

BOOKS IN BRIEF

The Broken Hearth: Reversing the Moral Collapse of the American Family, by William J. Bennett. Doubleday, 208 pages, \$22.95

WILLIAM BENNETT'S LATEST BOOK PROVIDES a succinct account of the dissolution of the family and the morality that supports it. In this slender and readable volume, Bennett takes just the right tone in discussing, and defending, marriage and family — subjects that are political, with immense social repercussions, and yet involve the deepest of personal sentiments. The book is deliberative, well reasoned, and sympathetic, but nonetheless presses upon the reader the magnitude of the crisis of the American family.

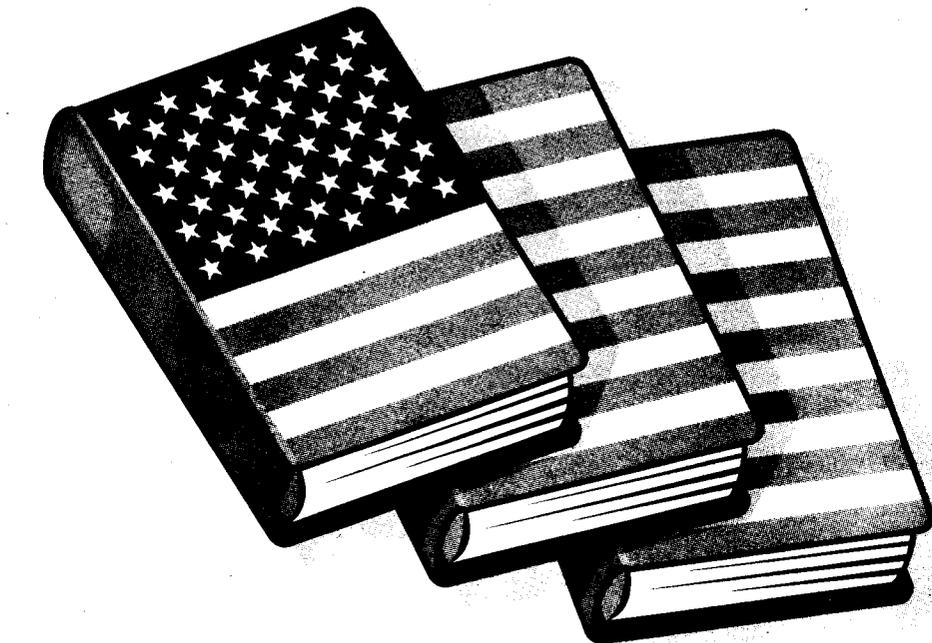
The story Bennett tells is sad — indeed, heartbreaking. He shows, without a hint of shrillness or smugness, the depth of human suffering that has accompanied the destruction of the family, while also painting a vivid picture of the goodness and desirability of a healthy family. He tackles head-on the leading arguments against the nuclear family and the traditional roles of motherhood and fatherhood. And he shows that at the center of these liberal and libertarian doctrines and institutions is a rejection of objective morality that undermines not only the family but also all that Americans once considered good, decent, and sacred.

Going beyond the usual conservative argument for the social utility of the family, Bennett explains in human terms the real happiness and contentment that spring from a healthy family life. Such an effort is critically important today, when so many Americans will never themselves be part of a happy family. —Thomas Krannawitter

A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation, by Diana L. Eck. Harper San Francisco, 416 pages, \$27

SOCIOLOGIST NATHAN GLAZER OBSERVED several years ago that multiculturalism had become the new civil religion of America, replacing that fusion of pious and rational principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the Gettysburg Address.

Diana L. Eck, a Harvard religion professor and director of the university's Pluralism Project, gives a popular portrayal of the forms taken by religions imported from Asia and the Middle East in this age of multiculturalism. These are fruits of a political act, the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965. Eck worships, eats, schmoozes, and eats some more with Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims in America, showing how the faiths transform and are transformed by American life. "[T]he founding fathers wrote what some have called a 'godless' Constitution, one that deliberately steered away from the establishment of any sect of Christianity, even Christianity itself, as the basis of the new nation." What replaced Christian prima-



cy was "pluralism[,] ... the dynamic process through which we engage with one another in and through our very deepest differences." Thus when the U.S. Army permits Wiccans to be identified as such on their dog tags, we see pluralism working its wonders.

