

this book was expanded before a gathering of English teachers. When he had concluded an indignant young woman from the audience approached him and exclaimed: "You are advocating censorship; you should not be allowed to publish it!" An eloquent illustration, one may say, of the liberal paradox.

¹Introduction to the *History of English Literature*, 1865.

²"What I have called the 'trouserer ape' and the 'urban blockhead' may be precisely the kind of man they really wish to produce." C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1947).

³Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, translated from the Italian by Angus Davidson (Oxford University Press, second edition, 1970).

⁴Denis Saurat, *Modern French Literature* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1946).

⁵Joseph Shearing, *The Lady and the Arsenic* (Smith and Durrell, Inc., New York, 1944).

The Christian Republic

The Power in the People, by Felix Morley; a fourth edition containing the introduction to the third edition by Herbert Hoover, *Los Angeles: Nash Publishing Corporation, 1972. xvii + 293 pp. \$10.00.*

EVERY INFORMED AMERICAN must reach conclusions as to the nature and provenance of his tradition. One proposition is that it arose primarily from the English Puritan experience and from English institutions, such as the common law and local government. Such a view would, of course, include various forms of English Protestantism, making our tradition, as with Dr. Morley, primarily Protestant. Another emphasis is to insist that our tradition is a product of all of Western thought. In this approach America constitutes a fresh start

for mankind, grounded in some of the ideas of the Greeks and Romans, the medieval heritage, and the influence of European intellectuals visible from colonial times. Morley mentions in this connection Montesquieu, Pascal, Montaigne, Voltaire, Helvetius, and Rousseau. Or, those who would begin by repudiating the American tradition turn to the revolutionary view of society, which may be studied as far back as the human literary tradition extends. These revolutionaries are utopian and often they are anti-intellectual, in the sense that they reject the reasoning and learning of "the establishment" of the day.

In this age of revolutionary criticism, conservatives should rejoice in the republication of *The Power in the People*. This volume returns to fundamentals. It affirms the unique quality and universal values in which American life is grounded. As a Quaker Mr. Morley seems to minimize the Anglican and Catholic mind in order to stress the influence of his own religious body. However, he does accept the English seventeenth century revolutionary tradition, while assuming the profound originality of the American rejection of the British and European and aristocratic tradition, along with its social system of status. A central theme in his argument is that the principles of individual rights and social responsibility are grounded in his reading of the New Testament. Individualism and personal responsibility are on this basis the ordering elements in our political system. He seems in fact to exclude Catholicism and Anglican-Episcopal systems of values, as well as the strong Deistic tendency in the early years of our Republic. Today there are few books like this one for Americans to read; it has, therefore, a lasting quality for those who are confused or angered by the articulate barbarians and contemporary neolithic characters.

We have here an ambitious book. It seeks to state the larger backgrounds of political theory. Morley is concerned with the discussion of society and state in Greek thought, and likewise the problem of sov-

ereignty in the modern age. He interprets Locke in the manner of colonial writers, e.g., Thomas Jefferson, and not in the style of some contemporary analysts of political theory who reject the forthright statements of Locke about the rights of men. There is generally great controversy over the historical junctures of political theory, and some of these points indicate possible weaknesses in Mr. Morley's book. He offers no treatment of the historical sources in the history of natural law and rights; his statement about the meaning of sovereignty seems to ignore the history of the conception; one could have welcomed a larger examination of the idea of status, especially in the common law which we took over in significant measure from the English; and he might have probed the issue of whether the notion of equality in the Declaration of Independence carried over into the Constitution, and to what extent equality before the law implies a recognition in society generally of equality between citizens. Yet the insistence of the author that limited government in our representative assemblies is more effective than the theory that the French Revolution proposed that the Third Estate is everything is discussed with energetic, if not original, force. Furthermore, Morley argues that the cycle of degeneration in democratic and other forms of government, e.g., the Platonic analysis, can be avoided through the insistence in America on Christian responsibility and the civic virtues of the individual. However, in America we now face a profound crisis, reflected in the onrush of European socialism and the Welfare State, which can only be contained by the reanimation and the restoration of the democratic Republic. "The flame of the Republic has not expired," says the author. "But it burns more dimly than it did."

For Felix Morley there are two issues that must be mentioned, and discussed with a brevity suitable for this review:

1. our reckless and destructive intervention in the European wars of our time, and
2. the dangers of the Welfare State, i.e., socialism, and the consequent failure to

keep before us a clear view of the meaning of communism.

I think we should call Morley a radical revisionist in regard to the history of our recent wars. A radical revisionist is one who rejects the war-time propaganda which has flooded over every one at the time of a particular war. The author offers a series of critical characterizations of American leadership. American leaders have been like the Tolstoy character in *War and Peace* who could never foresee the consequences of his actions. "Few Americans," says Morley,

possessed either the political vision or the historical knowledge necessary to foresee what was certain to result from the destruction of the German and Japanese barriers to Slavic expansion. . . . The first determined American effort [should be] to confine the enormous force that American political ineptitude had done so much to unleash, to our own deadly peril.

The only ally of the United States who benefitted was the one pledged to destroy us. The Roosevelt administration seemed to fight the Second World War as an end in itself, without long-range purpose. And the defeat of the Axis powers did far more to jeopardize than to preserve the security of the United States; our imperial burdens strongly imply the passing of the Republic.

Finally, Morley calls himself a political liberal, stating his belief in a theory of a close relation between Christianity and liberalism, and, at least by implication, the acceptance of the free market system. Liberalism has been so subjected to a rash of definitions that it has little meaning. Historically, it seems to have meant a thinker sympathetic with eighteenth century enlightenment philosophy, and the defense of the free market. Our intellectual "radical chic" liberals reject the free market and are "socialistic" in tone, but they push on to highly controversial extremes in the secular principles of the enlightenment and the non-Christian view of life. So today "lib-

eral" has become almost another word for European-copied socialism, or perhaps one should say an amorphous Welfare State. Morley does not like the word "conservative," but I think he would have done better to call himself one, rather than try the impossible feat of rescuing "liberalism" from the often pro-Marxist left-wingers. On the other hand, part of his discussion of liberalism is his notably able criticism of Marxism and communism in relation to the American tradition, and especially so in this period of flabby pro-communist chatter in high places. In general, Mr. Morley would do better as a Christian conservative and libertarian.

Reviewed by FRANCIS G. WILSON