Howe, Irving, ***Herbert Marcuse or Milovan Djilas? (Book Review)*** , Harper's Magazine, 239:1430 (1969:July) p.84

Irving Howe

BOOKS

Herbert Marcuse or Milovan Djilas? The inescapable choice of the next decade

An Essay on Liberation, by Herbert Marcuse. Beacon Press, $5.95.

The Unperfect Society, by Milovan Djilas. Harcourt, Brace & World, $5.

Late in life, Herbert Marcuse finds himself a celebrity. Specialist in Hegelian dialectic, spokesman for an esoteric and absolutist reduction of Marxism that he calls "the critical philosophy," and notable for a Prussian haughtiness as both man and thinker, Marcuse has been discovered in his old age by New Left students throughout the world and, like one of those poor captive-kings of African tribes, hoisted to the glory of theoretic mentor.* That these student admirers read him, that they *can* read him seems doubtful — his style is steadfastly opaque. Given the temper of the moment, an unreadable mentor may be just right.

A witty man, Marcuse must himself appreciate the ironies of his recent popularity — a political misunderstanding based on an intellectual blind date. But already, the misunderstanding is on the way to being corrected. In Berlin members of the German SDS recently hooted him with cries of "metaphysician from San Diego" and in the U. S. his view that destroying universities isn't the best way to liberate humanity has met with stern intimations that he may yet be tagged as a professorial fink. New Left heroes come and go almost as rapidly as French premiers in the Third Republic, and Marcuse may well be out of favor with the more extreme campus guerrillas by the time word of his fame reaches the ordinary reading public.

When I first met Marcuse in the mid-Fifties at Brandeis University, I was impressed by his learning, pleased by his charm, and intrigued by his effort to defend orthodox Marxism in heterodox ways (since I was then trying to defend my heterodox socialism in orthodox ways). Even those of us able to speak a smattering of Hegelian could not always be sure what he was up to; but in 1956 he did show his hand a little when he could not find it in his heart—or system—to support the Hungarian revolution. The struggle for political liberty seems not to move him very deeply.

Another clue to his thought I noticed at the time but didn't fully grasp. Marcuse had a way of speaking about intellectuals with whom he disagreed—especially if they were German ladies who had written on totalitarianism—as *Untermenschen,* subhumans; he did this smilingly, but beneath his lightness of manner there was an earnestness of intent, as if to anticipate his later views that in a democratic society tolerance is really no more than "repressive tolerance," that is, a way of disarming rebels. Only later did I begin to see that intellectuals who describe opponents as *Untermenschen* must also have in mind notions concerning *Uebermenschen,* supermen. Elitist and authoritarian to the core, Marcuse would soon emerge as spokesman for a "radicalism" of the *Uebermensch,* precisely, as it would turn out, the creed to attract middle-class student rebels.

Marcuse's political-intellectual influence dates back to about 1964, when he published his book *One-Dimensional Man.* Deeply conservative and pessimistic in its implications, his main idea is that the advance of technology has made possible a society in which material productivity increases so sharply that the traditional socio-economic conflicts of capitalism are softened and the once revolutionary classes tamed. Material wants can now be satisfied, but social equality and liberation are not achieved; indeed the satisfaction of the material wants forecloses the struggle for social equality and liberation. The working class, assigned by Marxism to the "historic task" of leading the revolution, fails to fulfill this obligation and instead becomes quiescent and self-satisfied:

> *... the capitalist development has altered the structure and function of these two classes [bourgeoisie and proletariat] in such a way that they no longer appear to be agents of historical transformation. An overriding interest in the preservation of the institutional status quo unites the former antagonists.*

The result is that no major social class or group seems able to realize "transcendent" values, that is, goals extending beyond the range of the existing society. Advanced capitalism, in Marcuse's view, is a society very much like that imagined by Aldous Huxley in *Brave New World,* one in which well-fed and contented robots do their assigned tasks, delude themselves into supposing they are happy, and have lost both the Faustian imperative to restlessness and the Marxian vision of classless fraternity:

