

BOOKS

of the young lady he hoped to seduce that evening . . ." More than two decades later, this sort of history seems slightly out of place.

But the camera-eye technique may well be the best one to record the muddled events that occurred in Paris between early August, when a de Gaulle messenger parachuted into a Paris suburb (with orders from Algiers to contain any possible insurrection), and Aug. 26, when Luftwaffe bombs finally fell on the liberated city.

Power: Between those fateful days, the Communist-inspired insurrection flared at barricades throughout the city, the Germans retaliated, de Gaulle flew into France in a plane that barely made it to the coast, an unknown French Resistance major, Roger Gallois, persuaded the Allies to enter the city; GI's and Second French Armored Division fighters crashed through, hip deep in wine and roses; and de Gaulle finally entered the city with power in his grasp.

One of the most interesting figures in the entire saga is the stolid Prussian general to whom Hitler entrusted first the defense, then the destruction of Paris, Dietrich von Choltitz. This efficient demolisher of cities and villages on the eastern front went about his business of reducing Paris to rubble with astonishing inefficiency. He cooperated with Swedish Consul General Raoul Nordling and double-agent Emil "Bobby" Bender to save more than 2,000 French Resistance prisoners slated for execution. While General Eisenhower was muttering "Well, what the hell, Brad. I guess we'll have to go in," Choltitz (had he too been seduced by the City of Light?) was subverting the letter of Hitler's demolition order with un-Teutonic subtlety.

While Collins and Lapierre bring all the excitement of those days back with a fury, their method smacks too much of a television documentary script: "Now, through the folds of this tent, another man appeared. His hair was unkempt and his khaki shirt only partially jammed into his trousers." The shaggy one turns out to be General Patton. This technique, after several chapters, begins to cloy. Still, the research involved in the writing of the book is staggering. Almost as staggering as the amount of dramatic imagination that must have gone into it.

Faces of Change

WHO SPEAKS FOR THE NEGRO? By Robert Penn Warren. 454 pages. Random House. \$5.95.

This is an important, touching and disappointing book. Poet-novelist-critic Robert Penn Warren traveled through his native South, as well as the North, armed with a tape recorder, his poet's

Newsweek, June 7, 1965



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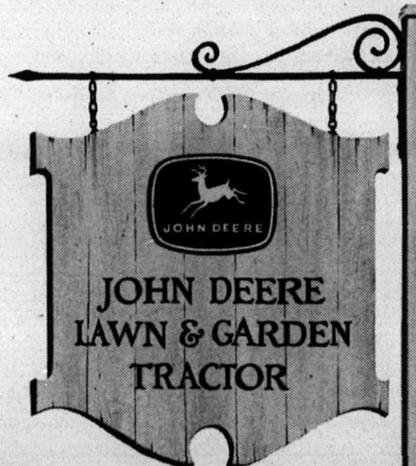
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BOOKS

sensitivity, his novelist's eye for detail and his critic's sense of logic and order.

The importance of the book lies in its portrait gallery of leaders of the civil-rights movement. Here are the careful, pragmatic, bourgeois administrators like Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, James Farmer of CORE, Whitney Young Jr. of the Urban League; the charismatic, inward-looking Martin Luther King Jr. and his associates; veteran grass-roots captains like druggist Aaron Henry of Mississippi and lawyer Lolis Elie of Louisiana; the master political helmsman Adam Clayton Powell; the conceptually uncertain but decisively active young radicals like Robert Moses and James Forman of SNCC; and the Savonarola and Psalmist of civil-rights scripture,



Newsweek—Tony Rollo

Warren: Troubled progress

James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison.

But it is Warren's own pervasive presence that makes the book both touching and disappointing. For the book is, in good part, a plotting of Warren's own inner progress from well-intentioned, paternal Southern conservative to his current position of troubled moderate whose basic attitude is still paternalistic, but whose ideological children have all grown up and left home. All the topsy-turvy pathos of the Southern myth is in Warren's memory of how, as a boy, when he first heard about a lynching, "I knew, in shame and inferiority, that I wouldn't ever be man enough to do that."

But there is present pathos in the feeling that Warren is inspecting the Negro leaders for rectitude, soundness and sincerity. Indeed, it is the more conservative leaders that Warren feels most comfortable with. He quotes, with tacit approval, Roy Wilkins' comment on the Negro: "I think he's a liberal only on the race question. I mean, I think he is a conservative economically."

Against this confident, middle-of-the-

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road attitude, Warren sees the younger Negro leaders as troubled, agonized, uncertain—even somewhat neurotic. Robert Moses, who has an “aimless abstract handshake,” sounds like a new Hamlet: “The country has such tremendous problems—I mean every time you try and get a breakthrough in, say, the Negro problem, you run into a deeper, tremendous problem that the whole country has to face. Jobs . . . education . . . automation . . . armament. I get lost.”

Ellison: Warren is sharp and keen on Malcolm X (“He is, like all men of power, a flirt; he flirts with destiny”) and James Baldwin (“the choked cry of rage, of self-pity struggling . . . to become pity”). But Ellison is his man, Ellison who sees the positive side of the Negro tragedy, who says, “Negroes have achieved a very rich humanity despite these restrictive conditions.” Although he is a poet, an artist, Warren shies away from the apocalyptic view, even the tragic view, of the race crisis.

At one point Warren confesses to “a cold flash of rage” at the “moral condescension” to him of one of the Negro leaders. “The Negro Movement,” he says, “is fueled by a sense of moral superiority.” But he himself can say, with some condescension, that “the Negro leadership has given the public little reason to be appalled.” Still, in the end, the importance of this investigation is its powerful, plodding documentation of the inevitability of profound change by one of the most discerning minds of Southern culture.

In many ways the most impressive figure in his gallery is that of the Rev. Joe Carter of Louisiana, who looks like “a black Robert Frost,” and who tried to register because he heard on television that “the gov'mint say for us to vote.” Carter is turned back, balked, stripped, jailed. The cuffs close over one wrist, and “when I heard the handcuff lock, I just laid the other one back there.” At that moment, Carter symbolizes present tragedy and future victory, for he finally does register. He becomes the Negro, of whom Warren says: “He is . . . the ‘existentialist’ American . . . His role is to dramatize the most inward revelation of that culture.”

Thinking God's Thoughts

THE POSITIVE THINKERS. By Donald Meyer. 358 pages. Doubleday. \$4.95.

When Bruce Barton reintroduced Jesus Christ to Christendom as the “Founder of Modern Business,” it was not an isolated moment in the history of American aberration. By the 1920s, there had long been a well-established tradition of linking piety with profit, pleasure and power. As Prof. Donald Meyer makes clear in his engaging and

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