

Professor Bickel reserves his sternest commentary for the two boldest ventures of the Warren Court—those on school desegregation and legislative apportionment. Devoted to the Idea of Progress, a “broadly conceived egalitarianism,” was the Warren Court’s main theme, so Bickel argues. In *Brown v. Board* its inarticulated premises seem to have been: (a) that Negroes yearn to go to school with whites and (b) that whites were, or could be made, willing to go to school with Negroes. Neither premise has worked out in fact, though the failure of (a) is both more recent and more surprising than the failure of (b). The phenomenon of the tipping-point—at which the races approach mathematical balance with the momentum toward Negro predominance—has emptied school after school of what was once a white majority, then a white half, and threatens to become a white minority. In recent times Negroes have discovered that black is as beautiful for Negroes as white for whites, and have in many areas and with increasing enthusiasm repudiated the idea that Whitey is all that attractive as a schoolmate or all that dynamic as an energizer of the educational motivation which white ideologues have seen as the major lack in all-Negro schools.

As for the Court’s procrustean insistence on arithmetical identity in legislative apportionment, one of its most obvious miscarriages is its enhancement of white majority power over the black minority in school as in other matters. Mr. Bickel, as stated, salutes the doctrine, however arbitrarily proclaimed, that states cannot legislate school segregation. He thinks it now clear beyond peradventure (as lawyers like to say) that courts cannot legislate desegregation. The court intervened, as Justice Jackson recognized at the outset, because Congress had not acted. And the reason Congress had not acted was pretty much the reason that the Court’s intervention has failed.

A wide reader of the general periodical press with an ear for mode words will note

that Professor Bickel denies himself much use of the very modish “pragmatic.” Fanciers of the Warren Court have called it pragmatic when what they meant was that it slighted tradition, hence precedent, hence principle, to push towards conclusions, some of which Professor Bickel admittedly finds attractive. But even in the illiterate interpretations now current of the word “pragmatism,” there is a second but hardly subordinate meaning: the test of goodness is workability, hence what does not work is bad and should be abandoned. The Warren Court, we may now agree with its friends, judged often in the first sense of pragmatism. So far, the Burger Court shows some disposition to judge by the second—and so to edge, unobtrusively but resolutely, back to tradition, precedent and principle, i. e., in “the direction of rules consistent with human nature.” All involved in the process—and not least the nominating and confirming authorities—may well take note of Bickel’s early and now his latest testimony.

Reviewed by C. P. IVES

---

### *Of Action and Reaction*

**The Counter-Revolution**, by Thomas Molnar, *New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1969. 203 pp. \$8.95.*

IT HAS BEEN the viewpoint of this reviewer that only by hard-minded thinking, realism and the candid consideration of alternatives can our accustomed civilization be preserved. This state of mind can be summarized by reference to a lively and motivating awareness of crisis. The prime virtue, among many other virtues, of Professor Molnar’s new book, *The Counter-Revolution*, is its pervasive recognition of cultural

crisis; its author displays a singular penchant for "hard-minded thinking, realism and the candid consideration of alternatives." It is a uniquely brilliant survey of our time of troubles, because it weds a tradition of humanistic and rational historical scholarship with a flexibility of mind, a refusal to accept facile compromise, that culminates in intellectual courage, a merit, one regrets to say infrequently encountered in the contemporary American academic discussion.

The principal indication of Professor Molnar's scholarship and intellectual valor in this volume is his avoidance of both the platitudinous and the parochial, qualities that lamentably mark so much of the social commentary extended to a worried public, even by many who announce adherence to some variety of conservative orientation. By the *platitudinous*, the reviewer refers to the habit of invoking honorific but vacuous terminologies that numb the possibility of useful analysis and by the *parochial*, the refusal to consider the problems of social remedy except within the narrow confines of some self-identified national tradition. The evaluation of ideological and political alternatives is certainly limited, in any rational sense, by historical and cultural factors, but the task of making efficacious recommendations cannot be adequately accomplished by assuming a stance of philosophical and even political insularity and nationalistic *hubris*. The reviewer could make specific reference to so-called "fusionists" who currently are attacking conservative traditionalism on the grounds that such a viewpoint must, at the very least, be radically reconstituted in order to accommodate what is obscurely posed as the American "experience."

