

Talk of "democratic literature" and "traditional social protest" is cropping up everywhere nowadays in discussions of the future of the nation's letters: in the *Reappraisals* (1963) of the English socialist iconoclast, Martin Green; in several books by the neo-romantic, Karl Shapiro; and in Roy Harvey Pearce's "history" of American poetry—to mention only a few. Karanikas evidently got his marching orders from the same place these gentlemen received theirs. And he knows the tune they follow.

Though the authors of the books here considered lavish some general praise on the power and persuasiveness of certain Agrarian writings, they rarely specify what they admire in these works. Their focus, however, is on the right people. They are (given their purposes) never merely stupid, only wrong—and wrong in a way that should prompt scholars and critics not of the Stewart-Karanikas persuasion to pick up where Louise Cowan's *The Fugitive Group* (Louisiana State University Press, 1959) left off and to undertake a history of the Agarians (past and present) and their role in that rebellion of (and for) the spirit which is the Southern Renaissance.

Reviewed by M. E. BRADFORD

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## Grand Finale

**The Last 100 Days**, by John Toland,  
*New York: Random House, 1966. xii + 662 pp. \$8.95.*

JOHN TOLAND has adopted the method of presenting history that was so successfully applied in much narrower focus by Walter Lord in *A Night to Remember* and *Day of Infamy*; by Cornelius Ryan in *The Longest Day*, and by Collins and Lapierre in *Is Paris Burning?* Mr. Toland traveled more than 100,000 miles in twenty-one countries to as-

semble his facts; he interviewed hundreds of persons—statesmen, generals, soldiers of all ranks, civilians of various conditions and nationalities. He searched through the official documents of every nation that would allow him access to its archives. Out of it all came this immense, kaleidoscopic, and vivid narrative of events between January 27, 1945, the opening day of the fateful conference at Yalta, and May 8 of the same year, the date on which World War II came to an end in Europe.

This is a work of history, but a quite different sort of history from that which is commonly found in our high school and college textbooks. Mr. Toland has not attempted to depict the broad strategy of armies and army groups in anything like the detail he has given to smaller and more dramatic operations. More space and attention, for example, is devoted to the experiences of a few men at the capture of Remagen Bridge than to some of the major battles. His account of this exploit is a fascinating one with tremendous impact on the reader. The event itself was an important one and a major contribution to the victory; yet in terms of the numbers of troops engaged, it must be considered a minor action. The incident of the armored task force that was sent to release the inmates of the Hammelburg Prison Camp, though it had little effect on the war as a whole, was a spectacular affair and Mr. Toland's account of it is one of gripping interest.

In describing the capture of Trier, Mr. Toland goes into great detail concerning the advance of the Tenth Armored Division through hostile territory. He tells us that two divisions were involved in the capture of the city, but neglects to identify the other one. Yet the Seventy-sixth Infantry Division moved as far and almost as fast as the armored division, driving south to attack the city from the north while the armored division drove north to attack it from the opposite side. An advance on foot through mud and against enemy fire may be less dramatic than a tank attack but it probably

involves more effort. However, the description of the tank maneuvers makes the better story, and Mr. Toland, besides being a fine historian, is a superb story teller.

Some of his descriptions of conditions in the Nazi concentration and prison camps are gruesome and harrowing in the extreme; his tales, collected from survivors, of the Russian treatment of German prisoners and civilians during the westward advance of the Red Army are almost too horrible to read. These passages in Mr. Toland's book make William Tecumseh Sherman's famous description of war seem not so much an understatement as a euphemism. The fantastic story of the capture and lynching of Benito Mussolini and his mistress surpasses almost anything the most melodramatic imagination could conceive. The final days of Adolf Hitler and his top staff in the bunker in Berlin are given in more detail than in any of the other accounts thus far published. Almost to the last, Hitler clung to his blind faith that his shattered armies would somehow succeed in stopping the Russians. Indeed, many of the German generals—and a good many of the German people—seemed confident that the Russians would be stopped, that Germany could come to terms with the British and Americans, and that these two would then clash with their strange Russian allies.

In the proverbial spirit of the "Monday morning quarterback" Mr. Toland draws his reader's interest to idiosyncracies and mistakes of the leading statesmen and generals. Both President Roosevelt and General Eisenhower are subjected to much criticism. General Eisenhower's failure or refusal to take Berlin ahead of the Russians is represented as an egregious error of judgment. In the light of our present knowledge Mr. Toland makes a strong case, but whether the proper decision could have been made at the time under the then known facts and existing conditions is debatable. Prime Minister Churchill, however, seems to have recognized the importance of Berlin in any postwar configuration and to have done all he could to

persuade Roosevelt and Eisenhower that Berlin should be taken by the Western allies. Churchill, although subjected to some criticism, fares better at Mr. Toland's hands than do most other prominent personages of the West, for he seems to have had a much clearer vision of the shape of future events.

This is a book that keeps one reading far into the night, even though one knows in advance how it all came out. It is a very important contribution to a very important period of history. No one interested in the Second World War, and certainly no one who participated in the fighting in the European theatre, should overlook it.

Reviewed by HENRY C. EVANS

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### *Confucius versus Mao*

**Chinese Political Traditions**, by Franklin W. Houn, *Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1965. 130 pp. \$3.75.*

**The Thought Revolution**, by Tung Chi-ping and Humphrey Evans, *New York: Coward-McCann, 1966. 254 pp. \$5.00.*

**Red China Today**, by Hugo Portisch, *Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1966. 383 pp. \$6.95.*

**Formosa: A Study in Chinese History**, by W. G. Goddard, *East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1966. 229 pp. \$7.50.*

IN RECENT YEARS, many books have been written in Western languages on the existing Communist system in mainland China. Generally speaking, these works express two different schools of thought. One school considers that the socio-political programs in mainland China today are not alien to the Chinese but are a reaction to Western imperialism and a renovation of traditional values under a Marxist mask. The second school holds that Mao and his