

**NUCLEAR POWER AND
NONPROLIFERATION:
The Remaking of
U.S. Policy**
by Michael J. Brenner
Cambridge, 1981
324 pp. \$24.95

Despite the awful specter of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the 1950s saw a remarkable flowering of American confidence in the peaceful potential of the atom. Charged with overseeing both military and civilian projects, the Atomic Energy Commission zealously carried out Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" program to bring atomic energy to the rest of the non-communist world, trusting that bilateral agreements would prevent buyer nations from converting their nuclear capacity into atomic arsenals. The Nixon administration's commitment to commercial nuclear power led to the private ownership of enrichment plants and to the spread of increasingly sophisticated nuclear technology. Finally, in 1974, India's explosion of a nuclear device brought to an end over two decades of wishful thinking. Two years later, the United States launched its first full-scale review of atomic policy since 1953. Concluded during the last months of the Ford administration, the Fri Review urged subordinating commercial interests to nonproliferation considerations, but the responsibility for action fell to President Carter. While crediting him with good intentions, Brenner, a professor of international affairs at the University of Pittsburgh, shows how Carter alienated our friendly competitors in the nuclear energy trade, notably France and Japan, with his sudden unilateral pronouncements (e.g., his "ban" on the breeder reactor) instead of trying for nonproliferation accords through steady diplomacy. For the declining exclusivity of the "nuclear club," Brenner puts most blame on the early U.S. nuclear policymakers, who naively failed to consider the dangers down the road.

**THE EUROPEAN
AND THE INDIAN:
Essays in the Ethnohistory
of Colonial North America**
by James Axtell
Oxford, 1981
402 pp. \$19.95

According to one scholarly view—voiced in the 1820s and revived in the 1960s—it was the white man who first taught friendly Indians to cut off scalps (of other Indians) as proof of a kill. Axtell, a historian at the College of William and Mary, mocks this account as the imaginative "product of Indian activism and white guilt." Citing archaeological discover-