Book Reviews

The Rebels. A study of post-war insurrections. Brian Crozier. Beacon Press, Boston, Mass., 1960. 256 pp. $3.95.

This is a fascinating and extremely informative study of a much-too-neglected subject, the anatomy of rebellion and the art of controlling rebels. Since the end of World War II the world has known no rest from internal wars; and even though there has been much discussion of how the balance of nuclear terror has increased the possibility of limited wars, there has been shockingly little serious scholarship on the subject of such forms of violence. Brian Crozier, Australian journalist and staff member of *The Economist*, has now provided us with an invaluable and lively introduction which takes the form of brief but rewarding conducted tours of almost all the postwar insurrections. These include the struggles by communists and noncommunists against both British and French colonial rule, insurrections against communist rule, and uprisings against the newly independent governments.

With remarkable economy of words, Crozier presents the roots of each rebellion and the key sequences of events so that even the previously uninformed reader can quickly grasp the essence of each situation. The scene moves from the jungles of Malaya and Vietnam to the white highlands of Kenya and the mountains of Algeria with breath-taking rapidity, but without superficiality in treatment. Specialists on particular countries and situations will be able to raise some questions of both fact and judgment—Crozier does seem to be just a bit more understanding of British embarrassments than French ones—but all must acknowledge that, as a broad work in contemporary history, this is a tour de force.

In spite of his accumulation of information, Crozier has some difficulties in advancing either completely convincing or particularly novel explanations of the nature of rebellions. Essentially, he advances the view that rebellions always stem from frustrations; political frustrations stem mainly from bad government; bad government generally means not moving with the times and forgetting that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure—for example, always stay one step ahead of a people's demand for independence; and if a rebellion does break out, only beastly governments can effectively use pure repression while democratic governments must combine a search for a political settlement with their use of force.

No objections can be made to any of these points; indeed, not only are Crozier's values right, but in various contexts, he has much to say of real political wisdom on these matters. The difficulties are the intellectual ones of categorizing knowledge and demonstrating the significance of relationships. We can all agree that there should be less frustration and more good government in the world; but we can feel this way precisely because people are always frustrated and governments are never as good as they should be. The fact that we find these conditions existing at all times, including the periods preliminary to a rebellion, may or may not mean that they are relevant in "explaining" subsequent rebellions. One of the great feats of the human imagination is the ability of political man to find, regardless of the objective circumstances, a public cause for giving expression to his private problems.

The fundamental difficulty Crozier has in arriving at a typology of rebellions is that he limits himself almost entirely to the level of political and rational calculations. People can get mixed up with, and even come to lead, rebellions for a whole host of reasons ranging from the most personal to the most general. This is particularly likely during periods of great social upheaval when people feel adrift. Indeed, during unsettled times, many people may be far less interested in the objectives of a movement than in the simple act of association and participation. They may just want to belong even when bored with the announced goals, and they may want to lead even when uninspired by professed objectives. In short, all problems are not to be solved by such crude methods as administrative programs and good government; in dealing with problems common to drastically changing societies, it is especially important to recognize the tremendous gap that usually exists between personal motivations and public issues.

These observations only suggest that, as we follow Crozier's lead and begin to study rebellions more seriously, we are likely to find that we are dealing with a subject which calls for a complete examination of all aspects of the problems of creating modern men and modern societies. It would be too bad if, at the beginning of such an effort, we were to commit ourselves too strongly to the view that human frustrations are dangerous and that the objective of government should be the creation of a placid and docile population by forward-thinking, manipulative administrative programs. Another alternative, or at least a complementary approach, might be to encourage the expression of frustration, hostility, and aggression, but through socially acceptable channels; for many of the greatest achievements of mankind, from art to politics, have occurred because men have been driven on by their frustrations and even by their aggressions. As a very wise colonial official once observed, when informed that the steam could be easily taken out of native opposition movement by giving the ambitious leaders minor government jobs, "Men should have their inalienable rights to frustrations, and good government should never rest upon the buying off of discontent."

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The Stone Age of Northern Africa. C. B. M. McBurney. Penguin Books, London, 1960. 288 pp. Illus. $1.45.

McBurney's latest contribution in the field of North African prehistory is a pleasant surprise. Too many books of this kind are so overloaded with ponderous and poorly organized masses of