

a formal bureaucracy. *Reality*: "Within a few years the new class of state employees reached unprecedented size. It grew and grew, as the state itself did, to become a new leviathan, the all-embracing apparatus. From about one million on the eve of the revolution the number of state employees grew to about ten million before the Second World War, and to about twenty million at the present time. The sacred promise that the new bureaucracy would not acquire new privileges was not kept."

There are a number of flashes of keen psychological insight. Mr. Dallin saw as a strong force in the communist movement, originally in Russia, now in the economically retarded countries, the half-educated, who can be induced to believe a simple revolutionary creed with fanatical ardor. But the presence of doubt is one of the first signs of a higher stage in the educational process. This is why, as education becomes more thorough and widespread in the Soviet Union, the simple dogmatism that was good enough for the generation that made the revolution tends to be over-spread with at least a thin layer of scepticism, such as many visitors to Russia in recent years have encountered among the younger members of the educated class.

Political exiles are sometimes embittered and exaggerated in their judgments; but Mr. Dallin was not one of this number. He recognized that, in his own words, "the forcible extermination of communism as such cannot be the foreign policy of the United States" and notes that it is only the threat of military aggression that makes peaceful coexistence impossible "so long as the foreign policy of the major communist states endangers the security of the United States."

Mr. Dallin recalls Pascal's figure of the "thinking reed" with his thoughtful analysis of a volcanic upheaval which drove him from his country and which was, in many of its aspects, blind and elemental.

Reviewed by WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

Ideology as a Fate

Suicide of the West, by James Burnham.
New York: John Day, 1964. 312 pp.
\$5.95.

I MUST MAKE a terrible confession: most books about the contemporary scene bore me to tears. This book, however, I could not put down once

I had started. I read it on a plane ride, from cover to cover, not even interrupting my lunch. The reason is not only that the book reads so well, but that it says so much. It is a portrait of Liberalism's dreamworld, by way of an explanation of what has been happening to the West, and to this country, in the course of our lifetime.

Appropriately, Burnham begins by identifying the Liberals. No meaningful answer could have been obtained had he started by asking "what is Liberalism?" and proceeded to "define" it in some intuitive way. A convincing list of Liberal personalities, publications, and institutions provides a sharp focus: whatever *they* say, write, teach, and do, must be taken as Liberalism. Empirically rather than speculatively, Burnham finds that Liberals believe in the utter plasticity of human nature, in the avoidability of evil through education and change of institutions, in a happy historical future. Liberals assume that politics consists of "problems" to which one can find "solutions," that all "truths" are relative, that distinctions between men are politically irrelevant, that social hierarchies are always bad, that the government is obligated to guarantee to everyone food, shelter, clothing, education, security against unemployment, disease, and want. A list of these and other Liberal tenets, nineteen in all, is highlighted by contrasting them with alternate modes of thinking, not necessarily conservative, though. For Burnham rightly insists that Conservatism, unlike Liberalism, is *not* an ideology and cannot be systematized along parallels to Liberal ideas.

The highlight of the book, for me, is Burnham's elucidation of what ideological thinking is. Having read this, Burnham's readers will never again insist that there should be an "American ideology" because there is a Communist one; nor will they think of calling Christianity an "ideology." Ideological thinking, as the term has been used for over a hundred years, is based, not on the perception of reality, but rather on some preconceived position to which reality is then adjusted. It is, therefore, factproof. "A convinced believer in the anti-Semitic ideology tells me that the Bolshevik revolution is a Jewish plot. I point out to him that the revolution was led to its first major victory by a non-Jew, Lenin. He then explains that Lenin was the pawn of Trotsky, Radek, Bukharin, Zinoviev, and other Jews . . . I remind him that Lenin's successor as leader of the revolution, the non-Jew Stalin, killed off all those Jews . . . He then informs me that the seeming Soviet anti-Semitism

is only a fraud invented by the Jewish press, and that Stalin and Khrushchev are really Jews whose names have been changed. . . . An ideology—one who thinks ideologically—can't lose . . . There is no possible argument, observation, or experiment that could disprove a firm ideological belief. . . ." This is, of course, not an example of Liberal ideological thinking, but Burnham shows in quotation after quotation how the same imperviousness to reality as it is characterizes Liberals. Theirs is what Robert Musil has called a "Second Reality," a self-constructed dreamworld, which one is determined to accept as if it really existed. Between those immersed in a Second Reality and those who can still see what is and how it is, there can be no dialogue.

