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Review article/Besprekingsartikel

NIGEL HAMILTON, *Monty — the Field Marshall 1944—76,* Hamish Hamilton Ltd, London 1986, Illus., Index, 996 pp., R49,95.

On 14 March 1976 there passed away in England one of the most distinguished soldiers Britain had ever produced: Field Marshall Bernard Law 1st Viscount Montgomery of Alamein. He was a great field general, arguably the equal of the duke of Wellington and Admiral Horatio Nelson, but a most contentious character as a man. He paid no regard to the opinion of others and seemed immune to the criticisms of war correspondents — probably just as well, for both the British and the American press seemed to delight in denigrating him, criticising him in the harshest of terms. He was inured to such treatment and replied that after his death "the rats would get at him".

Before his death Montgomery passed all his memoirs, diaries, orders and other documents to his great friend Sir Denis Hamilton, a publisher, who was to write the great man's biography, but ill health persuaded Sir Denis to pass this task on to his son, Nigel, also an author, who had known and been befriended by Monty since childhood. Nigel tackled this formidable task with loyalty and determination, and after labouring hard and long for seven years produced three massive volumes close to 3 000 pages, covering Monty's life from birth to death: *Monty — the Making of a General 1887—1942; Monty — the Master of the Battlefield 1942—1944;* and *Monty. The Field Marshall 1944—1976.*

Hamilton has probably produced the finest biography of Monty that has or will be written. He had access to all Monty's papers but in addition was able to interview all Monty's colleagues both civil and military (both friend and foe — of which there were many). In this the third volume his honesty and objectivity as an author come clearly to the fore; he does not hesitate to praise and criticise; he exposes the personality clash between Monty on the one hand and Eisenhower and Bradley on the other; his narrative becomes dramatically alive as the strategies and tactics of the protagonists are surgically analysed and presented. The role of the powerful media is clearly shown when the Americans credited Eisenhower and Bradley with most of the glory for the fighting, while the British newspapers praised Monty at the expense of his American colleagues.

In the end Monty emerges from the pages of the third volume as a true Jekyll-and-hyde character; as an unmatched battlefield commander with a genius for simplification, lucid presentation and sure direction. As a man, an arrogant bully, devoured by his megalomania for being the centre of the stage, yet at heart a kindly and caring instructor of children and soldiers. Yet beneath the facade of military arrogance and bravado he was at heart a man of peace.

During the battle for Normandy, Eisenhower, as Supreme Commander Allied Forces, had his headquarters in London, while Montgomery, as sole battlefield commander, masterminded the titanic struggles in France. As the end of the fighting loomed large Montgomery on 17 August 1944 proposed that he as field commander should lead a mass attack of 40 divisions over a narrow front towards the Ruhr. The Germans, he maintained, had not the strength on the western front to withstand such an attack. (After the war Field Marshal van Rundstedt, the German Commander, confirmed Monty's view).

In this the third and final volume: *Monty. The Field Marshal 1944—1976,* Nigel Hamilton tells a fascinating story of two diverse characters on a constant and sometimes violent collision course. On the one hand was Eisenhower: the great mediator and conciliator, who not only had to give guidance to millions of soldiers of different nationalities but also had to consider the effect of his decisions on the American people and their politics in the approaching Presidential elections.

To Monty, on the other hand, with his narrow single-track military mind, these considerations were quite unacceptable. In his mind a single massive strike would demolish the enemy, but to succeed, the problem had to be firmly "gripped" and pursued to its final end. Berlin was the main target which would fall if the Ruhr could be isolated: hence the line of attack should be aimed to approach the Ruhr from the north, thus also side-stepping the northern end of the Siegfried Line.

Eisenhower decided to launch the attack along the whole front which sprawled from the Dutch coast to the border of Switzerland, a distance of 450 miles.

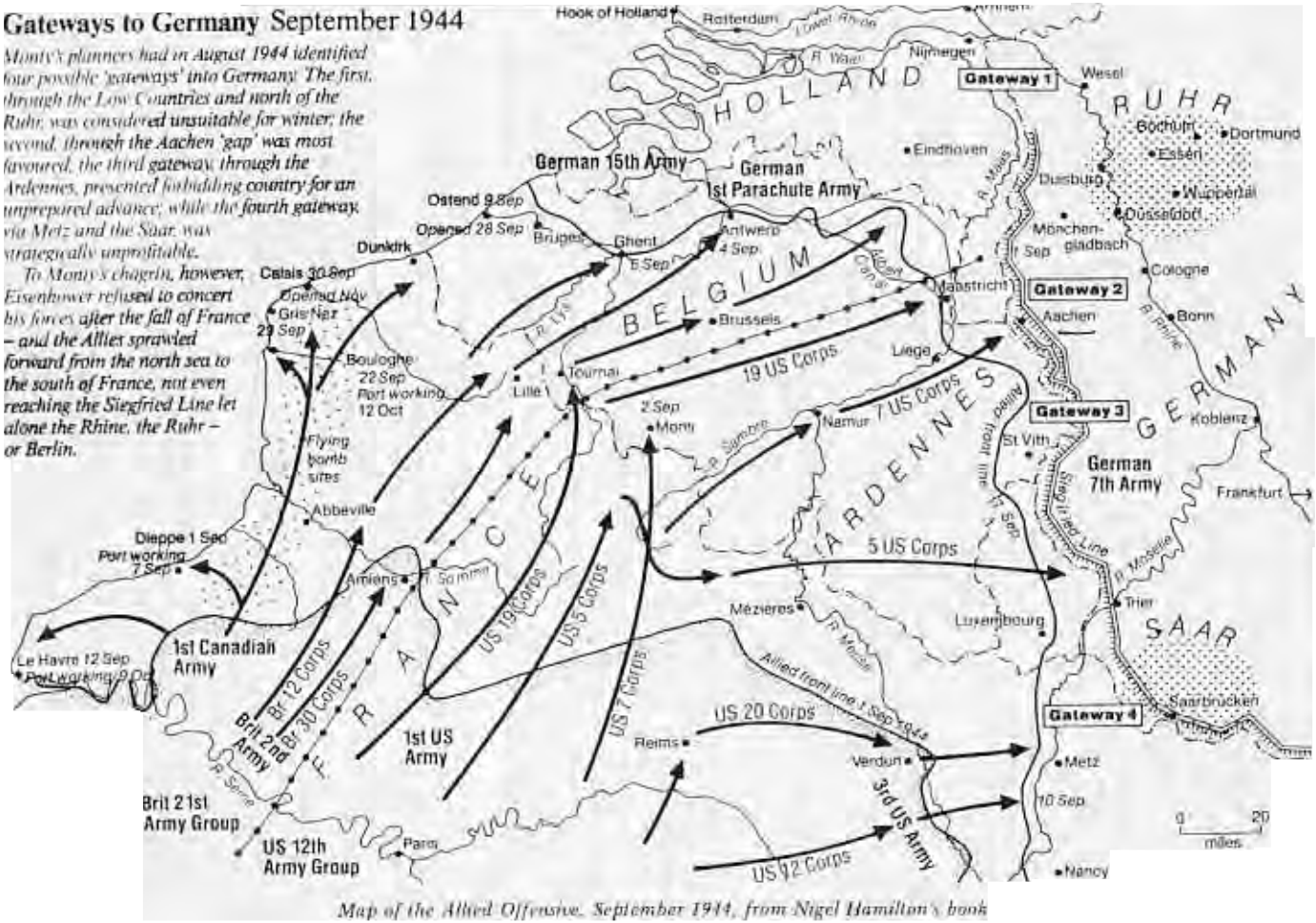
The Allies started moving from Normandy on 1 September 1944, the day Eisenhower assumed command of the battlefield and the day, also, on which Gen Hodges's 1st U S Army passed from command of Monty's 21st Army Group to Gen Bradley's 12th U S Army Group. On this day, too, Monty was promoted to the rank of Field Marshal, but since he also lost control of 2nd U S Army on this day the high rank did not do much to raise his spirits.

At this stage Eisenhower had three army groups under command: on the left Monty's 21st Army

Gateways to Germany September 1944

Monty's planners had in August 1944 identified four possible 'gateways' into Germany. The first, through the Low Countries and north of the Ruhr, was considered unsuitable for winter; the second, through the Aachen 'gap' was most favoured; the third gateway, through the Ardennes, presented forbidding country for an unprepared advance; while the fourth gateway, via Metz and the Saar, was strategically unprofitable.

To Monty's chagrin, however, Eisenhower refused to concert his forces after the fall of France – and the Allies sprawled forward from the north sea to the south of France, not even reaching the Siegfried Line let alone the Rhine, the Ruhr – or Berlin.



Map of the Allied Offensive, September 1944, from Nigel Hamilton's book

Group containing 1st Canadian Army and 1st British Army — a total of 16 divisions. In the centre was Gen Bradley's 12th U S Army Group and on the right, and approaching from the south, Gen Devers's 6th Army — a total of ± 60 divisions. By the 17th September the Allied Armies occupied an extended front from Ostend, through Ghent and Maastricht to Metz. The dividing line between the American and British forces ran from Amiens to Tournai to Maastricht with 21st British Army Group on the left, 12th U S Army Group on the right and Devers's 6th Army coming up from the south of France.

All this time Monty never stopped belly-aching and protesting about the field command set-up: he stated Eisenhower could not supply "grip and direction" from London — later Eisenhower had a headquarters at Granville and subsequently in the Trianon Palace, Versailles. Every night Monty either sent letters or signals to F M Allan Brooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff in London, and complained bitterly about Eisenhower's ineffectualness. He wrote to Churchill and even to the King — all to no purpose. Monty's disillusion was complete when Bradley launched Hodges's 1st U S Army ahead towards Antwerp and Aachen without a single overall commander who could develop a two-pronged assault on the Ruhr. He saw in this their only hope of ending the battle soon, squandered. To Monty's intense irritation Bradley further planned an eastward thrust to the Rhine and into Germany south of the Ardennes in which Patton had to be prepared to seize river crossings of the Rhine from Mannheim to Coblenz. (On this line of attack the Siegfried Line had to be crossed leading to many unnecessary casualties).