> *Thus emerges a pattern of one-dimensional thought and behaviour in which ideas, aspirations and objectives that by their content transcend the established universe of discourse and action are either repelled or reduced to the terms of this universe.*

That Marcuse has here struck upon an observable trend in modern society seems to me indisputable. It is a trend many other writers—conservative,

*Not by all left factions. The American Maoists, pointing to the fact that during the second world war Marcuse worked in a U.S. propaganda agency, have publicly wondered whether he might also have been a CIA agent. They forget one detail: it was a war against Hitler's Germany. There is of course no substance to their insinuations, since Marcuse is an honorable man whose only corruptions are ideological.

Mr. Howe is the author of Politics and the Novel *and other critical works, and editor of* The Radical Imagination: An Anthology from Dissent Magazine.

radical, and liberal—have also noticed, and in recent sociological writing it is often designated as the theory of "mass society." The mass society is characterized by a drift toward a bureaucratic, non-terrorist, and prosperous authoritarianism; the population grows passive, atomized, and indifferent; coherent publics based on definite interests and opinions fall apart; and man becomes a consumer, himself mass-produced like the products and diversions he absorbs.

Marcuse's great mistake—indeed, his intellectual vice—is to regard the trend as if it were the whole of reality, as if there were no significant complications or counter-trends in modern society, and as if his hypostasized model were so secure that further empirical investigation becomes trivial. Since what Marcuse says can these days be heard on every American campus, let me go into further detail:

☐ The actual society in the U. S., as well as in other Western countries, is far more complex and various than Marcuse allows; human beings retain far more independence and autonomy than the notion of "one-dimensionality" implies.

Shameful evils, crimes, exploitation, ignorance, racism—all persist. One can also believe, as I do, that the fundamental socioeconomic arrangements of the society are unjust and should be transformed. Yet if one has a little patience and really listens to people it becomes clear that now and again, within the bounds of their fallibility, they do try to struggle with the problems of our time. Some—a minority, but a growing minority—care about the fundamental destiny of our civilization. Others—fluctuating and unstable majorities—become concerned about particular injustices and outrages.

Actual human beings turn out to be neither the "one-dimensional" boobs of elitist theory nor the revolutionary paragons of intellectual desire. They are often more alive, quizzical, and intelligent than Marcuse's theory makes them out to be. Some participate in local government, trying to improve schools and end air pollution. Others join transient movements, like those for civil rights or against the Vietnam war or in support of Eugene McCarthy. Often such people fail; often they are limited; often they lack a *Weltanschauung*. But they are human beings, and they simply cannot be dismissed as "low company."

Thousands, for instance, share in the life of local trade unions in ways that Marcuse, and many other American intellectuals, are too snobbish to learn about. Thousands work in peace organizations, reform movements, even those PTAs at which it is so easy to laugh. Are they all really "one-dimensional," robot-victims of technology, socially lobotomized to the point where they cannot reach "transcendence"? Or may it be that their vision of "transcendence" differs from that of Marcuse?

Still other people exercise their minds and critical faculties in less structured or visible ways. They read; they think; they discuss. That they haven't reached a "revolutionary perspective" isn't completely blinding evidence that they are "one-dimensional." There may be other and quite powerful reasons: the wretched outcome of the Russian Revolution, the visible lust for violence and authoritarian manipulation displayed by some of our New Leftists, a seriously grounded if ill-articulated doubt as to the efficacy of a collective economy, and the conviction that through such agencies as trade unions they have significantly improved their conditions of life without risking a totalitarian apocalypse. And perhaps there remains among many Americans a belief that, our present convulsions notwithstanding, political democracy is a heritage worth honoring and preserving.

