

who fell overboard off Martha's Vineyard.

Two months before his first Bermuda Race his 40-foot racer *The Panic* mysteriously sank at her moorings during the night, and she almost repeated the performance a year later in the middle of the Chesapeake. During the Vineyard Race Buckley blew the navigation and the same craft ended up on the rocks, and in another race, with his wife aboard, *The Panic* was later dismantled off Block Island.

Soon after Buckley found *Cyrano* his chosen conveyance for "THE BIG ONE," she "several times ran aground in Bahamian waters" and then, while she was on charter to a friend for a dinner cruise on the Hudson, a cable snapped upon which a nonswimmer was sitting, with tragic results. Only one month before her great Transatlantic effort, *Cyrano*, on charter

once more, was the silent witness of another disaster when the charterer's wife, a certified diver, was found dead on the ocean floor forty feet below.

Buckley is a confirmed optimist but he is also a realist and his precautions against possible mid-Atlantic emergencies, (sinking in two minutes, or in five and over) make fascinating reading. So too does the understanding he displays of his wife's apprehensions about the whole undertaking and of her anguish at the realization that she is saying goodbye to the three most precious things in her life—her only son, her only sister, and her husband.

Obviously "THE BIG ONE" was a success or this book would never have been written, but as a movie actor I despise film critics who in a few sentences presume to tell a story which has taken others months

of hard work and preparation to bring to the screen, so I will simply recommend *Airborne* wholeheartedly as being well worth the price of admission: in fact it is cheap at the price.

Everything that could go wrong or break down during this production did so, but Buckley led his troops to final victory, with great panache (though he does not say so himself) relying almost entirely on a salt-soaked sextant, and occasional glimpses of the sun, the moon, and the swinging stars. Don't forget the supporting cast, though: they all came through nobly, and son Christopher is already a literary force to be reckoned with...A lovely "TRIP" and you can smell the sea. □



BOOK REVIEW

Adolf Hitler

John Toland / Doubleday / \$14.95

William H. Nolte

While reading John Toland's enormous, splendid biography of Hitler I couldn't help wondering what the future will make of this most gifted and appalling tyrant, certainly the most awesome mover of men, at least in the West, since Napoleon. An idle speculation, perhaps, particularly since no one can know what needs will oppress future generations or what their aspirations will be. That Hitler failed to accomplish his wild dreams of "unifying" Europe and saving it from the Bolshevik menace is obvious enough, but then so too were Jeanne d'Arc and Napoleon (to name but two such idealists) unsuccessful in their immediate efforts; only later in a different age did their spirits pick up a crown. I frankly fear that, as in the case of so many other Caesar-figures and all-too-human saviors, distance will make clean, or in any event blur the visage which today, little more than thirty years after his suicide in his Berlin bunker, leers at us with such nightmarish clarity. When he put the pistol to his head, the Russians were in the next street, gleefully making the rubble bounce. And it was, he always protested, only the Russians whom he really wished to defeat.

That good and evil, especially in the political realm, are relative terms, and even interchangeable terms, can be seen in the fact that Hitler would, as Toland puts it, "undoubtedly have gone down as one of the greatest figures in German history" had he died seven or eight years sooner

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than he did. As the existentialists are fond of saying, we usually die too late or too soon; only the very lucky exit at the proper time. "The evil that men do lives after them; / The good is oft interred with their bones; / So let it be with Caesar." Thus Shakespeare's Antony, over the body of Caesar and in the face of the multitude, gave the lie to the very views he expressed and with rhetorical flourish transformed the dead tyrant into a dreaming demigod. While no one in his right mind would argue that Hitler has undergone, or is undergoing, any such sea-change, our fascination with his life is, if anything, increasing as the years pass. Apparently none of his great rivals—Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill—has so captured the posthumous mind. Hitler will be with us for a long time, whether as ogre or failed messiah.

Toland concludes his biography with this sentence: "The most extraordinary figure in the history of the twentieth century had vanished—unlamented except by a faithful few." Though not many would argue with that assessment of Hitler, I fear that Toland engages in wishful thinking when he insists that only a few people still believed in him in those last days. Certainly the number of the faithful had shrunk since, say, 1938, which was truly Hitler's year; at which time the vast majority of Germans considered him their savior, and many people throughout Europe admired him as the leading man of the age. In a letter to the *Times* in 1938, Winston Churchill paid him this grudging compliment: "I have always said that I hoped if

Great Britain were beaten in a war we should find a Hitler who would lead us back to our rightful place among nations." He seemed, indeed, the archetypal answer to German prayers. Like Napoleon he was, par excellence, The Man on Horseback. His opposition in Germany, as elsewhere, came mainly from conservatives, reactionaries, and intellectuals. Behind him were the young, the proletariat, and the forward-looking. And why not? He offered what most men need—jobs, order, and hope.

To be sure, Hitler's General Staff had always distrusted him and truly hated him at the end. Of this Hitler was well aware; he once remarked that the inscription on his tombstone should read, "He was the victim of his generals." His generals were the victims, of course, and deserve at least some sympathy for their predicament. The Junkers, as everyone by now knows, tried again and again to kill him; they knew by the late 1930s that he could lead the nation only to destruction. The failure of their efforts helped convince Hitler that he was fated to accomplish his mission even though he knew, as he admitted to his Generals in November of 1941, that victory was impossible; henceforth the only hope lay in negotiating a peace with the West. When America entered the War the following month, even that hope went out the window.

