

the possible development of Ballymurphy in the future.

The report suggested that the authorities should act with urgency, for instance, that on the one hand the Catholic church should teach about the size of families and on the other that the authorities should knock houses together to provide sufficient accommodation for large families; that some houses should be swept away and playgrounds put in their place, or factories for that matter.

The enormity of some of the problems encountered in this survey can be seen from the following data:

'While the unemployment rate of men and women together rose in Ballymurphy from 21.1 per cent in April-May, 1971 to 23.5 per cent in February, 1973, in the Belfast unemployment area it declined from 6.1 per cent to 5.3 per cent. The Belfast rate for men fell from 8 per cent to 6.4 per cent. For women it rose from 3 per cent to 3.3 per cent. In April-May, 1971, Ballymurphy unemployment was 3.40 times the Belfast rate for men, and 2.84 times the Belfast rate for women. In February, 1973, Ballymurphy unemployment was 4.25 times the Belfast rate for men, and 4.82 times the Belfast rate for women.

The average number of persons per dwelling can be compared with that for all inhabited private dwellings in Belfast. The 1971 average of 6.5 per dwelling in Ballymurphy was twice the Belfast average of 3.35 in 1966. Another measure is the average number of persons per room. The Ballymurphy average of 1.27 in 1971 was one and three quarters the Belfast average of 0.73 in 1966. A third, and much more stringent measure is the proportion of the population living in private

dwellings at a density of more than 2 persons per room. Ballymurphy in 1971 had 13 per cent of its population living at this density, more than double the Belfast proportion of 5.9 per cent in 1966'.

The general picture emerging therefore from the survey by Anthony Spencer and his team was one of serious neglect resulting from bad planning and bad economic policies. But there was also the hopeful picture of citizens who had taken in hand the control of their own density and the increasing willingness of Government to correct the mistakes of the past. But much violence and tragedy had intervened and progress had been made at the cost of much heart-break and disappointment.

One has only to read the recommendations in each chapter of the survey and report to realise that there is not a single problem in the Ballymurphy area which is not soluble, given the resources and the will to create a new situation. In all probability the time necessary to change Ballymurphy from a deprived, dissatisfied, frustrated and tragic 'ghetto' into a thriving and intensely vital community need be hardly more than two years.

Whether this will happen or not depends of course upon whether the militants call a cease-fire and whether the overall political situation improves sufficiently to enable a good government to emerge. These are big pre-conditions and those who were concerned in the drawing up of the survey and report and those who will benefit by it can afford only a conditional and limited optimism. But the optimism is there nevertheless.

DESMOND WILSON

WHERE THE WASTELAND ENDS: POLITICS AND TRANSCENDENCE IN POST-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY, by Theodore Roszak. *Faber and Faber*, London, 1973. 492 pp. £3.75.

Bringing Theodore Roszak's books out in London assumes that Britain is simply a backward province of the United States and that what is happening over there will eventually occur here too. The theme of the earlier book, *The Making of a Counter Culture*, is that the most radical and potentially the most effective alternative to the increasingly hideous brutality of our society lies in the thought and action of the student generation (as of 1968) because they were alerted by such thinkers as Paul Goodman and Herbert Marcuse to that whole dimension of human life which the prevailing social and political structure excludes or distorts—namely the religious dimension. The 'one-dimensional man' who runs our society must give way to a generation more open and sensitive to the possibilities of 'transcendence'. Only a politics

that takes the poetic element of human nature seriously can give a human face to the necessary revolution.

Rozzak's negatives are always persuasive. He has a good eye for all the human blankness and crass mindlessness in the public thinking of such powerfully placed pundits as Robert McNamara, Henry Kissinger, Herman Kahn and Norbet Wiener—and if our very own domestic think-tank operates almost silently in comparison with the American model it perhaps only deceives us that more effectively. If it is true that Lord Rothschild swung the decision to go on with Concorde, the machine must work on the same anti-social principles, in favour of the first-class passengers. But what has always been troubling about Rozzak's analyses is the uncertainty (to say the least) of his positive commitments.

