boom, long term misery. The enemies of Christianity have consistently proposed easy paths to riches that have entered with a flourish, but left with the silverware.

One of the final case studies is nineteenth-century Germany, when Bismarck adopted the economic advice of Bishop Kettler and an economic policy that propelled Germany into rapid industrialization without an industrial revolution. Being Catholic, it began by recognizing that labor was the source of all production and undertook to pay labor accordingly. With high wages came high domestic demand and healthy growth. It reinforced itself by its own rising capacity and focus on supplying its own demand. This is in contrast to the English system that relied on exploiting cheap colonial supply and dumping into wealthy European markets. The English system flourished by suppressing its labor and subverting the industries of its markets with cheap imports. It was capitalism.

It was no surprise that Pope Leo XIII turned to Bishop Kettler for a workable Catholic solution to the “rapacious usury” that he observed in too much of the West. It was also no surprise that England eventually turned to military means to reassert its economic dominance, though perhaps that was only one of the several pressures prompting the First World War.

Barren Metal is a rich and readable tour through the rise of capitalism and its competition with Catholicism. Its focus is on culture, but it gives its reader insights into the social, moral, and political dimensions of Christianity and its enemies. It also provides ample empirical support for the merits of Economics as if God Matters. Combined with Economic Science and St. Thomas Aquinas, it provides a complete argument for the moral dimension of economics and a framework for exploring it.

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In the 1960s, Popes John XXIII and Paul VI, with the assistance of Archbishop Agostino Casaroli, adopted a new approach to the countries behind the Iron Curtain. It was called Ostpolitik, and it involved a cessation of public criticism of Communist regimes and full diplomatic engagement
Ronald J. Rychlak

with them. The Vatican’s goal was to be an independent partner in moral and ethical issues concerning both halves of Germany and both halves of the European continent. The perception of this approach, as well as the results, varied from one Eastern European nation to another.

Too often, simplistic explanations of Ostpolitik are based on sources from a particular perspective, and they lead to assessments focused on particular domestic or ecclesiastic issues. A deep study of Ostpolitik must look at it on a country by country basis, from various perspectives within (and without) each of those countries. That is why The Vatican “Ostpolitik” 1958–1978, makes such a valuable contribution. With writings from an impressive team of international scholars and published in collaboration with the Pontifical Hungarian Ecclesiastical Institute, this volume presents evidence and analysis of Ostpolitik and its impact on several nations, including Germany, Poland, Hungary, Soviet Union, and even the United States. The authors explore the expectations, concerns, and results from government authorities, clergy, and lay people. The result is a volume worthy of reading by anyone interested in the Church and geo-politics and worth a spot on the bookshelf of anyone who writes on or studies in this area.

The articles are excellent. They have each been evaluated through a double-blind peer review process. The depth of their content (and concern over translation issues) might cause one to postpone delving into the book. That would be a mistake. While many readers will want to turn to specific chapters and return to the book for details in the future, it reads well and provides deep and interesting food for thought the first time, straight through.

Chapters are devoted to topics including an overview of Ostpolitik; its Western roots; Archbishop Casaroli and the popes; Moscow; Austria and the popes; Pope Paul VI from the Soviet perspective; case studies from the United States; the diary of Cardinal Vaivods (Latvia); the Czechoslovakian secret service; negotiations with Budapest and Prague; the Vatican and Czechoslovakia; the 1974 agreement between Poland and the Vatican; and the Vatican’s relationship with East Germany. Obviously, this volume will come in handy for those researching the Church’s history with various nations, not to mention those studying current Church diplomacy.

With such broad coverage, it is beyond the scope of any simple review to attempt to cover much detail, but there are many observations that this reviewer found particularly interesting. Among the points that stood out is that such a policy was even viable following the papacy of a strong anti-Communist like Pius XII (who, Robert Morozzo Della Rocca informs the reader, was Casaroli’s ideal of a pope par excellence). Yet, Pius laid
the groundwork and left communications sufficiently open to permit this policy to develop.

Ostpolitik was not welcomed by all Church leaders. The encyclicals of Leo XIII, Pius XI, and Pius XII taught that Communist regimes stood in opposition to the natural order of things and subverted the natural order in economics as well as in every other field. Ostpolitik seemed to stand for cooperation with these regimes if not complete capitulation to them. A table reproduced in Pavol Jakubčin’s chapter shows that, of 375 bishops (broken down by nationalities), 102 agreed with Ostpolitik for both religious and political reasons, 227 agreed with the religious reasons but not the political ones, and 46 disagreed for both reasons.

The Vatican saw Ostpolitik as arising from pastoral concern about the ability of the Church to continue to function in Communist nations; it was not an expression of sympathy with Communism. For similar reasons, the Church engaged with Nazi Germany (and even today seeks to engage with Communist China). Della Rocca tells us that Pope Paul VI and Casaroli were “convinced of the inherent wickedness and treachery of Communism.” As Casaroli put it, “the inhuman cannot be eternal.”

