

William F. Buckley, Jr.

***Pied Piper for
The Establishment***

**by
John F. McManus**

The John Birch Society
Appleton, Wisconsin

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Published by
The John Birch Society
Post Office Box 8040
Appleton, Wisconsin 54912
www.jbs.org

Printed in the United States of America
Library of Congress Control Number: 2002107984
ISBN: 1-881-919-06-4

**In Memory Of
Lawrence Patton McDonald**

Publication of this book has been made possible by the generous gift of Don and Carol Van Curler and the Van Curler Foundation of Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Their gift is given in memory of Dr. Lawrence P. McDonald, a man whose friendship they began to enjoy in the early 1960s as a result of their mutual efforts as members of The John Birch Society. That friendship grew into enormous admiration for Larry McDonald's courage, wisdom, principle, and dedication to the American ideal.

Like John Birch who was murdered by Communists in Asia in 1945, Dr. McDonald was victimized by Communists in Asia when a Soviet fighter attacked the Korean Airlines plane on which he was traveling. At the time, he was serving both as a U.S. Congressman from Georgia and Chairman of his beloved John Birch Society.

To those perceptive individuals who saw through the designs of William F. Buckley, Jr. long

before I did.

To that one man whose correspondence in the early 1960s launched me on a tortuous reevaluation of both the Establishment's Pied Piper and his frequent target, Robert Welch.

To the late Robert Welch himself, whose fatherly yet firm leadership brought me and so many others to an awareness of 1) the stark realities in the world around us, and 2) the joy of knowing what can be built in an atmosphere of freedom.

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Foreword

In 1971, John Birch Society founder Robert Welch began writing his own analysis of the life and works of William F. Buckley, Jr. The many pressures he faced as the leader of a national organization repeatedly interrupted his plans, with the result that he completed only a small

fraction of what he intended to publish.

I gained a thorough awareness of Mr. Welch's attitude regarding the subject of this book through having worked closely with the Society's founder for more than a decade. It is entirely appropriate that some of his unpublished thoughts appear within these pages, and I have, therefore, chosen a portion of his unfinished manuscript to serve as the Foreword to this book. A few bracketed comments have been inserted in the text where doing so seemed proper.

Robert Welch passed away in January 1985. In response to questions about Mr. Buckley over many years, he would often state that he had done what he could to be a friend and an ally but all he ever received in return was deceitful opposition and abusive ridicule.

— John F. McManus

False Leadership
(An Uncompleted 1971 Assessment of William F. Buckley, Jr.)
By Robert Welch

A Revelation

At least this episode should have been a revelation, even at the time. But it was not until years later, when the whole affair was seen in retrospect, and in the light of later knowledge, that it became one. At the time — and undoubtedly to the great inner satisfaction and amusement of the suavely brazen Mr. Buckley — I ascribed his action to a sincerely mistaken belief which he felt bound by conscience to support on any occasion and at any cost.

The occasion developed out of unusual circumstances. One of the earliest members of the [*John Birch*] Society, and one of the most dedicated members we have ever had, was a Catholic priest, the Reverend Francis E. Fenton, who is now a member of our Council. In the fall of 1959 he formed our first chapter in Stamford, Connecticut. At that time Father Fenton was still one of several priests on the staff of the very large St. Mary's Parish in Stamford. Among his many duties was supervision of the Holy Name Society of the parish. Through his good offices I, a Protestant, had had the honor and opportunity of speaking on the Communist menace to six hundred members of the Holy Name Society, at their breakfast meeting on Easter Sunday morning, in the spring of 1960.

A few months after that, however, Father Fenton was given a parish of his own. It was the Blessed Sacrament Church in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where he still is today. [*Father Fenton left Blessed Sacrament Church in 1973 and passed away in 1995.*] This would require his moving to Bridgeport. He was a very much loved priest in Stamford, however, and his friends there wanted badly to hold some kind of a dinner or meeting in his honor before he left. But the Catholic Church — I learned at the time — frowns on such parties in honor of priests who are leaving one parish for a new one; and no real friend of Father Fenton wanted to do anything which was contrary to church policy in any way — nor would Father Fenton have been willing to let them.

So his friends in Stamford hit upon an idea which required my cooperation. They asked if I

would make a speech in Stamford in July, 1960, which would be open to the public and could be announced well in advance. Even though there would be the usual charge or “donation” for one of my speeches, the net proceeds of which would go to The John Birch Society, there was no doubt that several hundred of Father Fenton’s friends would attend, especially since the word would be passed around as to one purpose of the meeting. Of course I readily and enthusiastically agreed. Pretty soon small advertisements concerning my forthcoming speech began to appear in the Stamford papers, and other advance notices were distributed in the regular way.

Nothing was said, of course, in any of this publicity, about the intention to honor Father Fenton at the affair, and I do not know even now whether he learned anything at all about this intention until the evening in question. Since he was such a strong supporter of the Society and myself, it was obvious, and soon confirmed, that he would be present and sitting on the platform with me anyway. But two or three weeks before the speech Bill Buckley, who was a member of St. Mary’s Parish, got wind of what was being planned and invited himself in. Whether he already had some idea of how his participation might work out, I don’t know. But since he never has been a special friend of Father Fenton, either before or after this occasion, he may well have anticipated the need for him to throw a monkey wrench into the machinery being set in motion by my anti-Communist messages. Or it may be that Buckley just could not bear the thought of any wedding in the Stamford area at which he was not the bride.

At any rate, no sooner had he been welcomed by the committee as a member and a secondary speaker than he began to mold the whole program for the evening to his liking. He invited Father Fenton and myself and about ten other men who were active in making the arrangements, all to have dinner at his home in Stamford before the meeting, which we thought was very gracious on his part, and we all accepted. He also suggested to the committee, however, that — since he had a strong idiosyncratic preference for always being the last speaker when there was more than one, and since he knew that his friend, Bob Welch, would not really mind — under these circumstances the order be shifted so that I would speak first and he would follow me.

A couple of years later I learned that this was a habit on Buckley’s part. The only other occasion that I remember when I have ever appeared on the same platform with him was in Chicago at some convention of conservatives, where I had been invited to be the speaker for the final dinner. Buckley got himself invited to be a secondary speaker at the same dinner and then proceeded — using exactly the same approach — to get himself in the featured position, with me speaking first. Actually I didn’t mind, and it has never made the least difference to me when I spoke. For the Stamford affair the arrangement seemed a little strange, because my speech had by now been widely advertised as the purpose and business of the meeting. But when I was asked about Buckley’s request I replied truthfully and without hesitation that I did not mind in the least.

Unknown to me, however, there were people on the committee who were already far more familiar with Buckley’s wiles than I was. They did not trust him and were not sure what he had in mind. So they pinned him down as to the subject of his speech. He said it would deal entirely with the proceedings of the Democratic National Convention, which was right then in session in Chicago. And it was on this firm condition that Buckley’s rearrangement of the program was accepted — still with some misgivings which I did not know about.

As we all finished the excellent dinner at his beautiful home on the water's edge in Stamford, and were departing for the hall which had been rented for the evening, Buckley half shouted in reminder to somebody, who had visibly been impressed into acting as his aide for the evening, to be sure not to forget to bring along his clipboard. And the mild wonder did flash through my mind as to what on earth he would be needing a clipboard for, since its only usefulness could be in making notes for himself while I was speaking and he was going to be talking on a different subject altogether. But I paid no further attention to the matter, and neither did anybody else.

Eventually we reached the hall, assembled on the platform, the house was full, everybody was happy, and after the normal preliminaries I was introduced for my speech. It was, of course, on the menace and the progress of the Communist conspiracy. Actually, it was almost identically the same speech I had made elsewhere dozens of times before, and of which a transcript, under the title of "Look at the Score," now appears as the opening section of *The Blue Book*. Since the material had been studiously assembled and carefully arranged, and I had a receptive audience, the effect was very gratifying. I felt that I had really awakened a few hundred patriotic but formerly apathetic Americans to the point where they might start at least studying, or even doing something about, the Communist conspiracy.

Then I sat down, and Buckley was introduced. He had been busily scratching away on the sheets of paper held by the clipboard on his knee all of the time I was speaking. But if anybody was puzzled or alarmed by this procedure, they did not say anything and there was hardly any way they could. Whether or not his topic was announced, as a report on the Democratic National Convention, at the time he was introduced, I do not now remember. But it would have made little difference.

For Buckley proceeded, from the very beginning and for the whole half hour allotted to him, simply to tear my speech to pieces — or to try to — primarily with the weapons of sarcasm and ridicule. There was no conspiracy, and to believe that there was belonged in the realm of childish fantasy. To believe that the subjugation of various countries, which I had outlined, was accomplished by conspiracy and cunning, except as the populations of those countries had been sold by propaganda and deception on the ideological fallacies of socialism, was nonsense. One great problem for the real conservatives everywhere, who were trying so hard to stop this socialist advance by outarguing the proponents of collectivism, was the distortion of everything by ignoramuses like myself who saw Communists and conspirators under every bed. To hold that high officials of the United States government had been consciously involved in helping the Communists to impose their philosophy on China or any other nation was an almost criminal misinterpretation of their acts and their purposes. He finished with a resoundingly virtuous declaration that he *repudiated* everything Mr. Welch has said and all the views Mr. Welch had expressed. And on that note he sat down.

I arose calmly and asked if — even though this had never been intended as a debate — I could have one minute. The chairman said yes. I stepped to the podium and told the audience that everything I had said, including every accusation I had made about the actions of pro-Communists within our government, had been a matter of plain and fully documented history; that I still stood by my speech in every particular; and that I simply wanted to go on

record as completely repudiating Mr. Buckley's repudiation. Then I sat down, the chairman adjourned the meeting, and a very non-plussed crowd, containing many quite angry friends of both Father Fenton and myself, broke up and went home.

I shook hands with Buckley, thanked him again for the dinner, but told him with a grin that I still disagreed with everything he had said. He answered affably that he had known I would. And we parted on the same friendly basis as before. I did not know then, what I came to see quite clearly a few years later, that his action had been a compulsive necessity under the circumstances. It was his chosen course to fight the collectivist only and entirely on ideological grounds. Since this is exactly what the Communists want, and they will go to any length and even subsidize their opposition, to present the struggle which engulfs the world today between freedom and slavery as a battle between two opposing *philosophies*, they never smear or make any real trouble for anybody like Buckley, who is so ably promoting this idea for them — no matter how vigorously and even sometimes effectively he may fight against them on the academic level. In fact you can be sure that if there were no Buckley on the scene the Communists would invent one.

But there is always a tacit understanding that any such battler for conservatism on ideological grounds must always lend his full weight to suppression and ridicule of what the Communists have so cunningly labeled “the conspiratorial theory of history.” Otherwise, from his point of view, he is not keeping the decks clear for the ideological argument. And from the Communist point of view he is not supplying the *quid pro quo* which justifies their leaving him alone. But if he does do his part, and therefore is not subjected to the Communist smears, he can soon acquire quite a reputation for “respectable” and “responsible” conservatism; and the vast unthinking citizenry is led to believe that anti-Communists like [Senator Joseph] McCarthy or Fulton Lewis or myself have such horrible reputations only because we are not restrained enough to oppose Communism in a “responsible” way, like Buckley. All the various pieces of this strategy fit beautifully into the mosaic of the Communist program.

We brought in the name of Fulton Lewis above because he experienced a far more effective undermining of his anti-Communist efforts by Buckley than the comparatively minor foul blow struck at myself which I have described above. (I am talking about Fulton Lewis, Jr., now dead, and not his very able and patriotic son, Fulton Lewis III.) It was several years ago, and perhaps two or three years after my experience in Stamford, that Fulton Lewis began his carefully planned exposure of that treasonous and pro-Communist monstrosity called Radio Free Europe, or sometimes identified as the Voice of America.

And if you have any slightest doubt about the justification for my adjectives (despite all of the able but gullible American businessmen who have been beguiled into giving it their financial support), let me suggest that you get a copy of *The Politician*, and read carefully pages 187 to 194 [Chapter 15]. You will find there, although greatly condensed, the true and fully documented history of this disgraceful means of betraying the anti-Communists of central Europe, from the time it was founded and staffed by Communists, throughout all of the early years when Eisenhower, as the head of NATO and then as President of the United States, was permitting it to be used (while largely financed by American government money) to promote Communist purposes.

If you will pardon my saying so, I had done the necessary research, and printed a convincing exposure of the real role of the so-called Voice of America, years before Fulton Lewis decided to turn the light on it. But the number of people *The Politician* could reach, even after it was finally published by me (in self-defense) on March 10, 1963, was a drop in the bucket compared to those Fulton Lewis was reaching with his vast radio audience. And besides, there was nothing Buckley could do about what was already in *The Politician*, except to aid with his ridicule those who were trying to smother it. While there was a chance to stop Fulton Lewis in his tracks before his exposure ever got anywhere.