A superb chapter is that on the Liberal guilt. On the assumption that education and change of institutions can take care of all evil, Liberals feel guilty at the thought of any condition of wretchedness, anywhere. For this kind of guilt there can, of course, be no forgiveness. The Liberal seeks relief by trying to "*do something* about any and every social problem," a feverish and interminable compulsive activity in which not the correctness of the program but rather "good intentions" are counted. The Liberal's twisted and irrational sense of guilt has a fatal political effect: It disarms him morally before those whom he regards as less well off than himself. This vulnerability, and his peculiar sense of guilt, so often breeds in the Liberal a generalized hatred of Western civilization and his own country. Here also is the origin of the Liberals' determined preference to seek the enemy only on the Right. "*Pas d'ennemi à gauche!*"

There are ideologues, as, e.g., the Communists and the Nazis, who know how to handle power with consummate skill. Not so the Liberals, says Burnham. He is right, although he could have added that once Liberals decide on force, they tend to go to extremes, as in the case of unconditional surrender. Liberals are "better out of power than in power." With Liberals in the government, the area of the West has contracted, year after year, position after position, not from any lack of physical strength but from internal, i.e., spiritual and intellectual, causes. Liberalism, says Burnham, motivates and justifies the contraction, and reconciles us to it. Liberals tell us that "the occupation of Cuba by Russian troops is not entirely a bad thing" (Rovere) or that the enemy's aggressiveness will wane as he grows stronger. In this sense Burnham calls Liberalism the "ideology of Western suicide."

All of Burnham's books have been parts of an endeavor to understand what is happening to our civilization. At times there has been a trace of Spenglerian "destiny" in his concepts. More and more, however, he has been moving toward a deepening humane understanding of experiences and responsibilities. This book strikes me as his greatest, in that respect. The Liberal syndrome is examined with care and precision, never with hate or arrogance. The reader often is moved to feel the excitement of self-discovery and the urge to move on along the path Burnham opens. The book is so stimulating that I had a desire to write page after page in an effort further to deepen the insight. I would have liked to comment on the Positivism which governs our intelligentsia in and out of the Academy, on the Comtean sense of history which makes progress appear as a continuing fight against religion and metaphysics, on the ritual worship of mankind in lieu of a deity, on the Liberal ethics of action apart from any sense of constitution (either the constitution of being, or the constitution of national political existence, or the economic constitution), etc. The discovery of intellectual rot in those who govern us is no cheerful message. Hope, however, springs from the realization that in things of the soul the unflinching acknowledgment of the truth is the first step towards health.

Reviewed by GERHART NIEMEYER

The Making of "Principle"

The Least Dangerous Branch: The Supreme Court at the Bar of Politics, by Alexander M. Bickel. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1962. 303 pp. \$2.95 (paper).

THE EARNEST, honest, intricate and not quite persuasive argument of this book is the challenge of a Yale law professor to some views announced in two successive lectures on the Oliver Wendell Holmes foundation at the Harvard Law School. The Holmes lecturer of 1958 was the late Judge Learned Hand and the 1959 lecturer was Herbert Wechsler, Harlan Fiske Stone professor of constitutional law at Columbia. Hand rebuked the current Supreme Court for behaving at times like a "third legislative chamber" which decided great and passion-ridden issues without reference to principle but by mere "*coup de main*," while