Eck could not have foreseen how problematic her thesis is today, post-September 11. "America's vibrant new Muslim communities are here to stay," she writes. "Now more than ever, all Americans need the instructive challenge of the Qur'an: that our differences require us to get to know each other." But this presumes that the immigrant computer-geek from Pakistan and the Harvard professor from Montana know America's first principles. Unfortunately, both the new religions and the new civil religion appear closed to knowing the roots of the old civil religion — which still retains some vitality. Hearing the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" sung in that National Cathedral prayer service proved how much ours is both a Christian nation and a tolerant one, contrary to the apostles of soulless pluralism. —Ken Masugi

The Vanishing Automobile and Other Urban Myths: How Smart Growth Will Harm American Cities, by Randal O'Toole. The Thoreau Institute, 560 pages, \$14.95

DESPITE ITS ECCENTRIC ORGANIZATION AND its focus on Portland, Oregon, O'Toole's collection of essays is the best introduction to urban quality-of-life issues available today. The book serves multiple purposes: It contains 40 short, op-ed length chapters on urban-affairs topics; almost 80 more on "smart-growth myths"; case studies on Portland and other cities; and numerous useful tables of facts, statistics, and websites. The "myths" include the assumption that urban sprawl leads to economic and environmental ills. O'Toole, a much-honored policy analyst with the Oregon-based Thoreau Institute, makes clear how the arrogance of local planners, fueled by a vision of good urban life, has caused local government to be costly, inept, and despotic.

O'Toole points the way toward cities that

pay more attention to the benefits of markets, property rights, citizen awareness, and common sense. Much of his argument is devoted to challenging the advocates of "smart growth" who love public transportation, restrictive zoning practices, and regulation generally.

He has a formidable challenger in the "new urbanists," who have an appealing vision of beauty they wish to see realized in American cities. They disdain "sprawl," monotonous suburbs, boring architecture, and long commuting times. Their desire to re-create elements of small-town America — tree-lined streets, small stores within walking distance, houses with front porches — appeals to frustrated urban dwellers of all political views.

Armed with the confidence of bureaucracy, many new urbanists and smart-growth advocates are perfectly willing to impose their vision on cities through planning commissions and the like — all examples of the Progressive legacy in American politics. In this way, local government, with its non-partisan character, its disregard of political parties and hence of all democratic politics, and its trust in administrative expertise, is today the best example of the success of Progressivism. The American Founding's ideals of limited government (seen in its regard for property rights) and active citizenship might revitalize the cities while dismantling this administrative state. That is the challenge for students of local government today. In a field where Marxist tracts and bureaucratic apologetics abound, O'Toole's book is essential reading. —KM

Fighting Poverty With Virtue: Moral Reform and America's Urban Poor, 1825-2000, by Joel Schwartz. Indiana University Press, 376 pages, \$39.95

POLITICAL THEORIST JOEL SCHWARTZ'S NEW book is required reading for anyone seriously concerned with the poor. It is an elegant example of political philosophy applied to an eminently practical problem. Schwartz explains how early 20th-century moral reformers such as Jane Addams and Walter Rauschenbusch argued against personal moral reformation as an essential part of

overcoming poverty. Virtue's transformation from a responsibility of the individual to a by-product of social policy led eventually to the welfare crisis of the last half-century. Echoing Alexis de Tocqueville, Schwartz concludes that, "the promotion of virtue is not exclusively — perhaps not even primarily — a matter for public policy."

But what place do political obligations have in helping the poor develop as citizens? Perhaps an analogy with Aristotle's democracy, the rule of the many or the poor, might be applicable. Aristotle advised that the poor learn, and practice, virtue by contributing to the common good. The poor today could contribute to military success through participation in the army or navy. In the war on terrorism, any number of informal security functions, such as patrolling strategically important areas, might be performed by our urban poor. In return, their fellow citizens might treat them as equals, capable of assuming responsibility. —KM

Roots of Freedom: A Primer on Modern Liberty, by John W. Danford. ISI Books, 227 pages, \$19.95

POLITICAL THEORIST JOHN DANFORD, A scholar of David Hume and Ludwig Wittgenstein, perceptively examines the roots of modern political freedom — and what threatens them — in his new book. Danford wrote the early drafts of much of this book during the late 1980s in the form of short articles for Radio Free Europe. But readers will find that this series has a use beyond fighting Communism. His primer surveys Greek philosophy, Christianity, feudalism, the Protestant Reformation, and an array of modern thinkers from Machiavelli through Tocqueville and Marx. Danford shows that the fundamental modern principles are individualism, the rule of law, property rights, and moral restraint; their major theorists are John Locke and Adam Smith. Danford emphasizes free societies' need to protect property and the qualities of character that the concern for acquisition creates. But his ultimate concern is liberal education. He concludes his book: "Perhaps, after all, the ancients can be said to have something to contribute to the principles of free societies. If there are to be free societies, there is no substitute for liberal education."