In desperation Monty planned his own attack in the east which would open the way to the Ruhr. This plan developed into the airdrop on Arnhem and Nijmegen on 9th September 44, which failed because Monty lacked the means to sustain the attack with adequate support and supplies for the beleaguered paratroops at Arnhem and Nijmegen. This operation raised eyebrows among Monty's planners as it ignored the obvious solution to the supply problem: activation of the port of Antwerp, before any move into Germany could be contemplated. Later in the campaign Monty sacked the Island of Walcheren and opened the port of Antwerp which paved the way for his subsequent launching of his attack on the Ruhr from the bridgehead left at Nijmegen — the only bonus resulting from the abortive attack on Arnhem.

The attacks all along the front had come to a standstill, and Patton on the right was said to be meeting increased resistance losing up to 30 000 men in one month.

Meanwhile the rift between Eisenhower and Monty grew ever wider. Monty never let-up on his tirade against Eisenhower. He bombarded Allan Brooke with nightly signals and finally, having reached breaking point, wrote to Brooke: "Eisenhower has taken command of the Armies and sits at Granville without communication with his forward Armies except W/T. He might as well be in London.

Eisenhower himself does not really know anything about fighting the Germans; he does not understand the matter and is served by the wrong staff.

I am convinced that had the show been firmly gripped we could have advanced towards the Ruhr. There has been no grip".

As Hamilton remarks, this was reprehensible language about one's superior, but Eisenhower was dishing out criticism of Monty in like manner in his frequent despatches to General George Marshall in Washington.

What Monty failed to recognise from his forward tactical headquarters was that coalition warfare necessitated compromises and lack of grip, and that leaders most suited to coalition command, like Eisenhower and Alexander, were of necessity conciliators. In a word: Eisenhower was no match for Monty in fighting battles, but Monty could never have filled Eisenhower's shoes.

Despite his constant griping about the field command structure of the Allied Armies, Monty failed to take the single most obvious and vital step to get the Armies moving — opening of the Port of Antwerp. And Eisenhower's greatest weakness as a supreme commander was his failure to order Monty to clear the Port, which he would have had to obey.

The survivors of the Arnhem attack were retrieved across the Neder Rijn on the night of 25th September, but the Germans were now alerted to Allied intentions as their complete battle plans were found on the body of an American paratroop officer.

On 16th December '44 Hitler launched three panzer divisions against Hodges's 12th US Army Group. Bradley placed two more divisions under Hodges's command but these two generals did not take the threat seriously. However, it soon became clear that the Allies were facing a major threat, with no reserves to stem any breakthrough by the enemy. This attack also threatened Monty's position in the north, and without waiting for instructions from Eisenhower, he placed patrols on all the bridges on the River Meuse, between Liege and Namur. He also diverted four of his British divisions to take up positions behind the Meuse, but facing south. The three American generals, Eisenhower, Bradley and Hodges, had lost contact with each other and were thus unaware of the seriousness of the position.

This incident was a grave indictment of Eisenhower's claim to be an effective land force commander. American control broke down for lack of communications and all three were completely cut off from their armies. Matters were further complicated when rumours went the rounds that a deathsquad of German

paratroopers had been dropped behind the Allied lines with instructions to assassinate all the commanders. Eisenhower and Bradley immediately cut themselves off from the outside world. Eisenhower sat in the Trianon Palace at Versailles with doors locked and windows closed, curtains drawn and shutters latched, day and night. At his headquarters at Luxenbourg Bradley was persuaded to sleep in a different bed every night. Monty was left on his own, but by making good use of his system of sending liaison officers daily to different parts of the front he kept fully abreast of developments. He paid no attention to the assassination rumours.

On 20th December Eisenhower ordered 1st and 9th U S Armies to be placed under command of Montgomery, who was also given field command to stem the German attack. He also put 9th and 29th U S Tactical Air commands under British command, a fact which was never publicised. (It was deemed dangerous to let it be known that American Air units served under British commands.) Notwithstanding the paratroop threat, Monty immediately visited his two new American Armies and set about tidying matters up. He formed a reserve corps from the strengths of 2nd and 9th U S Armies, under command of Maj-Gen Joe Collilns, with instructions to form a buffer behind the two American Armies. Maj-Gen Patton with his 31st U S Army, was ordered to advance north and attack the left German flank. Monty did not intend to attack the Germans; rather his plans were to allow the German panzers to butt up against the Allied line, incurring heavy losses as well as imperilling their supply lines the further they advanced. At no time were British forces used in the battle. The Americans, from Eisenhower down, were most upset when they realised that Monty had no intention of fighting for an Allied victory in the salient — he said it would prove too costly in lost lives.

The German attack in the Ardennes finally fizzled out with the capture by the Americans of Houffalize on 16th January 1945. The balance of the Germans retired behind their original line.

Monty's prediction that it would be pointless to continue fighting along the whole line was finally proved true when the American Armies were not able to do more than restore their erstwhile line in the Ardennes at a terrible (rumoured) cost of 100 000 casualties. Eisenhower was finally compelled to close down these operations and shift the Allied thrust to Monty's northern attack towards the Rhine and the Ruhr.

The success of this notable achievement, far from welding a closer relationship between the Americans and the British actually caused a rift between the commanders which degenerated into a lifelong hatred between Montgomery and Eisenhower and Bradley. This sad state of affairs was triggered by Monty at a News Conference he held on 7th January 45.

In his most objectionable manner he told the Press how he had won the battle of the Ardennes using American Armies. What he said was quite innocuous, but the manner of his presentation gave great personal offence to Bradley. It was quite clear from then on there would be no question of co-operation between Monty and Bradley.

The antagonism also spilled over on the relationship between Eisenhower and Monty and it reached a stage where Eisenhower was thinking of resigning, and Monty got the fright of his life when it was rumoured that Gen Alexander would be arriving soon to replace him as Commander, 21st Army Group. He promptly apologised to Eisenhower and promised undivided loyalty.

On 30 January '45, at Malta, Eisenhower's appreciation of conditions at the front (attacking all the way from Holland to Switzerland) was turned down at a meeting of the combined British and American staffs. The green light was given for Monty's proposed limited attack to cross the Rhine before neutralising the Ruhr. He was also given two U S Armies to bolster his own forces.

However, before action started the Germans opened the sluice gates of the Ruhr dams flooding the area to a level which made crossing by assault boats impossible.

Monty was delighted when his plan was adopted but Bradley still longed to isolate the Ruhr by attacks from Bonn to Switzerland. He was bitterly opposed to Monty's attack from the north.

Monty's battle went splendidly and by 23rd Feb '45 his left hook had achieved complete surprise while the right hook of the 9th U S Army brought a good supply of added bridging equipment — he soon had 23 bridges and 40 temporary military bridges across the river Ruhr. The success of the right hook by American troops enthused Bradley on this line of approach. The speed of advance was doubly spectacular since it was achieved without air support — the "airbarons" thought attacking bridges was quite futile.

The Rhine was crossed and Monty had issued instructions for crossing the Elbe, when disaster struck. Eisenhower signalled Monty: "I agree with your plans in general up to the point of gaining contact with Bradley east of the Ruhr. Thereafter my present plans being co-ordinated with Stalin".

These plans were: "9th U S Army to revert to Bradley, who will mop up and occupy the Ruhr, and then, with minimum force will deliver your main thrust on the axis Erfurt — Leipzig — Dresden to join hands with the Russians. You will protect Bradley's northern flank".

This blow flabbergasted Monty. The mention of the Russians was a mystery, and presumably the plans flowed from a secret contact Eisenhower had made earlier on with Stalin. On 28th March Eisenhower

sent Stalin a second message in which he assured him that he would not occupy Berlin. This message was one of Eisenhower's most astonishing acts in World War II. It was sent without the knowledge of his second-in-command, Air Marshall Tedder, or of the Combined Chiefs of Staff or his Army Group commanders (Monty and Bradley).

In Monty's mind the new developments meant "the burgeoning of American desire to crush British wings and ring down an American curtain on the war". Monty thought it deplorable that at the moment when he was poised to strike for the Elbe and Berlin, he was prevented from doing so. Monty thought that this was resurrection of a fear of a Southern Redoubt which Bradley had earlier bandied about. It was not clear what this 'spook' was, but it was widely propagated as a sudden attack the Germans might launch from the south. No indication where these Germans were holing up — Monty dismissed these rumours with scorn and disdain.

Hamilton thought "all this might have been avoided if Monty had only encouraged Eisenhower's original intention to transfer Bradley's 12th U S Army Group north of the Ruhr instead of ridiculing the proposal. American humour would thereby have been preserved, the main Allied Armies would have remained together and the road to Berrlin secured". There can be little doubt that Bradley had persuaded Eisenhower at the cardinal point of the war to drive to Dresden and not Berlin. Thus Monty reaped the harvest which he himself had seeded. The chance of a final combined Allied thrust to end the war was lost and with it the prize of Berlin. There can also be no doubt that Monty would have agreed to Eisenhower's plan had he (Monty) been given sole field command of all the forces.

The Americans had 61 and the British 16 divisions in the field, and it was only natural that Eisenhower would now take an increasingly nationalistic view of affairs; he was determined to give Bradley the lions' share of the battle. British protests under these circumstances could only furhter exacerbate ill-feeling between the Allies. In fact the pressure exerted by the American press left Eisenhower no alternative.

On 3rd April 1945 9th U S Army was returned to Bradley who stopped his forces from crossing the Rhine on 13th April. He mounted an offensive south of the Ruhr — ignoring Berlin — and which lost Prague and almost lost the Danish Peninsula to the Russians.

A period of extraordinary American chauvinism set in: news reports painting achievements in glowing colours. Particularly Bradley's exploits. But from behind this dazzling self-praise was Bradley's vengeful spirit for his poor performance in the battle of the Ardennes. Forgotten was Monty's masterly handling of the battle, but his news conference on 7th Jan. when he denigrated Bradley was now rebounding with a vengeance.