As soon as Lewis turned his spotlight on Radio Free Europe, therefore, and his programs about it began getting under way, Mr. Buckley invited himself into that picture with his usual condescending effrontery. The CIA, of course, had immediately begun denying the Fulton Lewis charges. They accused him of misstating facts, misinterpreting motives, and seeing conspiratorial hands at work when there was nothing worse than stupidity or misguided idealism at work. (Just how the fulsome glorification of Stalin, to the people reached on both sides of the Iron Curtain by Radio Free Europe, could be justified, would certainly take some disingenuous explaining, but almost nothing has been beyond the brilliant powers of the CIA when it comes to finding reasons for their unceasing help to the Communists.)

So Mr. Buckley comes out with a very “responsible” lament about the whole situation. How sad it was, he proclaimed, to see these two great anti-Communist forces, Fulton Lewis and the CIA, quarreling between themselves. They should both be fighting the Communists only, and this simply would not do. Somebody should set things right, and glory be to God that Bill Buckley was available for the purpose. In fact he had a concrete proposal all ready to be acted on. A committee should be formed to determine the rights and wrongs between Fulton Lewis and the CIA over this whole matter, before the public became any further confused. And he, Bill Buckley, as a great public service, would make the sacrifice of serving as chairman of such a committee. And one of the other members of the committee, I happen to remember, was to be Henry Kissinger! (See page 30, May 1958 *American Opinion* for an early warning about Mr. Kissinger.)

Of course the CIA jumped at this opportunity. And what could Lewis do? Here was a great young conservative Lothario, with a reputation as one of the leading conservative intellectuals in America, and therefore supposedly a friend of Lewis and favorable to his point of view, offering to be a dispassionate and objective mediator between himself and the CIA [*by whom Buckley — and his sister Priscilla — had been employed; this was not public information when Welch wrote the above comment*], whom Lewis well knew any honest investigation would prove to be a bunch of pro-Communist liars, about Radio Free Europe as about almost everything else. (As late as 1960 Allen Dulles, as head of the CIA, and with all of the manpower and millions of that agency at his disposal, was still claiming his inability to discover or to believe that Castro was a Communist!)

So Lewis fell in line, the wheels of his exposure of Radio Free Europe were temporarily stopped — and they never started up again. What actually happened, or how this was managed, I never knew, or at least do not now remember. The mechanics of the stoppage do not matter, but the public interest in the whole subject (which had been growing rapidly) was simply allowed to

fade away. Lewis went on to other subjects. And the “responsible” Mr. Buckley had been responsible for another spike in the movement to expose the Communist conspiracy.

And if, gentle reader, you are hard to convince, then this thought may have occurred to you: “Well, Welch is wrong about one thing anyway. McCarthy’s whole effort was to expose the Communist *conspiracy*, and Buckley certainly helped McCarthy.” In that case may we suggest that you go back and reread Buckley’s book, *McCarthy and His Enemies* [*a later edition was published by Regnery and Company in 1996*], in the light of all we know today. Of course Buckley had to be very careful in that situation, in view of his pose as an anti-Communist and as a friend of McCarthy, and for a number of other reasons. But the man who invented the expression “damning with faint praise” would have been exhilarated beyond measure on finding, by reading Buckley’s book, how beautifully this could be done by a real expert at the job. The book, while pretending to explain and justify McCarthy, is far more industriously concerned with pointing out what were presented as his errors and his faults — which were made more damning because they were supposedly seen through the eyes of a friend who was disposed in McCarthy’s favor. This book, in its subtle way, fitted exactly into the general strategy for destroying McCarthy. And if you don’t believe us, we insist again that you go back and read *McCarthy and His Enemies* now, and judge it for yourself.

Buckley may be a sincere anti-Communist, but only in his own way, and to hell with anybody who fights them differently. And there can be little question as to how the Communists feel about it. With a few more enemies like Buckley they would not need so many friends.

Introduction — Fronting for America’s Enemies

Guess the name of the following person: This individual has long advocated the legalization of marijuana; approved of the Panama Canal giveaway; said he would probably join the communist-dominated African National Congress if he were a black South African; has repeatedly called for national service for youth; smeared Pat Buchanan by charging he committed acts of “anti-Semitism”; pushed for foreign aid giveaways to Russia; favors legalized prostitution; supports adoption of the Brady Bill gun control measure; and has endorsed “gay rights” legislation.

Did you guess Norman Lear? Playboy publisher Hugh Hefner? Jesse Jackson? Our mystery person is actually William F. Buckley, Jr., the mass media’s designated “leader” of the conservative movement.

An old saying relates that if you acquire a reputation for showing up at work early, you can get away with arriving as late as you want. The same adage apparently works in politics: If you have a reputation for conservatism, you can get away with being as liberal as you want.¹

— Thomas R. Eddlem

This book has been written to present evidence that William F. Buckley, Jr. is one of America’s

slyest deceivers, a clever but supremely duplicitous frontman for a behind-the-scenes cabal whose operatives have been laboring for generations to steer America into their contrived “new world order.”

Hardly anyone in recent decades has doubted Buckley’s lofty status as the leader of the nation’s conservative movement, but very few have questioned what he has made of it. Simply stated, today’s conservatism is a near-complete departure from what it was when he emerged as a national figure. Over the years, he managed to turn an entire movement away from the “Old Right” principles on which he himself was raised.

The dominant canons of the “Old Right” included nonintervention in the affairs of other nations and the strict limitations on federal power set forth in the U.S. Constitution. In the days leading up to Pearl Harbor, “Old Right” insistence that America should stay out of World War II attracted the backing of a huge majority of the American people. And by 1940, even though Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal had already broken some constitutional chains, resistance to greater growth of government had not been completely eroded, and the possibility that it would stage a comeback was real.

The direct opposite of the “Old Right,” even though that phrase has seldom been used in recent years, is the “new world order,” whose major components are world government and socialism. The United Nations has long been its foreign policy centerpiece, and the combination of taxation, regulation, controls, and Big Brother government constitutes its domestic agenda.

As we shall show, Buckley’s support for the new world order’s blueprint began subtly, progressed steadily, and gradually became more blatantly overt. Over the years, he led many conservatives to forego the vital resistance they could offer to the encroachments of the new world order’s promoters.

Nevertheless, the accolades he has received have been both numerous and flattering. In 1981, his eventual biographer, John Judis, wrote that Buckley “played a leading role in shaping the American conservative movement.”² Ten years earlier, middle-of-the-roader John Reddy lauded him as “conservatism’s most eloquent, tireless and entertaining voice.”³ And in 1972, conservative Jeffrey Bell described Buckley as “the most eloquent and influential of non-elected conservatives.”⁴

Other plaudits demonstrate the extent to which the Buckley mystique has spanned the decades. Josh Getlin of the liberal *Los Angeles Times* declared in 1990 that Buckley is “best known for sparking an intellectual movement that . . . made conservatism a household word.”⁵ In a 1992 review of a Buckley novel, Nathan Glazer of the *New York Times* stated that *National Review* had become “the chief journal of opinion of American conservatism.”⁶ And that same year, longtime friend and collaborator Marvin Liebman touted Buckley as “the founder of modern American conservatism and the prime articulator of its philosophy.”⁷

Liebman’s choice of the word “modern” hints at the effect Buckley has had on the movement. The conservatism Buckley created is indeed modern, and as we shall see, it departed strikingly

from its parent. John Judis was correct in pointing to Buckley's role in "shaping" the conservative movement. But the shape he made of it, and the tactics he employed to accomplish the transformation, constitute a story that must be told.

Less than two years after graduating from Yale, only a few months after completing a year of service with the Central Intelligence Agency, and long before achieving national notoriety, Buckley signaled his utterly non-conservative inclinations with a revealing article published in *The Commonweal*, a Catholic weekly magazine. Fans of conservatism's "leader" may well be shocked by the following quotation. That he wrote it in 1952 only intensifies the jolt:

...we have got to accept Big Government for the duration — for neither an offensive nor a defensive war can be waged, given our present government skills, except through the instrument of a totalitarian bureaucracy within our shores....

And if they deem Soviet power a menace to our freedom (as I happen to), they will have to support large armies and air forces, atomic energy, central intelligence, war production boards, and the attendant centralization of power in Washington — even with Truman at the reins of it all.⁸

Such an attitude could not be described as "conservative" in 1952, and it certainly deserves no such label today. But it does help to explain Buckley's lifelong agenda. Eventually, he took control of and diluted much of America's resistance to "Big Government." While he was supposedly leading the fight against "the attendant centralization of power in Washington," he and the retinue of socialists and internationalists he assembled at *National Review* not only failed to impede the acceptance of "Big Government," they did everything in their power to stifle those who tried.

A basic Buckley stratagem found him regularly ignoring the nation's contract for good government, the U.S. Constitution, and providing, instead, a stream of his own craftily formulated but deficient opinions. An example of this tactic appeared in his syndicated column for December 13, 1991, when he wrote: "It's a bad time to be asking Americans to give money to foreign countries."⁹ He gave this middle-of-the-road attitude at a time when liberals and internationalists led by Secretary of State James A. Baker III were worriedly predicting dire consequences for mankind if the U.S. refused to send billions to Russia. And billions were indeed poured down the Russian rathole.

Anyone holding the Constitution in high regard, however, would have insisted that there is never a time — good or bad — to give the taxpayers' money to foreign governments since the Constitution in no way authorizes such giveaways. But Buckley-style leadership had a different message that defused opposition to delivering tax dollars into foreign sinkholes.

Buckley employed the same tactic during a 1989 brouhaha over the funding of pornographers and blasphemers by the National Endowment for the Arts. He merely chided NEA chairman John Frohnmayer for deficient leadership. "Lacking a central vision, the NEA has been easily distracted," he stated.¹⁰ Why, it should be asked, wasn't he pointing to the Constitution to confirm that endowing the NEA with federal tax dollars should be terminated? The real issue

was not how the NEA spends its funds, which is what Buckley lamely objected to, it was the need to abolish the NEA entirely.

Buckley's deficient leadership had surfaced years earlier. In 1971, the United Nations General Assembly expelled Nationalist China (Taiwan) and awarded its place in the world body to the blood-drenched Beijing regime. UN delegates literally danced in the aisles to celebrate this long-sought-after Communist victory. As sentiment in the U.S. to withdraw from the world body increased, Buckley advised in a November 1971 column that "the United Nations has its uses, and the United States would be mistaken recklessly to withdraw from it."¹¹ Instead, he recommended refraining from casting any further votes in the General Assembly — as if *that* would accomplish anything of substance.

Yes, Buckley had made conservatism "modern," as Marvin Liebman had indicated. He subjected its principles to a watering-down process that redefined them in a way that bolstered the agenda of the nation's ruling Establishment.

"Old-style" conservatism contends that government is customarily the problem and rarely the solution. It agrees with our nation's Founders that a steadfast rule of law, rather than the shifting and unreliable rule of man, must undergird this nation's affairs. Without the foundation of the Constitution, Old Rightists contend, America will be vulnerable to the whims and designs of ambitious and amoral men who profess that they will rule wisely, but who unquestionably intend to rule.

Old Right conservatives recognize the wisdom in a classic maxim often attributed to George Washington: "Government is not reason, it is not eloquence, it is force. Like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master."¹²

These advocates of constitutionally limited government also champion Thomas Jefferson's incisive warning to avoid reliance on fallible man. In perhaps his most widely quoted defense of the Constitution, Jefferson stated:

It would be a dangerous delusion, were a confidence in the men of our choice to silence our fears for the safety of our rights; that confidence is everywhere the parent of despotism; free government is founded in jealousy and not in confidence; it is jealousy, and not confidence which prescribes limited constitutions to bind down those whom we are obliged to trust with power; that our constitution has accordingly fixed the limits to which, and no farther, our confidence may go ... in questions of power, then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief with the chains of the Constitution.¹³

Our nation was guided by such wisdom as it grew to world prominence. Adherence to easily understood constitutional principles paved the way to national greatness. The Constitution required no redefinition, no reshaping, no modernization. Were it adhered to today, the size and cost of the federal government would shrink by at least two-thirds. Instead, fedgov continues to balloon.

In the absence of the hard-and-fast rule of constitutional law, the body politic is left twisting in the wind.