The amazing thing is that Germany could have stood so long against such overwhelming opposition. Between Bismarck's victory in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871 (a victory, as Renan told the French at the

time, of the German schoolmaster) and the beginning of the Second World War, Germany was undoubtedly the leading nation of the world in most of the indices relating to culture or civilization. That Hitler should have commanded such allegiance from so generally enlightened a people is a testament to his magnetic personality. That such a people should have followed him over the brink is a sad commentary on human nature.

In no other book that I know of has Hitler been made more convincingly real. After reading this detailed account of his life from its rather ordinary beginnings in Austria, through the years of the First World War (an excellent soldier, he was twice decorated for valor and at War's end was left temporarily blinded by mustard gas), the period of political turmoil and party strife in the 1920s, the fabulous rise to power in the 1930s and on through the cataclysm that followed, I believe I understand him. Such men have appeared numerous times in history, but seldom have they had so powerful a following. That Hitler possessed many of the ordinary virtues and traits of a man of his time makes him all the more frightening to

behold. Until Power placed him above the law, or rather made him a law unto himself, he was little more than a fanatical patriot of iron will, a forensic genius determined to lift up his adopted people after the ignominious Armistice in 1918, the result, he believed, of betrayal at home rather than defeat abroad. Toland attaches great importance to the fact that Woodrow Wilson refused to make an armistice with the Kaiser and the imperial German generals, who had lost the War, but insisted on dealing only with democratic elements in Germany—that is, with the socialists. "And by forcing the socialists to assume the blame for something they had not brought about, Wilson gave Adolf Hitler a political tool that he was destined to wield with devastating force." It is important to note that many of the socialists were Jews—a fact that lodged in the fevered brain of Hitler, who was then recuperating from his war wounds.

Toland leaves no doubt that in the final years Hitler had succumbed to a messianic delusion—that is, he had begun to confuse his will with the will of God. Certainly this was the case with his infamous Judeophobia. He believed, Toland writes, "that

he was observing God's injunction to cleanse the world of vermin. Still a member in good standing of the Church of Rome despite detestation of its hierarchy ('I am now as before a Catholic and will always remain so'), he carried within him its teaching that the Jew was the killer of God." It was the Idea of Jewishness, rather than individual Jews, that he opposed with single-minded fury. In effect, he made the Jews sacrificial offerings to a concept. One can find no better instance of idealism gone mad.

As I've said before, *Adolf Hitler* is a splendid work of biographical art—well written, objective throughout, filled with fascinating details, free of the psychoanalytical claptrap that mars so much contemporary biography, instructive in the best sense, and more than a little humbling in the tale it tells about a genius (or call him monster, if you will) who contained within his being elements of Everyman, albeit blown up to epic size. Just what moral there is in the study God only knows. But one cannot read the book, I am convinced, without arriving at a better understanding than one had before of the horrific events in Europe between 1920 and 1945. □

BOOK REVIEW

Disaster by Decree

Lino A. Graglia / Cornell University Press / \$11.50

Terry O'Rourke

Professor Lino Graglia of the University of Texas Law School has written a concise and lucid account of the Supreme Court's decisions on race and education. Beginning with the 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, which barred the use of racial criteria in assigning children to public schools, Graglia traces the Court's capricious course to its present position mandating the busing of schoolchildren on the basis of race. Court-ordered busing has become the most divisive domestic issue of the 1970s—directly affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands of parents and children, and contravening the fundamental principle that government should make no decision based on race—and Professor Graglia's account of the Supreme Court's role in re-introducing race as a permissible and sometimes constitutionally required basis of government action should astound even the most hardened critics of the Court. It is one of the worst examples of the modern Court's tendency, so aptly described by Milton Handler, to indulge in "over-generalization, disrespect of precedent, needless obscurity of opinions....tortured

reading of statutes, and seeming absence of neutrality and objectivity."

Like all informed critics of court-ordered busing, Graglia applauds *Brown's* prohibition of state-imposed racial discrimination as a justifiable and understandable interpretation of the Constitution, but he faults the Supreme Court for undercutting the new law with an impression of hesitation and uncertainty in the ensuing decade. New impetus for the desegregation movement came in 1964 with the enactment of the Civil Rights Act, which reaffirmed *Brown's* prohibition against discrimination in education. The Act's definition of "desegregation" was clear-cut: "Desegregation" means the assignment of students to public schools and within such schools without regard to their race, color, religion, or national origin, but 'desegregation' shall not mean the assignment of students to public schools in order to overcome racial imbalance." In addition, the Act expressly stated that it did not "empower any official or court of the United States to issue any order to achieve a racial balance in any school by requiring the transportation of pupils or students from one school to another or one district to another

in order to achieve such racial balance."

The language of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did not, however, deter HEW's Office of Education. In what Graglia rightly describes as an "administrative and judicial perversion of legislative purpose," the Office of Education promulgated, and the lower courts upheld, a series of administrative guidelines purportedly designed to implement the Civil Rights Act, but instead authorizing the transfer and assignment of students according to race when the result was to increase racial balance. Finally, in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg* (1971) and afterward, the Supreme Court ruled that racial balance was required, as was cross-district busing where necessary to achieve it.

The Supreme Court's compulsory-busing decisions are virtually unparalleled examples of judicial obliquity and obfuscation. Graglia thoroughly demonstrates that while imposing its requirement of racial balance the Supreme Court has never openly stated that school racial imbalance is unconstitutional; instead, the Court has required racial balance under the guise of "remedying" the state-imposed segregation prohibited by *Brown*. The Court's "remedy" rationale has allowed it to

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