While approving enthusiastically Danford's purposes and this book's adoption as an elementary text, one might quarrel with his portrayal of the division between ancients and moderns. As he explains it, the division leads to a practical problem, namely, how to defend what he calls "liberal commercial societies." "The ills of equality or egalitarianism are probably inevitable in free societies," he writes. But don't these ills reflect the radical assault on the mixture of the pre-modern and modern roots of our freedom by those who have redefined freedom? —KM

Red Terrorism: The End of the Affair

BY CHRISTOPHER C. HARMON

"The Legends of Rita" (Die Stille nach dem Schuss), directed by Volker Schlöndorff; written (in German, with English subtitles) by Wolfgang Kohlhaase and Volker Schlöndorff. Starring Bibiana Beglau (Rita), Martin Wuttke (Hull), Nadja Uhl (Tatjana), Harald Schrott (Andi), Alexander Beyer (Jochen) and Jenny Schily (Friederike). Available on VHS and DVD. (103 minutes, Not Rated)

LIKE A WELL-RESEARCHED HISTORICAL NOVEL, "The Legends of Rita" is almost true. There was no "Rita Vogt," but there were many young women like her who joined the terrorist underground in the early 1970s in Germany, and from their remarkable lives this film has been composed.

Barbara Meyer of the Baader-Meinhof gang was at the end of her teens and lovely, with "the face of an angel," but she was an accomplice to political murder, like Rita.

Gudrun Ensslin joined the gang out of affection for Andreas Baader and because she was a true believer in violent Marxism. When Baader was jailed, she — like Rita — planned the operation that sprung him.

Inge Vielt, a German terrorist using Paris safehouses, did shoot a French cop who dared to ask her why she was riding her motorcycle without a helmet. In this film it is one of Rita's friends who fires the pistol.

Astrid Proll, an excellent car thief and driver for the gang's bank robberies, spoke for terrorists everywhere when she told a reporter years later that they deserved to be seen as idealists: "we were very well-armed social workers." Ms. Proll operated in Paris as well as her native Germany, like the cinematic Rita.

The East German *Stasi* (secret police) did indeed shelter and support German female and male terrorists who had fled Western police. The Baader-Meinhofs, and their descendants called the Red Army Faction, used East Berlin as a transit station between the West, the East Bloc, and the

Middle East with its Palestinian training camps and roiling low intensity conflicts. East German agents could help "militant internationalists" in most of those countries.

Or they could protect them within East Germany, as with terrorists Susanne Albrecht and Inge Vielt, who were covertly immigrated and settled in banal jobs in Dresden and Magdeburg. In this film, "Susanne" is the very name Rita assumes for a new life under communism. She comes to be seen by coworkers as an embarrassingly naive fan of the East German system. And she similarly resembles the real Inge Vielt in being notably unenthused by the democratic movement of the late 1980s, which excited many East German laborers.

"The Legends of Rita" is thus a valuable portrait as well as an entertaining one. Whatever the politics of scriptwriter Wolfgang Kohlhaase, who flourished in the Communist period in East Germany, the film calmly details many essential truths that were once *verboten*. American analysts of the late Cold War used to debate the question: "Does the Communist bloc back terrorism in the West?" This new German movie is one more affirmation atop the maze of papers from police and foreign ministry offices that have poured out of Budapest, Bucharest, Berlin, and Moscow since the Wall fell down. Today, evidence that Communist states helped German and Italian terrorists, various Palestinians, and even Carlos the Jackal is so overwhelming that many U.S. citizens barely recall the old disagreement, while many academics and self-important newsmen like Daniel Schorr want to forget how wrong they were in ridiculing the idea.

Bibiana Beglau plays "Rita." She is a young woman with clear determination but no rage; she is more sober than many of her cohorts. The scene opens in West Germany with her orchestration of the prison breakout of her lover/comrade. Like the Andreas Baader of contemporary history, this male leader frequently raves at the women in the terrorist group and belittles them — from a proper Leftist perspective. In the film, the man soon enough takes up with a different terrorist mistress, but then both die at a police checkpoint.

