

But the second caveat, and one upon which Caldwell spends a fair amount of time, is the rapidity with which the incomers are breeding, to the extent that one of these days, not so far off, “we” (whites) will be a minority in “our own” countries. Caldwell has the stats to hand; the declining birthrate of the Caucasians, the incredible fecundity of the immigrants, the poorest of them being the most fecund, of course. He dismisses comparisons with the U.S. and the speed with which Hispanics are outbreeding whites; this is less of a worry, he suggests, because Hispanics have cultural norms and values very similar to the white U.S. working class of 40 years ago and so the cultural challenge, the problem of assimilation, will be minimal. I don’t know if he’s right about this—you might argue that the Muslim incomers to Great Britain have values very similar to the British lower classes of 1,500 years ago, but I’m not sure where that leaves us.

Even without the breeding statistics, the rate of immigration at the moment suggests that a Muslim majority is possible in some European countries within the next 50 years. Keep your eyes on that flat, hyperindustrialized, rather desolate crescent of our continent from Lille and Metz in France, to the south, to Rotterdam in Holland and even Aarhus in Denmark in the north, where the proportion of Muslim people is already in the region of 30 percent, and rising by the week. That is where you will see the advent of Eurabia.

The arrival in Europe of hundreds of thousands of Muslims might still not be a problem were it not for the painstaking care with which the Western countries have ensured they pick the very worst, most dangerous Muslims to whom they will pay welfare benefits to and later, as a form of thanks, be blown to smithereens by. For this, you can thank the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees. The whole business has a fabulous logic to it: the people who flee the likes of Libya, Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and so on and claim asylum in the West are those who fear some form of retribution from the

Islamic hellholes from which they have fled. The reason these countries are ill-disposed toward them, however, is because, often, they are radical Islamists who wish the countries from which they fled to be even more ghastly than they are at present. They are not political agitators who want greater freedom of assembly at home, maybe a bit of proportional representation, trade union rights, etc.—they wish to establish autocratic Islamic theocracies and have demonstrated this commitment by murderous atrocities. Once in Britain—or France or Germany—they cannot be sent back because the law states that, if there is the risk they might be roughed up a bit upon their return, it is an infringement of their human rights and they must be given leave to stay.

There was a recent case in which a British court decided that a Libyan Islamist should be allowed to remain at large in Britain even though, the court accepted, he was probably associated with al-Qaeda, had already carried out acts of terrorism against Western targets, and would “probably” do the same sort of thing in Britain, as soon as he got his welfare check sorted out. But he could not be returned to Libya because the probability was that, Libya being Libya, he might not receive what you or I would consider fair and just judicial treatment, trial by his peers, right of appeal, and legal aid. This sort of case crops up pretty much every week. And every week it astounds the indigenous population. But there is, from our politicians, just a throwing up of the hands, a weary surrender.

It is this liberal weakness, Caldwell suggests, that will undo Europe in the end. He concludes that Islam may not prove assimilable to the West: “When an insecure, malleable, relativistic culture meets a culture that is anchored, confident and strengthened by common doctrines, it is generally the former that changes to suit the latter.” ■

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[*Kissinger: 1973, The Crucial Year*, Alistair Horne, Simon & Schuster, 457 pages]

Super K and the Perils of Power

By William B. Quandt

WHEN I FIRST LEARNED that the British historian Alistair Horne was writing a book on Henry Kissinger, I wondered if anyone had the appetite for another Kissinger book. After all, Kissinger himself has written three weighty tomes about his White House years, as well as a major treatise on diplomacy, and *Crisis*, a focused memoir of the October 1973 War and the last phase of the Vietnam War, to say nothing of the many biographies and case studies by other eminent authors.

To justify another, the author should uncover new information that has hitherto escaped notice or come up with a new interpretation of Kissinger and his role that helps us understand the dramatic events of the early 1970s. To his credit, Horne has partially answered the first of these challenges. He has dug deeply into the massive documentation that is now available and interviewed a significant number of people, including the man himself. As a result, there are a few tidbits that strike me as fresh.

As for presenting an original case, the author offers less. This portrait is pretty much the one that Kissinger has already drawn of himself, and it is quite a bit less critical than the acclaimed biography by Walter Isaacson. It is, in short, an admiring account of the man in his prime. But perhaps, in our post-neocon era, it is worth reminding ourselves what a realist foreign policy as practiced by a master looks like.

Horne decides—wisely, in my view—to confine his focus to 1973. This was the crucial year when Watergate began to undermine the presidency of Richard

Nixon, the year of major developments in U.S. relations with both China and the Soviet Union, the beginning of the end of the war in Vietnam, and the overthrow of the Allende regime in Chile. Most momentously, 1973 was the year of the Yom Kippur War, from which ensued the oil embargo, the stage-three nuclear alert, the invention of “shuttle diplomacy” and the Middle East peace process, and the phenomenon of “Super K,” the foreign-policy impresario who simultaneously wore the hats of secretary of state and national security adviser.

