JOHN H. HERZ: Political Realism and Political Idealism: A Study in Theories and Realities. University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1951. XII, 275 pp. $ 3,75.

Systematic and analytic studies of political theories and realities are rare. For this reason alone Professor Herz' book deserves much praise and many readers. But in addition to his ability for theoretic thinking, the author can draw upon a varied and significant experience. Not only is he widely read in politics, law, philosophy, and literature, but as a citizen of both hemispheres he has witnessed the ravages of a depression, the rise and fall of Naziism, the metamorphoses of Bolshevism, and the horrors of two world wars. Like many contemporaries, Herz is an idealist whose hopes have come to naught, but his sensitivity and culture have kept him from turning into a realistic cynic. Avoiding both the Scylla of idealist utopianism and the Charybdis of realist nihilism, he walks with much grace the tight rope of a "Realist Liberalism". That he does not discharge his difficult task quite as successfully as he may have hoped is probably due to the nature of any such attempt. But whatever the ultimate validity of his synthesis, the brilliant analysis of the various possible positions by itself makes his a most timely, challenging, and judicious book.

In developing his thesis Herz assumes that what Hobbes called "diffidence" "makes the homo homini lupus a primary fact of the social life of man." This fear of one's neighbor is at the basis of Herz' "security and power dilemma." Competition and struggle for power, he claims, go on incessantly, also in modern society where the areas of peace have grown larger, but where "the struggle for existence is primarily one among collectivities." It is Herz' conviction that this conflict is universal among men "regardless of the period of history, the civilization or country, the social group or class to which it may belong." In his opinion it is this conflict situation that is responsible for the fundamental dualism of political thought. For most great political movements have been guided by political Idealism which, oblivious of the exigencies of the security and power dilemma and the oligarchic tendencies in society, has always been based upon a belief in the attainability of harmonious peaceful relationships that would be free from oppression and exploitation. An insight into the phenomena of the security and power dilemma, on the other hand, has time and again produced a counter-type of political thought and action, Political Realism, which holds that politics must recognize the facts and should not combat power relationships and processes. This lack of ethical idealism, however, is the weakness of Political Realism.

Following in the footsteps of Aristotle and Spinoza Dr. Herz then tries to evolve a higher synthesis between Political Idealism and Political Realism, a position which he calls Realist Liberalism (perhaps the term Realist Idealism would have been more logical). "A basically liberal philosophy may be founded on the insights supplied by Realism, at the same time that it is guided ethically by the standards of Idealism, namely, concern for the individual and the free