For intellectuals captive to large ideological visions, it is much too easy to slide from revolutionary frustration to authoritarian arrogance. The masses, whom your heart would elevate and your theories cast as heroic agents of History, fail to act as they are "supposed" to; you remain convinced that our society needs a basic change which, somehow, its members don't yet seem to want; there follows the temptation to grow indifferent to and even contemptuous of such democratic impedimenta as majorities, votes, and compromises; and thus, after having begun a lover of mankind and principled egalitarian, you end up a bristling elitist looking for a way to force, or rape, History while scorning as merely "one-dimensional" the millions who fail to follow you. (I offer this caution not only to Marcuse but to all intellectual radicals, including myself.)

In a ghastly outburst of snobbism Marcuse writes: "The people recognize themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobiles, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment." Well, if Marcuse had ever lived in a slum tenement, I can assure him from experience that he wouldn't be quite so disdainful of split-level homes and kitchen equipment. Let him try doing the week's laundry by hand and he'll learn to appreciate washing machines.

But more. The tacit assumption behind such passages is that somehow neither author nor reader — the blessed, incorruptible We—is included among these soulless robots. How does he know? By what presumption can We distinguish ourselves from and pass judgment upon Them? And if we are indeed superior, how have we managed to escape the common fate of "one-dimensionality"?

☐ Marcuse's work is striking for its utter absence of factual material; he seems proud of his freedom from the restraints of the empirical. (A comparison between his abstractedness and the rich documentation of a Marx would be devastating to his reputation among the radical young if they troubled to read Marx.) As a result of this abstractedness, Marcuse soon evokes a solipsistic universe in which he communes exclusively with his own self-confirming categories. Evidence is sacrificed for coherence; the risk of factuality abandoned for the protection of a closed universe of discourse. At best Marcuse offers what a young philosopher, Allen Graubard, in a devastating critique has called "totalizing evidence": that is, a particularly horrid instance of, say, *Time*-ese is taken for the totality of modern discourse. This method, writes Graubard, involves basic ambiguities:

> *First, a characterization of the general category — Art, Philosophy, Science, Language—is stated. ... Then the realization of the general category for advanced industrial society is described in terms of the root metaphor of "one-dimensionality."* The *art*, the *politics*, the *language*, the *philosophy are one-dimensional; they lack the possibility of transcendence. ... These realizations are expounded in terms of particular examples, often extreme examples, the worst aspects of whatever activity or category is being considered. ...*

The effect... is really dependent upon the conceptual claim that the "totalizing" syntax is justified; that the examples or particular realizations of the general category are the defining, essential ones. No real argument justifying the "essential" constructions is, in fact, given.... What drives the discussion along is the repetition of the root image, the emotional appeal of extreme and powerful examples.

□ In his view of the society in which we live—the welfare or semi-welfare state—Marcuse's seemingly radical intransigence ends up as curiously static and conservative. He argues that the welfare state is, first, the consequence of autonomous economic processes that are inherent in modern industrialism, and, second, a conscious effort by the ruling classes to stabilize society in order to avoid breakdown and revolutionary crisis. What is missing here is nothing less than the substance of historical change and action: the ways in which people express desires, affect decisions, modify institutions.

The welfare state is a capitalistic economy that has been partially humanized—and the degree and terms of this humanizing are not fixed in advance by the "necessary" limits of capitalism, they are determined by the course of sociopolitical struggle, the actions and choices of men. How strongly both government and various secondary institutions, like trade unions, will care to curb the power of, say, leading corporations is at least in part a matter of political effort. Hence, the welfare state must primarily be seen as the outcome of decades of struggle by the labor and liberal (also, in Europe, the socialist) movements to *wrest* significant social change. It is, if you wish, a form of the class struggle.