A Curious Selection for Biographer

Buckley biographer John B. Judis has been widely praised for providing an informative and fair look at his subject in *William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives*.¹⁴ *Wall Street Journal* reviewer Donald Kagan saluted Judis for “writing a clear and interesting account the fairness and balance of which are especially praiseworthy.”¹⁵ *The New Republic*’s Allan Brinkley applauded Judis’s examination of the Buckley career for its “striking fairness and respect.”¹⁶ And Mark Feeny of the *Boston Globe* described it as “consistently fair and illuminating.”¹⁷ But several reviewers expressed surprise that Buckley would willingly make himself and his files so available to the left-leaning Judis. John C. Chalberg of *Chronicles* noted:

A still living and breathing William F. Buckley, Jr. has been elevated to sainthood. And by whom? Not by the pope and not by Buckley’s own flock, but by a man of the left.¹⁸

Godfrey Hodgson and Katherine Roberts of the *New York Times* were similarly perplexed. Hodgson, who described the book as “solid and thoughtful,” listed several leftist publications in which Judis’s work regularly appears. He claimed to be puzzled that “Mr. Judis had his subject’s cooperation in writing this book and has made ample use of interviews, personal papers and the like.”¹⁹ Katherine Roberts was even more astonished by Buckley’s cooperation with a man widely reputed to be his political adversary. She wrote:

If William F. Buckley Jr. could have chosen his ideal biographer, he might not have picked John B. Judis, a senior editor at the liberal-to-left magazine *In These Times*. Among other things, in 1981 Mr. Judis wrote an uncomplimentary article about Mr. Buckley in *The Progressive*.... Mr. Judis was given access to about 500 boxes of documents at the Yale Library and spent 30 to 40 hours interviewing Mr. Buckley.²⁰

In another review of the Judis book, James Nuechterlein noted that “subject and author make an awkward fit. Judis is a man of the Left, a senior editor of the socialist journal *In These Times* and a contributor to a variety of left-wing magazines ranging from the *New Republic* to the *Progressive*.” Nuechterlein astutely remarked:

The book reads as if the author had come to an agreement with his subject, according to which, in exchange for access to Buckley’s personal papers and an open door to interviews with his family and friends, Judis would undertake to offer as impartial and dispassionate an ideological reading as possible.²¹

Virtually all who reviewed the book, and certainly John Judis himself, espoused philosophies that were at odds with Old Right conservatism. Yet they all concurred that Buckley had become conservatism’s extremely capable leader and, more importantly, its eminently responsible spokesman. In effect, these individuals added weight to the reputation Buckley eagerly pursued and has labored to maintain.

While painting a distinctly favorable portrait of modern conservatism's godfather, *William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives* includes abundant evidence confirming that Buckley is, to the contrary, the darling of the liberal internationalist Establishment.

Our Purpose

After arriving on the political scene in the early 1950s, Buckley created a fork in the nation's political road. Though few realized he had done so, the new path lured conservatives away from the Constitution and toward an undefined and shifting standard where attitudes, personalities, and organizations previously deemed to be anathema gained approval.

Those who followed Buckley failed to comprehend that their conservatism had been gutted and their once-treasured principles had been cast adrift. Many were led to believe that they had new allies in an assortment of liberals, neoconservatives, and internationalists they should have shunned, including: Henry Kissinger; Jeane Kirkpatrick; Allard Lowenstein; Michael Novak; Irving Kristol; and a swarm of Reagan-era apologists for huge deficits, unconstitutional bureaucracies, and internationalism.

Leftists had not swung to the Right. The Right was being sidetracked to the Left — to a vacillating, more docile, and more “respectable” posture that was actually liberalism and internationalism in disguise.

The chapters that follow detail the career and impact of William F. Buckley, Jr., including his:

- membership in such Establishment and secretive entities as the Council on Foreign Relations (Chapter 1), Yale University's Skull & Bones Society (Chapter 3), and the Central Intelligence Agency (Chapter 5);
- tutelage by a Trotskyite socialist professor at Yale (Chapter 3);
- selection of an array of ex-Communists, Trotskyites, and CIA veterans to staff *National Review* (Chapter 6);
- intimate relationship with Henry Kissinger and his incredible recommendation that Kissinger's patron, Nelson Rockefeller, be named U.S. secretary of defense (Chapter 7);
- demonization of old-line conservatives and incessant ridicule of the notion of conspiracy (Chapter 8);
- dishonestly attacking The John Birch Society (Chapter 9); and
- support for abortion while posturing as a faithful Catholic (Chapter 11).

For more than four decades, Buckley has been the liberal Establishment's Pied Piper, leading the Right away from its roots. His role has been bolstered by such would-be Buckley clones as William Bennett, Jack Kemp, Newt Gingrich, George Will, Rush Limbaugh, William Kristol, and a flock of neoconservatives whose preference for right-wing socialism and internationalism

is examined in Chapter 2.

Bill Buckley is indeed a famous author, lecturer, editor, television commentator, columnist, and political analyst. As the pages that follow seek to demonstrate, however, if conservatism means strict adherence to the immutable truths and fundamental principles that launched this nation and made it the envy of the world, he is not its champion.

— John F. McManus
May 2002

Chapter One — Buckley and the Establishment

*[If Buckley didn't exist,] the establishment would have to invent him. Maybe they did.*¹
— Howard Zinn

In 1971, leftist professor Howard Zinn of Boston University debated William Buckley at a forum held at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. During the proceedings, Zinn pointedly suggested, in the remark cited above, that Buckley's reputation as a combative opponent of "the Establishment" was fraudulent. His curt assertion generated a huge laugh from the audience, most of whom despised Buckley's vaunted conservatism.

Unfortunately, Zinn's piercing comment, coming as it did from a strident leftist, had little effect on the political stance of most of those in attendance. But it did resonate with a few conservatives on the scene, and with others via a newspaper account of the confrontation the next day. Some had already begun questioning the type of leadership Buckley was offering.

Although Zinn didn't define what he meant by "the establishment," he obviously held the view, prominent among leftists during those Vietnam War days, that it was the seat of well-entrenched eastern capitalists who were responsible for most, if not all, of the nation's ills. Buckley was supposed to be at war with this force, but Zinn didn't believe it.

Ten years earlier, syndicated columnist Edith Kermit Roosevelt *had* defined the term. She dared to put in print what many who agreed with her were unwilling, even afraid, to say. Her detailed description of "the Establishment" provided sorely needed insight about a power structure that has been undermining America for decades. The granddaughter of President Theodore Roosevelt wrote:

The word "Establishment" is a general term for the power elite in international finance, business, the professions and government, largely from the northeast, who wield most of the power regardless of who is in the White House. Most people are unaware of the existence of this "legitimate Mafia." Yet the power of the Establishment makes itself felt from the professor who seeks a foundation grant, to the candidate for a Cabinet post or State Department job. It affects the nation's policies in almost every area....

What is the Establishment's viewpoint? Through the Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations its ideology is constant: That the best way to fight Communism is by a One World Socialist state governed by "experts" like themselves. The result has been policies which favor the growth of the superstate, gradual surrender of United States sovereignty to the United Nations....²

Does Buckley belong to this "legitimate Mafia"? Is he a member of the "power elite ... who wield most of the power regardless of who is in the White House"? Does he support the creation of a "One World Socialist state"? And does he favor policies leading to "the growth of the superstate [and] gradual surrender of United States sovereignty to the United Nations"?

Fully a half-century before Miss Roosevelt issued her stinging definition of "the Establishment," a soon-to-be-President Woodrow Wilson acknowledged the existence of this same force, though he never employed the word "Establishment." Instead, he pointed to a fearsome but hidden "power" in a book he wrote prior to entering the White House. Published in 1913, Wilson's *The New Freedom* includes this penetrating passage:

Some of the biggest men in the United States, in the field of commerce and manufacture, are afraid of something. They know that there is a power somewhere so organized, so subtle, so watchful, so interlocked, so complete, so pervasive, that they had better not speak above their breath when they speak in condemnation of it.³

Again, could such a "power" have influenced William Buckley to the point that he not only refuses to speak about it, but has joined it and placed himself at its service?

Seeing Through the False Front

In the fall of 1967, Johnson administration heavyweight Richard Goodwin appeared as a guest on Buckley's "Firing Line" television program. A holdover from the Kennedy administration, Goodwin had helped to create the twin socialistic programs known as the New Frontier and the Great Society. As early as 1961, he had distinguished himself as a far-out leftist when he sought to have the U.S. dignify Fidel Castro and Che Guevara as the legitimate leaders of Cuba.⁴

Neither a conservative nor an anti-Communist, Goodwin wasted no time in tossing Buckley a remarkably revealing bouquet. *Time* magazine noted his unctuous tribute:

Any society, and particularly the Great Society, needs a responsible force on the right. I think that all of us are very glad that you are that force. It might have been somebody who is mean and sharp and nasty and unwilling to debate the issues. As long as you're there, it protects the civilities of discourse in a free society.⁵

Here we have a highly placed emissary of the Establishment acknowledging Buckley's strategic importance. If Buckley's fans were not aware of their hero's usefulness to the Establishment, Goodwin was. As early as 1967, he knew that his television host could be counted on to offer no serious opposition to the Great Society, and Buckley's subsequent actions did not contradict that assessment.

Even before Goodwin's rosy tribute, Medford Evans (former chief of security training for the Atomic Energy Commission and, like Buckley, a Yale alumnus) had reached the same conclusion, though he wasn't pleased with his discovery. At *National Review's* inaugural in 1955, Evans' name appeared on the list of the magazine's contributors. A champion of the Old Right, Evans parted company with the Buckley-led publication in its infancy, believing that it had drifted from what he had thought were its soundly rooted foundations. He transferred his loyalty and literary output to *American Opinion* magazine.

It was in *American Opinion*, an affiliate of The John Birch Society, that he stated in 1985: "The reluctant conclusion I have reached is that William F. Buckley Jr. is and has been driven by vanity, ambition, and greed to seek a place in the Establishment which he professes — or once professed — to oppose."⁶

Evans detested the Establishment precisely for its policies as cited by Edith Kermit Roosevelt. He had spent a lifetime combating many of the treacherous programs spawned by its highly placed agents. He didn't agree with cozying up to and financing Communism, driving the United States into world government, building socialism, and slandering groups and individuals who dared expose the Establishment's unremitting drive for power. He had reached the conclusion that Buckley was a willing pawn in the sinister game.

The program for *National Review's* 40th anniversary celebration on October 13, 1995 provided further confirmation of Buckley's place within the Establishment. On that occasion, Dr. Henry Kissinger, whose standing within the Establishment is virtually second-to-none, noted his long personal friendship with the magazine's founder. He delightedly remarked that in whatever position he himself might take, "I won't have to look around to know that Bill Buckley and *National Review* will be right there beside me."⁷

An unvarnished history of the 20th century will confirm that the Establishment has been disturbingly successful in engineering America's decline. Personal freedom *is* under attack; national sovereignty *is* being transferred to the United Nations; a "One World Socialist state" *is* on the horizon; and a hidden power fearsome enough to silence most opponents *is* working its sinister magic. America's internal enemies have been winning, and their steady advance toward total power is not happening by chance.

Bill Buckley's carefully crafted "conservative" image generated an impression that he was opposed to all of this, but some of his followers had already begun to see through their once-revered hero. In 1974, his open affiliation with the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) completely shattered his falsely acquired reputation for many more.

The Council on Foreign Relations

In mid-1974, Buckley not only joined the Council on Foreign Relations, he proudly published that fact in *National Review*. He thereby provided the Establishment's most obvious front group crucial protective coloration. Henceforth, the CFR and its members and associates could cite Buckley's affiliation as "proof" that the organization couldn't possibly be subversive

His invitation had been jointly issued by CFR Chairman David Rockefeller and President

Bayless Manning. Buckley's letter of acceptance, sent to Alton Frye, the group's director of membership, and subsequently published in *National Review*, aired his displeasure at having had to wait nine years for the honor. (He had first been nominated back in 1965.) A CFR internal memo written by staff assistant Lorna Brennan in 1974 pointed out that Frye had "mollified him somewhat by explaining that, although previously he had been perhaps considered a somewhat controversial figure by some, now, with the Council's new president and new administration, there is unanimous wish that he become a member."⁸

In his letter to Alton Frye, Buckley stated in part:

Thank you for your kind letter urging me to accept Mr. Rockefeller's invitation to join the Council on Foreign Relations, and for the enclosures, which I have looked over.

I am inclined to bow to your courtesy, and accept your kind invitation to join the Council. But I feel I should say a word or two. The reason for the rather extraordinary period of my exclusion did not transpire in our discussion. I was nominated for membership in 1965, and invited to join in 1974. I am required to conclude either that the opposition to my election was personal, in which case it was presumably expressed by one or two members with administrative leverage now dissipated; or that it was ideological, in which case it has apparently been diluted either as a result of a changed attitude by certain members of the Council toward foreign relations, or a changed attitude of my own toward foreign relations; or of a changed understanding by certain members of the Council of my positions towards foreign relations.

... I note that among your members are many of my personal friends, and that with a few of them, I have practically no political differences.⁹

Prior to at last being invited into the Establishment's inner sanctum, Buckley cultivated the friendship of numerous CFR members through a luncheon group he and *Time* magazine executive Richard Clurman formed in 1970. Dubbed "The Boys Club," regular attendees included Abe Rosenthal (CFR) of the *New York Times*, Osborn Elliott (CFR) of *Newsweek*, Irving Kristol (CFR) of *The Public Interest*, John Chancellor (CFR) of NBC News, and journalist Theodore White (CFR).¹⁰ Clurman would join the CFR the following year.¹¹

Whatever the basis for his acceptance by America's Establishment, Buckley's alliance with the CFR said reams about him. He remains a member to this day.