I am not an entirely neutral reviewer, since I worked in a junior capacity for Kissinger on his National Security Council staff during this period. Until the outbreak of the October 1973 War, I had little direct contact with him, and I doubt he paid much attention to the memos that I regularly sent to his office. During the October War, however, I saw him nearly every day from the lowly vantage point of note taker in the numerous meetings of the Washington Special Action Group or when he and Nixon met with Arab foreign ministers. It was Henry at his best and worst, sometimes raging about the insanity of Sadat for starting a war that he could not possibly win, then quickly realizing that winning was not what Sadat had in mind at all and figuring out that this crisis might actually open the way for a new relationship with Egypt that would advance American interests.

Kissinger was always hard to decipher. At times, he seemed clear-sighted and able to grasp the essence of an unfolding crisis. On other occasions he seemed emotional, petty, manipulative, duplicitous, and ignorant—he really did not seem to understand the nature of the international oil market.

How to sort out the real Kissinger from these contrasting images? Horne’s account may be laudatory, but it is not hagiographic. He offers some trenchant observations about his subject’s weaknesses. He notes, for example, that Kissinger’s “own insecurity never ceased to surprise me.” Certainly Nixon,

knowing that he held the power to make or break Kissinger’s career, played on that insecurity and vanity. Perhaps that is why Kissinger seemed so deferential to Nixon. Yet he would also mock the president behind his back, calling him “loaded” after a few drinks or saying that Nixon was a madman. On occasion, Horne finds Kissinger obsequious “almost to excess,” but he also expresses understanding. What else, he seems to suggest, can one expect when dealing with the president of the United States?

Almost one-third of this engaging book deals with the Middle East. I am struck by Horne’s insistence that Kissinger seemed to have a critical view of Israelis, referring to them as an “ungenerous people” and expressing doubt about Israel’s survival as a state beyond the mid-21st century. He further notes that Kissinger opposed the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, calling it a “potentially historic disaster.” Contrast that with a quote from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin about Super K: “First and foremost he’s an American, no doubt about it, but deep in his heart, he comes from here ... and he’s a very warm Jew and for him it is a mission to defend us” (cited in Patrick Tyler’s *A World of Trouble*, page 140). One wonders again who is the real Kissinger. My guess would be that here Rabin is closer to the truth.

Horne explores the most vital and intriguing elements of Kissinger’s role in the October Crisis, but leaves some important issues unresolved. There is the long-running debate over the airlift to Israel, for one. The standard account, which Horne largely sticks to, has it that Kissinger favored a quick and large-scale response to Israel’s urgent requests for arms. The Department of Defense, according to this version, served as the obstacle to supporting Israel—either for bureaucratic reasons or for pro-Arab motives. I clearly remember, however, Kissinger telling then Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger that the DoD would have to take the blame for a delayed response

while he tried to put a ceasefire in place with the Soviets and others. The British were supposed to introduce a resolution on Oct. 12 and, pending the outcome of this maneuver, Kissinger was not eager to launch the airlift, despite the fact that the Soviets were already sending in resupplies to their clients. It was only when the British initiative failed that Nixon and Kissinger shifted gears and authorized a full-scale airlift. Once the Pentagon got the green light, the flow of supplies began almost immediately.

A second question involves Kissinger’s visit to Israel after he had brokered the ceasefire in Moscow. While in Israel, he encountered strong resistance from the Israelis to an immediate ceasefire, since their army had nearly surrounded the Egyptian Third Army. Horne quotes Kissinger telling Golda Meir, “You won’t get violent protests from Washington if something happens during the night, while I’m flying.” Horne thinks Kissinger came to regret the remark, which encouraged the Israelis to break the ceasefire. Others, however, see it as a typical example of Kissingerian duplicity.

Finally, there is the peculiar issue of the Defcon 3 nuclear alert. Many have noted that on the momentous evening of Oct. 24, when Brezhnev seemed to be threatening to send troops to the region, Nixon did not join the meeting of the National Security Council where the decision on the alert was made. Some have suspected that Nixon was drunk. When asked if this was true, Kissinger has offered no comment. Horne clearly believes the allegation, and he gets some confirmation from interviews with those close to Nixon—though not from Kissinger or Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr. Perhaps we will never know, perhaps it does not matter, though the idea that Nixon was not in the right mental shape to make decisions in the midst of a nuclear crisis, and that others acted in his name, does raise concern.

