may, of course, never follow) is observed; and then it becomes more and more of a lie as its effects are more and more widely disseminated. A.B.C. readership figures and T.A.M. ratings are seen as multiplication factors for sin, and a single imaginary problem—that of apparently escalating and uncontrollable moral evil—becomes substituted for two real and more manageable problems: the need to condemn and combat evil whenever and wherever it occurs; and the need to circumscribe the power of any individual or group to tell any story, true or false, to audiences as large as the mass media audiences.

Thirdly, there is a recurring tendency to suppose that even causes as complex as those of the mass media contents have simple and similar effects on all people. It is this unlikely supposition which lends plausibility to the jargon of 'mass manipulation', as though the many individuals who constitute the audience for a mass medium do not in fact react to a particular stimulus in as many different ways—as variously, as rationally (or irrationally) as each would in turn react to a comparable stimulus from some other, non-mass-medium source. 'Mass' describes some media appropriately enough but does not extend to their audiences; and the individuals in those audiences are no more (or less) 'manipulated' by mass media contents than they are by normal, personal discourse.

But I do not want to end on a critical note. If Mr Halloran has failed to make a case for special or priority treatment of the mass media, he has more than made a case for the urgency of more and better sociological evidence. *Control or Consent?* amply demonstrates that far too many of the important questions have not yet been asked, let alone answered; and that fruitful results more often follow when sociologists use the mass media as tools for the fashioning of more sophisticated models, rather than as a collective scapegoat for the sins of everyone and no-one.

MARTIN REDFERN

THE PEACEFUL ASSAULT, by Douglas Hyde; Bodley Head; 10s. 6d.

Douglas Hyde is concerned to persuade us that Communism, for all its apparent disintegration, is still a highly organised and sinister world-force, intent as it always was on burying capitalism. What is new about the assault is that it is now 'peaceful'; but only in the rather negative sense that a major armed conflict between East and West, or among the capitalist countries themselves, is no longer 'inevitable'. The danger is that we should so much welcome the switch from 'violent assault' to 'peaceful assault' that we should forget that the second word is still the same.

Everywhere the same communist policy is proclaimed and followed, if we only take the trouble to read the Marxist international literature carefully enough. The policy is to break capitalism at its weakest links—where it is least well-established, that is in the 'third world', the developing countries of Africa, Asia, and South America. The links are to be broken by a deadly pincer grip;

the upper claw is aid-and-trade, and the lower claw is internal subversion, 'common front' tactics, etc., by which communist parties are used to gaining influence in an unstable situation.

When it comes down to a detailed discussion of communist policy in Egypt, Iraq, Guinea, and the Congo, however, the monster seems to lose some of its gruesomeness; for it is not, after all, a very successful monster. All these countries welcome the aid-and-trade, but remain firmly unaligned. Nasser does the dirty by squashing Arab communism all the more firmly as the Aswan Dam project proceeds with the support of Russian funds. In fact, the only 'breakthrough' for the new assault is in Cuba—which, incidentally, seems much less like a 'satellite' of the East than it once was of the West.

Still, the aid-and-trade continues, even when it has been rewarded with such notorious ingratitude; and this, we are made to feel, is perhaps the most sinister thing of all—for it shows the ruthless patience and quiet determination of the monolithic dogmatic monster. 'Aid without strings' is the policy, and it is religiously followed; but after the 'point of no return', when a country's economy has come to depend on trade with the communist bloc, it will be at the mercy of the monster in an economic crisis—and this could be a danger for developed countries as well as for developing ones.

Though the monolithicity of Communism is becoming as tricky a position to defend as the monolithicity of Catholicism, there are no doubt very useful lessons to be learnt from Mr Hyde's book, and he puts before us an important aspect of the truth which must be understood if our politics are to be realistic. It is only the tone and the implications of his discussion which sometimes call for clarification. 'The bourgeois nationalism of every oppressed nation', wrote Lenin, 'has a democratic content which is directed against oppression; and it is this constant that we support unconditionally'. This is part of the sinister dogmatic pattern. But how, one wonders, is one to combat a movement that unconditionally embraces an important aspect of justice? By aligning oneself with injustice? By remaining cautious and aloof? Or by competing in generosity and justice, thankful that by God's providence our stupid rivalries can be used for ends better than our own?

G. S. WINDASS