He and all other members are bound by the group's by-laws, which require secrecy about what transpires within the organization. As published in the *CFR Annual Report*, Article II states:

It is an express condition of membership in the Council, to which condition every member accedes by virtue of his or her membership, that members will observe such rules and regulations as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board of Directors concerning the conduct of Council meetings or the attribution of statements made therein, and that any disclosure, publication, or other action by a member in contravention thereof may be regarded by the Board of Directors in its sole discretion as

ground for termination or suspension of membership pursuant to Article I of the By-Laws.¹²

In short, the CFR operates under a veil of secrecy enabling it to keep the public generally unaware of its activities and the many unsavory characters who have frequented its chambers. One disreputable individual regularly welcomed by the CFR was Anatoly Dobrynin, the USSR's ambassador to the United States during much of the Cold War. A hard-core Communist and slick spokesman for the tyrannical Soviet government, he returned to Moscow in 1986 after serving the Kremlin as its representative in the U.S. for 24 years. In their 1975 book *Kissinger on the Couch*, authors Phyllis Schlafly and Retired Admiral Chester Ward (the latter, a former judge advocate general of the U.S. Navy, who once belonged to the CFR) aptly described Dobrynin as the “*ex officio* head of the KGB in the United States.”¹³

Dobrynin was the beneficiary of a lengthy and laudatory 1984 article by Madeline G. Kalb in the *New York Times Magazine*. Kalb noted that the career Soviet diplomat generally avoided interviews, but that “he keeps in touch with influential journalists and top people at such organizations as the Council on Foreign Relations.”¹⁴ This highly placed agent of a despotic government that had spilled the blood of millions knew, even if most Americans did not, that the welcome mat at CFR headquarters was always out. Beginning in 1974, it was also in place for William F. Buckley, Jr.

The CFR's Devastating Influence

The footprints left by Buckley's friends in the CFR are readily detectable in a long succession of setbacks for this nation.

For instance, more than 40 members of the U.S. delegation to the UN's 1945 founding conference either were or would eventually become CFR members. Included among these prominent internationalists were John Foster Dulles, John J. McCloy, Nelson Rockefeller, Adlai Stevenson, and Alger Hiss.¹⁵ Our nation's gradual descent into a UN-controlled world government, which began with their efforts, has been orchestrated by subsequent CFR operatives.

In the late 1940s, CFR members Owen Lattimore and Dean Acheson arranged for America's betrayal of our Nationalist Chinese allies while simultaneously helping Mao Tse-tung and his murderous band into power.¹⁶

From posts in the Truman State Department, CFR members Dean Acheson and Dean Rusk placed U.S. forces under the control of the United Nations in the no-win, undeclared war in Korea. They prevented General Douglas MacArthur from achieving victory, and they ushered in the reign of the Communist Chinese as the dominant military power in the Far East.¹⁷

CFR members John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles served respectively as secretary of state and CIA director during the administration of CFR member Dwight Eisenhower. They double-crossed the Hungarian Freedom Fighters in 1956 and helped Fidel Castro grab the reins of power in Cuba in January 1959.¹⁸

CFR members Dean Rusk, McGeorge Bundy, and Adlai Stevenson saw to it that the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba became a miserable failure, a huge black eye for the U.S., and a tremendous boost in prestige for Castro.¹⁹

CFR members Dean Rusk, Robert McNamara, and Henry Cabot Lodge sent U.S. military forces into Vietnam under the UN's SEATO pact, then drew up rules of engagement for our troops that made an American victory impossible.²⁰

CFR members Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger continued the no-win Vietnam War, presided over America's capitulation in 1973, shamefully abandoned hundreds of POWs/MIAs, and allowed North Vietnam to keep 200,000 fully armed troops in South Vietnam after the supposed end of the war. It was hardly a surprise, then, when South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia were overrun by Communist forces.²¹

And this is merely a glimpse of the record compiled by leading members of the organization that Bill Buckley sought to join in 1965, and was allowed to join in 1974.

Key CFR Members Approve Buckley's Membership

Buckley could not have been unaware of the CFR's history. Likewise, CFR officials could hardly have been ignorant about him and his career. In 1974, Paul C. Warnke, a determined leftist, chaired the CFR's Membership Committee. Three years later, Warnke, whose reputation for tolerating Soviet arms cheating became legendary, would be tapped by President Jimmy Carter to head the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.²²

Buckley's public image, of course, was that of an intense foe of everything Warnke stood for, especially disarmament. Yet, as a CFR official, Warnke saw fit to approve Buckley's membership. Once again, image and reality were not meshing.

Also serving on the CFR's Membership Committee at the time were such internationalist luminaries as Jimmy Carter's future treasury secretary, W. Michael Blumenthal, and David Rockefeller's eventual successor as CFR chairman, Peter G. Peterson.²³ It is unlikely that these individuals were tricked into awarding membership to an opponent of CFR designs.

Within a year of Buckley's initial affiliation with the CFR, retired U.S. Navy Admiral Chester Ward issued sharp criticism of the organization. Having been a member himself for 16 years, he was in a unique position to know what it had been trying to do. In *Kissinger on the Couch*, Ward bluntly concluded that the CFR's goal had long been the "submergence of U.S. sovereignty and national independence into an all-powerful one-world government." He claimed that "this lust to surrender the sovereignty and independence of the United States is pervasive throughout most of the membership."²⁴

Admiral Ward explained how the organization operated and how its desires invariably became U.S. policy:

Once the ruling members of the CFR have decided that the U.S. Government should adopt a particular policy, the very substantial research facilities of CFR are put to work to develop arguments, intellectual and emotional, to support the new policy, and to confound and discredit, intellectually and politically, any opposition.²⁵

Because the admiral's comments added to growing national awareness about the CFR's goals, its leaders found themselves in need of some serious damage control. Buckley came to the rescue! He approved publication of a four-page whitewash of the CFR in his *National Review*. Author Zygmunt Nagorski, a CFR staff official, claimed that the organization was a mere "marketplace of ideas related to American foreign policy"²⁶ — not a fountain of policy-making.

Denying or ignoring many of the charges laid at the CFR's doorstep, Nagorski insisted that the organization was a paragon of bipartisanship. He supported his claim by listing names of CFR members whose very presence within the group supposedly sealed his case. Not surprisingly, as proof of a "conservative" element, he cited Bill Buckley. Others he touted as "conservatives" included Peter G. Peterson, IBM Chairman Frank Cary, Generals Maxwell Taylor and William Westmoreland, and Paul Nitze. And he parroted the standard CFR line: "Since its inception the Council has felt free to invite proponents of all views."

Of course, merely feeling "free" to do something is no guarantee that it will be done!

Buckley allowed Nagorski to give *National Review's* readers a sanitized glimpse of the CFR, avoiding any significant facts about its history and influence. Nagorski then asked rhetorically, "Does all this suggest a kind of conspiracy?" The conclusion readers were conditioned to reach, of course, was: "No, it certainly doesn't." Based on what Nagorski offered, no one would believe that the CFR had ever been a part of a plot to subvert American independence. Keeping readers of *National Review* in the dark about the CFR's real intentions was important to Establishment elitists. And kept in the dark they were — with the assistance of the founder, editor, and chief spokesman of *National Review*.

When someone of the caliber of Admiral Ward discovers the CFR's real goals, he works to change the organization from within and, failing that, resigns and speaks out about what he has learned. Unfortunately for America, the CFR hasn't had to contend with too many Admiral Wards.

Another CFR member who tried to steer the organization away from its sinister path was career diplomat Spruille Braden. Frustrated by his unsuccessful attempts to influence the organization, he eventually walked away from the Council after failing to counter the preachments of one Herbert Matthews at a CFR gathering.²⁷ A leftist *New York Times* reporter, Matthews was a prominent apologist for Fidel Castro during the revolutionary Cuban's rise to power. Like Medford Evans, Ambassador Braden then became affiliated with The John Birch Society, where he knew his efforts and experience would be helpful to our nation.

Perhaps the greatest departure from truth in Nagorski's *National Review* article was his claim that the CFR "is a body that seeks no consensus, no agreed-upon conclusion." That claim has become the standard CFR response to criticism. It is a disingenuous dodge.

No CFR consensus? No agreed-upon conclusion? Are we to believe that David Rockefeller and his coterie of internationalists have enthusiastically financed and directed an organization unconcerned about the extent to which its agenda parallels their own? The CFR *does* take positions, *does* arrive at conclusions, and *does* have an agenda.

When David Rockefeller announced his retirement as chairman in the 1984 *CFR Annual Report*, he revealed the creation of a CFR endowment “to provide an even greater range and scope of programming for its membership and the nation.”²⁸ Can there be “programming” for the nation without having first reached conclusions about what it will entail?

Current CFR chairman Peter G. Peterson, David Rockefeller’s immediate successor, has on more than one occasion let some very telling cats out of the CFR bag. In his “Letter From the Chairman” in the 1989 *CFR Annual Report*, Peterson stated that “the Board of Directors and the staff of the Council have decided that this institution should play a leadership role in defining these new foreign policy agenda...”²⁹ In the organization’s 1995 *Annual Report*, Peterson wrote: “We must help spark and shape the debate about the new foreign policy challenges and our country’s proper global role in the post-Cold War environment.”³⁰

How can the CFR “play a leadership role in defining these new foreign policy agenda,” or how can it “shape the debate about the new foreign policy challenges,” without taking a position? Simply stated, it can’t. The CFR has always taken positions, and perhaps its major accomplishment has been assuring that only various shadings of its desires are considered within the high councils of government and by the American people. Its strategically placed members see to it that any proposal threatening to halt or reverse America’s disastrous slide into world government is ridiculed or ignored.

For example, the “debate” shaped by CFR members in and out of government gave Americans the choice of which former Soviet satellite nations should be welcomed into NATO. Completely absent was the option of having the U.S. withdraw from NATO. Another “debate” dwelled on possible reductions in the UN’s “bloated bureaucracy” while neglecting the option of withdrawal from the world body. In yet another managed “debate,” Americans influenced by the CFR through its near-total domination of the mass media are regularly offered the choice of either increasing or maintaining current spending levels for socialistic programs. The alternative of abolishing such programs is never considered.

As Peter G. Peterson openly asserted, the CFR “must ... shape the debate.” And Bill Buckley, a supposed opponent of the Establishment, can usually be found marching in lock step with his CFR colleagues on the issues they deem important.

With its near dominance over the choice of America’s top political candidates, and its weighty influence within the mass media, the CFR can even “shape” presidential contests, as in the races between Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson, Richard Nixon and Hubert Humphrey, George H.W. Bush and Michael Dukakis, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, etc. The names of all these individuals have appeared on CFR membership rosters. Other presidential aspirants who were not CFR members during their candidacies nevertheless sang the CFR’s tune (e.g., John

Kennedy), and some (e.g., Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter) joined shortly after leaving the White House. For decades, those seeking the top rung of American politics while resolutely opposed to the CFR's agenda have either been consigned to non-entity status or found themselves the target of vicious attacks.

If the CFR and those it influences "shape the debate," the American people are presented with lose-lose choices. The forces of big government win no matter which of the approved alternatives is accepted. Yet, even as it continues to define the nation's agenda and shape the debate on the key issues, the CFR claims that it offers "no consensus, no agreed-upon conclusion." Bill Buckley has for years shielded his followers from the truth about this devious game.

Occasionally, some truth about the CFR's pervasive influence appears in unexpected places. In October 1993, for instance, the *Washington Post* published an op-ed column by staff ombudsman Richard Harwood. Entitled "Ruling Class Journalists," it candidly claimed that CFR members "are the nearest thing we have to a ruling establishment in the United States." That observation is reminiscent of what Edith Kermit Roosevelt stated 32 years earlier. Harwood wrote of this "ruling establishment":

The president is a member. So is his secretary of state, the deputy secretary of state, all five of the undersecretaries, several of the assistant secretaries and the department's legal adviser. The president's national security adviser and his deputy are members. The director of Central Intelligence (like all previous directors) and the chairman of the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board are members. The secretary of defense, three undersecretaries and at least four assistant secretaries are members. The secretaries of the departments of housing and urban development, interior, health and human services and the chief White House public relations man, David Gergen, are members, along with the Speaker of the House and the majority leader of the Senate....