Bradley not only delayed his projected attack on Dresden but refused to move until an equivalent Russian Assault was launched into Silesia.

On 8th April, Eisenhower, concerned at Bradley's slow pace, authorised Monty to "crack" along the northern front in order to draw enemy forces from Bradley's main forces in the south. Bradley relieved Monty of the responsibility for protecting his left flank.

At this stage Eisenhower was still being bedevilled by arguments about the merits of Berlin as a legitimate target. Monty advocated and stressed its importance. Bradley refused to increase his pace of advance.

Rooseveldt's death on 12th April left the American forces in a temporary vacuum. On this day Monty was deeply shocked by the receipt of a signal from SHAEF (Eisenhower's headquarters at Reims). It was hoped Monty realised the urgent need to get to Lübeck before the Russians did. This was followed by a phone call from Eisenhower in which he reminded Monty of the importance of Lübeck and the Danish Peninsula. He promised Monty all help to ensure the speed and success of the operation. This was rich when viewed against Eisenhower's fanatical determination not to do just that, as Monty had been pleading all along.

Eisenhower gave Monty command of 18th U S Airborne Corps and these two divisions were used to cross the Elbe on the night of 28th/29th April.

As the advance progressed thousands of political prisoners were liberated and Monty was sickened by the sights that met his eyes at Belsen and other camps. In a general order to his troops he warned against fraternisation, in any form, with enemy subjects.

By the end of April the Russians were in the suburbs of Berlin; on 1st May they were within a couple of hundred yards of Hitler's bunker, "whereupon, from his temporary headquarters, Admiral Dönitz announced the Führer's death and his own succession as head of the Third Reich, broadcast by Radio Hamburg".

Monty's troops were moving as fast as they could, but the Russians were also racing and by 1st May had reached Rostock a bare 35 miles to Wismar and a further 30 to Lübeck. On 2nd May patrols of 6th U S Airborne Division entered Wismar, a bare 12 hours ahead of the Russians. Lübeck also fell to Monty's troops.

In his report to London Monty said: "The flood of German troops and civilians fleeing from the ap-

proaching Russians is a spectacle that can seldom have been seen before, and it will be interesting to see how it sorts itself out tomorrow". It was also said on the Russian side of the border not a soul was seen — and every woman under 70 years of age had been raped.

After a certain amount of histrionics to impress the German officers, Monty accepted the surrender of the Third Reich at his headquarters at Lüneberg on 4th May 1945. He got in a last dig: he had drafted the Instrument of Surrender in which the surrender was made to 21st Army Group i.e. himself. The surrender document was submitted to Eisenhower the following day.

Thus ended the last world war to be conducted by massed armies — nuclear power will ensure that. It was a titanic struggle but one cannot help wondering how many lives were needlessly lost through the bickering and confrontation between the principal Allied generals of the war. Would co-operation instead of confrontation, have led to an early end of the battle with a line drawn along the River Oder — thus placing the whole Germany in the Allied Sector?

Monty's post-war oppointments

Monty's military service did not end with the cessation of hostilities. He was successively charged with the military Government of British-occupied Germany; he was CIGS in Whitehall, London; he played a part in the debacle of Palestine; he tried to resurrect the Atlantic Alliance and played a major role as architect and founder of NATO.

Monty expected to be, and was, appointed as Military Governor of the British Zone of Occupied Germany as well as C-in-C British Forces. He approached his task in an essentially military manner and identified the immediate problems:

(a) To disarm and disband the German Forces;

(b) To re-establish civil control sufficiently to enable the people to live decently and without disease or disorder.

To promote and advance civil control he drafted a message of intention which he sent to Eisenhower for information. (Eisenhower at this stage was Commander of All American Forces in Europe). The message contained the following intentions:

Restoration of Press freedom;
Acceptance of Trade Unions;
Public meetings and discussions permitted;
Problems to be resolved among selves;
Political activities granted.

On receipt of this message, Eisenhower's chief of staff recommended outright rejection as it did not conform to his notion of treating a defeated enemy. Eisenhower, however, demurred and requested Monty to hold it back until his staff could come up with a similar American message. This incident suddenly gave Monty a new perception of the major task of conciliation Eisenhower had performed during the war, and surrounded as he was by small and narrowminded men. If only this realisation had dawned on Monty during the recent battles.[1]

Visions of a central European Commission soon evaporated in the attrition of the French and the Russians. French intransigence was designed to drive the Americans out of Europe, and by destroying German frontiers beyond the Oder-Neisse line Stalin ensured that neither Poland nor Russia would ever again be vulnerable to attack from the West.

As the days sped by Monty sat secluded in his Schloss at Ostenwalde becoming ever more detached from his post as Chief of the British Occupation Forces. He never left his headquarters and governed entirely through his subordinates. It was a traumatic experience for him to find his life's work virtually done, and no battle to fight. As he brooded he became ever more egotistical — developing into a type of megalomania which reached its rudest level when he refused his mother a seat anywhere near him at a banquet given in his honour by the Mayor of Newport on 25th September '45. He dealt Sir Francis de Guingand a similar stunning blow, when he refused De Guingand permission to accompany him on a nostalgic visit to the Alamein battlefield. At Alamein De Guingand, by his brilliant staff work, laid the foundation of Monty's success in the last battle against the Germans on Egyptian soil. Monty also refused to promote De Guingand to the post of Vice Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Chief of the Imperial General Staff

In anticipation of his appointment as Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Monty set to and produced

ambitious scheme for Britain's post-war army, embracing conditions of service, morale, structure of the army and training. He also formulated inter-service doctrines and tactics. In March of 1945 he learned of the drastic cuts in defence expenditure introduced by the Labour Government and realised that Britain's world-wide commitments would be changed significantly. In fact it heralded Britain's complete withdrawal from India, the Middle East and Africa. The days of the rajah were numbered.

Monty was arguably the worst incumbent of the prestigious post of CIGS. He was the Army's member of the Chiefs of Staff, the others being Marshal of the Air Force Lord Tedder, Royal Air Force, and Admiral John Cunningham, Royal Navy. Monty keenly anticipated taking up his new post, but whatever harmony there might have been, was shattered the moment Monty stepped into Field Marshal Allan Brooke's shoes. "Monty couldn't stand Tedder, having declared war on him at an earlier stage. John Cunningham was very clever, but Monty didn't like his style of cleverness and in fact didn't like him at all. Cunningham didn't like Monty; Tedder didn't like Monty so it was not a very happy organisation with Tedder and Cunningham ganging up on Monty".

Monty became CIGS during the last week of June 1946 but in an atmosphere of so many animosities nothing worthwhile was achieved, and due to the fiscal policies of the Labour Government Monty saw all his fondest dreams go up in smoke. Monty was clearly out of step with his times and held a Victorian concept of empire and spheres of influence. He was appalled when Mountbatten granted India independence with three months notice; at the British withdrawal from Israel leaving the country to Jewish mercies, and lastly his illusions of grand design for the African Territories controlled from London dissolved in smoke. Monty failed to see that bankrupt Britain was not financially strong enough to rehabilitate the African colonies.

Amid all the fighting and feuding on the Chiefs of Staff Committee, Monty paid a visit to Russia, where he met Stalin, and on his return to London warned that Russia was in a state of chaos and would not be ready for war for at least 20 years. He expressed the opinion that Germany would hold the key to world peace and it was from this direction that Russia would practise a policy of "squeeze" on the West. The Western powers should be allied to withstand such pressures.

Western Union

These predictions were proved to be only too well-founded when, on 24th June 1946, the Russians closed all access to Berlin by road, rail and water. The appointment of a supreme commander of the armies of the Western Union thus became one of extreme urgency and after due discussions and lobbying, on 3rd October 1948, the British Government confirmed the appointment of Field Marshal Montgomery to the post of Chairman of the Western Union Chiefs of Staff. Powers of the Western Union approved this appointment.

If Monty had a stormy passage as CIGS, it was as a veritable calm to the strained relations which now emerged with the French General de Lattre de Tassigny, commander of Land Forces Western Union. The Frenchman refused to be subordinated to Monty in case of war.

To add to Monty's problems, Eisenhower published his memoirs in 'Crusade in Europe', and not only criticised Monty's ability as a field commander but also insinuated that America won the war; all British ideas were "shot down".

As the feud between Monty and De Tassigny reached rock bottom, Monty proclaimed at the end of one of his exercises "that there was no effective fighting force in Western Europe that could offer effective resistance to Russian aggression. He thought the unpreparedness and lack of equipment and communications would one day offer a terrible temptation to the Russians to resort to war." He also thought it was imperative to appoint one person who was completely international to command Western Union Forces.

NATO

Monty and De Tassigny finally made peace and sufficient unity was displayed by the Western Union defence ministers to persuade President Truman — alarmed by the crisis in Korea — to set up an enlarged North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Defence Headquarters under General Dwight D Eisenhower.

In the period leading up to Eisenhower's assumption of command, Monty went through a phase of weird isolation "denying himself even the affection and loyal service of those who loved and admired him, lest they come too close". He had refused to attend his mother's funeral early in 1951 and had also finally turned his back on Sir Francis de Guingand, loyal and brilliant staff officer.

On 1st April 1951 Eisenhower took over NATO command with Monty as his second-in-command. The headquarters was located in the Astoria Hotel, Paris which Monty regarded with absolute contempt. In his view it was an invitation to disaster.

However, he welcomed the work he had to do: to make a plan for NATO, to divise a strategy for NATO that would give the organisation a sense of purpose and direction.

Monty embarked on a self-imposed task of visiting the NATO members in turn from UK to Belgium,

Holland, Norway, Denmark and Italy. With Eisenhower's backing he could now thump the table, could threaten to strike a country off his list if there was any resistance to policy. Monty was now in his element and relished every moment of it.

