

BOOK REVIEW

John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s

BY FRANK KOFKY

Kofsky, history professor, writer on jazz and leftist, combines all three avatars in this firebrand of a book, which puts jazz into an emotional and economic focus. Whites, he says, “own” the talent, and the ideologists of the ruling class are “antiradical whites.” In other words, the author says, the problem is one of “black creation” versus “white control.” Jazz musicians have been the first “to be converted and to espouse the tenets of black nationalism,” and the author tells us why and how. He destroys the misapprehensions that blacks don’t support jazz, that jazz is not protest music and that the death of jazz is “imminent.”

Attacking the music critics name by name, Kofsky discovers that the white American left never “adequately comprehended the nature either of Negro music or Negro nationalism.” He deplores, too, the use of black musicians as instruments in the cold war diplomacy of the United States.