In the past 15 years, council directors have included Hedley Donovan of Time Inc., Elizabeth Drew of the *New Yorker*, Philip Geylin of *The Washington Post*, Karen Elliott House of the *Wall Street Journal* and Strobe Talbott of *Time* magazine, who is now President Clinton's ambassador at large in the Slavic world. The editorial page editor, deputy editorial page editor, executive editor, managing editor, foreign editor, national affairs editor, business and financial editor and various writers as well as Katharine Graham, the paper's principal owner, represent *The Washington Post* in the Council's membership. The executive editor, managing editor and foreign editor of the *New York Times* are members, along with executives of such other large newspapers as the *Wall Street Journal* and *Los Angeles Times*, the weekly newsmagazines, network television executives and celebrities — Dan Rather, Tom Brokaw and Jim Lehrer, for example — and various columnists, among them Charles Krauthammer, William Buckley, George Will and Jim Hoagland.³¹

Washington Post staffer Harwood stated that those he listed had accomplished "their ascension into the American ruling class."* He did not note how Buckley provides protective cover for the CFR's fraudulent we-welcome-all-views claim, but he did cite *National Review's* leading light as

one who had arrived in the inner councils of the Establishment he once claimed to oppose.

Harwood summarized the impact of the many CFR members who dominate the Fourth Estate, including Buckley: “They do not merely analyze and interpret foreign policy for the United States; they help make it.”³² Harwood not only contradicted the false CFR claim that it didn’t shape U.S. policy, he included Buckley as one of many who “help make it.”

Buckley has occasionally responded to inquiries about his CFR membership with brief letters claiming that members “take no corporate positions, and I am entirely unencumbered by their activity.”³³ Richard Harwood’s account of the CFR’s pervasive influence in helping to “make” foreign policy clearly contradicted Buckley’s assertion.

In March 1982, Buckley interviewed CFR President Winston Lord for his “Firing Line” television program. The subject, as noted in Buckley’s 1989 book *On the Firing Line*, was “The CFR and its Critics.” But the CFR was hardly criticized as the two danced around the real substance of the organization.³⁴

Others Did Expose the CFR

In 1962, former FBI official Dan Smoot published the first substantive exposé of the CFR. The Dallas-based author and television commentator contended in the foreword to his book, *The Invisible Government*, that the CFR had been working from its inception in 1921 “to convert America into a socialist state and then make it a unit in a one-world socialist system.” Documenting that assertion with overwhelming evidence, he continued:

I am convinced that the Council on Foreign Relations, together with a great number of other associated tax-exempt organizations, constitutes the invisible government which sets the major policies of the federal government; exercises controlling influence on government officials who implement those policies; and, through massive and skillful propaganda, influences Congress and the public to support the policies.³⁵

Smoot’s work quickly became a standard reference for the growing number of Americans who were becoming aware of the existence of the Establishment of which the CFR was the major player, and of the Council’s dominating influence in government, the media, foundations, and large corporations. Several books underscoring this message soon followed, including those by Kent and Phoebe Courtney, Mary M. Davison, and John A. Stormer.³⁶

Then in 1966, Georgetown University professor Carroll Quigley’s ponderous *Tragedy and Hope: A History of the World In Our Time* burst onto the scene, supplying important corroboration of the thesis propounded by Smoot and others — *from the inside*.

A Harvard-trained historian, Quigley traced the roots of the Council to the 1870 global ambitions of Oxford University Professor John Ruskin and his star pupil, Cecil Rhodes. He detailed Ruskin’s passion to eliminate America’s independence and to bring the entire English-speaking world under the control of British-trained elitists. He showed that with help from Europe’s Rothschild banking empire, Rhodes built a huge mining operation in Southern Africa and used his immense fortune to carry out the Ruskin plan. Quigley labeled the fruit of the Ruskin/Rhodes

plan “a secret society.”³⁷

Rhodes passed away in 1905. The secret organization he helped form evolved, by 1919, into England’s Royal Institute of International Affairs, with affiliates in other English-speaking nations. According to Quigley, the U.S. branch of this secret society “is known as the Council on Foreign Relations.”³⁸

Quigley outlined the “far-reaching aim” of the CFR and several allied organizations as “nothing less than to create a world system of financial control in private hands able to dominate the political system of each country and the economy of the world as a whole.”³⁹ The Georgetown professor added that the “system was to be controlled in a feudalist fashion by ... secret agreements arrived at in frequent private meetings and conferences.”⁴⁰

He also bared this secret society’s largely ignored determination to have America’s two major political parties become virtual clones of each other:

The chief problem of American political life for a long time has been how to make the two Congressional parties more national and international. The argument that the two parties should represent opposed ideals and policies, one, perhaps, of the Right and the other of the Left, is a foolish idea acceptable only to doctrinaire and academic thinkers. Instead, the two parties should be almost identical, so that the American people can “throw the rascals out” at any election without leading to any profound or extensive shifts in policy.... But either party in office becomes in time corrupt, tired, uninteresting, and vigorless. Then it should be possible to replace it, every four years if necessary, by the other party, which will be none of these things but will still pursue, with new vigor, approximately the same basic policies.⁴¹

All three elements of a malign conspiracy are evident throughout Quigley’s study: secrecy; a coordinated group of individuals; and an evil goal. The professor, however, did not believe that what he was describing was evil. He never used the word “conspiracy,” preferring instead repeated references to a praiseworthy “secret society.”

But the term conspiracy aptly fits his account. And it should be apparent to any serious student of current events that the world is heading precisely in the direction charted by the plotters whom Quigley lauded.

At one point in his 1,348-page work, Quigley boasted of his own direct familiarity with the plot. He stated that he had “studied it for twenty years and was permitted for two years, in the early 1960s, to examine its papers and secret records.”⁴² He did not, however, say who “permitted” such an examination, where he journeyed to view those “papers and secret records,” or what they contained. His only substantive complaint about the “network” he chronicled was that “it wishes to remain unknown, and I believe its role in history is significant enough to be known.”⁴³

Five years later, investigative writer Gary Allen, combining both Quigley’s revelations and his own considerable research, produced his blockbuster book *None Dare Call It Conspiracy*.⁴⁴

Over five million copies found their way into the hands of concerned Americans.

Many who read Allen's book admitted that it dramatically changed the way they had been viewing national and world affairs. Allen's brief but incisive analysis made them aware that a powerful conspiracy did indeed have a solid grip on our nation.

Allen focused attention on the identity and Marxist leanings of the CFR's principal founder, the mysterious Colonel Edward Mandell House, whom President Wilson described as his "alter ego." House had detailed his megalomaniacal ambitions in his 1912 novel entitled *Philip Dru: Administrator*, where he advocated "Socialism as dreamed of by Karl Marx" and called for a central bank, an income tax, the repudiation of the U.S. Constitution, and the reuniting of England and the United States.⁴⁵

Allen's small but potent work further revealed that CFR hands were leading the U.S. into socialism, war, astronomical debt, and world government. Two of his most shocking revelations were the CFR's domination of virtually all branches of the mass media and of both major political parties.

CFR kingpins found themselves facing the problem of countering Allen's charges. William F. Buckley, Jr., reputed to be a leading foe of the Establishment, was ideal for the job. During its first 17 years, *National Review* had ignored the CFR, and no references to the organization had appeared in Buckley's nationally syndicated columns. But the exposure by Allen and others made Buckley's silence deafening.

In a brief review appearing in September 1972, *National Review* discounted and ridiculed Allen's indictment. The author, A. Reynolds, disdainfully wrote: "Allen connects the Council on Foreign Relations with everything but the men's room at Grand Central Station."⁴⁶

In 1976, Gary Allen produced another powerful book focusing on Jimmy Carter, who was being raised from near obscurity to the status of serious presidential contender. *Jimmy Carter, Jimmy Carter* included the salient revelation that Carter was an early member of CFR Chairman David Rockefeller's other Establishment creation, the Trilateral Commission:

In the fall of 1973, David invited Jimmy to have dinner with him in London. Over the *hors d'oeuvres*, David asked Jimmy to become a member of the Trilateral Commission — an important new group David was forming to promote world government. By the time dessert was served, Jimmy had agreed to come on board. The Trilateral Commission is another CFR front (over half of its 65 North American members also belong to the CFR)...⁴⁷

Allen demonstrated that Carter was anything but the outsider he repeatedly claimed to be. Though *Jimmy Carter, Jimmy Carter* didn't equal the enormous impact of *None Dare Call It Conspiracy*, its exposé of Carter's connections to America's "legitimate Mafia" contained additional details about the conspiratorial plans of the CFR and its Trilateral offspring.

Coincident with the release of Allen's critique of Jimmy Carter, *National Review* publisher

William Rusher issued an urgent fund appeal to the magazine's subscribers. His desperate letter included this whimpering forecast of imminent ruin: "I still cannot tell you, for sure, whether NR is going to pull through again..."⁴⁸

About that time, however, Gary Allen sent *National Review* a \$1,400 check to cover the cost of an ad for his new book. The check was promptly refused and returned by — William Rusher!⁴⁹ No exposure of the Establishment or its key organizations and players would appear — even as a pre-paid advertisement — in the supposedly financially strapped and hardline conservative *National Review*.

More Defense of the Indefensible

Continuing his defense of the CFR and his own membership, in 1977 Buckley published a letter he sent to a reader who asked for his comments about the charges contained in *None Dare Call It Conspiracy*. (The Allen book was still having an impact.) In lock-step with the CFR itself, Buckley parroted the false claim that the CFR takes no positions. He stated:

The Council on Foreign Relations consists, as far as most of its members are concerned, in a forum for speakers, more often than not from foreign countries. If there is such a thing, I have never heard the corporate position of the CFR expounded, and certainly it has never been urged at any meeting I have attended.⁵⁰

Not content with attaching his name and reputed conservatism to the CFR, echoing the CFR's official line of defense, and verbally savaging those who raised questions about the organization, Buckley devoted his syndicated column to further defending it. In October 1979, he noted with regret that George Bush (the elder) had just resigned from the CFR. Bush gave as his reason (confirmed by David Rockefeller but ignored by Buckley) the need to make himself appear more acceptable to Republicans in the race for their party's 1980 presidential nomination. Buckley wrote:

Poor George Bush, at one point a director of the CFR, who knows as well as he knows the depths of his own patriotism that the CFR is not pro-Soviet, nor in favor of surrendering U.S. sovereignty, nevertheless feels that resigning his membership is the expedient thing to do, if only to save the postage required to answer patiently the number of people who would be denouncing him as a pro-communist or a One Worlder or an instrument of Rockefeller Interests (the three most frequently leveled charges against the CFR).⁵¹

Note Buckley's claim that the CFR does not favor "surrendering U.S. sovereignty." Yet in 1974, the same year that Buckley joined the organization, prominent CFR member Richard N. Gardner, a former deputy assistant secretary of state for international affairs, issued his notorious call for "an end run around national sovereignty, eroding it piece by piece" in the CFR's flagship journal *Foreign Affairs*.⁵²

Gardner lamented that expectations of pulling off a single leap into world government were not realistic. Instead, he listed an array of international entanglements that would help complete the "end run," stating that the "case-by-case approach can produce some remarkable concessions of

‘sovereignty’ that could not be achieved on an across-the-board basis.”⁵³ Buckley’s contention that the CFR does not favor the surrender of U.S. sovereignty amounted to a further whitewash of the CFR’s sinister objectives.

In 1980, Buckley penned an article for *Foreign Affairs*. In “Human Rights and Foreign Policy: A Proposal,” he urged the U.S. Congress to establish a Commission on Human Rights made up of nominees recommended by such left-leaning groups as the International Commission of Jurists, Amnesty International, and the Anti-Defamation League. He proposed having this commission supply an annual, nation-by-nation assessment of human rights “using the Universal Declaration [of Human Rights] of the United Nations as the paradigm.”⁵⁴

We can only gasp at the audacity of this “respectable” conservative in recommending the UN’s Universal Declaration as a model for America, since its next-to-last article blatantly states: “In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law”; and “These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.”⁵⁵ Which means that those who oppose the UN’s “purposes and principles” have no rights according to the world body’s own litmus test.

A completely opposite model is the “self-evident” assertion in the Declaration of Independence that “Men ... are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights.” Consistent with this pronouncement, the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution maintains that “Congress shall make no law” dealing with an array of unalienable rights.

If Buckley’s recommendation had been adopted, it would have led to a further suppression of the recognition that rights are God-given, and it would have boosted even further the fraudulent contention that rights emanate from a government such as the UN, which can suspend them “by law.”

By December 1980, Buckley was invited to speak at the CFR’s New York headquarters. He has also occasionally served as a moderator or presider at CFR convocations. His 1980 address at a “Meeting for Members and their Spouses” supplied his “Early Reflections on the New [Reagan] Administration.”⁵⁶

In his “personal documentary” entitled *Overdrive*, Buckley revealed that, by 1981, he had ascended to such a height within the CFR that he was now screening potential members. He wrote:

A youngish man who wants to join the Council on Foreign Relations has one of those nice-type problems. You see, his roommate at Yale was *the current president of the Council on Foreign Relations*. But ever since Watergate and Abscam, things like this have to be handled with the utmost delicacy and regard for punctilio. So he makes an appointment to meet me, so that I can size him up, so that I can, after talking to him for twenty minutes, write a letter to the membership committee, which is, in effect, run by the president, so that I can inform the president of the Council on Foreign Relations what his ex-roommate is like.⁵⁷ [Emphasis in original.]