Horne retells the Defcon 3 story in a compelling manner even for those of us who lived through it. He accepts that

Kissinger was prepared to order American troops into Egypt to confront Soviet troops. My own recollection is rather different. On the morning of Oct. 25, when we briefly received intelligence that Soviet troops might be on their way to Egypt, Kissinger asked his staff to come up with plans to send American troops to the region but not actually into Israel or Egypt. Fortunately, within hours we were reassured that we had received the wrong intelligence and that no Soviet combat forces would be sent to the region. Maybe Kissinger did send a message to Sadat threatening to intervene “on Egyptian soil,” but if such a message was sent, as he claims in *Crisis*, I think it was a bluff. In any event, I was not at all aware of the possibility of such a course of action. It would have been a logistical and strategic nightmare.

Throughout this book, Horne expresses admiration for Kissinger’s willingness to act to ease Cold War tensions, to finish the Vietnam War, to halt the cycle of violence in the Middle East—at least he did not just react. Yes, but there are still too many unanswered questions about the endgame in Vietnam. What about Kissinger’s charge that it was Congress that caused the failure in Vietnam? Or the bombing of Hanoi? Or the intervention in Cambodia? And why did Kissinger and Nixon, having been warned by Brezhnev and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko in fairly explicit terms in the summer and fall of 1973 about the danger in the Middle East, fail to see the war coming or take action to prevent it?

It is true Kissinger was a brilliant crisis manager, but might we have been better off if these crises had been prevented in the first place? Kissinger initially thought Sadat weak, incompetent, and pro-Soviet. He was later to alter those views dramatically, but it took a war, a nuclear alert, and an oil embargo to bring him around. ■

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[*We Are Doomed: Reclaiming Conservative Pessimism, John Derbyshire, Crown Forum, 272 pages*]

Demolition Derbyshire

By Patrick Allitt

IMAGINE A CHEERFUL, observant, talkative man who, as he advances into late middle age, becomes impatient with much of the world around him and starts complaining. Yes, he’s an immigrant from Britain, but that doesn’t mean he approves of open immigration policy. Sure, he has a Chinese wife, but that doesn’t mean he favors diversity as a social goal. Certainly, he thinks America draws its strength from religion, but that doesn’t make him a believer in God. He is definitely a conservative, but much of what passes for conservatism these days fills him with dismay.

Imagine further that, during a few memorable weeks after the election of President Obama, he records his remarks to friends about everything that annoys him, then transcribes and prints the lot. That’s the feeling you get from *We Are Doomed*. It’s a book that feels like conversation. It has all the quips, gags, and digressions that you get from a natural chatterbox at the height of his powers. Undisciplined, amusing, full of exaggerations and flights of fancy, it’s also the work of a voracious reader, a man who’s interested in everything. John Derbyshire thinks he’s a pessimist, but actually he’s an indignant optimist. His spluttering objections to various aspects of the contemporary scene bear witness to his belief that things don’t have to be the way they are, that they could be a lot better. A real pessimist would survey each new catastrophe, sigh, and take it as further confirmation that civilizations only decline and individuals only die.

If this book has a central theme, it is that the American conservative movement has recently succumbed to a facile, bright-eyed cheeriness, forgetting its long

heritage of skepticism about the human condition. Too many conservatives, Derbyshire writes, welcome the ideology of diversity, embrace big government, support a foreign policy of global democratization, and believe that the nation has an almost infinite capacity to absorb culturally alien immigrants and refugees. They’re wrong on every point, in his view, though he shows a strange reluctance to name any of them other than George W. Bush. Not surprisingly, he deplores the incoming Obama crowd, too, especially for their faith in big and costly projects, but he sees them as different only in degree, not in kind, from what too many conservatives have become.

Once you realize that you’re not reading a pessimistic manifesto in the tradition of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, but merely a long pamphlet urging conservatives to be more skeptical and to remember the need for prudence, everything falls into place. You’ve heard it all before: from George Gilder on masculinity, from Allan Bloom on high culture, from Roger Kimball on education, from Pat Buchanan on foreign policy, and from dozens of lesser lights. The indictments are familiar: federal bloat, cultural decay, feminization, barbarian invasion from south of the border, overconfident military adventures in distant lands. What’s new is the idiom. Where Bloom was solemnly apocalyptic and Kimball fretful and feverish, Derbyshire makes his case in a long succession of wisecracks.

Like many of his British ancestors, Derbyshire is good at picking up insults and giving them a positive spin. (That’s how the terms “Puritan,” “Whig,” and “Methodist” started out.) He borrows Professor Leonard Jeffries’s terms about the “Sun People” and the “Ice People,” but only so that he can sing the praises of chilly white northerners. He also enjoys inverting the Obama administration’s new clichés: readers will smile at his references to “the audacity of hopelessness” and his periodic refrain “No, we can’t.” He calls politics “show business for ugly people” and describes the annual State of the Union address as a “disgusting spectacle.”