



Neither Victims Nor Executioners

Albert Camus

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A reprinting of a series of essays written by Camus originally appearing serially in the 1946 Fall issues of "Combat," a French resistance newspaper published during WWII. In the essays he discusses violence, murder & the impact these have on those who perpetrate, suffer or observe. (These essays, originally written in French, were translated into English by Dwight Macdonald & were 1st published in the July-August issue of "Politics." With Macdonald's permission, they were republished in this volume.)

Camus' essays deal with the future of politics & human society in the era of modern warfare & totalitarian states.

Neither Victims Nor Executioners Details

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J Name says

It was a short, wise and ok read for me. I mainly agreed with what Camus said and learned quite a lot. In this edition I really loved the introduction.

jediShelley says

An important essay that should have been read by my grandparents and parents and used to resolve the world's problems before I came into existence.

Beside Beside says

The world had seen enough of men and women dying for causes; it was time to live for one. 'Neither Victims nor Executioners' appeared serially in the autumn of 1946 in *Combat*, the daily newspaper of the Resistance, which Camus helped edit during the Nazi occupation and for a short time after the war

Cristina Chi?u says

The 17th century was the century of mathematics, the 18th that of physical sciences, and the 19th that of biology. Out 20th century is the century of fear.

a man with whom one cannot reason is a man to be feared.

if the moral values extolled by the Socialist Party [the end does not justify the means] are legitimate, then Marxism is absolutely false since it claims to be absolutely true. [In the Marxian perspective, a hundred thousand corpses are nothing if they are the price of the happiness of hundred of millions of men.]
(...)

A hope that is grounded precisely in this contradiction, since it forces—or will force—the Socialists to make a choice. They will either admit that the end justifies the means, in which case murder can be legitimized; or else, they will reject Marxism as an absolute philosophy.

But today one can conceive only the extension of a revolution that has already succeeded. This is something Stalin has very well understood, and it is the kindest explanation of his policies (the other being to refuse Russia the right to speak in the name of revolution).

The forties have taught us that an injury done a student in Prague strikes down simultaneously a worker in Clichy, that blood shed on the banks of a Central European river brings a Texas farmer to spill his own blood in the Ardennes, which he sees for the first time. There is no suffering, no torture anywhere in the world which does not affect our everyday lives. (...) Today, tragedy is collective. We know, then, without a shadow

of a doubt, that the new order we seek cannot be merely national, or even continental; certainly not occidental nor oriental. It must be universal.

today frontiers are mere abstractions

When our Utopia has become part of history, as with many others of like kind, men will find themselves unable to conceive reality without it. For History is simply man's desperate effort to give body to his most clairvoyant dreams.

Yes, we must minimize domestic politics. A crisis which tears the whole world apart must be met on a world scale (...) And if there are many today who, in their secret hearts, detest violence and killing, there are not many who care to recognize that this forces them to reconsider their actions and thoughts. (...) They will admit that little is to be expected from present-day governments, since these live and act according to a murderous code.

If he who bases his hopes on human nature is a fool, he who gives up in the face of circumstances is a coward. And henceforth, the only honorable course will be to stake everything on a formidable gamble: that words are more powerful than munitions.

Kirtida Gautam says

"History is simply man's desperate effort to give body to his most clairvoyant dreams."

Insightful and interesting read.

Travis Culley says

A proper scolding by a master. "The revolution will be made on a world scale or it will not be made at all."

Erik Graff says

I may have read an earlier edition of this work than this one, but the cover is familiar and it is plausible that it was read as late as in 1972 despite my obsessive interest in Camus during high school. In any case, during high school and college I was very much torn between personal pacifist feelings and the fear that such tendencies were, under certain circumstances, immoral. Here, as in the collection *Resistance, Rebellion and Death*, Camus is nuanced and considerate in his treatment of such dilemmas.

Joseph says

Not much to say about Camus that can actually match his brilliance, work as a writer and a man who wanted peace, freedom, brother of all men.

Giorgi Komakhidze says

MUST READ for them who is interested in the politics of post WWII period.
Critical view about Ideologies false BELIEVERS.

Farhana says

the book focuses on what everybody has known to be true but dared not to talk about - how killing of men were legitimised over time - in the name of war, revolution, peace, terrorism , checking terrorism, racism & so on . But it leaves the solution of it feebly on the fact of " universal unity " !

Marts (Thinker) says

A brief discourse by Camus focusing on the effects of murder and other violence in society...

Dana Miranda says

I enjoyed Camus' treatment of History as an absolute end and his call towards sociability, '...that words are more powerful than munitions' (55). On the other hand, I find his prescription towards international democracy troubling.

"We are being torn apart by a logic of History which we have elaborated in every detail—a net which threatens to strangle us. It is not emotion which can cut through the web of a logic which has gone to irrational lengths, but only reason which can meet logic on its own ground.... But the problem is not how to carry men away; it is essential, on the contrary, that they not be carried away but rather that they be made to understand clearly what they are doing" (52).

. Haouzi says

Se nota que no has sufrido, hijo mío.

Zack says

Semi-prescient in intriguing ways. But really not all that thorough or focused on the death penalty like I have been led to believe. Odd.

Sagar says

This edition has a great introduction setting the context for this seminal essay while also reinforcing its relevance.