A worrying passage in the earlier book sticks in my mind and it is worth turning Roszak's critical approach to other men's rhetoric upon some of his own. The text comes at the beginning of the bibliographical notes in *The Making of a Counter Culture*, which Roszak prefaces by reminding us that much of what matters in the student opposition (as of 1968) never finds its way into print: 'One is apt to find out more about their ways by paying attention to posters, buttons, fashions of dress and dance—and especially to the pop music, which now knits together the whole thirteen to thirty age group'. Fair enough, though perhaps one doesn't have to be a Clydeside shipyard worker to look dour and turn a trifle ribald at the spectacle of *this* ally in the struggle for a juster society. And surely there must be a good deal that separates the pubescent thirteen-year-old from even the trendiest thirty-year-old packed into his ready-faded tight denim jeans. And those who were thirty in 1968 are thirty-five in 1973. Right, but maybe this is picking nits.

The real give-away comes in the sentences that immediately follow the words already quoted: 'Timothy Leary is probably correct in identifying the pop and rock groups as the real "prophets" of the rising generation. Unfortunately, I find this music difficult to take, though I recognise that one probably hears the most vivid and timely expression of young dissent not only in the lyrics of the songs but in the whole raucous style of their sound and performance'. Roszak goes on to admit—to admit—that he finds much of this music 'too brutally loud and/or too electronically gimmicked up'.

These 'probables' betray what seems to me a worrying wobbliness that finally discredits Roszak as a serious guide. Why can't the man trust what are plainly his own true instincts? Why should he be *apologising* for finding so much of this music brutal and difficult to take? What can there be that matters—humanly and socially—in a dissent that expresses itself, however vivid and timely it may be (always as of 1968), in such crass brutality? What on earth leads a man to wish he were more capable of listening to music that he himself describes as raucous and brutal? One remembers Jimmy Reid in a television interview shortly after the Clydeside work-in ended, saying that he had only just discovered Beethoven and the world of classical music and wishing for nothing more than a society in which that beauty could become the inheritance of everybody and not just of a tiny elite. . . .

The 'pop music scene', in fact, for the most part, blatantly exemplifies precisely the same anti-social and unhumane principles and attitudes that Roszak so perceptively detects and

exposes in so many other areas of our 'common culture'. It is painful to see him suppressing what he instinctively knows to be the truth in this case too. His essential doubts and misgivings about his recourse to the wisdom of the young dissenters come out in that twice-used qualificatory 'probably': 'Timothy Leary is *probably* correct . . . I recognise that one *probably* hears. . . .

It should be explained, for the benefit of the enclosed nuns among our readers, that Timothy Leary is a much less than young ex-clergyman on the run from the F.B.I. narcotics squad, whose legal entanglements are ravelled even by American standards (he has already been sentenced to thirty years in prison). His main fame is (or was) as the campus apostle of visionary religion through psychedelic drugtaking: 'Our Supreme Court will be smoking marijuana within fifteen years. It's inevitable, because the students in our best universities are doing it now. There'll be less interest in warfare, in power politics' (Leary in a B.B.C. interview in 1967, quoted by Roszak without much comment). That Leary should be quoted at all in any serious discussion of anything whatever may seem incomprehensible to some of us. The value of his guess that the real prophets of the rising generation are the pop and rock groups may be measured by his unquestioning assumption that our best universities will still be providing the candidates for the top jobs in our society: the social structure will be the same but everything will be different—not a very likely situation, on the face of it—and everything will be different because top persons will be smoking marijuana. It need not concern us here that Leary is so naive—the problem is that Roszak bothers to quote him as an authority—and in doing so cannot help displaying his own uncertainty, with that revealing 'probably'. It seems plain that Leary is certainly wrong, and on Roszak's own showing earlier in the book (*The Making of a Counter Culture*) it would be a very bleak look-out for our society if Leary were to turn out to be right. But Roszak seems unable or unwilling to take his stand securely on what he himself has shown and knows—that is what is disquieting about his whole argument.