The CFR president at the time was Winston Lord. Like Buckley, Lord spent his senior year at Yale as a member of the mysterious and secretive Skull & Bones Society. In time, Lord moved on from the presidency of the CFR to become our nation's ambassador to Communist China and, later, to accept a top post in the Clinton State Department.

While Buckley was defending the CFR, Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) was offering a distinctly opposite view. During remarks given in the U.S. Senate on December 15, 1987, Helms maintained that a "campaign against the American people" was being waged by "the Department of State, the Department of Commerce, the money center banks and multinational corporations, the media, the educational establishment, the entertainment industry, and the large tax-exempt foundations ... to create what some refer to as a new world order."

Targeting "the eastern establishment," Helms listed many of its constituent organizations:

Private organizations such as the Council on Foreign Relations, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, the Trilateral Commission, the Dartmouth Conference, the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, the Atlantic Institute, and the Bilderberg Group serve to disseminate and to coordinate the plans for this so-called new world order in powerful business, financial, academic and official circles.⁵⁸

With the exception of England's Royal Institute, all of whose members are British subjects, each of the entities named by Helms is top-heavy with CFR members. And Buckley has been a key functionary within this combine for decades: fronting for it, deflecting attention away from its agenda, and helping to propel this nation toward its world-government goals.**

In 1990, many hundreds of concerned Americans sent evidence documenting the CFR's jaded history to individual CFR members, asking why they would belong to such an organization. Many defended their membership by pointing out that "William F. Buckley, Jr. is a member." Merely citing his name was supposed to overcome objections.

Other CFR members parroted the "we never take a position" ruse. Little else was offered in response to legitimate questions about their membership, or about the CFR itself. Inquiries sent directly to the CFR's headquarters elicited a response from a spokesman who sent a copy of Zygmunt Nagorski's 1977 *National Review* article defending the CFR. Buckley to the rescue once again!

No American relying on Buckley for an understanding of national and world events will learn the truth about either the conspiracy that is undermining our nation, or the crucial role the CFR continues to play in promoting its goals. The Establishment needed a William F. Buckley, and he enthusiastically played the needed role. Indeed, it is possible, as Boston University's Howard Zinn whimsically speculated, that the Establishment itself arranged to "invent" him.

*Why did the *Washington Post* hierarchy allow publication of this article? One reasonable guess is that it pointed the way for aspirants seeking a place within the Establishment, as it contained no condemnation of the powerful organization it described.

**Eventually, however, Helms softened his strong anti-CFR position to the extent that he authored “Saving the U.N.” in the September/October 1996 issue of the CFR’s *Foreign Affairs*. He called for mere reform of the world organization, rather than U.S. withdrawal.

Chapter Two — Buckley and Neoconservatives

*The conference was sponsored by William Buckley’s National Review, and most of those attending regarded themselves as conservatives first and Republicans second. By the end of the meeting, a significant reversal had occurred.... [M]ost were Republicans first and conservatives second.*¹
— Irving Kristol

Many who attended this May 1991 invitation-only conclave not only shifted their priorities from conservative to Republican, they had become *neoconservative* Republicans. And this is why Irving Kristol, who revels in being acknowledged as the “godfather” of neoconservatism, was so pleased when he wrote about the event.

As important as the neoconservative boost from this untitled conference may have been, the fact that the confab was sponsored by “William Buckley’s *National Review*” is especially revealing. As Kristol reported, “some two dozen conservative Republicans” had been led away from conservatism by the nation’s supposed conservative leader.

What, then, is neoconservatism? Kristol himself has supplied the best definition of the movement he leads. In *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea*, he wrote in 1995:

It [neoconservatism] describes the erosion of liberal faith among a relatively small but talented and articulate group ... (which gradually gained more recruits) toward a more conservative point of view: conservative, but different in certain respects from the conservatism of the Republican party. We ... accepted the New Deal in principle, and had little affection for the kind of isolationism that then permeated American conservatism.²

In other words, neoconservatives seek socialistic big government (the New Deal) and champion American meddling in the rest of the world’s affairs.

The personal histories of neoconservative leaders confirm that many are anti-Stalinist socialists who despised the brutality inflicted on mankind by Lenin and Stalin, but who nevertheless endorsed socialism — especially the brand favored by Leon Trotsky. Their preference for having America become the policeman of the world, intervening in one foreign quarrel after another, is the stepping-stone toward *interdependence* and eventual world government, two concepts which they also enthusiastically favor. They despise “isolationism,” their pejorative term for America’s original foreign policy of nonintervention in the non-threatening (to the United States) affairs of other nations.

Kristol has never been shy about his preference for socialism. In 1983, neoconservatism's godfather claimed unabashedly that "a conservative welfare state ... is perfectly consistent with the neoconservative perspective."³ The phrase "a conservative welfare state" should have garnered a prize for the most egregious oxymoron of the decade. It included, he stated in a *Wall Street Journal* piece in 1993, such blatantly *anti-conservative*, welfare-state fare as "Social Security," "Medicare," and "food stamps and Medicaid, as well as a children's cash allowance" for the offspring of unwed mothers.⁴

Charles Krauthammer, another neocon, boldly underscored the movement's lust for interventionism in his 1989 article published in Kristol's journal, *The National Interest*. He called for the integration of the U.S. with Europe and Japan to create a "super-sovereign" entity that is "economically, culturally, and politically hegemonic in the world." He further urged the formation of a "new universalism [which] would require the conscious depreciation not only of American sovereignty but of the notion of sovereignty in general." "This is not," he added, "as outrageous as it sounds."⁵

Neocons Turn to George Bush (the Elder)

Though he never identified the "two dozen conservative Republicans" who attended the 1991 Buckley-sponsored conference, Kristol revealed the major conclusion they reached: "President Bush is now the leader of the conservative movement within the Republican Party." Not only had erstwhile conservatives been transmogrified into Republican-firsters and neocons, they had accepted certified Establishment figure George H.W. Bush as the "leader of the conservative movement" within the GOP!

Kristol admitted that "foreign policy was simply not mentioned" during the three-day conference. There was no attempt whatsoever, he clucked, "to revive a version of pre-World War II isolationism." "The upshot," he noted, "is that conservatives have, in effect, entrusted the issue of foreign policy to President Bush."⁶ These freshly-minted, Republican-über-alles neocons now firmly backed a president whose outrages included sharply increased taxation, across-the-board expansion of federal controls, and the use of U.S. armed forces in a foreign conflict authorized by the UN. They had become cheerleaders for the new world order envisioned by President Bush as he prepared to send U.S. forces into the war against Iraq. Recall Bush's statements:

1) **September 11, 1990:** "Out of these troubled times, our fifth objective — a new world order — can emerge.... We are now in sight of a United Nations that performs as envisioned by its founders."⁷

2) **January 7, 1991:** "I think what's at stake here is the new world order ... a reinvigorated United Nations."⁸

3) **January 9, 1991:** "[The Gulf crisis] has to do with a new world order. And that world order is only going to be enhanced if this newly-activated peacekeeping function of the United Nations proves to be effective."⁹

For six months, President Bush had plainly maintained that the underlying purpose of the action against Saddam Hussein was the enhancement and reinvigoration of the United Nations. Less than five months later, Bill Buckley used his influence to steer conservative leaders to a neoconservative conference where they were enticed to accept George Bush's leadership.

According to Irving Kristol's June 3, 1991 *Wall Street Journal* article, abortion was discussed during the Buckley-sponsored conference. The attendees opted for a "middle ground," which Kristol characterized as "modest government restriction." As for George Bush's abandonment of his "no new taxes" pledge, Kristol indicated that the conferees swallowed hard but accepted it. "What's done is done," he insisted while noting that "conservatives are, much to their own surprise, loyal members of his [Bush's] constituency." Such loyalty meant that they had accepted not only a "reinvigorated United Nations," but also the bypassing of Congress to achieve UN authorization for war, a ballooning bureaucracy, and more taxes. They had, in other words, accepted much of the neoconservative agenda.

Kristol's revealing article confirmed that the marriage of Kristol-led neoconservatism and Buckley-led conservatism had been formalized. But it was Kristol who had drawn up the prenuptial agreement. In his 1995 opus, *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea*, he had summed up the results of the years of effort he and other neocons had expended: "So I deem the neoconservative enterprise to have been a success, to have brought elements that were needed to enliven American conservatism and help reshape American politics."¹⁰

But give Buckley his due. His career-long efforts to water down the Old Right's standards had eased the way for recasting the Republican Party's conservative faction. Recall from his 1952 *Commonweal* article that Buckley recommended "Big Government ... a totalitarian bureaucracy within our shores ... and the attendant centralization of power in Washington."¹¹ That article was his initial post-Yale foray into the world of political commentary. It was also unadulterated neoconservatism even before the term had been coined.

During the 1980s, Buckley and Kristol conferred virtual sainthood on Ronald Reagan and the Reagan administration, despite such deficiencies as enormous deficits, a steady expansion of the Rooseveltian welfare state, and stepped-up internationalism. Buckley supporters prefer not to be reminded of Reagan's pivotal and unexpected 1984 endorsement of the UN's dangerous Genocide Convention, which conservatives had long opposed. And Buckley's fans would rather not be reminded that their hero had backed this neoconservative-favored pact almost a decade earlier.

Buckley joined in applauding the so-called "Gingrich revolution," a reputed return to strict conservatism that never happened — and was never intended to happen. That revolution, too, was warmed-over neoconservatism.

Buckley also made it a practice over the years to parade neoconservatives and their views before his weekly "Firing Line" television audience. Among the many neocons he interviewed and seldom challenged (some on numerous occasions), were Richard Barnett, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Robert Bork, Michael Novak, William Bennett, Jack Kemp, Elliott Abrams, Ben Wattenberg, Robert Bartley, Midge Decter, Richard Perle, Michael Ledeen, and Richard John

Neuhaus.¹²

Neoconservatism's Roots

As far back as 40–50 years ago, those who have become today's neoconservative leaders drifted away from Trotskyism and began to identify themselves as democratic socialists. They were eventually able to pull off their theft of the conservative label in large part because William Buckley had emasculated conservatism's traditional meaning. In ensuing years, they gravitated to the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, sauntered into the Republican Party as "moderates," took on the name "conservative," and seized intellectual control of the Republican Party's right wing.

But the neoconservative link to Leon Trotsky cannot be ignored. Adherents of the neocon agenda favor the strategy attributed to the Russian revolutionary who was murdered in Mexico in 1940 by one of Stalin's henchmen. By 1927, Trotsky had broken with Stalin's head cracking and gulags, favoring instead the imposition of Marxist socialism slowly and patiently. Exiled from Russia in 1928 by his once close comrade, Trotsky and his followers labored to have mankind *choose* Marxist world government rather than having it forced on them. So the Trotskyites discarded their guns and clubs and turned to pens and the podium. In 1995, neocon godfather Kristol candidly stated, "I regard myself as lucky to have been a young Trotskyite and I have not a single bitter memory."¹³

During the Vietnam War, many neocons attached themselves to the Republican Party and its conservative wing. Kristol explained why:

In 1972, the nomination of George McGovern, an isolationist and a candidate of the New Left, signified that the Democratic party was not hospitable to any degree of neoconservatism. Only a few of us drew the obvious conclusion that we would have to try to find a home in the Republican party, which had always been an alien entity, so far as we were concerned. But with every passing year our numbers grew.

The traditional Republican party that was so alien to us was a party of the business community and of smaller-town America. It ... was still campaigning against the New Deal; and, in foreign policy, its inclination was almost always isolationist.¹⁴

As the Southeast Asian conflict intensified, neocons joined others in recoiling at the thought of a Communist victory and may indeed have been repulsed by the outrageous antics of America's anti-war leftists. But labeling CFR member George McGovern an "isolationist" merely for opposing the war in Vietnam was an enormous stretch. Nevertheless, most anti-Communist conservatives of that era, unaware of the total neoconservative package and nauseated by McGovern and the leftists in his entourage, giddily welcomed the neocons with open arms. They didn't realize that they were also condoning socialism at home, internationalism at the expense of national sovereignty, and scorn for those who believe that America should tend to its own business, not that of other nations.

Irving Kristol later credited neoconservatism for helping to "modernize" the Republican Party, by which he meant tearing it away from its Old-Right roots. He heaped praise on President

Reagan for being “the first Republican president to pay tribute to Franklin D. Roosevelt.” Claiming that the conservative movement “had little relevance” during the 1960s and 1970s, he bragged in his 1995 book:

And yet, from the ashes of the Goldwater and Nixon debacles there arose Ronald Reagan, to become a two-term President only a few years later....