Cardinal Mindszenty of Hungary, discussed in several of the chapters, was an outspoken opponent of Ostpolitik. He had been arrested by the Communist government and given a show trial in 1949. He was liberated during the Hungarian uprising of 1956, but his freedom was short-lived. Soon the Communists regained control of the government, and he had to seek asylum in the U.S. Embassy in Budapest. He lived there for the next fifteen years and became something of a cult figure. His presence and outspoken protests against the Communist regime, however, created a very obvious problem for the Vatican’s Ostpolitik. Eventually the Vatican forced him to vacate his seat. By the mid-1970s, Church leadership in Hungary was owned and operated by the Communist Party, and Catholicism was just about wiped out in that nation. Mindszenty’s objections to Ostpolitik in Hungary seem well-founded.

In Poland, where the people clung to their faith more strongly than in some other Soviet bloc nations, Cardinal Wyszynski first tried to make peace with the Soviet overlords. This soon, however, became untenable and he became known for his opposition to the regime and to Ostpolitik. For that reason, he also became a problem and Vatican diplomats tried to displace him as the Church’s interlocutor with the regime. He reported at the time that the Church “has the ability to well stand the weight of government oppression for at least ten more years; however we also want peace . . . on this almost the entire episcopate agrees.” Many today credit his strength for the Church’s vitality though those harsh years.
One of the continuing disputes between the Vatican and Soviet bloc nations related to the appointment of bishops. Too often, Communist nations wanted to elevate their priests into higher offices. Pope John Paul II, certainly not known for being soft on Communism, explained why the Church was willing to negotiate over such matters. “The hierarchy is essential to ensure a future for the Church. Better two good bishops and two bad ones, than no bishop at all.” Setting forth another rationale after helping de-escalate the Cuban missile crisis, John XXIII said: “to promote, to encourage, to accept dialogue, at all levels and at all times, is a rule of wisdom and prudence.”

One of the most telling passages in the book appears in Nadezhda Belyakova’s chapter. It is part of a protest letter taken from a collection in the Archives of the History of Dissent in the USSR International Society Memorial. Faithful lay Catholics in the Soviet Union gave voice to their opinion about Ostpolitik, expressing the concern, distrust, and confusion that permeated their community regarding the Church’s policy:

Representatives of the Soviet Union are happy to seek contact with the Apostolic See, in order to receive some concessions from the Catholic Church and thus persecute the Church more cautiously, mainly by the hands of loyal clergymen highly ranked in the hierarchy. . . . A bishop of Lithuania, returning from Rome, claimed that the Holy Father at the audience had advised the faithful of the Soviet Union to “pray and wait calmly and patiently.” We have become accustomed to deception and do not believe that the Holy Father would give us such an advice. . . . It is difficult for us to understand the so-called “Ostpolitik” of recent years: in our opinion, it brought a lot of harm to the Catholic Church in the East. . . . Atheists are happy to seek good relations with the Apostolic See. However, by this diplomacy they want to negotiate concessions, by which they could cause more harm to the Church. As a rule, they do not comply with their promises and contracts. . . . We are less scared and endangered by a bloody persecution than by a slow quiet dying, with the Church being stifled with their own hands.

While much writing has been done regarding the Church’s view of its relations with Communist nations, The Vatican “Ostpolitik” 1958–1978, also gives the reader a look inside the Soviet Union’s leadership, and it becomes clear that there was much distrust and concern on that side too. They were never fooled into believing that the Church saw their system
as legitimate. Of course, that did not prevent them from pushing their advantage.

_Ostpolitik_ led to the serious penetration of the Vatican by Communist secret intelligence agencies, including the Soviet KGB, the East German Stasi, and the Polish SB. That penetration led to Communist moles in Vatican offices and in the Vatican press corps, where they worked against the Church’s interests. For instance, during Vatican II, the Polish SB tried to undercut Cardinal Wyszynski by preparing and circulating to all the Council fathers a memorandum questioning his orthodoxy.

_The Vatican “Ostpolitik” 1958–1978_ does not resolve all debate over the Vatican’s diplomatic approach to the Soviet bloc, but it does make clear the need to look at it on a nation-by-nation basis. It is a great introduction to the study of Vatican diplomacy with the Soviet bloc during this time period, but it is more than that. The detail and new information will make this book an important scholarly reference for years to come.

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Bruce Frohnen and the late George Carey have produced a comprehensive and reflective study of the historical transformation of the American Constitution and its consequent effect on American political culture.

From the limited (and limiting) language of the Framers’ Constitution to the so-called “living constitution” of today, the authors trace the emergence of a document which “commands” (thus shaping society in a specific way) rather than “mediates” (between groups and institutions). This “commanding constitution” is the product of both progressive ideology and particular socio-economic changes that have promoted the notion of government as provider, educator, arbiter, and regulator.

The engineers of this change distinguish between the explicit, written constitution of enumerated powers and the “unwritten constitution,” which has incorporated extratextual sources over time that reflect both the changing character of American society and the aspirations of its most influential leaders. Legal scholar Akhil Reed Amar, for example, cites a number of texts, including the Gettysburg Address, the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, and Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech,