Book Reviews

On War. Raymond Aron. Translated from the French by Terence Kilmartin. Doubleday, New York, 1959. Cloth, 163 pp. $3.50; paper, 143 pp. $0.95.

Raymond Aron is a brilliant French sociologist. He is also a talented publicist with a thesis, who writes less as a Frenchman than as a citizen of the West. His thesis is that as between preserving peace "by the threat of an increasingly horrible war" and minimizing unnecessary violence by distinguishing between the different types of war, "the second is right and the first fatal."

It is not as a sociologist but as a publicist that he has written this tract for the times. As Aron says, "the sociologist is neither more nor less entitled than anyone else to indulge in these hazardous but necessary speculations" to discover the other alternatives, "between peaceful discussion and mutual annihilation."

The scientist is specifically included in Aron's assertion that "no one is qualified to give a positive answer to such questions" as the discovery of "a way out of the terror stalemate." He refers at one point to "the physicists who have suddenly become aware of their responsibilities, though without acquiring a sense of history." At another, in dismissing world government as one of the alternatives between peaceful discussion and mutual annihilation, he declares that "the scientists who enjoin us to create the universal state or perish in a monstrous holocaust do not strengthen our will but drive us to despair."

The moral, then, is that no one—natural scientist, social scientist, or theologian, for that matter—can responsibly claim to derive broad policy from necessarily narrow *expertise*. When one parades his policy preferences, he should be meticulous and self-disciplined in asserting that the policies he favors are grounded in considerations into which he alone has insight. Experts' insights into political problems are necessarily partial insights; they clarify policy choice, but they do not obviate the necessity for choice. In our society the statesman and the publicist have the task of synthesizing and integrating diverse technical, political, and moral considerations; the informed public, in turn, has the task of offering discriminating support to those whose policy prescriptions, so clarified, seem to make sense. Aron is the synthesizer, the integrator, and the man "with a sense of history" (which he thinks some experts lack).

For Aron, the middle way between peaceful discussion and mutual annihilation requires the development of a functional equivalent for periodic inter-great-power, general, total war, which in our day would also be two-way thermonuclear war. He gives short shrift to world-government proposals, sees limited use for, or possibility of, disarmament by international agreement, and dismisses appeasement on the ground that it seldom appeases. What, then, is left?

What is left is traditional diplomacy to achieve moderate objectives, backed by limited war capabilities—as well as by the retaliatory capability whose single purpose is to remove the temptation to the other side to embark on thermonuclear war. Moderation in diplomacy means fewer references to "massive retaliation" and "brinkmanship" on our side, less atomic blackmail on the other. It is not "use of a certain weapon" but "desire for too grandiose a victory" that poses the threat of unlimited war. Moderation, says Aron, would have called for a halt at the 38th parallel after the successful landing at Inchon, and the world would have called it an American victory; it would not have called for abandoning Korea without a fight. Today, in the era of approximate nuclear parity, moderation is a more obvious necessity than it was at the time of the Korean war. Massive retaliation and brinkmanship scared the allies of the United States far more than it scared our opponents.

What else would Aron do differently? He would, for one thing, have the United States give atom bombs to its European allies, in order, first, by giving these countries the power to retaliate, to strengthen the atomic deterrent to an attack on Western Europe, and second, to reduce the sense of inequality among NATO members which is a strain on the alliance. (Perhaps Raymond Aron is a Frenchman after all, as well as a citizen of the West with a sense of history.) Apparently, no one else is to have the bomb, for he writes that if the "Big Two" were to impose "a condominium on mankind," that "would be good luck indeed."

There are grounds for hope today. "The global balance," he writes, "is not at the mercy of any partial or temporary disparity." The "general balance of terror" is fairly stable, since surprise is unlikely to be so effective as to preclude retaliation. A diplomatic incident, *à la* Sarajevo, is no longer enough to set off the chain reaction of the general war. In the era of thermonuclear bipolarity, neither side is eager to use its H-bombs to force a small power to stand up and be counted on its side. Guerrilla war, meanwhile, is a type of local war in which the distant great power can coerce only with the greatest of difficulty. The economic causes of war have practically disappeared. Aron might have added that the strategic advantage to be gained by territorial expansion and the acquisition of a defensive glacis has practically disappeared too.

There are grounds for fear, too. Immoderate diplomacy, the acceptance of "war-as-destiny," the belief that all is lost unless world government is established, another psychopath at the head of one of the perhaps inevitably increasing number of atom-bomb-possessing powers—all these are real dangers. They cannot, he believes, be absolutely eliminated; they can be minimized.

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Birth Control and Catholic Doctrine. Alvah W. Sulloway. Beacon Press, Boston, Mass., 1959. xxiii + 257 pp. $3.95.

This is a challenging book, written by a Harvard-trained attorney, with an interesting preface by Aldous Huxley. Huxley points out the importance of the book and calls attention to the world-wide problem of overpopulation. He notes that uncontrolled fertility threatens thousands of millions of persons, now on earth and unborn, with

the loss of liberty and human dignity and with famine, pestilence, war, and enslavement. He believes that time is against us and that the longer we wait the harder it will be to save ourselves from biological, social, and individual disaster.