What happened, I would say, were two things. First in time, though certainly not in order of political significance, was the emergence of an intellectual trend that later came to be called “neoconservatism.”¹⁵

In a way, evidence that neoconservative thinking had gained influence over the Republican Party surfaced when Ronald Reagan could praise Franklin D. Roosevelt as a great American president — praise echoed by Newt Gingrich a dozen years later when it was no longer so surprising. The message was clear: The Republican Party was no longer interested in destroying the welfare state, but intended rather to reconstruct it along more socialistic and interventionist lines. Columnist Samuel Francis, a fierce foe of neoconservatism, observed:

As the Cold War wound down, “exporting democracy” and opposing “isolationism” became the major neoconservative foreign policy goals, reflected in their almost universal support for NAFTA, the World Trade Organization, and United Nations “peacekeeping” missions.¹⁶

Buckley and *National Review* supported these neoconservative goals. For instance, in his column for September 15, 1993, he claimed that “the North American Free Trade Agreement is in principle a very good thing, economically and politically.”¹⁷ While stumping for NAFTA, Buckley was in lock-step with his close friend Henry Kissinger who, as the date of the vote in Congress approached, would write that NAFTA “will represent the most creative step toward a new world order taken by any group of countries since the end of the Cold War.”¹⁸

National Review also turned to other writers to promote NAFTA. Examples include a September 20, 1993 article by former Minnesota Republican congressman Vin Weber and one by ABC News White House correspondent Brit Hume in its November 15, 1993 issue. If Buckley and *National Review* foresaw nothing but good in NAFTA, no “conservative” was to believe otherwise.

When it came to the sovereignty-compromising GATT/World Trade Organization sellout, a Buckley column noted that Newt Gingrich’s support was critical and that it was “good that Mr. Gingrich is captain of the Republican team on this question.”¹⁹ Buckley’s boost had been preceded by a more cautious promotion of the measure in *National Review* by Cornell University professor Jeremy Rabkin.²⁰ Buckley later defended the WTO’s levying of a fine on the U.S. because of our oil import policy, claiming that it was not a case of an improper foreign meddling in American law.²¹

Regarding UN-organized peacekeeping missions, *National Review* for March 29, 1993 published

CFR member Peter W. Rodman's conclusion that "the United States and the international community had ... a duty" to intervene with military force in cases of "humanitarian crisis."²² Such a "duty," it should be needless to say, is nowhere mentioned or implied in the U.S. Constitution.

Prior to the decision of the "international community" to utilize NATO forces (mostly American) for peacekeeping purposes, *National Review* had prepped its readers to applaud the move. In February 1994, *National Review* favored the alliance with a glowing tribute.²³ Its author, CFR member Adrian Karatnycky, neglected to point out that NATO derived its existence from the United Nations, is required by its Charter to report to the United Nations, and does the work of the United Nations. When NATO was proposed in 1949, Secretary of State Dean Acheson (CFR) urged senators to vote for it because "it is an essential measure for strengthening the United Nations."²⁴ NATO was sold to the American people as an alliance to defend against possible Soviet advances to the West. When the Soviet Union dissolved in 1990, and there were no longer any such threats from the USSR, NATO should also have been dissolved. It has instead, with Buckley's support, become the UN's military arm — and a key component of the drive for world government.

CFR member and future *Foreign Affairs* managing editor Fareed Zakaria wrote in the December 11, 1995 *National Review* that the U.S. had a responsibility to use force to maintain "international stability."²⁵ That was a far cry from a constitutional basis for employing military force, but it dovetailed nicely with the neocon agenda.

In January 1993, Samuel Francis pin-pointed Buckley's critical role in the neocon theft of the conservative label:

... the whole concept of "conservatism" in America is virtually devoid of meaning, in large part because conservatives made the seminal error of allowing dilettantes like Mr. Buckley to define it for them in the first place.²⁶

Francis always noted the absence of any neocon reliance on the U.S. Constitution, a deficiency also evident throughout Buckley's long career. In 1995 he noted:

Almost none of the neo-conservatives showed any interest in American constitutionalism or federalist and states' rights issues, and arguments based on constitutionalism were muted in favor of the "empirical" arguments drawn from disciplines like sociology and political science in which neo-conservative academics tended to concentrate.²⁷

Buckley Supports Gingrich's Neocon Agenda

When the 1994 elections produced stunning Republican congressional victories, Kristol considered them neocon triumphs and joyously noted that the gains "ratified this change, just as the person of Newt Gingrich exemplified it." In tandem with the neoconservatives, Buckley chimed in with a defense of the Gingrich-led Republican program. In a May 1996 column describing the House Speaker as "greatly gifted," Buckley concluded that Gingrich "will be

around for a good while, and that is welcome news.”

The Gingrich-led “revolution” applauded by Kristol and Buckley saw the Republican Party accept America’s change of course: away from limited government under the Constitution; away from non-intervention in the world’s conflicts; toward more New Deal socialism and globocop militarism. It amounted to a benchmark neocon triumph. Kristol’s reference to Newt Gingrich as the exemplar of the transformation may surprise those who believe that the former Speaker of the House was a genuine conservative. They forget that Gingrich backed federal aid to education, land controls, foreign aid, NAFTA, GATT, the Mexican bailout, the Export-Import Bank and almost every conceivable assault on U.S. sovereignty. Bill Buckley had also supported such measures. While feigning opposition to the reconstruction of the Republican Party, Buckley had actually greatly assisted in bringing about the change.

Never abandoning their underlying desire for New Deal-style big government, neoconservatives have quietly and persistently promoted key elements of socialism. Their favorite tactic has them opposing only the *excesses* of various welfare-state programs. As Irving Kristol put it, they desire to “keep increases in government spending below the historical rate of growth of the economy.”²⁸ In effect, they confer legitimacy on a lengthening list of socialistic enterprises. Buckley also practices this deceptive strategy.

Surveying the damage done by these socialists and internationalists posing as conservatives, Llewellyn Rockwell, president of the Ludwig von Mises Institute, has written that neocons “believe in the domineering presidency, the welfare state, and mass democracy, and they seek to enact these ideas worldwide through U.S. military intervention.” He pointed out that these fundamental neocon positions are the source of “their social and political power,” and added, “in its service they have sought, all too successfully, to co-opt the Right.”²⁹

Additional Testimony About Neoconservatism

In *The Essential Neoconservative Reader*, editor Mark Gerson, a proud and unabashed neocon, jubilantly observed: “The neoconservatives have so changed conservatism that what we now identify as conservatism is largely what was once neoconservatism. And in so doing, they have defined the way that vast numbers of Americans view their economy, their polity, and their society.”³⁰ Rather than leading the resistance to this transformation, Buckley has worked to bring it about.*

In addition to Norman Podhoretz and Irving Kristol, prominent neoconservatives Midge Decter, Ben Wattenberg, Robert Bartley, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Richard Perle, and Elliott Abrams share membership in the CFR with Buckley. Some have contributed articles to *National Review*.

Confirmation of much that we have presented about the neoconservative movement can be found in John Ehrman’s *The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs*,³¹ reviewed in the July/August 1995 issue of the CFR’s *Foreign Affairs*. The reviewer, Buckley’s liberal biographer John Judis, clearly recognized the Trotskyite roots of the major neoconservative leaders. He wrote:

The other important influence on neoconservatives was the legacy of Trotskyism — a point that other historians and journalists have made about neoconservatism but that eludes Ehrman. Many of the founders of neoconservatism including *The Public Interest* founder Irving Kristol and coeditor Nathan Glazer, Sidney Hook, and Albert Wohlstetter, were either members of or close to the Trotskyist left in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Younger neoconservatives, including Penn Kemble, Joshua Muravchik, and Carl Gershman, came through the Socialist Party at a time when former Trotskyite Max Schachtman was still a commanding figure.

What both the older and younger neoconservatives absorbed from their socialist past was an idealistic concept of internationalism. Trotskyists believed that Stalin, in trying to build socialism in one country rather than through world revolution, had created a degenerate workers' state instead of a genuine dictatorship of the proletariat. In the framework of international communism, the Trotskyists were rabid internationalists rather than realists and nationalists.³²

The current followers of Trotskyite socialism and internationalism are the neoconservatives. Over the years, through his syndicated column in some 350 newspapers, Public Broadcasting System television programs, well-attended lectures, numerous books, and *National Review* magazine, Buckley has not only watered down conservatism but has deftly promoted neoconservative views while hammering away at virtually anyone who objected. As a result, he has become the darling of neoconservatives — true conservatism's deadly enemies.

Buckley Expels Flynn

Soon after launching *National Review* in 1956, Buckley contacted Old Right luminary John T. Flynn, a well-known leader of the anti-socialist and noninterventionist brand of conservatism. He asked Flynn to write a review of liberal Arthur Larson's *A Republican Looks at His Party*. What happened next confirms that Buckley had not abandoned his 1952 call for "a totalitarian bureaucracy within our shores [and] the attendant centralization of power in Washington." Justin Raimondo, in his book *Reclaiming the American Right*, compiled the details about this revealing incident from old transcripts of Flynn's radio broadcasts:

But when Flynn submitted a piece attacking militarism as "a job-making boondoggle," and denouncing Eisenhower for prolonging the cold war, Buckley rejected the article. He sent \$100 along with the rejection letter, stating that Flynn failed to appreciate the "objective threat of the Soviet Union," which, he maintained, poses "a threat to the freedom of each and every one of us." Flynn returned the \$100, and in a note to Buckley said that he was "greatly obliged" to him for "the little lecture."³³

The treatment Buckley accorded John T. Flynn was a precursor to the ostracism he has dished out to other conservative stalwarts. Flynn had been a leading spokesman for the noninterventionist America First movement that had appealed to Buckley's father. Those hearty pre-Pearl Harbor Americans, supported by 90 percent of their fellow citizens according to polls taken at the time, sought unsuccessfully to keep this nation out of World War II.

In his 1944 book *As We Go Marching*,³⁴ Flynn had insisted that the nation was being prepared

for the emergence of gigantic bureaucracy, government takeover of business, welfare schemes, deficit spending, and meddling internationalism. And it was war or the threat of war, he claimed, that would be cited as justification for all of it. He labeled the coming transformation fascism. Had the term neoconservative been in use at the time, he could have applied it. Summing up what he saw looming on the horizon, he wrote:

Fascism will come at the hands of perfectly authentic Americans ... who are convinced that the present economic system is washed up ... and who wish to commit this country to the rule of the bureaucratic state; interfering in the affairs of the states and the cities; taking part in the management of industry and finance and agriculture; assuming the role of a great national banker and investor, borrowing billions every year and spending them on all sorts of projects through which a government can paralyze opposition and command public support; marshaling great armies and navies at crushing costs to support the industry of war and preparation for war which will become our greatest industry; and adding to all this the most romantic adventures in global planning, regeneration, and domination, all to be done under the authority of a powerfully centralized government in which the executive will hold in effect all the powers, with Congress reduced to the role of a debating society.³⁵

Who today can doubt that Flynn had correctly forecast the future? Having manipulated the U.S. into World War II, the forces favoring big government and an interventionist foreign policy further manipulated the aftermath of the war that transformed Flynn's predictions into reality.

Flynn didn't deny that Communism was America's enemy. But he believed that our leaders should have ceased their propaganda about a Cold War, gone about the nation's business, and watched from afar as the Communist world, deprived of outside help, collapsed from within. He protested the policy of opposing a foreign enemy by adopting its statist philosophy, which he claimed was occurring. Justin Raimondo summarized Flynn's 1944 position: "America's war against fascism may be won on the battlefield — and lost on the home front."³⁶

In 1950, Flynn denounced U.S. entry into the undeclared Korean War. He considered the unconstitutional deployment of U.S. forces in combat without a congressional declaration of war another grand excuse to build executive power and hasten America's descent into socialism and internationalism. He penetratingly pointed out that the same State Department that was eager to have our forces fight against a Communist insurgence in an undeclared war in Korea had, only one year earlier, moved heaven and earth to deliver China to Mao Tse-tung's Communist tyranny.³⁷ John T. Flynn was among the last of the nationally known journalists to identify with and support conservative Republican Senator Robert Taft of Ohio. He also led the unsuccessful campaign to impede the post-World War II takeover of the Republican Party by Establishment liberals and internationalists. Gradually, those who still held to the uncompromising anti-interventionist stands advocated by both Flynn and Buckley's father found themselves read out of the revamped conservative movement by none other than the younger Buckley himself. Flynn predicted dire consequences ahead for America in his 1953 book, *The Road Ahead: America's Creeping Revolution*.³⁸

Were wars and the fear of Communism actually being utilized to pressure the American people

into supporting domestic socialism and world government? Yes, indeed. Benjamin Schwarz, a Senior Fellow at the internationalist World Policy Institute, addressed this issue in the June 1996 *Atlantic Monthly*:

In “scaring hell out of the American people,” as Senator Arthur Vandenberg said in 1947, the U.S.-Soviet rivalry helped to secure domestic support for Washington’s ambition to create a U.S.-dominated world order. That same year one of Vandenberg’s colleagues, the fervently anti-Communist Senator Robert Taft, expressed a strong suspicion that the supposed dangers to the nation from the USSR failed to explain America’s new foreign policy. He complained that he was “more than a bit tired of having the Russian menace invoked as a reason for doing any — and every — thing that might or might not be desirable or necessary on its own merits.” The former Secretary of State Dean Acheson put things in proper perspective: describing how Washington overcame domestic opposition to its internationalist policies in 1950, he recalled in 1954 that at that critical moment the crisis in Korea “came along and saved us.”³⁹

Imagine! One year after the shooting in Korea had ended, Acheson, one of the key architects of America’s no-win policy, claimed that the internationalism he and his companions were plotting could not have been “saved” had the U.S. not entered the war. That conflict, of course, cost 55,000 American dead, 200,000 wounded, and thousands of POWs/MIAs left behind. Acheson’s admission, in this author’s opinion, earns him the posthumous designation of “traitor.”^{**}

Buckley focused on the *external* communist threat to justify federal encroachment on American sovereignty and personal freedom. He labored to lead American conservatives away from noninterventionism and toward a new interventionist standard not found in the Constitution. He created an undefined and increasingly left-leaning and internationalist departure from conservatism. And, for all who dared to suggest that a conspiracy was working for such changes, or who challenged his “conservative” leadership, Buckley sought feverishly to undermine and isolate them.