To speak of the welfare state merely or mainly as one that offers bread and circuses, palliatives and opiates in order to disarm potential opposition—that is much easier for professors on tenure, to whom, say, the strength or weakness of minimum-wage laws means little personally, than it is for millions of workers who know in their bones how their conditions of life have changed in the years between 1929 and 1969. These workers may not have made "the revolution" in accordance with a quasi-Marxist prescription, but at least in part they have helped revolutionize the quality of American life. And one of the few advantages of being over thirty is that you may have enough of an historical memory to grasp the extent of this change.

No awareness of, no sensitivity to, not so much as a token of interest in such matters appears in Marcuse's books. To him the proletariat is an historical abstraction which either performs its assigned task or is punished with dismissal. The automobile workers in Detroit, more and more of them black, can today earn a far better living than only two or three decades ago; that through union intervention they have some, if not enough, control over their conditions of work; that they can expect fairly decent pensions; that in some plants they have recently won new terms which approach a Guaranteed Annual Income (I'd bet a dollar Marcuse, like most American intellectuals, doesn't even know about these new union agreements)—all this is good: politically, socially, and in the simplest human terms.

As against Marcuse's formulas I would propose the cogent remarks of the British socialist Alisdair MacIntyre:

... the Welfare State... has to be politically achieved by the struggles of the labor movement—the notion of it as simply handed down from above, as nothing but an administrative device of the rulers to subordinate the ruled, is absurd ... it is not necessarily a source of political or social stability. For the institutionalization of welfare, like other rises in the standard of living, alters the horizons of possibility for different social groups and alters too the standards by which they assess their deserts and their rights. Not absolute but relative deprivation becomes crucially important....

The problem of a politics that goes further than this is partly the problem of a working class that sixty years ago had to set itself the goals of welfare and now has to find for itself new political goals....

□ If Marcuse is right in believing that "one-dimensional" society is increasingly capable, through its material largess and inhumane rationality, of containing social change by persuading its citizens not to want what they "should" want, then one must wonder whether to draw the conclusion—and many of Marcuse's campus followers do draw this conclusion—that "the worse, the better." As Allen Graubard has remarked:

Even those seemingly favorable signs, like the civil-rights movement, must be seen [if Marcuse is right] as... signs of how totalitarian the society is becoming. For now even the most materially oppressed groups will be brought into the system; and whereas a blatantly oppressed and despised Negro population was by its very existence, if not in its consciousness, a threat to the system, a Negro population with apparent political power and opportunities for seeking significant economic advance will lose this existential aspect of "negativity."... Better, it would appear, the old McCarthyite terror or worse, outlawing of student protests, police censorship of political publications; at least this would force some people to face the underlying truth.

That Marcuse might not accept this extension of his views I am ready to suppose; but how can anyone argue that it does not logically follow from all that he says?

□ I would suggest that, as a general historical principle, all theories which posit a virtual end or blockage to history are suspect. We might profit here from the fate of Hannah Arendt's brilliant theory of totalitarianism, so popular in the Fifties: it lacked a sense of the dynamic that might lead to crisis and disintegration. And what our recent experience suggests is that even seemingly invulnerable institutions may crack under the pressures of unforeseen conflicts; the mere fact that one projection of social change seems implausible does not mean we are doomed to eternal stasis. Indeed, the joke of the matter is that precisely those who cling to Marcuse's "one-dimensional" theories refute them by their own activism.

II

In the years between *One-Dimensional Man* and the present moment, Marcuse's main contribution to political thought has been his remarkable double-think notion that in modern society liberal tolerance is actually a "repressive tolerance," softening up rebels and thereby help-

ing preserve the status quo. He has openly acknowledged his preference for an "educational dictatorship"—in which he will surely reign as one of the main "educators"—in order to pull "one-dimensional" men out of their slough.

To suppose that these are mere vagaries would be a grave mistake. For Marcuse is an influential man, and his not very subtle formulas quickly reappear on our campuses in a still more crude form. If tolerance for opponents is "repressive," then the SDS has a rationale for breaking up a meeting at NYU where James Reston is supposed to speak, and the New Left has a justification for campus tactics violating democratic norms and simulating coups d'etat. Ideas do have consequences.

