

SOFT ENERGY PATHS:

Toward a Durable Peace

by Amory B. Lovins
Ballinger, 1977, 233 pp.
\$15 cloth, \$6.95 paper
L of C 77-4349
ISBN 0-88410-614-4
ISBN 0-88410-615-2 pbk

An oft-proposed solution to the world's energy problem is to increase supplies to meet projected demands, primarily through rapid extension of high technologies for generation of electricity and production of hydrocarbon fuels. Lovins, a young American physicist now residing in Britain, summarizes the arguments for an alternative to this "hard" path. He advocates more efficient use of existing energy systems and supplies, with particular emphasis on careful matching of the scale and quality of delivered energy to consumers' real needs (e.g., electricity to light, but not to heat, houses). Critics who have attacked his "soft" path thesis as softheaded point out that it is based on unproved assumptions and say that it would require unacceptable changes in U.S. lifestyles. But Lovins is no primitivist taking us back to an earlier, wood-burning rural America. His nonapocalyptic study, bolstered with supporting data, is probably the best guide we have to the feasibility—he would say the necessity—of something other than expanded high technology as a solution to energy needs.

— Charles F. Cooper ('77)

**PERUVIAN DEMOCRACY
UNDER ECONOMIC
STRESS: An Account of the
Belaúnde Administration,
1963-1968**

by Pedro-Pablo Kuczynski
Princeton, 1977
308 pp. \$16.50
L of C 76-24296
ISBN 0-691-04213-6

What are the prospects for successful civilian rule, once the Peruvian military steps down from power in 1980, as promised? Kuczynski's account of economic policymaking under Peru's last popularly elected president, Fernando Belaúnde, does not encourage optimism. A former manager of Peru's Central Bank during the Belaúnde administration, Kuczynski has written an insider's chronicle of events leading to the military takeover and so-called Revolution of 1968. Weak political institutions, obstructionist opposition parties, vulnerable export-oriented economy, and rising demands on government from a restive population still characterize Peru; restoration of civilian rule could lead to a replay of the kinds of events he describes.

**GOVERNMENT POLICY
AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME IN
PERU, 1963-1973**

by Richard Charles Webb
Harvard, 1977, 239 pp. \$15
L of C 76-22579
ISBN 0-674-35830-9

Webb, former research director of Peru's Central Bank, writes for specialists but reaches conclusions that are of general interest. He argues that between 1963 and '73, little progress was made toward a more equi-

table sharing of income; the patterns of government-fostered redistribution before and after the 1968 Revolution did not change much. Workers within the modern sector of the economy saw their living standard improve, but their incomes were already higher than those of subsistence farmers.

—*Susan Kaufman Purcell ('77)*

**BLACK CULTURE AND
BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS:
Afro-American Folk Thought
from Slavery to Freedom**
by Lawrence W. Levine
Oxford, 1977, 522 pp. \$15.95
L of C 76-9223
ISBN 0-19-502088-X

Challenging the long-accepted academic view that slavery destroyed black culture, Levine holds that black oral tradition, folk heroes, legends and other lore, sacred and secular music, all flow together into a rich cultural stream. The idea of a historic black culture is not new; black intellectuals have been insisting on it for years. What is original and fresh is Levine's use of the techniques of the folklorist and anthropologist in the cause of writing a history of the minds of the mass of Afro-Americans rather than of the often-studied black elite. An important example of the newest of the "new history" of popular and mass culture, Levine's book extends even to black humor, including such variants as "playing the dozens"—a game of verbal taunts in which the winner is the one who keeps his cool.

—*Thomas Cripps ('76)*

DEFENDING AMERICA
by James Schlesinger et al.
Basic Books, 1977
255 pp. \$13.95
L of C 76-43479
ISBN 0-465-01585-9

The most thorough critique of the Nixon-Kissinger policy of détente available today, this collection of essays from San Francisco's Institute for Contemporary Studies is unified by a common conservative philosophy and a prevailing pessimism. James Schlesinger, Theodore Draper, Walter Laqueur, Gregory Grossman, Albert Wohlstetter, and Leonard Schapiro are among the 13 contributors to sections on the political and economic implications of détente, on the current U.S. military posture, and on human rights. Robert Conquest bluntly concludes that "a stable [Soviet-U.S.] truce based on mutual distrust is preferable to delusions of friendship accompanied by and encouraging political and military initiatives by the Kremlin, which increase the dangers of both war and totalitarian victory."

—*Samuel F. Wells, Jr. ('77)*