The author examines the background of the Catholic Church's position in regard to birth control. His thesis is prepared with the documented care that goes into the preparation of a careful legal brief. He shows how the laws against contraceptives evolved during the period of Victorian preoccupation with obscenity, only to be adopted by the Catholic Church 50 years later as its first line of defense against the birth-control movement initiated by Margaret Sanger and her small band of women coworkers, in 1914. Catholic authors attacked contraceptives as harmful morally, medically, economically, and socially and attributed these dire consequences to the separation of intercourse and parenthood. However, the advent of physiologic means of child spacing, exemplified by the rhythm method, and the acceptance of this method by the church strike at the heart of the arguments advanced against the use of contraceptives. The author concludes that the church has made a philosophical mistake in contending that natural law forbids the use of contraceptives and that it has been inconsistent in approving birth control by physiologic means but disapproving artificial measures. If a couple intends in good faith to have children and does have them, the primary procreative function has been fulfilled, regardless of the method of birth control practiced in the interim. The author hopes that the church, legislating for Eternity, will reappraise its present view in the interests of all mankind.

This scholarly contribution can be read with interest by all thinking people.

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The State of Israel. L. F. Rushbrook Williams. Macmillan, New York, 1957. 229 pp. Plates. $4.50.

Of the many works that appeared around the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the state of Israel, Williams' *State of Israel* is probably the most useful as a general introduction for the reader unfamiliar with the subject matter. The author gives a very brief summary of the history of the Zionist movement, goes quickly over the Arab-Israeli conflict, and then discusses at length the problems of absorption of the "ingathered" immigrants, the return to the land, the welfare state, internal politics, and, finally, the relationships both with Israel's Arab minority and with the surrounding Arab states.

Williams acknowledges his indebtedness to the authorities in Israel for help in preparing the book, and the treatment of Israel is sympathetic throughout. But this approach does not always serve him well in his attempt to convey a realization of Israel's problems and of the efforts that are being made to solve them. In his chapter "Europe in Asia," the tone is set by his finding of "an efficient precision about everything" in contrast to the other new Asian states that he has recently visited. The contrast is, in my opinion, invidious. One of the reasons some Asian and African states are turning to Israel for technical assistance is that the latter represents a sort of halfway house between their own lack of development and the highly developed European and North American economies. Israel has been, and still is, engaged in solving the very same problems that confront these other states, and its experience is useful. One of the central issues is the productivity of the individual worker in industry. This has been a considerable headache to the Israeli planners, and the problem has by no means been solved. While, in the last year, the productivity of the Israeli worker increased by approximately 5 percent, the index is still well below that for the Western European worker.

The chapter "Back to the land" is not really indicative of the current scene in Israel. A disproportionate amount of space is devoted to agriculture. This is the longest chapter of the book, and it has a curiously old-fashioned flavor, as if it had been written in the 1930's instead of in this decade. The real problems in agriculture are not whether Israelis are attached to the land and are good farmers—that was proved so conclusively so long ago that it is beside the point—but, rather, whether the *kind* of farming that is being done is best for Israel's economy, and whether the proportion of people on the land may not actually already be too high. Israel is not alone in this latter respect. The United States, Egypt, and the U.S.S.R. all face the same question, to name only three. The other side of the coin—the industrialization of the state—is dealt with by Williams in rather summary fashion. Yet it is exactly here that Israel must make its greatest strides if it is to free itself from the need for perpetual subsidy.

On the question of Israel's Arab minority, Williams states that all is for the best. This is hardly borne out by the facts. Even Ben-Gurion, who recently visited Arab villages, has promised some amelioration of, though not an end to, the military administration of Arab-populated areas.

Twenty-seven excellent photographs illustrate the text.

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Russian for the Scientist. John Turkevich and Ludmilla B. Turkevich. Van Nostrand, Princeton, N.J., 1959. ix + 255 pp. $5.95.

The appearance of this text is a propitious and timely event for Anglo-American scientists and teachers of Russian. With the important exception of James W. Perry's *Scientific Russian* previous "scientific Russian" manuals have merely provided succinct outlines of grammar, apparently on the assumption that scientific Russian is much easier for a scientist reading in his field than for the layman, and that scientists are so superior intellectually that they can bypass the ordinary plodding methods of other people in learning Russian. While it cannot be denied that the study of scientific Russian, in comparison with the study of general Russian, can be greatly streamlined, the average scientist will need a good deal of careful and patient pedagogical help before he will be able to read Russian texts with any degree of competence or facility. In my opinion, *Russian for the Scientist* provides such help, amply and expertly. At the same time, it greatly simplifies the study of Russian for those who, for understandable reasons, wish to concentrate their efforts on learning to read scientific texts, at the expense of other aspects of Russian.

Basically, this grammar approaches the problem in somewhat the same fashion as do certain contemporary regular Russian grammars. For example, it presents the cases of nouns one at a time and, in general, attempts (successfully, I think) to introduce other grammatical categories in proper pedagogical sequence. At the same time, there is a