This last observation is altogether pertinent to Professor Molnar's exposition of an important and neglected vein in the counterrevolutionary ideology, the conservative thought of continental Europe, particularly France. In sum, the book develops from three root propositions: (a) that the revolutionary urge projects a more

or less organic ideology that has, historically, provoked a similarly holistic counterrevolutionary body of thought that is more rudimentary than the specifics of institutional arrangements; (b) that this counterrevolutionary response cuts across national cultural predilections and that among the most significant and trenchant statements of this antiinsurrectionary and antinihilistic attitude were produced by the continental theorists in the tradition of Maurras, de Maistre and de Bonald; (c) that the struggle between revolutionary and counterrevolutionary philosophies ultimately turns upon conflicting spiritual (or antispiritual) affirmations, that the preservation of order, as against chaos, depends upon the perseverance of a theistic perspective of temporal order.

Professor Molnar's initial premise, that counterrevolution must be systematically studied as "a philosophy, a corpus of doctrine, even as an attitude of mind," is ingeniously simple, but not simplistic. That the momentum of the spatial-temporal dimension can be variously observed seems obvious enough; a root difference can be detected among those whose attitudes diverge on the relative value to be accorded formal stasis as against mobility—an aesthetic analogy comes to mind. That revolutionary enthusiasm and its opposite proceed from such elemental world-views appears reasonable. It follows from this that an analysis of counterrevolutionary thought involves not only plumbing the depths of philosophical precepts, but also examining those theorists who have most perceptively recognized the full character and threat of revolutionary zeal, that is to say a passion for tumult that proceeds not so much from a desire to attain specific social goals, but from an energetic relish for destructive turmoil. Burke, of course, is an exemplar; but less appreciated in the United States, Professor Molnar contends, is the history of continental counterrevolutionary social thought. His historical survey of the "counterrevolutionary restoration" is masterly, a surgical operation per-

formed on the successes and more often failures of the antiinsurrectionary rebuttal. Especially provocative are his treatments of the interrelationship of counterrevolutionary forces and the fascist radicals, the de Gaulle phenomenon and the strife within the Catholic church.

The confusion in the battle lines between revolutionary and counterrevolutionary social elements in the post World War II period arises, Professor Molnar argues, from the "neutrality of the industrial society." He writes:

... The novelty of the conflict between revolution and counterrevolution in this post-1945 era is that the battlefield is no longer strictly political, but cultural, more exactly, spiritual. The destructiveness inherent in revolutionary doctrine has finally brought about the decisive weakening of all Western institutions: church, state, courts, university, army, and cultural life. The acceleration is due to the neutrality of the industrial society: it has been able to satisfy people's primary demands, promise more, and generally to fulfill its promises.

This very contentedness aids the revolutionary cause; revolutionary ideology spreads doubt as to the legitimacy of institutional leadership, even among those who constitute that leadership. "The takeover," Molnar comments, "is effected without the demolition of the institution itself, in fact, in the name of progress, renewal, greater efficiency, terms borrowed from the official program of the industrial society." It is cultural subversion that is the revolutionists' most potent weapon, "because, with its [society's] exclusive attention to economic objectives and its optimistic outlook, it forbids itself any serious consideration of its problems of culture and spirituality."

The problem facing the counterrevolutionaries, in Molnar's view, is to overcome the advantages enjoyed by their opponents by virtue of their emphasis upon action and passion and, foremost, to understand that

the contemporary milieu is one of a "continuous revolutionary situation." Professor Molnar summarizes:

To conceive of a counterrevolution would require not a political power-seizure—since it has been too often demonstrated that this may mean a temporary measure, or worse: a mere change of guards; more decisive would be a reshaping of culture, a spiritual power-seizure, and the resulting becalming influence. A new Malaparte would have to teach counterrevolutionaries something better than a technique: the word of the spirit and of truth brought once more to prevail in Western institutions.