This acute activity preparing for war masked Monty's true belief in peace. He regarded Russia as the greatest potential enemy of the West, and he believed the only way to counter this was to be prepared to meet any threat that might arise. Moreover, he believed that the West's only salvation lay in close allied effort and co-operation.

Increasingly, Monty adopted the role of prophet and critic in NATO, and by the time he finally retired in 1958, at the age of 71 years, his departure was long overdue. His contributions to NATO were immense. He paved the way for the entry of Germany, and his annual command exercises were honest and "more controversial than any other figure would have dared put forward".

Eisenhower was succeeded by the American General Ridgway, with whom Monty had as stormy passage and relationship as he had had with Eisenhower during the advance from Normandy. De Tassigny proved equally difficult and he flatly refused to co-operate with Monty. At the base of his disagreement with Ridgway lay two diametrically opposed views on the structure and aim of NATO's forces. Ridgway believed in bigger, massed armies, while Monty favoured smaller compact armies — well equipped, trained and officered. Monty felt any future struggle would be dominated by air and naval power, hence his doctrine of having both the North Atlantic and Mediterranean flanks guarded by navies, while a powerful airforce, commanded by one man, was to support the armies in the centre.

General Al Gruenther replaced Ridgway during July 1953, and General Larry Norstadt, another American, was appointed Commander-in-Chief NATO Air Forces. These two "had Monty taped" and instead of opposing him at every turn "buttered him up and had him eating out of their hands". These three became a powerful trio in NATO and flourished as never before.

These new commanders approved Monty's "New Look" which then developed into the "New Approach Group". Monty was in truth the dinamo behind NATO's new and confident role in the maintenance of peace in Europe; he drafted the "Emergency Defence plan of October 1954, and guided the submission of Gruenther's new NATO proposals to the standing Grtoup in the summer of 1954. As the Inspector-General of NATO forces Monty spread the gospel from Norway to Portugal to Turkey.

This work was most satisfying to Monty, but hardly had Gruenther accepted his ideas of the new look, or his thoughts began to pass again to the larger, global context of Western defence. He emphasised that the West should be "locked into an agreed, global political aim which was sufficiently clear to guide military strategy". The Communist bloc is centrally controlled from Moscow. The free nations have no such advantages".

French Indo-China, Vietnam and Suez proved Monty's predictions correct. The free nations were risking defeat in detail by dissipating their national efforts piecemeal across the globe. Monty's plea to Eden and Churchill to incorporate the Suez Canal into the NATO umbrella went unheeded and the way for subsequent abandonment of its Anglo-French friends in 1956 was opened.

At this stage Monty started writing his "Memoirs", and in spite of the most vigorous attempt by his friend Williams to get him to tone down his style, Monty was determined to tell the story his way, and the result was a life-long rift between him and Eisenhower who never spoke or wrote to Monty again.

On 20th November 1956 Norstadt succeeded Gruenther as Supreme Commander and accepted Monty's new approach for the defence of Europe, but Monty, looking forward, called for yet another radical change in NATO strategy: the days of the "levee en masse" — of massive forces mobilised on the outbreak of war — were numbered. The nuclear deterrent made the logistical mobility required by large scale mobilization impossible.

The heart of Monty's proposal was "never to march on Moscow" and the offensive nuclear punch was to be exploited by air, sea and land forces.

The land armies should adopt the strategical defensive initially and must not give the enemy the resources or the opportunity to liberate the satellite countries. NATO should train fire-fighting forces "to handle limited aggression in NATO countries, such as Turkey and Norway which would not require nuclear weapons to be used". By full use of air transportation ugly situations could be defused which might lead to unlimited nuclear war.

By this new approach Monty put naval power — nuclear submarines — back on the "balance of power" which elicited unstinted praise from Lord Mountbatten.

Ever looking forward at the next hurdle to be cleared, Monty now questioned the whole existing NATO hierarchy. He recommended the abolition of the Military Committee, the Standing Group and the Military Representatives' Committee in Washington. The Supreme Commanders in Europe and the Atlantic would then be responsible to the NATO council in Europe, who would be aided by the Joint Services Advisers. This would result in a simple, sound and effective organisation. Great savings in staff and money would also be achieved, and orders would become "the basis for action instead of for argument".

Before he departed from NATO Monty visited America and there perpetrated one of the biggest faux pas of his life: he belittled the American generals Lee and Meade for their tactics employed during the Battle of Gettysburg; said they should have been sacked. This not only mortified his host Eisenhower, but stirred up so much emotion in the South that Monty had to call off a visit to Montgomery, Alabama.

After a welter of speeches, lunches and farewell functions Monty finally retired from NATO on 18th September 1958, aged 71 years. During his service he had paved the way for the entry into NATO of West Germany, and the French Government had thought so highly of his contribution to NATO that it awarded him the MéDAILLE MILITAIRE. The British Government gave him nothing.

Monty's "Memoirs" was published a few days after he left NATO and this propelled him immediately into an uproar. In his outspoken way he said some bruising things about Eisenhower, and made downright slanderous remarks about General Auchinleck's handling of Eight Army in Egypt in 1942.

Eisenhower took such umbrage at Monty's remarks that he turned his back on his former army commander and never spoke or wrote to him again. Auchinleck, however, threatened legal action if the slander was published without apology or correction. In the end the publisher added a note explaining Auchinleck's role at Alamein.

In retirement Monty devoted himself to lecturing to adults, students and pupils; also to fundraising. He was at heart a teacher — probably the greatest instructor the British Army had known. The final years were spent in loneliness in his house at Islington, Hampshire; he died on 24th March 1976.

GEN. H J MARTIN

Europe/Europa

G MARTEL (ed.), *The Origins of the Second World War Reconsidered. The A.J.P. Taylor Debate after Twenty-Five Years,* Allen and Unwin, Boston, etc., 1986, pp. 276.

During the nineteen-sixties and nineteen-seventies, Alan John Percivale Taylor was probably the best-known historian in the English-speaking world. Perhaps he still is. His autobiography published in 1983 was a best-seller and his television lectures (usually delivered without notes or prompts) can still be guaranteed to top the charts.

A.J.P. Taylor is renowned for the controversial nature of his views even more than for his prolificity. Most of his twenty-eight publications — including his *Personal History* — have been provocative, to say the least, and have in some way or other questioned conventional wisdom. None of his other works, however, produced the storms that blew up after the publication of *The Origins of the Second World War* in 1961. In his autobiography Taylor relates that when a taxi driver in Munich learnt who he was, he remarked to him: 'You are the man who proved that Hitler did not cause the war. I know you are right. I was in the SS and one of his bodyguard'. Some members of the public and even historians who should have known better, did indeed see *The Origins* as a whitewash of Hitler. In actual fact the main theme of the book was rather a portrayal of Hitler not as a demonic genius who planned far in advance, but as an opportunist and *Realpolitiker* who did not differ much from other German leaders of the late nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries. Alan Taylor stressed the lines of continuity between the nineteen thirties and earlier periods. It was not only Hitler that Taylor presented in a different light. He took a contrary view, to that which was generally accepted, of most of the other European statesmen, their policies and the role played by their states in the 1920s and the 1930s.

It is remarkable that Taylor's book on the origins of the Second World War was published the same year as another seminal work, Fritz Fischer's controversial analysis of Germany's aims in the First World War, *Griff nach der Weltmacht.* Fischer's revised interpretations probably made even bigger waves than Taylor's and the ensuing Fischer debate has probably lasted longer in an intensified form, been more scholarly and has arguably led to the publication of more important by-products. One of the contributors to Martel's book suggests that Fischer's work is manifestly serious, announcing its own importance on every page whereas Taylor's is frivolous by comparison. 'Frivolous' is not quite fair, but such a view contains more than an element of truth. Yet the very appearance of this collection of twelve essays, mostly by historians from American universities, testifies to the significance and continuing impact of Taylor's book.

Historians who have written about the 1930s after 1961 have had increasingly more evidence to work from. Not surprisingly specialists have found that much of what Taylor wrote requires revision or reconsideration. But it is also evident that Taylor overlooked material that was available to him or wrongly interpreted evidence. It has also become clear that some of the criticism levelled at Taylor when his book was published, especially some regarding contradictions and exaggerations, were justified. And yet Taylor's book continues to be read and argued about.

This review can only deal with some of the intriguing comments of the contributors to this book of reconsideration.

Firstly the interpretations (or insights) that have stood the test of twenty-five years or that have been confirmed by other more detailed research. At a general level, Norman Rich believes *The Origins* can still be regarded as a brilliant challenge to orthodox beliefs. Robert Young sees Taylor as

> an historical *agent provocateur* who invited the blows of those who found his grasp of economics rudimentary, his interest in ideology moribund, his predilection for contrived aphorisms excessive. And yet he has never been chased from the field, never made to surrender.

More than one contributor stresses that few historians would now disagree with Taylor that the origins of World War II did not suddenly emerge in 1935 or 1936 and that his work forced historians to consider that World War II was not simply the outcome of a deranged man's design for world conquest. Some of Taylor's depictions of statesmen were ahead of their time and brilliantly conceived. Not many historians today would dispute his perceptive portrayal of Streseman as a great German nationalist rather than 'a good European'. Similarly his somewhat cynical views of British statesmen and diplomats like Simon, MacDonald, Hoare, Nevile Henderson and Halifax are now, in the light of new evidence, considered to be very accurate.

