justice in this response. It strikes me as unconvincing to argue that the mere use of the notion “value” entails all the dolorous consequences that Schmitt imagines. What if one value (or some set of values) really is objectively better than others? Schmitt refers to Hartmann and Max Scheler, who held just this position, but he does not refute their views. Why, further, does a value hierarchy have to involve reducing all values to units of a single value?

Fortunately for those constitutionally averse to metaphysics, I do not propose to go further in discussion of these matters. (Those who think that I have already said too much should keep their opinions to themselves.) Regardless of the philosophical accuracy of Schmitt’s analysis of value, he, and Mr. Gottfried following him, unerringly describe how many intellectuals in fact operate.

Left-wing intellectuals, our author claims, have a particular agenda that they wish to impose on everyone else. These intellectuals claim to continue the classical-liberal tradition, but in fact they strike at its heart.

Classical liberalism favored a strictly limited state: individuals are left largely to their own devices in their pursuit of



happiness. In these endeavors, persons of course rely on the principal engine of social cooperation, the free market. As Ludwig von Mises explained better than anyone else, the market functions best without state interference.

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This position was not to the liking of a group of philosophers who flourished at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Among these our author numbers T.H. Green, Bernard Bosanquet, and L.T. Hobhouse. These writers, Mr. Gottfried maintains, “took to task the ‘Manchester liberalism’ of the mid-nineteenth century, which they equated with commercial values and a night-watchman state...they demanded that the growing disjunction of the modern age between the individual and established authority must be overcome by the creation of a new synthesis between liberty and order” (p. 13).

“What has this got to do with the tyranny of values?” you might well ask. Patience: matters will soon be clear. These writers, Mr. Gottfried holds, did not themselves establish the main lines of the administrative tyranny that

followed. Rather, they provided the “window dressing” (p. 13) that enabled more radical thinkers to claim that they were true heirs of the classical liberals. They pioneered the tactic of undermining the liberal tradition by pretending to continue it.

The main lines of our author’s discussion of the new liberals seems to me eminently sound, but I think he is too hard on Bernard Bosanquet. His book *The Philosophical Theory of the State* deviates much less from classical liberalism than is commonly believed. (Here I suspect Mr. Gottfried has been too much influenced by Herbert Marcuse’s discussion near the end of *Reason and Revolution*.)

And Hobhouse, far from being an ally of Bosanquet, wrote a book assailing him. Perhaps, though, Mr. Gottfried can bring against me A.E. Taylor’s review in *Mind*, January 1920, of Hobhouse’s book, *The Metaphysical Theory of the State*. Like our author, Taylor, the greatest of all philosophical book reviewers, saw Bosanquet and Hobhouse as in essence similar. But all this is by the way.

Once alien ideas had been introduced into liberalism, the real process of destruction could commence. John Dewey, Herbert Croly, and other “progressives” endeavored to establish a scientific politics. “The work of Dewey’s friend Herbert Croly also illustrates the practice of hiding personal preferences behind ‘historical necessities’ and appeals to science. In the end he too reduced democracy to a set of procedural and administrative problems” (p. 59).

Here then is the long-promised connection with the “tyranny of values.” Modern pseudo-liberals and democrats believe in rule by an intellectual elite. Their values, just as Schmitt maintained, are held to be objectively true. As such, they must be imposed on the benighted masses.

How was this task to be accomplished? First, a welfare state had to be set up that made people dependent on the government for many of their needs, such as income during retirement and the provision of medical care. (Fortunately, government control of medicine is less extensive in the United States than in other Western countries.)

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Along with increased economic dependence goes ideological control. The dominant elite attempts to indoctrinate everyone in a “democratic religion.” “But it soon became apparent to [Arthur] Bestor and other liberals that a pragmatism combining experimental methods with value-relativism is only a ‘dissolvant’. It does not teach enough that is positive.... It is therefore necessary to propagate a militant democratic religion through public education” (p. 137).

The main lines of Mr. Gottfried’s argument here seem to me entirely right, but it is surprising that he cites Arthur Bestor in this connection. I should have thought that Bestor broke decisively with “progressive education” and called for a return to tradition.

An ideology must postulate enemies—another basic theme from Carl Schmitt. The enemies in the new disposition are all who doubt that human beings are plastic objects to be molded by the “democratic” elite. Thus, anyone who asserts that important cognitive differences between races exist must be expelled from polite society. Mr. Gottfried, describing certain critics of *The Bell Curve*, avers that “they perform a kind of liberal exorcism by attempting to drive their debating partners out of the community of respectable scholars” (p. 5). Our author writes not to endorse a particular stance on race but rather to note how ideological conformity is imposed.

Mr. Gottfried further supports his analysis with a detailed account of the French National Front. Critics of this party allege it is a racist group akin to the Nazis. What concerns our author is not to mount a defense of Jean-Marie LePen and his movement. Rather, he wishes to show how dissent from the views of the elite is artificially forced into categories, such as fascism, that then are perforce excluded from consideration. Mr. Gottfried protests against these tactics: “the National Front has not called for denying Jews their full rights as French citizens. It has not attacked them as racially alien, though it has engaged in ridicule of its

Jewish political opponents. It is therefore questionable whether the National Front should be compared to Nazi or Vichy leadership" (p. 114).

The key point here does not lie in the politics of a particular organization. Rather, Mr. Gottfried's analysis returns us to the main theme of his book, the tyranny of values. All who do not extend a full measure of sympathy to "victims" favored by the ruling elite are cast into darkness. Opponents of leftist ideology, we learn from Theodor

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Adorno's *The Authoritarian Personality*, are mentally ill. They must be controlled by a therapeutic state run by the modern liberals. Paul Gottfried's outstanding study gives far and away the best account available of the liberal intellectual elite.

I shall close with two nitpicking points—what else did you expect? However much I admire Mr. Gottfried's abilities, I do not think these include the power to elevate Wilhelm Röpke to the nobility. And even if he dislikes Bernard Bosanquet, he should

not have taken away eleven years from his life (p. 13). ♦

ECCLESIOLOGY AND THE STATE

*The Church Impotent: The
Feminization of Christianity*

LEON J. PODLES
SPENCE PUBLISHING COMPANY, 1999,
XVIII + 288 PGS.

Usually I review a book by getting into the swing of things at once. What is the book's central thesis? and (if possible) How is that thesis mistaken? are the questions that occupy me. But, faced with Mr. Podles's excellent study, I must confront a preliminary issue: why review this book in *The Mises Review*?

Prima facie, the case against doing so is strong. Mr. Podles argues from theological premises, and theology far exceeds my competence. He maintains that, since the Middle Ages and increasingly in modern times, the Christian Church has become "feminized." (Our author concerns himself principally, but by no means exclusively, with the Roman Catholic Church.) By this he means that men have, in large numbers, abandoned the church: among the laity, religion is largely a woman's affair.