

daunted by the inconvenient disturbances of the 16th century.

Not until the 1960s and the Second Vatican Council did the hint of pluralism force its way into the tightly sealed system. Concurrently, the rest of the world not only was exploring new planets but was also experiencing a few tremors of its own with the arrival of nuclear weapons, the boisterous emergence of the political left, and the coming of age of the Third World.

How was the church to preserve its insularity and its stronghold in the face of such cogent counterforces? It wasn't, it couldn't, and it didn't. While the Roman Catholic Church experiences the painful yielding of its universal claim to truth, it is also, optimists would hold, gradually recapturing its central mission of facilitating among people their prayerful relationship with God and their compassionate relationship with one another.

The strength of Noel's analysis lies in his ability to highlight, from an informed liberal perspective, the points at which the church has gone awry along the way. If he is to be faulted, it would be for devoting too much space to the U.S. church, which is hardly representative of the church in "an age of revolution." It is the struggles of the faithful in oppressed countries that by the force of necessity will effect the changes of the future. It is the poor and the religiously disenfranchised, those who mysteriously still care about the church, who will one day redirect it away from its lust for orthodoxy. **MICHAEL J. RUSH, S.J.**

## Fromm on Freud

**GREATNESS AND LIMITATIONS OF FREUD'S THOUGHT.** By Erich Fromm. Harper & Row, 145 pp., \$9.95.

ERICH FROMM'S last book, appropriately enough, examines the *Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought*. In his previous 20 books, psychologist Fromm contributed some of our society's best writing on subjects such as love, destruction, religion, Marx, freedom and hope. When Fromm died in March 1980 at the age of 80, the world lost one of its most creative, productive and controversial thinkers.

When Fromm left his native Germany for the United States in 1934, he had already been deeply influenced by two of the greatest writers in the German language: Freud and Marx. Though Fromm learned much from these two

teachers, he also departed significantly from them, and cannot be considered either an orthodox Freudian or an orthodox Marxist.

Fromm both credits Freud for his substantial achievements and describes his errors, concluding: "Freud was a prisoner of the feelings and thought habits of his society." Fromm maintains that Freud's greatest accomplishment was to demonstrate "that the way to cure lies in insight into one's own mental structure and thereby in 'de-repression.'" Freud applied the principle that "truth liberates and cures," which is what drew Fromm to him. Ultimately, however, Fromm is more hopeful and loving in his writing than was Freud.

Fromm alleges that Freud's distorted view of women was a fundamental error which weakened his entire work. He asserts that "Freud's grotesque picture of women as essentially narcissistic, unable to love and sexually cool is male propaganda." Fromm also scores Freud for his concept of love "Freud and his disciples usually speak of 'object love' and of a 'love-object.' Is there really such a thing?

Does not the loved person cease to be an object? Is not love precisely the inner activity which unites two people so that they cease to be objects?" Fromm describes this way of thinking as "not different from a merchant speaking of capital investment."

Though Fromm credits Freud with significant discoveries in respect to sexuality, particularly its development in children, he adds that today "in the culture of the cities, sexuality is not the main object of repression . . . sex has become one of the main articles of consumption." Fromm describes other important conflicts between conscious and unconscious strivings, including the following: freedom/unfreedom, good conscience/guilt feelings, happiness/depression, power/powerlessness, faith/cynicism. These are the "true contradictions of today that are repressed and rationalized," according to Fromm.

Any thinking person in contemporary society must come to grips with Freud. One should not dismiss, ignore or glorify him. Fromm's approach to Freud offers much. He acknowledges Freud's discov-

## Recent Arrivals

**FIGHTING JANE: MAYOR JANE BYRNE AND THE CHICAGO MACHINE.** By Bill Granger and Lori Granger. Dial, 244 pp., \$12.95.

The city in which we edit has this mayor named Byrne. About her there are no neutral opinions. The Grangers have really found nothing especially new, and there are neither warm strokes nor smoking pistols here. But they do set the familiar story in order for those who wish to catch up. Illustrated.

**PETER THE GREAT.** By Robert K. Massie. Knopf, 928 pp., \$17.95.

This may not belong to the Great Books, but its scope matches its great subject. 928 pages may seem to be more than one can bear to read about the Russian autocrat. But Massie is one of those grand-scale researchers and writers who know how to move a subject along, and he does so here as he did with *Nicholas* and *Alexandra*. You will need long winter nights to have time to face up to it. It will shorten the nights.

**THE SAGA OF THE AMERICAN SOUL.** By Richard E. Wentz. University Press of America, 155 pp., \$7.50 paperback.

This modest-looking (typeset) book has ambitious ends to begin to limn a "soul" on the scale of a "saga." But Wentz disciplines himself and most of the time is content to point as he sees outlines emerging. In a few lines it is hard to summarize the

plots, and the author himself admits he has not drawn it all together everything is too dynamic for that. At times Wentz meanders; at others he catches the dynamism in word-portraits. Providence, Soul Covenant. These are the themes. It is a soft and even compassionate reading of the American drama.

**FISHERS OF MEN: THE WAY OF THE APOSTLES.** Photographs by Gordon N. Converse. Text by Robert J. Bull and B. Cobbe Crister. Prentice-Hall, 141 pp., \$14.95.