The team of contributors also point to serious flaws in Taylor's version of the coming of the war, some of which hinted at by critics in 1961, have become more glaring in the light of new research and perspectives. Central to Taylor's interpretation is his perception of Hitler as 'one more Weimar politician struggling manfully against the shackles of Versailles'. Sally Marks is adamant that such a view is completely unacceptable and that it is contradicted by the evidence. She postulates that Hitler's aims were vaster, his ideology different and his methods more drastic than those of his predecessors — he wanted more than a mere revision of the Versailles Treaty (some of which had already been wiped off the slate before Hitler came to power). Alan Cassels agrees and believes that a vital missing factor in Taylor's account of German foreign policy after 1933 is the ideological drive of National Socialism. It is only, Cassels argues, by disregarding Hitler's racialism and its expansionist concomitant, the quest for 'Lebensraum' that Taylor is able to present Hitler in the light that he does. Edward Ingram, however, poses the question whether it is necessary to make a choice between Hitler the opportunist and Hitler the fanatic: that Hitler was an opportunist need not preclude him from also having been a fanatic. Although Taylor may have been perspicacious in his portrayal of other British statesmen, Paul Kennedy is convinced that modern evidence has revealed Chamberlain as a far more complex figure than the one-dimensional businessman — turned politician sketched in *The Origins*. But more basically it is felt by Sally marks and others that Taylor's account lacked perspective as a result of his concentration almost exclusively on diplomatic (or military) matters. Public opinion, Paul Kennedy points out, was not a key feature of *The Origins* and when it was introduced, Taylor made mistakes. Norman Rich maintains that although Taylor's work may have been scholarly, it was not careful. Rich goes on to state that while every historian is forced to be selective in his use of evidence, the great weakness of Taylor's research was the perverse nature of his selectivity.

The editor did not ask A.J.P. Taylor for his views of *The Origins of the Second World War* after twenty-five years. Elsewhere, however, Taylor has (in 1981) provided some retrospective comments on the book. He expressed surprise that the book had aroused so much controversy and particularly that so many people saw it as an apology for Hitler. *'The Origins,* despite its defects', he declared, 'has now become the new orthodoxy, much to my alarm. Every historian cashes in on my views perhaps without knowing that he is doing so'.

This book of reconsideration is highly recommended both for the insights it provides into Taylor's provocative analysis of the origins of the Second World War, as well as for its discussion of the research done on the topic since 1961.

S B SPIES
University of South Africa

W J MOMMSEN and L KETTENACKER (eds.), *The Fascist Challenge and the Policy of Appeasement*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1983, pp. xii + 436.

Anthony Eden once pointed out that the dictionary offered a range of meanings for the word 'appeasement', extending from the idea of making peace by inducing agreement to the idea of making peace by offering concessions. In fact the *Concise Oxford Dictionary's* definition accentuates the possible negative connota-

tion of the term even more by introducing the concept of bribery and by stating that there is frequently a sacrifice of principles involved.

Historically appeasement has been used to describe British and French foreign policy towards the fascist dictators, Hitler and Mussolini — a policy which reached its climax (or nadir) at Munich in September 1938. It has been the conduct of Britain's external affairs from 1933 and more particularly the line of action of Neville Chamberlain from 1937 which has been most closely linked with the concept. During and for some time after the Second World War appeasement was generally somewhat emotionally, regarded as a short-sighted and supine surrender to the threat of force posed by Haly and Germany. There was even an extreme view which identified appeasement as a capitalist conspiracy to turn Hitler against Russia. It was fashionable to believe that if only Britain and France had stood up to Hitler earlier, the Second World War may have been averted and it may even have been possible to have got rid of Hitler.

This work is a reconsideration of the diplomacy of the 1930s — which the editors contend, may be considered 'the swan-song of Europe as an independent entity in international politics' — in the light of more than thirty years of research. The contributions originated from papers read by twenty-eight British (including one with South African connexions), German, French and American historians at a conference on 'The Threat to the International System by the Fascist Powers and the Policies of Appeasement' which was held in 1980 under the auspices of the German Historical Institute, London.

There is general agreement that many previous interpretations of 'appeasement' are simplistic and one-dimensional. It is contended that it is futile simply to concentrate on the motives and perceptions of certain statesmen, although these aspects must nevertheless be taken into account. The views and actions of individual decision-makers must be considered within their structural framework — the historian must be aware of the interaction of international diplomacy and domestic currents in various countries. Consequently, as the editors point out, 'a whole range of parliamentary financial, economic and social policy issues which influenced the decisions on foreign policy has been introduced into the debate'.

In this book the debate has focused on four areas — fascist aggression and the west; appeasement policies in Britain; appeasement and the European powers; appeasement in global perspective.

The foreign policies of nazi Germany and to some extent, of fascist Haly, are analysed by D.C. Watt, R.A.C. Parker, Ronald Smelser and others. It appears now that it is unlikely that any policy or combination of policies on the part of Britain and France could have stopped Hitler from going to war or could have separated him from the German people.

What emerges strongly in other areas is that the foreign policy options of Britain and France were severely limited by a number of factors which have received insufficient attention in the past.

Both Gustav Schmidt and Bernd-Jürgen Wendt, stress the need to examine the economic and financial facets of appeasement alongside its more usual political application. They point out that the question of armaments should be regarded as the decisive link between the various components of appeasement, domestic and foreign trade, politics and economics. Appeasement can then also be seen as a response to a precarious economic and social situation in Britain (and in France) as well as the hope that a rejection of the arms race would spill over into Germany. Appeasement, it is further propounded, was not merely as a strategy designed to enable Britain to catch up in the arms race; it also reflected, so it is argued, interest in using that time for a negotiated solution.

The strategic dimension, is examined by John Dunbabin and Brian Bond. British strategic overcommitment, limited resources, together with a reluctance on the part of the military establishment to become involved again in a war on the continent as it had in 1914, are shown to have been important ingredients of the appeasement policy.

René Girault, Anthony Adamthwaite and others analyse the French contribution to appeasement. Historians have traditionally emphasized French dependence on, and subservience to, Britain. It is now postulated that far from French statesmen being reluctant partners in a policy made in Downing Street and Whitehall, the majority of decision makers of the Quai d'Orsay were convinced appeasers. French appeasement, it is demonstrated was, like its counterpart across the Channel, an amalgam of many influences and that serious economic weaknesses played a vital role.

Ritchie Ovendale, a graduate of the University of Natal, shows that Britain had to weigh carefully the attitudes of the dominions, which were not bound by Locarno. By 1931 the British government had accepted that only the parliament of a dominion could decide on that country's neutrality or belligerency in a war. Hertzog in South Africa favoured neutrality and even Smuts before 1939 was suspicious of Britain's too close support of France. Many Canadian politicians were strongly influenced by the isolationist attitudes of their American neighbours. There was considerable opposition in Australia against that dominion becoming committed beyond its shores and both in that country and in New Zealand there were strong preferences for Britain to keep out of Europe to counter Japanese demands in the Far East. When Chamberlain left for Munich he knew the dominions were opposed by a war over Czechoslovakia. It seemed to Chamberlain and to other members of the cabinet that if Britain declared war over the Sudetenland issue, the continued ex-

istence of the Commonwealth would be endangered.

Lord Beloff briefly puts the case that Russian policy in the 1930s was also influenced by the Soviet brand of appeasement. 'The question between 1933 and 19451 was not', he suggests, 'whether or not the Soviet Union was ready to appease Nazi Germany but whether or not Hitler was prepared to accept the concessions that were on offer'. Whereas British and French appeasement may be said to have ended in March 1939 Russian appeasement ended in 1941 when German armies invaded the Soviet Union. The attitude and policy of the other super-power, the United States of America, is another factor which has tended to be underestimated in the discussion of appeasement. Some recent assessments see the overriding aim of Washington's policies between 1933 and 1940, as appeasement of Germany.

These are some of the new perspectives which are offered in this book. The overarching conclusion is that the whole appeasement area is much more complex than an earlier generation realized. Appeasement can then perhaps best be regarded to have been a series of attempts at crisis management — desperate attempts by a number of statesmen to deal with multitudinous problems with inadequate resources at their disposal. This is an important work which should make it impossible for students of the period to reduce political, economic and social intricacies to trite and simplistic diplomatic formulae.

S.B. SPIES
University of South Africa

RAYMOND CARR, introd., *Images of the Spanish Civil War*, George Allen & Unwin, London and Sydney, 1986, 192 pp., bibl., map, illustrations, UK £14,95.

Published to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the Spanish Civil War, this book is both a commentary and a pictorial record of the bitter three year struggle. It was fought against the sombre backdrop of totalitarian militarism in Germany and Italy soon to plunge the world in a greater conflict; a testing time for rival ideologies, it was also an innovative period in the techniques of total war and in the manipulation of the mass media — radio and the popular press — for propaganda purposes.

Professor Carr of St Anthony's College, Oxford outlines in his perceptive introduction the origins of the army revolt of 18 July 1936 and discusses the elements in Spanish society which made up the opposing forces: Falangists, Carlists, Catholics and conservative traditionalists on the right; bourgeois socialists, communists, anarcho-syndicalists, anticlericals and liberal reformers on the left. He traces the course of the struggle to the fatal war within a war in the Republican ranks which hastened the end, and stresses the international aspects of the conflict: the Western democracies and non-intervention; open German and Italian support for the Nationalists; the Russian contribution and that of the International Brigades to the Republican cause. There can be no doubt that the assistance provided by Germany and Italy in men and material — particularly guns and aircraft — played a major part in the Nationalist victory, but Carr recalls internal contributory factors often lost sight of: the "scarcity of middle-rank trained officers" in the Republican army (p. 19), the problems of Basque and Catalan separatism, and the removal of a potential threat to Nationalist unity and Franco's position of supreme power in the execution by the Republicans of the Falangist leader, Primo de Rivera, on 20 November 1936. The final fictory on 1 April 1939 inaugurated a dictatorship which endured until Franco's death in November 1975. We may rejoice at its passing and the emergence of a parliamentary democracy in which "the political heirs of the conquered" rule the new Spain (p. 23). Yet the higher ideals which motivated the Nationalists have a place in the present political dispensation and the monarchy for which Franco acted as guardian has been fully restored, though in constitutional guise. The significance of the war for the modern nation deserves wider treatment than is accorded it here.