At some point in the last year or two Marcuse, who is after all a cultivated man with a taste for scholarship, seems to have drawn back a little from the guerrilla methods of his admirers. At a New York symposium in May 1968 the sorcerer chided his apprentices:

> *I have never suggested or advocated or supported destroying the established universities and building new anti-institutions instead. I have always said that no matter how radical the demands of the students and no matter how justified, they should be pressed within the existing universities.... American universities, at least quite a few of them, today are still enclaves of relatively critical thought and relatively free thought.*

But the evidence of Marcuse's most recent book, *An Essay on Liberation* (for the 91 pages of which the good Unitarian folk of Beacon Press, hoping they have a hot property, are charging a cool $5.95), suggests that he has abandoned these admirable sentiments or at least sees no need to repeat them. His influence has grown; he sees himself becoming a pocket-myth; and it is apparently difficult for a political intellectual, after experiencing decades of neglect, to find himself in old age raised to a guardian of rebellion. The result is a book which, even by Marcuse's own standards, is coarse in quality and argument. Self-caricature becomes the price of popularity.

The *Essay* repeats Marcuse's earlier views, but with a new stridency and lack of qualification. Castro and Mao are advanced as models, with no visible concern that they are politically repressive. Political democracy in the West is dismissed as "pseudo-democracy" and struggle urged against its "rules and regulations"—even though Marcuse, undaunted by contradiction, also says this democracy "provides the most favorable ground for the development and organization of dissent." There are however a few novel elements in this new book:

☐ Marcuse claims that "the politics of corporate capitalism" have created "a second nature of man," so that "counterrevolution [is] anchored in the instinctual structure." Precisely how this remarkable claim is to be tested Marcuse does not say; verification isn't one of his passions. But if counterrevolution is indeed "anchored in the instinctual structure" of men, how will he explain that the workers, once supposed to be the most exploited class, show little impulse to revolutionary action while middle-class and wealthy students are fired with rebellion? How can it be that they, and perhaps they alone, avoid the common fate of "instinctual" contamination?

☐ Marcuse sees recent changes in our society as signs of a deepening reaction: "the liberalization of sexuality provides an instinctual basis for the repressive and aggressive power of the affluent society" and "the narrowing of the consumption gap has rendered possible the mental and instinctual coordination of the laboring classes." If so, should not revolutionists propose the return of traditional constraints on sexuality—at the very least, the banning of miniskirts—and a widening of "the consumption gap"—at the very least, the abolition of minimum wages?

☐ In proposing a version of what he once called "the educational dictatorship," Marcuse writes—the nonchalant cynicism is simply astonishing!—that the rule of his desired "intellectual elite" might at first well lack the support of the majority of the people but in time could gain it:

> *To be sure, this has never been the course of a revolution.... [Technical progress] could be effectively used for imposing another set of repressive controls, but our entire discussion was based on the proposition that the revolution would*

be liberating only if it were carried by the non-repressive forces stirring in the existing society. The proposition is no more—and no less—than a hope.

For this, we are to sacrifice our democratic (very well, our "pseudo-democratic") rights and procedures. For this, we are to risk a bloody apocalypse. For this—"no more—and no less—than a hope"—we are to hand over our fate to Marcuse or perhaps to his young cousin Tom Hayden!

I cherish a fantasy for which I would yield a week of my life. I would like to be present, as a silent witness, when Professor Marcuse rises to explain his "proposition" to an audience of American workers. He might begin by expounding to them the terms of their "one-dimensionality."

III

Some of it written during the nine years Milovan Djilas was kept in prison by the Tito dictatorship, *The Unperfect Society* is the work of a man who gave up power and suffered persecution because he had decided to make the perilous intellectual journey from Communist totalitarianism to democratic socialism. Djilas's book bears the marks of an intellectual passion so fierce that it sometimes shatters the structure of his argument, even the coherence of his prose. "Today," he writes, while perhaps wondering if the doorbell will again ring at four in the morning, "I have more reason to believe I shall be slandered and persecuted because of this book than that I shall not... [But] the need for self-expression, the expression of one's thoughts, enthusiasms, and visions, is as compelling as the will to live itself...."