A camera tour of sites mentioned in writings concerning the apostles, this collection does what it can to look right past evidences that almost 20 centuries have passed. There are no automobiles in the picture, no modern doorknobs. Only the decay that the passing of time works on monuments and roads, doorways and arenas that are hallowed in memory. Black-and-white illustrations.

**THE BACKYARD REVOLUTION.** By Harry C. Boyte. Temple University Press, 271 pp., \$14.95.

Now that we have passed one of our more sour and dull election campaigns, it is time to think of ways to revitalize American politics. The lull occurring between formal partisan assaults may be the best time for the roots of grass to become untangled and readied for new growth. This is a catalogue, a register, a history, a how-to, a morale-builder all at once.

eries, criticizes his limitations, and adds his own thoughts from a life which spanned four-fifths of this century.

SHEPHERD BLISS.

## Wit and Wisdom

THE NEW TESTAMENT WITHOUT ILLUSION. By John L. McKenzie. Thomas More, 256 pp., \$10.95.

✦ SOMETIMES books should be read aloud. John J. McKenzie's new work needs to be read that way to catch the wit, candor and wisdom of the author as he addresses the question of how the New Testament can aid in the renewal of the church.

Father McKenzie, whose teaching and publishing career has spanned the middle of the 20th century, can well be called the dean of his generation of American Roman Catholic New Testament scholars. Here he speaks from a commitment to the historical/critical study of Scripture and the renewal of the church. The style of the book is casual. There are no footnotes, yet every page is packed with allusions to other scholarly works. The best readers for the book would be (1) colleagues who know the author and (2) students he has taught. However, it can also be appreciated by a wider audience—one that would include both laypersons and the Catholic hierarchy.

What Father McKenzie offers here is a set of 21 essays on a variety of New Testament themes, along with discussion of how these themes could function for the renewal of the church. All the essays are salted with a witty debunking of pretension in places high and low. The general idea is that the gospel of forgiveness and reconciliation is too radical for the church. The church *should* listen, but it might not do so because it is about other things. Insofar as Jesus was not a Zealot he would stand aloof from liberation theology. Because he opposed the Sadducees he would call the hierarchy to task as well. In a touch of wit McKenzie also sees that Jesus didn't have much to say for the Pharisees. He concludes:

I have expressed my fear that the Zealots and the institutional church exercise no leadership or leadership to ruin. Can the clerks lead? Have they ever done so? Not really. Yet we clerks believe that there

tionally called pharisaic. But as far as we are able, we will not join hands with those who want to burn down the Temple.

McKenzie sees himself as part of a minority of Roman Catholic scholars who have called for a critical appraisal of Catholic tradition by looking at

the scriptural foundation of His faith. He has no illusion that he can perform miracles, but he does know that something out is needed, and something does in a humble and ordinary way. There are few who can command respect and simple grace.

DAVID G.

## Film

### Struggling Toward Autonomy

✦ THE PASSAGE of a boy from childhood to manhood is a theme with a long and honored history in both literature and film. Now three recent films have focused on the struggles of teen-age boys to become authentic, autonomous human beings. Each of the three locates some threat to the boy's existence, depicts the companionship or help around which he organizes his response to the threat, and then reaches a dramatic moment in which he triumphs over the threat. Of the three, *My Bodyguard* is the most entertaining, *Ordinary People* the most moving, and *The Great Santini* the most satisfying overall.

#### I

Tony Bill's *My Bodyguard* is a somewhat confused film. The story revolves around a boy whose father manages an expensive hotel; Cliff is sent to a Chicago public high school where a gang of boys is selling "protection." Cliff (Chris Makepeace) hires Ricky Linderman (Adam Baldwin), a boy whom everyone fears, as his bodyguard. They become friends and, after an initial setback, face their foes together.

Chris Makepeace (left) and Adam Baldwin in 'My Bodyguard.'



The film is marred by a sitcom quality about Cliff's grandmother (Lillian Gish), who prowls around the house looking for carnal-minded older men, saying the things that we think are too polite to say. What this has to do with anything else going on in the film is to discern, and the footage would have been better used in developing the characters of the boys.

The threat in this film is explicit: boys who are selling protection. Cliff in a rest room; they are on the walls in the halls; they seem to make an intimidating smaller, weaker, more lunch and "walking around" boys. Their leader, Moody (Matt Fretwell), usually dressed in black chinos and a black T-shirt, with slicked-back hair (resembling the '50s archer), crawled out of *Grease* and *Back*, *Kotter* in the late '70s.

Ricky Linderman is a loner. Rumor is abroad that he fights and sometime in the past has hurt someone. He is larger than a life-size doll, has no friends, walks about in dark clothes. Tony Bill's camera looks at him obliquely, from slightly below, giving him an ominous and menacing presence in the early frames. As he comes more human to Cliff, it is just a solution to a problem, also begins to treat him normally.

At this stage Bill transforms Cliff. Having been led to believe that the problem is his physical well-being, he now finds that he has difficulty coming out humanly to someone else. He hides behind Ricky's protection. Underneath, Ricky has a real sense of justice, but he also understands that being used. Then the two boys form an alliance based on mutual attraction rather than power. They finish