But it is the illustrative material which will capture the attention of most readers, particularly if they recall those "fearful years" which led up to the outbreak of World War II, years in which the war in Spain was generally regarded, and always in over-simplified terms, as a struggle between Fascism and Marxism, between autocracy and democracy, or again, between the upholders of traditional spiritual values and those, the godless, who rejected them. The endless permutations on these themes engendered often acrimonious debate. The faces in these pictures, now half-forgotten, were then familiar to all: Franco himself, his brother-in-law Serrano Suner, Minister of the Interior, the Socialist leader Largo Caballero, the Catalan President, Luis Companys, Juan Negrín of the Popular Front and a host of others. The voices too were often strident enough to be heard over the threatening tones of Hitler, Goebbels and Mussolini: Queipo de Llano who took Seville for the Nationalists; the Communist orator Dolores Ibarruri, "La Pasionaria". And the brave words of those who fought are still remembered: Franco's "Arriba Espana" and the Nationalist slogan, "Dios, Patria, Rey", surely ill paraphrased on p. 76; the "No pasarán" of the Republican

defenders of Madrid. The reproduction of so many posters in Spanish and Catalan deserves special recognition. They not only shed new light on many aspects of the war, but also recapture the spirit of the decade in style and presentation. An exceptionally good example is the Republican appeal for unity against foreign invaders, a theme exploited as the Nationalists gained ground (p. 171). The choice of photographs is wide-ranging. Some are little known; others, like Capa's famous study of the Republican soldier at the moment of death (p. 60), possibly posed for dramatic effect, could not well have been omitted.

This excellent visual history of the Spanish Civil War presents an evocative picture of what, in many ways, was the prelude to the global conflict of 1939—45.

M. BOUCHER
Pretoria

R H BREMMER, *Reformatie en rebellie, Willem van Oranje, de calvinisten en het recht van opstand, Tien onstuimige jaren 1572—1581*, Uitgeverij T. Wever, Franeker, 1984, 289 pp.

De Opstand van de 17 Nederlanden tegen Spanje in 1572 is een ingewikkeld verschijnsel, waarover uiteenlopende beschouwingen zijn gepubliceerd. Volgens velen — nu talrijker dan voorheen — was de zucht naar vrijheid het hoofdmotief (libertatis causa), volgens anderen — merendeels Protestanten — de drang naar vrije godsdienstuitoefening voor Protestanten (religionis causa). Volgens sommigen was de Opstand een revolutie, d.w.z. de opstandelingen wilden de oude maatschappij omverwerpen en grondig veranderen. Volgens anderen, onder wie Bremmer, was de Opstand een rebellie, d.w.z. de opstandelingen wilden andere gezagsdragers, maar de bestaande maatschappij grotendeels handhaven. Bremmer is voortgekomen uit de Anti-Revolutionairen in Nederland, dus houdt niet van revolutie.

Niet-Calvinistische historici, zoals P. Geyl, J. Romein en J.J. Rogier, hebben de rol der Calvinisten in de Opstand gedevalueerd. Zij menen, dat de Calvinisten in verbond met "sociaal wanhopigen" — talrijk onder de Watergeuzen — nog geen 10% der bevolking vormden en de overige Nederlanders — neutralisten en weifelaars — hebben gedwongen om aan het verzet mee te doen. De Calvinisten waren even onverdraagzaam als de Rooms-Katholieken en hebben andere erediensten in hun bolwerk Holland en Zeeland verboden en de andere provinciën onder dwang gecalviniseerd — althans ten dele. De Opstand was een conservatief, geen modern, progressief verzet, zo menen zij.

H A Enno van Gelder, schrijver van het degelijke werk *Revolutionaire Reformatie* (1942) wijkt van dese mening af, staat met zijn opvatting dichter bij de rebellie dan bij de revolutie en betoogt verder, dat de Calvinisten in de voorhoede van de Opstand stonden, maar krachtig werden gesteund door talrijke leden van de verdraagzamere, Erasmiaans gezinde middenstand, m.a.w. de regentenklasse. Hij houdt vol, dat de Opstand progressief en niet conservatief was: het denkbeeld van volksinvloed op de regering was bekend in de Middeleeuwen, maar is eerst in de late 18de eeuw algemeen aanvaard. De rebellen, die dat denkbeeld aanhingen, onder wie Oranje, waren dus modern, niet reactionair tegen de centraliserende staat onder absoluut vorstengezag, zo betoogt Bremmer op voorbeeld van Van Gelder.

Bremmer rekent zich tot de Calvinistische historici met G Groen van Prinsterer als voorman, die de godsdienst als hoofdmotief en de leiding der Calvinisten bij de Opstand beklemtonen. Hij verklaart op p. 8: "In dit boek kiezen wij positie in (d.w.z. voor) de gereformeerde traditie van Groen van Prinsterer." Hij devalueert echter de rol van de middenstand, welke later — vooral tijdens het 12jarig Bestand — partij tegen het orthodoxe Calvinisme heeft gekozen. Hij beschuldigt deze middenstand, de regentenklasse, van "eigenbelang en positiehandhaving" (p. 230) en verwijt haar de onhandige staatkundige organisatie van de Republiek, door J.J. Rogier het "zevenkoppig raadsel" genoemd, als resultaat van de Opstand.

Het is te begrijpen, dat Bremmer de onverdraagzaamheid der Calvinisten onderbeklemtoont en dwang en geweld als oorzaak van de calvinisering der Republiek ontkent. Ook Van Gelder ontkent deze dwang, niet omdat de Calvinisten dwang afkeurden, maar omdat de overheid, gevormd door de gematigde regentenklasse, ze niet toeliet. Er was druk, doch geen zware, om Calvinist te worden, bijvoorbeeld de hoogste ambten stonden alleen voor Gereformeerden open. Wegens deze houding der overheid was de calvinisering der Republiek onvolledig. Bremmer had hier kunnen wijzen op het contrast met de "reconquista" (herovering door Spanje) in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden, die volledig gerekatholiseerd zijn en waar het Protestantisme met geweld uitgeroeid is.

Geyl noemde de Nederlandse Opstand, de Glorious Revolution in Brittannië in 1688 en de opstand der Britse koloniën in Noord-Amerika conservatief, Bremmer noemt ze progressief, omdat ze de volkssoevereiniteit voorstonden, en hij wijst daarbij op invloed van het Calvinisme, welke m.i. inderdaad bestond maar geenszins de enige of mogelijk leidinggevende was.

Bremmer bespreekt in hoofdstuk een het recht van opstand bij de Calvinisten en de evolutie daarvan, en op boeiende wijze het beleg en ontzet van Leiden in 1574, volgens hem het militaire keerpunt in de Opstand. Hij beschouwt terecht de kerkgeschiedenis van de Opstand als nauw verweven met de politieke en behandelt uitvoerig de Gereformeerde synoden van 1571, 1574, 1578 en 1581. In navolging van Rogier e.a. ontkent hij R. Fruins mening, die de oppositie der Hollanders op de synode te Emden in 1571 verklaart uit de vrijzinnigheid der Hollanders tegenover de rechtzinnigheid der Calvinisten uit de Zuidelijke gewesten. Hij e.a. verklaren deze tegenstelling uit de zucht der Hollanders naar onafhankelijkheid, vooral op staatkundig terrein.

Hij geeft ruime aandacht aan de Ban van Filips II tegen Oranje, Oranjes Apologie en het Plakkaat van Verlatinge, waarin de Staten-Generaal Filips lakoniek hebben afgedankt, niet afgezworen, zoals men algemeen zegt. Hugenootse juristen en theologen hebben Oranje bij de twee laatstgenoemde verklaringen geholpen, maar Bremmer ontkent de mening, dat Oranje geen of weinig aandeel in de Apologie en het Plakkaat van Verlatinge had; dat was niet naar zijn aard (hij heeft waarschijnlijk ook de hand in het "Wilhelmus van Nassauwe-lied gehad). De Anti-Revolutionair Z W Sneller heeft in zijn geschrift over het Plakkaat de leer der Calvinistische monarchomachen (bestrijders van het absolute vorstengezag) als hoofdmotief beklemtoond. A.E.M. Jansen heeft hem verweten, dat hij de Middeleeuwse standenvertegenwoordiging als oorsprong heeft genegeerd. Hij, P Geyl en A C J de Vrankrijker noemen die standenvertegenwoordiging en de "Blijde Incomste" van Brabant ter beperking van het hertogelijk gezag als hoofdmotief. Bremmer acht beide hoofdmotieven voor het Plakkaat van invloed.

Bremmer heeft een belangwekkend boek over de omstreden rol der Calvinisten in de Opstand geschreven, hoewel sommigen zijn standpunt niet in alle opzichten kunnen delen.

C DE JONG
Universiteit van Suid-Afrika

NANNE BOSMA, *Balthazar Gerards, Moordenaar en martelaar,* Rodopia, Amsterdam, 1983, 116 pp, ill.

In de geschiedschrijving van tijdperken en biografieën blijven somtijds hardnekkige leemten. Een leemte in de uitgebreide historiografie over Willem I van Oranje in de 20ste eeuw was het gemis van een werk over Balthazar Gerards, de moordenaar van de Prins. Na de heftige polemieken over Gerards van de 16de tot de 19de eeuw is het stil om hem geworden. Deze leemte is nu gevuld door Nanne Bosma. Hij heeft het weinige, dat over Gerards bekend is, bijeen gebracht en schildert de moord tegen een brede achtergrond. De schaarse feiten zijn voldoende om Gerards te onderkennen als Rooms-Katholiek fanaticus, intelligent, geslepen, vasthoudend en met rotsvast vertrouwen in zijn heilige roeping ten spijte van marteling en marteldood. Wegens zijn onaanzienlijk uiterlijk en nederige serviliteit was hij des te gevaarlijker.

Bijzonder interessant is de uitvoerige bekentenis in Bijlage II, welke Gerards dadelijk na zijn arrestatie vrijwillig heeft neergeschreven. Bosma meent, dat hij daarin zoveel mogelijk schuld op zich nam, maar noemt niettemin landvoogd Parma, diens secretaris d'Assonleville, de gouverneur van Luxemburg, Peter Mansfelt, en twee geestelijken, die hem absolutie gaven, als personen, die hoogstwaarschijnlijk door hem over de beraamde moord zijn ingelicht. Overigens heeft hij blijkbaar geen anderen in vertrouwen genomen, hij opereerde alleen en was daardoor des te gevaarlijker.

