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mere intensity and logic of our mental activity. The dialectical interpretation, creative transvaluation and humanization of the meaning of our voyage lies beyond any particular method but within the boundaries of dialectical discovery and poetic articulation. Imaginative, comprehensive images of humanity should not be viewed as arbitrary gestures equally valid and therefore, equally futile. It is here that the question of ontology commences rather than terminates. Marx had his images and spoke of freedom. Durkheim had his and spoke of moral authority and discipline. What of humanity, of the quality of life? We cannot begin with a closed, fixed, preconceptualized notion. We cannot begin with the way things are for no particular can give birth to the catholicity of quality. Only from a qualitative perspective can I say that the Labyrinth of commodities is inhabited by a monstrously defaced humanity in quest of the satisfaction of denied, lost desires. To utter this is not to validate it. But it is the only beginning. This is how adventures start: with the eyes open and with a dream. That fools and the educated imagination speak in dreams is not adequate ground to renounce the voice of the imagination. After all wisdom is the ability to discern quality, even in dreams. Fools, in defence of their dreams, would be the first to dispute this.

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Sandor Halebsky, *Mass Society and Political Conflict: Toward a Reconstruction of Theory*. New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. ix, 309. \$19.95 cloth, \$6.95 paper.

Mass Society and Political Conflict by Sandor Halebsky, a sociologist from Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, is another of a by now considerable list of scholarly efforts which have been dedicated to criticism of mass political theory, particularly as that theory is exhibited in William Kornhauser's *The Politics of Mass Society* (1959). It begins with an analysis of the viewpoints of a variety of contributors to mass political theory from Tocqueville and Max Weber to Riesman and Nisbet. One sees here the emphasis upon the presumed rationalization and depersonalization of the social situation as a background for mass behaviour and the absence in its participants of any intimate relationship to class or other intermediate group forms. One is made aware as

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well that the exponents of this position frequently imply, as in the case of Tönnies, a looking back to some romanticized past where *Gemeinschaft* rather than *Gesellschaft* relationships prevailed and hierarchies were clearly defined and stable while elites were not intruded upon by non-elites in their decision making functions. Intermediate groups — kinship, community, and religious — were also common in this dreamed-up halcyon past which prevented the full weight of the ultimate organization, the state, from falling on an unprotected individual. Such intermediate group structures are conceived as providing a sense of personal security and nurturance, partly because of the conditions they afford for personal expression, responsiveness, and control. They make possible the maintenance of a sense of membership within a community. Although the purpose of Halebsky's study is negatively to criticize this body of mass political theory, he does an excellent job of presenting it with the intonations and the intentions of its spokesmen.

When he turns to his own purposes, however, the author of this book shows a keen sense for the weaknesses of his adversaries. He displays familiarity with the work of other political and social theorists, such as Pinard and Gusfield, who have preceded him in the task of assailing Kornhauser and his fellows, but he affords a summarizing and integrating view which more than justifies its *raison d'être*. Developments in modern industrialized and urbanized societies, he points out, have not destroyed the strength of intermediate groupings to anything like the extent that mass political theorists usually assume. He refers to studies which confirm the continuing vitality of kinship groupings in the contemporary city. The data that have been gathered do not support a contention of a population troubled by lack of ties. The problem of political unrest and potential support for demagogic leaders among important elements in contemporary society rests not so much with those who are adrift and isolated but depends, instead, on whether there is a lack of any meaningful sense of a means to control one's environment.

The most impressive argument which Halebsky develops against political mass theory is to be found in the central section of his book where he considers the cognitive and rational (as opposed to the emotional and irrational) aspects of radical political behaviour. Dissident politics does not so much represent a response to the alienated character of individuals as much as it reflects the dissident's location within the principal social forms in terms of which the society is structured, the social organization which surrounds him, and the political forms and processes which are characteristic of his time and place. Political forms and processes play an especially significant role, par-

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ticularly with regard to the appearance of violence or revolutionary action. They create the timing, opportunity, and spur for action whose potential is principally generated by these factors.

Halebsky proceeds to survey a series of radical protest movements from early peasant and labor agitation to the Nazi movement in Weimar Germany; and he indicates, in each instance, how specific group alliances and completely logical interest orientations have conditioned each extremist response. Granting the preconditions for the social experiences, there was literally no other direction in which the movements in question might have been expected to go. Communist party support, likewise, does not appear to arise from political estrangement or from the absence of ties and the consequent search for community. It also does not arise out of irrational and emotional pique or merely reflect a vague *ressentiment*. While Communist voters may be more disaffected than other groups, this disaffection is based on social realities rather than on character structures. The nature of radical or protest political behavior will be misunderstood, asserts Halebsky, in the absence of attention to its possible class or other interest group character and the broader determining circumstances within which it arises.

Some aspects of Halebsky's work may be repetitive of earlier endeavors but in the eyes of this reviewer even repetition is desirable in terms of the climate of much present opinion which fosters the contention that a primary source of human behavior lies in the realm of the irrational. A major theme running through Halebsky's book is the affirmation, in the face of all such doubt, of the dignity and reasonableness of man as he seeks to come to terms with an often stressful and confusing world. There is also here an emphasis on the broad scope of social factors that both shape the activities of individuals and provide the broader context in which individuals — to evoke the Marxian insight — may create their own destinies.

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Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing: 1900 - 1970*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976, pp. 300. \$12.50 cloth.

In *The Sense of Power* (Toronto, 1970) Carl Berger examined the ideas of Canadian imperialists in the fifty years before the First World