Djilas is overcome with the excitement—one must add, the pathos—of *catching up*. Years as a Communist functionary, first in the underground and then in power, followed by years of suffering and isolation in prison, hardly provide the ideal conditions for intellectual work. Liberated from the chains of ideology, Djilas's mind rushes, leaps, and falls; he grapples with ideas he can state but not fully develop; he reads everything within reach. Yet the sad truth is that in middle age it is very hard to catch up. His intellectual training has been poor, his intellectual muscles are stiff.

In an obvious sense *The Unperfect Society* is badly organized, badly developed, badly written. Like an overexcited speaker who spills one phrase into another, Djilas fails to preserve a clear line of argument, steadily repeats himself from chapter to chapter, mixes things up in his eagerness to speak out. The writing is muddy. One wonders: has the translator been faithful, perhaps too faithful, to the original, or is he ill at ease with the Marxist vocabulary Djilas continues to use? Finally, his book must be read as if it were a message in code, with brilliant key sentences breaking out of a dreary casing of language.

Yet it barely matters. From *The Unperfect Society* there emerges the image of a remarkable man: nine years in prison yet unbroken in mind or will, systematically probing into all the assumptions that led to the sacrifices, the heroism, the corruption of his own life, still full of a humane ardor and affection for the life of mankind, but now cleansed of all the arrogant elitism of those intellectuals who, in the name of but unasked by humanity, have taken it upon themselves to break humanity on the wheel of fanaticism.

Djilas's central theme is simple enough, the quintessence of twentieth-century politics:

Men must hold both ideas and ideals, but they should not regard these as being wholly realizable. We need to comprehend the nature of Utopianism. Utopianism, once it achieves power, becomes dogmatic, and it quite readily can create human suffering in the name and in the cause of its own scientism and idealism. To speak of society as imperfect is perhaps to imply that it can *be perfect, which in truth it cannot. The task for contemporary man is to accept the reality that society is unperfect, but also to understand that humanist, humanitarian dreams and visions are necessary in order to reform society, in order to improve and advance it.*

From such premises, shared by a great many intellectuals in Eastern Europe, Djilas now declares himself a principled opponent of the party-state dictatorship, whether in its most brutal form under Stalin or its more benign form under Tito. He moves to a keen but short-breathed analysis of the disintegration of Marxism as an intellectual system; the breakup of the Communist world into brutal fratricide, imperialist oppression, and moral decay; and—intellectually most valuable of all—an effort to relate the visible political crisis of the Communist countries to their half-visible economic crisis. Returning to the classical socialist argument against authoritarianism, he argues that a "planned economy" is impossible, or worse still, a caricature of its own claims, unless the planning occurs though democratic politics. "The Yugoslav economy today is suffering from... all those troubles that the Marxists have shown to be 'exclusive' and 'incurable' ailments of capitalism (and from which capitalism has indeed itself suffered)."

Since his crude but powerful statement in *The New Class,* Djilas has made a certain amount of progress in his analysis of Communism as a new form of class exploitation, one that is neither capitalism nor socialism but a new mode of society resting on a dictatorial bureaucracy. Following the line—though in his isolation perhaps not even aware—of such socialist theorists in the West as Rudolf Hilferding, Bruno Rizzi, Lucien Laurat, and Max Shachtman, he writes:

What is in crisis and disintegration is the privileged position of the Communists over various types of publicly owned property, and their prerogatives in certain departments of the state, without which they would no longer be the power in society that they are. The elimination of this Communist monopoly would mean that public property and the authority of the state would constitute truly national *ownership as well as freedom.*

And in another, incisive formula:

...if we substitute "party" for "capital," then we can see before our eyes a vision of Communism's destiny, the one Marx had assigned to capitalism: "Monopoly capital [party monopoly] becomes fetters on the mode of production which flourished with it and under it."