Rita's attentions thus shift. She devotes herself to being a good worker in her new East German environs, and she makes new friends. They find Rita deeply empathetic, generous, and even quick to cover for their errors. One close friend is a fellow factory hand, female, prone to drink, whose nascent lesbian interests bring even the libertine Rita to draw the line. Next there is a fling and friendship with a lifeguard, the proverbial bronzed beach boy on the Baltic coast. Like other East Germans around Rita,

however, he grows unnerved as her past is uncovered. Average East German citizens seem to think terrorism stupid and immoral. Not so *Stasi* agent "Erwin," our terrorist heroine's manager; he sees the violent German young people as immature, yes, but as anti-capitalist allies deserving protection. Despite Erwin's status as an agent for a totalitarian system, Director Volker Schlöndorff and his screenwriter seem fond of him, as they are of Rita. Well played by Martin Wuttke, Erwin is humane. Whatever the crisis, or however small the concern, he seems to know the best way, and says the right words. Among his duties is helping Rita create her new "legends," the false personal histories that help her fit quietly into successive East German communities for years at a time. By the late 1980s, as that state's moral emptiness gapes and the *Stasi*'s power wanes, agent Erwin displays slightly more loyalty to his pretty charge than to his decrepit government, and he tries to help her escape before lesser men of the "People's Police" grab her for extradition. Other terrorists sheltering in the East are so grabbed, gifts offered up to West Germany in the act of reunification.

Erwin and Rita might have realized that they represent two kinds of political failure, both radically undemocratic. But more in Marxist character, they see themselves as unfortunates "swept up by history," and together "caught between East and West." Each must now promise to forget knowing the other; each must forge a new legend to escape democratic authorities. That careful advice is the *Stasi* man's last, and he fades quietly from the scene. Rita makes a less skillful, more dramatic exit. But ever the "idealist" and "the good terrorist," she goes out without having personally shot anyone.

Most of Germany's 82 million people today are grateful things ended as they did: Urban guerrilla warfare lost; the open civil society won. What was largely evil gave way to what is largely good. The creators of "The Legends of Rita" are not fully reconciled to this obvious truth, and this is their voice, speaking out from center-left, to slightly shape the past as it recedes.

But they tell a fine story. There are a hundred accurate details in this picture, all visible beneath the subtle rose tinting. The last frame, before the credits roll, declares with some truth: "That's exactly how it was, more or less."

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Christopher Harmon is the author of Terrorism Today (Frank Cass). His research for this essay is indebted to Eileen MacDonald's Shoot the Women First, published by Random House in 1991.

WAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

tence, dissuade and discourage potential adversaries from investing in other hostile capabilities. For example, effective missile defenses discourage potential adversaries from investing in ballistic missiles that threaten U.S. and allied population centers. The United States also needs to strengthen the capability to deter future adversaries by increasing the capability of its forward-deployed forces and global striking power to respond rapidly to threats. Finally, it must maintain the capacity to swiftly defeat attacks and impose severe penalties for aggression in critical regions.

To do this, the Defense Department will need forces and capabilities that give the president an even wider range of military options. Implementing such a multi-layered deterrence and defense strategy

requires improved intelligence capabilities, long-distance force projection, integrated joint forces, and a credible offensive nuclear deterrent. It also requires a transformation of U.S. forces. Long-time Defense Department official Andrew Marshall notes in his analysis that military transformation is about more than technology. It is about innovative concepts of operating and configuring U.S. forces, and adjustments in how the Department of Defense trains and bases people and materiel and how it conducts day-to-day business. The goal of transformation is to maintain a substantial advantage over any would-be adversaries in key areas such as information warfare, power projection, space, and intelligence. If the United States can do this, it can reduce its own chances of being surprised, and increase its ability to create surprises of its own.

To realize the vision of the QDR, Rumsfeld must now make the hard choices and move money. He must promote those who support the new way of thinking and get rid of those who do not. Of course, thoughtful words and sound strategy in the Pentagon must be matched with decisive action in the field. "Every great army has a soul," historian Victor Davis Hanson once observed. "It is nourished on military competence along with success; but without an identity and élan it eventually starves ... In the coming crucible, the nation's real benefactors may prove the most odious to organization and bureaucracy ... We do not require 'A' students with impressive recommendations, but scrappers who have been overlooked amid the order and routine of the past — the more eager and desperate the better — who know opportunity and fate are not ordained, but fleeting and of the moment."

These various elements of defense policy, military strategy, operational art, and field leadership must come together in Afghanistan and beyond. President Bush has correctly argued that the war in which we now find ourselves will be fought on many fronts, most of them outside the arena of armed combat, and in association with many other nations. But here is a sobering thought: every other member of the so-called anti-terrorist coalition can contribute in the areas of law enforcement, intelligence gathering, public diplomacy, critical infrastructure protection, border security, and the like. But only one nation can project serious and sustained military power anywhere on the globe, and destroy its enemies and their instruments of terror. If we fail in that, all the rest ultimately won't matter.

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