De schrijver verbreekt de eenheid der biografie door uitvoerige, lezenswaardige beschouwingen over koning Filips' ban tegen Oranje, diens Apologie en voorafgaande moordaanslagen op Oranje. Deze stof had beter aan Gerards biografie vooraf moeten gaan.

Bosma geeft terecht aandacht aan de politieke sluipmoord in de 16de eeuw in het algemeen, vooral aan die door Poltrot de Merlé op Francois de Guise, leider van de anti-Protestantse partij in Frankrijk, wiens moordaanslag veel lijkt op die van Gerards, en aan de Bartolomeusnacht, dat is de massamoord op Hugenoten op 24 augustus 1572. De Guises hebben De Merlé's moord verweten aan Gaspard de Coligny, leider van de Hugenoten, en bloedig wraak op hem genomen in de Bartholomeusnacht.

Sluipmoorden op vooraanstaande politici komen in alle eeuwen voor, ook de onze. De politieke moord door een koninklijke moordenaar kwam vooral in de 16de eeuw, de eeuw van Macchiavelli, voor. Het opkomende absolute vorstengezag meende een vonnis, over een politieke tegenstander geveld, te mogen voltrekken door een sluipmoordenaar te huren. Voorbeelden zijn de moorden op Willem van Oranje, Henri de Guise, zoon van Francois, en koning Hendrik III van Frankrijk. De terechtgestelde moordenaar werd door zijn partijgenoten dikwijls vrijgepleit of zelfs als martelaar verheerlijkt met verwijzing naar het Oude Testament, waarin Jael en Judith, de moordenaressen van de veldheren Sisera en Holofernes, als heldinnen zijn geprezen. Ook Gerards droeg een uitgave van het Bijbelboek Judith in zijn zak.

Vooraanstaande politici, zoals De Coligny en Oranje, zijn beschuldigd van medeweten en zelfs medeplichtigheid aan aanslagen op Francois de Guise en Alva, echter zonder enig steekhoudend bewijs. Stierf een politicus onverwachts, dan werd spoedig over vergiftiging gefluisterd.

Gerards is op weerzinwekkende wijze gemarteld en terechtgesteld volgens het gebruik van de wrede 16de eeuw. Hij is volgens Bosma dadelijk na zijn arrestatie door vele Rooms-Katholieken, onder anderen de Delftse geestelijke Sasbout Vosmeer, als martelaar beschouwd. Vosmeer heeft naar bewering het hoofd van Gerards heimelijk in bewaring genomen en een prijzend pamflet over hem geschreven. Het streven van Vosmeer en andere Rooms-Katholieken om Gerards zalig of zelfs heilig te laten verklaren, is echter mislukt.

Het Genootschap Delfia Batavorum (Delft van de Bataven) heeft Bosma's werk uitgegeven. Het is een bijzonder belangwekkende bijdrage tot de Oranjeliteratuur van 1984.

C DE JONG
Universiteit van Suid-Afrika

JAN BOSDRIESZ en GERARD SOETEMAN, *Ons Indië voor de Indonesiërs, De oorlog — De chaos — De vrijheid,* Uitgeverij Moesson, 's-Gravenhage, en T. Wever, Franeker, 1985, geïll., 138 pp.

In 1985 is het einde van Wereldoorlog II herdacht, onder meer de capitulatie van Japan en de uitroeping van de Republiek Indonesië. De ellende van de Japanse bezetting in Oost-Indië in 1942—45 is gevolgd niet door de bevrijding, maar door het nog gruwelijker tijdperk van de opstand der Indonesische nationalisten onder de leuze *Merdeka* (vrijheid) met massamoorden tijdens de periode van de *bersiap* (Val aan!); in 1946 begint de vierjarige oorlog van Nederland tegen de Republiek met de erkenning van de Republiek in 1949 als voorlopig einde.

De Nederlandse Omroepstichting (NOS) heeft in 1985 een televisieserie aan Oost-Indië in 1940—50 gewijd. Daarin zijn Nederlanders, Britten, Japanners, Indonesiërs en Molukkers aan het woord gesteld. Onder hen was de Zuid-Afrikaan Laurens van der Post, Brits officier, krijgegevangene bij de Japanners en later schrijver. De reeks is samengevat in een beknopt, pakkend geïllustreerd boek. De serie is samengesteld door C. van Heekeren. De samenstellers van het boek hebben de aanhalingen uit de reeks verbonden tot een tijdsbeeld. De rechtstreekse getuigenissen in het boek maken nog meer indruk dan het werk van geschiedschrijvers.

De Nederlanders en andere blanken zijn in 1940—50 in Oost-Indië van de ene verbijstering in de andere gevallen. Verbijsterend waren de snelle overwinningen der Japanners en de massale opstand der Indonesiërs dadelijk na de capitulatie van Japan op 15 augustus 1945. De blanken in de Japanse kampen en ver van Oost-Indië wisten niets van de ophitsing door Japan van de nationalisten in Indonesië en de organisatie van een leger onder de Indonesiërs. Verbijsterend was, dat in 1945 opeens de Japanners van kwelgeesten der geïnterneerden tot hun beschermers werden. De houding der Japanse en in oktober 1945 gelande Britse troepen (merendeels Brits-Indiërs) was dubbelzinnig; zij voelden niets voor terugbezorging van Oost-Indië aan het verslagen Nederland en leverden nationalisten wapens, maar spoedig moesten zij voor hun lijfsbehoud fel tegen de nationalisten vechten. De chaos was enorm, de tragedie verschrikkelijk, bloedbaden in Boeloe (Semarang), Ambarawa, Bronbeek bij Bandoeng en meer. Verbijsterend voor vele Nederlanders was ook, dat zij de militaire oorlog tegen de Republiek wonnen, maar de diplomatieke oorlog verloren en de Republiek in 1949 moesten erkennen onder druk van de Verenigde Staten en de Verenigde Naties.

Al deze en andere gevoelens blijken uit de aanhalingen der ondervraagden. Ik onderstreep in het boek de volgende bijzonderheden.

Op p. 8 zegt C. van Heekeren over het contact tussen Nederlanders en Indonesiërs vóór 1940: "Er zijn heel weinig mensen (d.z. blanken) geweest die dat hebben gehad." Dit verwijt is ook tegen blanken in andere koloniën en Zuid-Afrika vaak gemaakt. Het is m.i. onredelijk, want ook in de Eerste Wereld heeft de bovenklasse weinig contact met andere bevolkingsgroepen buiten hun werkkring en bezoekt ze zelden arbeiderswijken en armoedbuurten.

De Nederlanders hadden na drie eeuwen heerschappij in Oost-Indië een misplaatst meerwaardigheidsgevoel jegens Japanners en Indonesiërs. Zij beseften bij de capitulatie van Japan in 1945 niet, dat het prestige der koloniale mogendheden bij de inheemsen wegens hun nederlagen tegen de Japanners verdwenen was. Zij meenden, dat de opstand in Oost-Indië van "het zachtmoedigste volk ter wereld" spoedig onderdrukt zou zijn en dat in Oost-Indië evenals in Nederland de vooroorlogse toestand zou terugkeren. Zij vergisten zich.

Het Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch Leger (KNIL) was een politiemacht, geen modern leger voor een

oorlog op grote schaal als in 1941 (p. 20). Het werd dan ook binnen enkele weken door de Japanners weggevaagd. Dat is geen verwijt jegens KNIL-leden, maar wel jegens de Nederlandse politici, die weinig geld voor de strijdkrachten over hadden. Dezen dachten bewust of onbewust, dat geallieerden Nederland en zijn koloniën wel van vreemde overheersing zouden bevrijden.

De Britse journaliste Miss H W Ponder heeft in haar boek *Java pageant* omstreeks 1934 geschreven: "I am afraid that by no possible stretch of imagination can either the European or native 'rankers' of the army in Java be called smart or soldierly in appearance. But then neither can their officers" (pp. 279—280). Deze opmerking geeft te denken.

De Nederlanders voerden in 1946—49 meestal een guerrilla, sluipoorlog of bosoorlog tegen de Indonesische nationalisten. De ons bekende prof. J A A van Doorn was officier en zegt op p. 117: "Met alle respect ... voor wat de Indonesiërs hebben gepresteerd tegen de beter bewapende en beter getrainde vijand die wij waren, maar het is ze nooit gelukt om zelfs maar een post van 20 man echt op te rollen." Daarom is s.i. een ramp voor de Nederlandse troepen, zoals er in Vietnam zijn voorgevallen, uitgebleven.

Ooggetuigen vetellen van de bloedbaden door nationalisten aangericht. Uit het gesprek met R P P Westerling (pp. 105—106) is duidelijk, dat Nederlanders hard tegen de sluipoorlogstrijders zijn opgetreden, zoals regel is in dit soort oorlog. In de jaren 70 zijn Nederlandse wreedheden in de Nederlandse pers aangeklaagd. Men heeft hiernaar bij de Indonesische regering geïnformeerd. Daar is men waarschijnlijk over deze selfbeschuldiging verbaasd geweest, want Oosterlingen kennen wel schaamte wegens nederlagen, maar geen schuldgevoel, zoals Westerlingen koesteren. Zij liet tactvol weten van dié wreedheden niet te weten — zand erover!

Ik keer terug naar het hier besproken boek. Het eindigt met de onverwachte souevereiniteitsoverdracht aan de Republiek en herstel van haar regering. Dat was een deelstaat, daarnaast hadden de Nederlanders nog heelwat kleine staten opgericht. Maar die werden enige maanden later door de Republiek bezet en ingelijfd zonder enig protest buiten Nederland. Dat zal z.i. ook kunnen gebeuren, wanneer in Pretoria een zwarte regering aan de macht zou komen, die zal graag de huidige TBVC-republieken willen inlijven zonder enig protest van buiten Zuid-Afrika, vermoed ik.