When the modern party exerts total control over both economy and state, it moves toward the condition of a ruling class. What is decisive in such societies is not the forms of property ownership (*i.e.,* nationalized econ-

omy) to which ritualistic Marxists point, but the realities of property relations (*i.e.*, who controls the state that owns the property) to which realistic socialists and liberals point. Can the workers, in whose name power is held, organize themselves into trade unions to strike against "their" state? Can they establish an opposition party to challenge the monopoly of "their" rulers? These, finally, are the key questions.

Djilas does not hesitate to drive this analysis to the point where it may endanger his liberty. Unlike Western intellectuals who tend to romanticize the "workers councils" in Yugoslavia, Djilas sees that, while potentially of great value, such institutions cannot take on a decisive democratic content when there is no political freedom:

> *Politics are an argument about life's itinerary and about life itself, about the destiny of a nation; and they involve the banding together of people; hence it follows that* an unfree people can have no scope in the economic organism. *(Emphasis added—I.H.)*

The Unperfect Society is enlivened by a series of seemingly casual *aperçus* which in the end come to yield a unified intellectual outlook. Here is Djilas polemicizing against the vulgar-Marxist notion of economic determinism:

> *And is not the Communist system in itself the most extreme example of how, contrary to Marx, the juridical and political superstructure determines "the relationships of production" . . . ? And finally, in my own life, what were the material conditions or causes that drove me in particular to hurl myself from the comfortable heights of power into the abyss of desolate alienation and prison humiliations?*

Among these *aperçus* are some extremely sharp side-glances at Western political and intellectual life. Djilas quotes a passage from Simone de Beauvoir in which she romanticizes the life of underdeveloped countries and proposes that "people ought to content themselves with a minimum standard of living, as some of the very poor communities still do, in Sardinia and Greece, for instance, where technology has not penetrated nor money corrupted." Djilas replies sardonically, in words that ought to be

required reading on all American campuses:

> *I do not know what Madame de Beauvoir's "minimum standard of living" is, but I suspect that it is a little more than what she is idealizing in "some of the very poor communities." Life in Sardinia may look "harshly happy" to Parisian left- and right-wing intellectual cliques, but I know from my own Montenegro . . . just what life has been like—a life of hunger, hatred, and death. . . .*

Equally precious—and, I suppose, equally certain to meet neglect among American intellectuals—are Djilas's remarks on the New Left:

> *The New Left shows its latent ambitions by indifference, even impatience, with respect to "revisionist," i.e., democratic-socialist ideas and trends in Communist systems. . . . [One cannot ignore] in the preaching of a Rudolf Dutschke . . . or in the bravado of a Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the masks of a domination over society that may be yet to come. This observation is not a belittlement of the intellectual revolutionaries, or of the human qualities of these current movements. It is merely a pointer to their other side, an incontrovertible one—their authoritarianism, the violent methods employed to make a reality of their ideologies, and their attempts to devise ideologies that are all things to all men.*

Marcuse or Djilas: the authoritarian elitism of the professor at La Jolla or the democratic socialism of the man who shivered in Tito's prisons. It is a dramatic, an inescapable choice which will confront reflective people during the next decade. That most New Left students will hail Marcuse and ignore Djilas; that intellectuals like Susan Sontag will write encomiums to authoritarian regimes while showing little interest in the struggle of men like Djilas; that idiots and knaves will try to pin the label of "sell-out" on Djilas—all this is only to be expected, the ephemera of the moment. But those who believe both in liberty and the need for social transformation will see Djilas as their friend and their comrade, a true revolutionary; and they will take a bitter sort of consolation from knowing that if only it were not clubbed into silence, Prague would agree.