The major focal points of counterrevolutionary strength, as seen by Professor Molnar, are the Catholic church and the "Anglo-Saxon political tradition," the "two entities surviving in the contemporary world that preserve a prerevolutionary inspiration." He warns: "Our civilization will no doubt come to an end the day the Catholic church and the United States join the revolution."

The obligation for those who would preserve civilization, as Molnar wisely observes, "is a nonspectacular task, without a final victory, its successes won in minds and souls rather than on the forum. It is a never-ending task, a daily burden. And so it must be performed, every day."

The book, overall, is more than a work of articulate, integrated scholarship, it is a pulling off of the academic velvet gloves and a stark, even sharp, indictment of lassitude and fuzzy thinking. It "tells it like it is," to turn that solecism to a more profound end.

Reviewed by DONALD ATWELL ZOLL

## *The Agonized Academy*

**The American University: How It Runs, Where It Is Going**, by Jacques Barzun, *New York: Harper & Row, 1968.* xii + 319 pp. \$7.95.

WHEN JACQUES BARZUN undertakes to discuss the American University, he knows whereof he speaks. Long, and occasionally weary, years spent in both teaching and administrative capacities have endowed him with a background that entitles him to write as an expert.

What are our universities, and what is expected of them? His answer: "They spend huge sums and are desperately poor; their students attack them; their neighbors hate them, their faculties are restless; and the public, critical of their rising fees and restricted enrollments, keeps making more and more preemptory demands upon them. The universities are expected, among other things, to turn out scientists and engineers, foster international understanding, provide a home for the arts, satisfy divergent tastes in architecture and sexual morals, cure cancer, recast the penal code, and train equally for the professions and for a life of cultured contentment in the Coming Era of Leisure."

He voices complaints for ills that often have no clear-cut remedies: "The subject matter of instruction has split and split again into lesser but larger specialties. What one man would have taught in 1880 required three in 1920 and from ten to thirty in 1960." And what to do about the white elephants represented by endowments, bequests, and government grants with attached strings which expand the university's activities, but invariably fail to make sufficient provision for their implementation?

Barzun is absolutely fearless in exposing some evil practices that have been current of late; for instance, the offer of a professorship without teaching or other duties, where "come to us and grace our campus"

means "grace our catalogue", and a prestige name is used as a substitute for the instruction that the students have a right to expect. For this matter of high-flown appointments, says Barzun, there is a partial remedy in the system of *ad hoc* committees drawn from departments other than the one involved; but he is candid enough to admit that there is a reverse to the medal in the fact that an unspecialized *ad hoc* committee is forced to seek qualified opinions elsewhere, and thus base its judgment on what amounts to hearsay evidence.

From direct experience, Barzun condemns that segment of the academic mind that views with scorn the man who has the knack of writing so that people understand what he writes, along with the fad of admiring those who deliberately fail to make themselves understood ("Use mathematical symbols to discuss French irregular verbs and your fortune may be made—for a while"); we even suspect we know whom he has in mind. "In any subject, the fashion that counterfeits knowledge and is not destined to last is nevertheless not to be withstood at the moment."

Barzun is an economic realist. He knows that the average full professor in a lesser college may, if he is lucky, be enjoying a top salary of \$15,000 a year by the time he retires. He should also know that the situation is not much better at the larger universities; my own salary in my final year was all of \$16,000. But the larger universities have other compensations, not the least of which is the comparative freedom from too heavy teaching schedules and enforced attendance at rubber-stamp committee meetings where everybody says "aye."

Neither is Barzun blind to the shortcomings of the scholarly mind. "Competition, as in business, would soon weed out the dead wood." And he speaks scathingly of the specialist teacher's contempt for all but recruits to his own line.

I cannot fully agree with Barzun when he deplores the fact that some teachers consider education superior to money, and permit unregistered students to attend their