Het boek zwijgt over de nasleep van de souvereiniteitsoverdracht, dat was de likwidatie van zogenoemde collaborateurs met de Nederlanders door de nationalisten — een gruwelijke episode, waarover de uitgever T Wever onlangs een boek heeft gepubliceerd — en de strijd om West-Nieuw Guinea. Deze had als hoogtepunt de verbanning door president Soekarno van de Nederlanders en nationalisatie van Nederlandse ondernemingen in 1958 en eindigde met andermaal toegeven van Nederland en afstand van West-Nieuw Guinea. Het droevig naspel was daarmee be-eindigd.

Zou Nederland Oost-Indië in onze eeuw hebben kunnen behouden? Ik geloof van niet. Daarvoor was de druk van de grote mogendheden, de Westerse inbegrepen, op de kleine koloniale mogendheden om de koloniën onafhankelijk te maken, te groot. Bovendien zijn koloniën nu verliesgevend geworden en zakenbelangen willen daarvan zonder bezwaar afstand doen.

Verklaarbaar is, dat de terroristen van gisteren de verzetsstrijders van vandaag en de helden van morgen zijn. Het is opvallend hoe spoedig de vele onschuldige slachtoffers van de terreur der onafhankelijkheidsbewegingen ook in het Westen zijn vergeten en de terroristenleiders als eervolle nieuwe machthebbers worden beschouwd. Dat geldt ook voor Indonesië.

C DE JONG
Pretoria

Suid-Afrika/South Africa

KAREL SCHOEMAN (red.), *The Free State Mission: The Anglican Church in the O.F.S., 1863—1883* Pretoria, Human & Rousseau, 1986, 104 pp., bibl., indeks, illus., R25 + AVB.

Die skrywer Karel Schoeman het werklik geen bekendstelling nodig nie en uit sy vrugbare pen het reeds etlike populêre werke die lig gesien. Onlangs het Schoeman onder die titel *Die huis van die armes: die Berlynse Sendinggenootskap in die O.V.S., 1833—1869* aan die hand van tydgenootlike bronne 'n oorsig van die werksaamhede van die Berlynse Sendinggenootskap in die Oranje-Vrystaat die lig laat sien. Die werk onder bespreking is op dieselfde lees as die een oor die Berlynse Sending geskoei, maar nou gee die skrywer ons aan die hand van kontemporêre literatuur 'n blik in die werksaamhede van die Anglikaanse Kerk in die Vrystaat.

The Free State Mission is geen geskiedenis van die Anglikaanse Kerk in die Vrystaat nie, maar is bloot 'n kompilasie van tydgenote se siening van die Anglikane se rol in die Boerestaat gedurende die eerste

twintig jaar van 'n eie bisdom. Om die geskiedenis van die Anglikaanse Kerk in die O.V.S. te wete te kom, is dit nog steeds nodig om na ander gesaghebbende werke soos dié van I.S.J. Venter (*Die Anglikaanse Kerk en die Onderwys in die Oranje-Vrystaat, 1854—1900,* Pretoria, J.L. van Schaik, 1959) te gaan. Al wat Schoeman doen, is om grepe uit die ontwikkeling van die Anglikaanse Kerk aan die hand van die kerk se "Quarterly Paper" weer te gee.

Schoeman konsentreer hoofsaaklik op die ampstermyne van die eerste twee Vrtystaatse biskoppe, Twells en Webb. Hiervoor is daar 'n baie goeie rede, want dit was juis onder Twells en Webb dat die Anglikane hulle werklik in die Vrystaatse arbeidsveld ingegrawe het. Dit was ook gedurende hierdie periode dat die Anglikane met sendingwerk onder die Vrystaat se Swartes begin het.

Wanneer 'n mens hierdie bundel gelees het, kom jy opnuut onder die indruk van watter belangrike werk die Anglikane in die Vrystaat onderneem het. Hulle bydrae tot die ontwikkeling van dié gebied is werklik buite verhouding tot hul getalsterkte. Onder uiters ongunstige toestande en selfs openlike vyandigheid van die Afrikanerbevolking het die Anglikane daarna gestreef om hulle godsdienstige beginsels aan ander oor te dra. Vir diegene wat in kerkgeskiedenis belangstel behoort hierdie werk van groot waarde te wees.

WERNER VAN DER MERWE
Universiteit van Suid-Afrika

H L PIVNIC, *Railway dining cars in South Africa. History and development,* South African Transport Services Museum, Johannesburg, 1985, 415 pp., illus., no price mentioned.

This book is, to quote the foreword, "the first tangible evidence of a new policy by S A Transport Services which supports the publication of worth-while transport-related research that may not otherwise see the light of day". This policy must be welcomed most heartily. It is extremely gratifying that in an age where priorities are too often determined by Rands and cents and the profit motive, a state institution such as the South African Transport Services, whose primary concern is the movement of goods and passengers, should see its way clear to the promotion of publications on transport matters. That this first publication deals with a facet of transport *history* is also fitting, for too often these days we are implored from public stages to forget the past and rather look to the future — when it suits the purpose of the speaker. Too often it is forgotten that a society without history — recorded history — is like a person without a memory. He who does not know his origins cannot assess his position in the present intelligently and make meaningful choices as to the future.

Having said that, the work of the recorder of the past — the historian — has to comply with certain norms. Whether he be a professional or amateur, curator, dillettante or enthusiastic collector, when he commits his pen to paper his record has to answer to certain requirements. One such requirement is that his record has to deal with human activity or some aspect of it. Even when his field of enquiry has to do with objects used by humans in the past it is the *utilisation* of such objects that should be the aim of his study and not the objects themselves.

Unfortunately in this respect this book does not succeed. It describes in the minutest detail the various vehicles used for catering purposes on the South African railways from 1885 to the 1980's and the changes that these vehicles have undergone over the years; only rarely does the human use of these facilities receive any attention. Although the work is therefore the product of meticulous and painstaking research, for which one can only have admiration, it seldom goes beyond the chronicling of the changes brought about in the physical appearance of dining cars, with only here and there a reference to their utilisation. It is a great pity that the author never attempted to capture the social changes which lay behind the outward manifestations — that the opportunity was not grasped of writing what could have been an enthralling social history. Many examples can be cited of this lack of explanation of human needs: there is virtually one on every page of the book. One case in point, however, is the change mentioned at the top of p. 61. There we are told that the decision was taken by the General Manager of the Railways in 1930 to substitute fixed settees in dining cars for revolving chairs. No attempt is made, however, to *explain* why it took place, i.e. why changing human needs necessitated the change.

It is also a pity that the topic was conceived so narrowly by the author and that it was not expanded to include the history of the whole catering service on the railways. Thus, for instance, we are told on p. 4 that the NZASM (wrongly abbreviated as ZASM, which can be very confusing since there is a Dutch organisation in existence today with the initials ZASM, i.e. Zuid-Afrikaansche Stichting Moederland) operated no revenue-earning vehicles. No attempt is made, however briefly, to explain how and where passengers ob-

tained refreshments. In the case of the Cape Government Railways also, no mention is made of the great upheaval in the pre-dining car days by the awarding of a contract for refreshment rooms at stations on the Cape railways to J D Logan, the legendary founder of Matjesfontein in the Karoo. So great was the scandal that it led to a cabinet crisis in the Rhodes government, with the result that the Cape Prime Minister resigned in 1893 and formed a new cabinet with the omission of three of his dissatisfied colleagues. (See in this connection the biography of Logan in the Dictionary of South African Biography, Part II. An M A dissertation has also been written on this topic by B L G Swart: "Die Logan-kontrak en die invloed daarvan op die Kaapse politiek", University of Stellenbosch, 1952).

However, the conception of the topic is the author's prerogative and finally the book has to be judged as it stands. On the credit side has already been mentioned the painstaking research that has gone into it. The author has left no stone unturned in tracing the whereabouts of catering vehicles and recording them. A good example is the interesting story of two dining cars dating back to 1905 which ended up at Voortrekkerhoogte where they have served for more than 40 years inside a building as tearooms for the South African Army Band (pp. 45—47). The many fine photographs of exteriors and interiors of vehicles are also commendable.

The author has, however, quite unnecessarily made extensive use of official correspondence in facsimile form in the text. This militates against the very essence of good history writing: the writer should interpret the sources and embody in his text only that information obtained from them that is essential to convey what has to be said. This necessarily implies that he has to select information and separate the wheat from the chaff. It becomes decidedly frustrating and irritating to the reader to be time and again confronted in the text with phrases such as: "The following letter gives an idea of the type of service ... etc.", or: "His (the Chief Mechanical Engineer's or the General Manager's) letter again, makes interesting reading," to be followed by a facsimile copy of the letter in question. This happens so often that the reader is forced to read pages and pages of undigested source material. In some cases the correspondence seems to be endless and is interrupted only here and there by a short sentence or paragraph by the author in order to string them together. From pp. 204 to 217 we have some thirteen pages of such correspondence and shortly afterwards on pp. 218 to 226 another 9 pages.

But the abovementioned criticism aside, one wonders in the final analysis what function the detailed descriptions of the various catering vehicles really have. Is it really meaningful publishing a book describing in detail where lights were situated and what the quality of the lighting was; what kind of upholstery material was used in a particular dining car (many instances of the description of these two items can be cited); in another case, by what firm the electrical cabling for a vehicle was to be supplied (top of p. 237); that the gas stoves used in one case "gave a certain amount of trouble" (p. 241), which, however, was rectified; the process of decision making in the General Manager's office (p. 254); etc. Does all this detail really concern the reader? Does this type of information warrant publication at all, or would it have been more meaningful as an unpublished record for the use of the South African Transport Services internally?

I am afraid that the multitude of detail compressed into this publication does leave these questions lingering in one's mind.

D H HEYDENRYCH
University of Pretoria