And likewise his recognition that one 'probably' hears the meaning of 'young dissent' in the din of pop concerts surely demonstrates this same indecision. How can we take him seriously unless at least we can believe he is himself *sure*—either this dissent upon which such hopes are being set does or does not express itself 'in the whole raucous style'. If the social and political intentions of the dissenting young are in fact audible 'in the whole raucous style', then it is high time that the rest of us began to resist. On the other hand,

if they are *not*, and if the raucous and brutal music only reveals the immorality of commercial exploitation by serving the contradictions in an alienated society, then we can safely switch off and certainly leave unread any more essays by social thinkers not so sure about what they are recommending that they can do without the intrusive 'probably' that

simultaneously hedges and discredits their arguments.

Where the Wasteland Ends is no worse—but also no better—than *The Making of a Counter Culture*. It made me want to go back and read Leavis.

FERGUS KERR, O.P.

THE LIFE OF JESUS CRITICALLY EXAMINED, by D. F. Strauss translated by George Eliot, edited by Peter G. Hodgson. S.C.M. Press. lviii+812 pp. £4.50.

'Whenever a religion, resting upon written records, prolongs and extends the sphere of its dominions, accompanying its votaries through the varied and progressive stages of mental cultivation, a discrepancy between the representations of those ancient records, referred to as sacred, and the notions of more advanced periods of mental development, will inevitably sooner or later arise'. Thus Strauss began his great work. He was eager to present the living Lord to those whose cultural schoolings had made them uneasy in the contemplation of the gospel narratives. He writes, he is convinced, within the evangelical tradition of the church, but he writes with a greater sense than any contemporary churchman of the recent success of G. L. Bauer's suggestion of mythological elements in scripture, and the recent failure of Paulus' suggestion that the New Testament was composed within a few years of the events it recounts.

Strauss makes nice fun of those commentators who got confused in the flurrv of mythological fashion, and even of the great Bauer himself who supposed that he had distinguished within the myth of the Promise to Abraham the historical nugget of a patriarchal evening walk under the stars, and who had hoped to elucidate the angelic annunciation to Zechariah by references to a meteoric phenomenon, but Strauss' own acceptance of mythological assumptions in his exegesis contributed mightily to the prohibition of his Zurich professorship. Ordinary folk were convinced, he says wryly, that 'that which distinguishes Christianity from the heathen religions is this, they are mythical, it is historical'. Strauss therefore set out to examine every particle of christian evidence in the gospels. He went through the narratives bit by bit. There is in his work a simple concentration upon single elements, and he makes no attempt to distinguish the place of any element within the general intention of the evangelist. Large matters did not concern him. He was not, for example, despite his command of the relevant material, the least interested in the synoptic problem. His was a simple-minded procedure founded upon a

conviction that a story was believed simply because it held together consistently, and bit by bit he pulled each one apart, but his method is not to be dismissed as any more inevitably sceptical than that of those who deal in total gospel themes. These may bring a reader to happy confidence in overseeing providence, or they may equally encourage scepticism of the historical value of the texts.

Strauss, through a happy suggestion that belief in the star of Bethlehem must only encourage rascally astrologers 'thereby creating incalculable error and mischief', a recognition of the Ebionite character of 'Woe to you that are rich', a rejection of an 'explanation' of the wedding garment that was still being offered at Oscott in 1956, a splendid piece of fun at the expense of Nicodemus' simplicity by night, a tedious dissection of the passion narratives which made George Eliot herself 'Strauss-sick', and a final reference to Elijah at the Lukan ascension narrative, comes to the point at which he must, for his contemporaries' salvation, 're-establish dogmatically that which has been destroyed critically.' He has always held that 'the supernatural birth of Christ, his miracles, his resurrection and ascension, remain eternal truths, whatever doubts may be cast on their reality as historical facts'. His criticism is conducted with what he thought a scholarly *Kalt blutigkeit*, and which prompted Liddon to remark that 'his cold infidelity chills one's soul to the core', precisely because he was always warmly aware of the presence of his Lord. How was he to express this?

There is a famous anecdote retold in the otherwise dullish introduction by Professor Hodgson, of Strauss determining to find out if Hegelianism would do the job for him, and setting out for Berlin to consult the great man himself. But on his arrival at the university he met Schleiermacher first, and that great man told him that Hegel had just died, at which Strauss inconsiderately blurted out, 'But I only came here to see him'. Four years later, in 1836, Strauss had at least seen that he could not manage Hegel's christological ambiguities. In the 1st, 2nd and 4th editions