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## **An Analysis of World Communism: The Nature of Communism**

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## AN ANALYSIS OF WORLD COMMUNISM

THE NATURE OF COMMUNISM. By Robert V. Daniels. New York: Vintage Books, 1962. 398 pp.

Professor Daniels has produced a very readable and informative work on World Communism. To the informed reader the facts and interpretations presented in this book are not new. Professor Daniels' originality lies mainly in the manner in which he has integrated many different perspectives and insights into a unified and comprehensible picture of World Communism.

The first five chapters of the book are devoted to a historical analysis of the rise of Communism in Russia. In this analysis, one fact comes through very clearly, that Marx would scarcely recognize present day Russian Communism as his offspring. Just as it has been said of Marx that he set Hegel on his head, so Communism today, although professing loyalty to the Marxian ideal has so reinterpreted that ideal to explain 'ad hoc' policies, that little of Marx is recognizable beyond the claim of being Marxian. Professor Daniels explores skillfully the fate of such Marxian doctrines as "historical materialism" and "the inevitability of revolution", once they could no longer be reconciled with policies of the Soviet state. Lenin, first, and then, Stalin, felt that working class movements had to be made revolutionary by sheer organizational force and both likewise played a large part in turning Communism from an international revolutionary movement into a national movement seeking the glorification of Russia.

The most valuable sections of Professor Daniels' work, for this reviewer, are the chapters in which he analyzes the appeal of Communism to the nations of the East. For Daniels the revolt of the East is essentially a reaction to Western domination and influence. Because of this domination "Easterners (especially the educated and politically conscious among them) are being alienated from their own traditions by the power and example of the West." Communism, according to Professor Daniels, represents a peculiarly Eastern reaction to this alienation. In countries with long experience of despotic rule and lacking a liberal tradition, Communism can be quite acceptable especially since it has proved itself well adapted to the political and economic problems of competing with the West.

Perhaps the weakest section of the book is the chapter on "Communism as a Faith." In this chapter, Professor Daniels scarcely escapes the criticism of "immodesty" made by contemporary scholars of Marx himself. He seems so taken by the similarities between Christianity and Communism that he overlooks important differences. On the surface there are many similarities between Communism and Christianity but only on the surface. In his analysis, Professor Daniels betrays little

understanding of the Christian faith or of the sociological context in which that faith grows and develops. For him, a commitment in supernatural faith is little different from the commitment of the average party member to the "dogmas" of Communism. This said, it cannot be denied that some useful insights into Communism can be derived from the application of religious categories to an analysis of the Communist movement provided one does not, as Professor Daniels seems to do, tailor the Christian experience to the demands of the comparison.

The final chapter of the book, "Communism and the Future," says very little but perhaps what is said is all that can be said at present. The future would indeed seem to be bleak as far as the cold war is concerned if Communism, particularly the Chinese variety, made new gains in the underdeveloped countries.

The Bibliographical Note at the end of the book is a very valuable guide to some of the best sources available in English on World Communism.

In summary, it can be said that Professor Daniels has presented us with an insightful, imaginative and in places rather original analysis of World Communism. Though, at times, there is a tendency to press his analogies a bit too far, the book on the whole is a very rewarding experience.

JOHN F. DOHERTY

## THE CHURCH AS CREATIVE FORCE

**CHRISTIANITY AND REVOLUTION: The Lesson of Cuba.** By Leslie Dewart. New York: Herder and Herder, 1963. 321 pp.

The author was born in Spain, received his primary and secondary education in Cuban schools, emigrated to Canada, and during the war years flew more than fifty missions as a pilot for the Royal Canadian Air Force. After the war, he completed his education and was awarded the doctorate in 1954 by the University of Toronto. He is presently Associate Professor of Philosophy at St. Michael's College.

"This is an essay in political philosophy. Its viewpoint is Christian, empirical, and existentialist. Its subject, in general, is the relation of twentieth-century Christianity to the world polity of today, to a world that is politically definable in terms of the thermonuclear confrontation of East and West. Its subject, in particular, is the relation of the Cuban Church to Castro's communist state" (from the Prologue, p. 15).