As noted previously, most leading neoconservatives belong to the Council on Foreign Relations, as does Buckley, who was singing the neoconservative song long before the term became popularized. Yet, he has been portrayed as the nation’s premier conservative. We will now look more closely at how this curious turn of events came about.

*A steady diet of undisguised neocon views can be found in Norman Podhoretz’s magazine *Commentary* and Irving Kristol’s *The National Interest*. For a watering down of traditional conservative principles and a diet of neocon views cloaked in conservative rhetoric, turn to Buckley’s *National Review* and, more recently, to *The Weekly Standard*, published and edited by William Kristol, Irving’s son.

**Secretary of State Acheson, of course, was a member of the CFR.

Chapter Three — The Formative Influences

*[Willmoore Kendall] became a follower of Leon Trotsky, the Soviet Socialist exile who had broken with Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin.*¹
— John Judis

William Frank Buckley, Jr., the sixth of 10 children, was born on November 24, 1925. Because the family had two older boys (John and James), it seemed odd to many that the senior Buckley waited until the birth of his third son before passing on his name. Years later, in *The Buckleys: A Family Examined*, Charles Lam Markmann revealed that this was a deliberate decision; it was “his namesake whom the senior Buckley sought to groom for a public career.”²

Reared in southern Texas in the late 19th century, William Sr. left home in 1910 to build a law practice with his brothers south of the border. After oil was discovered in Mexico, Will Buckley invested in oil and real estate, soon accumulating a small fortune.

In the wake of Mexico’s accelerating political unrest, Buckley’s expertise regarding the turmoil was sought by both the Mexican government and the Woodrow Wilson administration. He married Aloise Steiner of New Orleans in 1917. By 1921, his unsuccessful effort to organize a coup to unseat the Marxist government of Alvaro Obregon resulted in his expulsion from Mexico and the confiscation of much of his fortune. Having learned a great deal about making money in the oil business, however, he was soon on the road to riches in the United States.

Within a year after leaving Mexico, the Buckleys settled in the town of Sharon in northwest Connecticut, moving into a mansion called “Great Elm.” The year 1925 marked the arrival of young Billy, as Bill Jr. was affectionately nicknamed by his parents. While Sharon was his home, Billy spent many of his formative years in Venezuela or in Europe where family interests took him.

Disdainful of most educational institutions, the senior Buckley hired private tutors, music teachers, Mexican nannies, and French and British governesses to assure that his children would become well-versed in a variety of subjects and fluent in several languages. Billy and his siblings were also steeped in the Catholic faith to which the Buckleys were strongly committed.

Of all the Buckley children, Billy pleased his father most by becoming proficient in languages, music, and oratory, and especially by echoing the family patriarch’s political views. He regularly competed with his brothers and sisters for their father’s favor. In early 1938, Billy and three siblings were sent off to England for schooling, and they didn’t return to the United States until 1940 when the European war threatened the British Isles.

His experiences in Mexico, his distaste for U.S. participation in World War I, and a strong belief in America’s constitutional system made the elder Buckley an ardent noninterventionist and Old Guard Republican. With the family reunited in Sharon by 1940, the Buckley children followed in their father’s political footsteps and began publishing a small, politically oriented local newspaper. It served as a voice for the noninterventionist America First movement.

Many readers, most of whom were Eastern-style liberals, reacted with horror at what they

considered to be the “isolationism” of the Buckley clan. But such opposition only spurred the Buckley children to more impassioned defense of their deeply held convictions. Billy, especially, took great delight in the venture. After Pearl Harbor and America’s entry into the war, however, the Buckylys — like all patriotic noninterventionists — suppressed their anti-war sentiments.

During 1940–1943, young Bill was sent to Millbrook Academy in Dutchess County, New York, 15 miles from Sharon. He promptly developed a reputation for combativeness about nearly everything. So contentious was young Bill that his father once instructed him in a letter “to be more moderate in the expression of your views” in order to “give as little offense as possible to your friends.”³ Those views continued to include intense noninterventionism, firm opposition to Soviet Communism, and strong condemnation of the Communists who had ravaged Spain and targeted that country’s Catholic clergy for persecution during the recently concluded Spanish Civil War.

Bill completed his studies at Millbrook at age 17, then spent a year in Mexico perfecting his Spanish before entering the Army in 1944. After basic training, he was accepted for Officer Candidate School at Georgia’s Fort Benning in January 1945, winning his commission 18 weeks later. According to John Judis, “Bill’s commanding officers didn’t think that he took his training as seriously as the other men, some of whom had already served in combat. Once, when leading a group of men in a training exercise, Bill stopped in order to pick a flower, suspending maneuvers for ten seconds and costing his group a victory in the competition.”⁴

Senior officers at Fort Benning doubted Bill’s ability to lead men in battle. The nation was at war and new Army lieutenants were being sent immediately to the front. Military officials knew that good leadership qualities and combat-ready proficiency often meant the difference between life and death for both the new officers and the men under their command. Ultimately, a special board was convened to rule on Bill’s fitness for a commission. He survived a grueling hearing and received his lieutenant’s bars in the spring of 1945.

When the European phase of World War II ended in May 1945, and the need for combat-qualified field lieutenants receded, Bill was assigned duty as an infantry training officer in Georgia for a brief period. Then his fluency in Spanish earned him a transfer to an army post in San Antonio, Texas. He arrived at the new assignment on August 14th, the day the Japanese surrendered. His brief military career winding down, Bill left the Army early in 1946 and enrolled that September in Yale University.

Yale and Willmoore Kendall

As an early step on his path to personal fame, he joined the staff of the *Yale Daily News*, performing the customary minor assignments given to underclassmen. Working his way up the ladder, he eventually became class chairman of the newspaper. It is no understatement to say that Buckley’s editorials polarized the campus and were read more diligently than those of his predecessors.

Buckley also excelled on the debate team. It was here that he formed a close friendship with L. Brent Bozell, an equally talented debater and orator who later married Patricia Buckley and became Bill’s brother-in-law. A Nebraskan, Bozell had entered Yale as a member of the World

Federalists, but he soon parted company with the world-government crowd and began championing Buckley-style political views. The two represented Yale in numerous debate tournaments, and they usually won.

Among Bill's teachers, none had a more profound effect on him than Professor Willmoore Kendall, who had arrived at Yale in the fall of 1947 after serving with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), renamed the Central Intelligence Agency in 1947. (See Chapter 5 for further details about these agencies and Kendall's involvement.)

Though nearly a dozen years apart in age, the two developed a profoundly close relationship. Markmann noted that the teacher/student relationship changed in later years, with Buckley becoming the "guru" and Kendall the student. Noting the rift that developed between the two prior to Kendall's death in 1967, Markmann wrote in 1973, "Buckley still speaks of him with a warmth of loyalty and admiration that cannot be discounted, and his influence on Buckley's style — intellectual and rhetorical, especially in its more baroque obscurities — is unmistakable."⁵

The son of an Oklahoma preacher, Kendall had finished college at age 18 in 1932. He then enrolled at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. While in England, Kendall — who would later become a founding editor of *National Review* — became a Trotskyite socialist. John Judis explained that "he studied with philosopher R.G. Collingwood and became a follower of Leon Trotsky, the Soviet Socialist exile who had broken with Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin."⁶ When Kendall returned to the U.S. from England he was an ardent devotee of the brand of socialism/Communism advocated by Trotsky.

Continuing his schooling at the University of Illinois, Kendall's Ph.D. dissertation called for rule by the majority at the expense of individual rights, including those carefully delineated in the U.S. Bill of Rights. He dubbed his concept "absolute majoritarianism." It recommended "public orthodoxy" in virtually everything. All of this clashed dramatically with the fundamentals undergirding a free country. Buckley biographer Judis commented on Kendall's majoritarian views:

In economics and politics, Kendall was an opponent of laissez-faire philosophies. A follower of John Maynard Keynes, he didn't believe that firms, if left to compete freely, would automatically create prosperity.... In the late thirties, Kendall's absolute majoritarianism led him to back Roosevelt in his battle with the Supreme Court.... When Buckley first met him, Kendall still described himself as "an old-fashioned majority-rule Democrat."⁷

Though the term "neoconservative" had not yet been coined, Kendall was an early devotee of its major elements. Still a Marxist, he passionately hated Stalin-style Communism and supported legislation designed to outlaw the U.S. Communist Party. Judis noted that "like Buckley, he considered himself at the core to be a counterrevolutionary rather than a conservative." Markmann recalls that Buckley referred to Kendall as having come to Yale "as somebody who had been a liberal, or, as you prefer, a man of the Left."⁸

Buckley would later claim to have led Kendall away from his Communist/socialist past, excusing

the leftist leanings of his close friend by claiming: “He was a conservative all right, but ... he’d have been a revolutionist if that had been required in order to be socially disruptive.”⁹

Markmann related a rather unflattering and revealing view of Kendall’s conservatism given by Professor Russell Kirk, another member of the initial team at *National Review*. Kirk thought that Kendall had associated with Buckley because he “loved to quarrel with people and essentially to take the losing side: since the conservatives tended to be the losing side, he determined to join them.”¹⁰

Markmann concluded that during his years at *National Review*, Kendall’s “complex nature burgeoned there until his inability to agree long with almost anyone and the zest of his pogroms against various other chieftains of conservatism sent him once more into the wilderness.”¹¹ Kendall eventually left the magazine’s headquarters, but he continued to submit articles and allow his name to remain for a time on *National Review*’s masthead.

Returning to full-time teaching, the former Buckley intimate found employment at Stanford University, then at Los Angeles College, and finally at the University of Dallas. He completed the break from *National Review* in 1963. Following his death, Buckley’s obituary of his former associate in the magazine completely overlooked Kendall’s Trotskyite, OSS, and CIA connections.

In Chapter 5, we describe how, at Kendall’s urging, Buckley entered the CIA after graduating from Yale. It was then that Kendall introduced Buckley to James Burnham, who, after Buckley himself, would become the most important figure at *National Review* during the magazine’s formative years. Like Kendall, Burnham had studied at Oxford and returned to America a Trotskyite. And he, too, had taken his Trotskyite training into OSS, the CIA — and *National Review*. (See Chapter 6 for a glimpse into the background of James Burnham.)

Yale’s Skull & Bones Society

Any review of Buckley’s formative years must include his membership in Yale’s Skull & Bones Society. For well over a century, this eerie campus organization has served as a training ground for entry into the Establishment. By becoming Bonesmen, the select few gained high-level contacts and connections leading to prestigious jobs, including top government posts.

Some of the prominent Skull & Bones members, past and present, include Averell Harriman, Henry Stimson, and Robert Lovett of the Franklin Roosevelt administration; Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, who was selected by fellow Bonesman George Bush to administer the then-vice president’s oath of office in 1981; McGeorge Bundy and Winston Lord of more recent administrations; Senators John Kerry (D-Mass.) and the late John Chafee (R-R.I.); former Oklahoma Senator David Boren; *Time* magazine founder Henry Luce; William F. Buckley, Jr., and his son, Christopher.¹²

While some of the inner activities of this prestigious, secretive society have been bared, a great deal more remains hidden. From various sources, we know that each spring, the 15 seniors already enrolled in Skull & Bones (the oldest, richest, and most influential of Yale’s seven secret societies) select 15 juniors for admission and direct them to “The Tomb,” the name given to the

group's ancient stone building on High Street in the middle of Yale's New Haven campus. That night, according to informed sources, an initiation ritual requires each new member to recount details of his life for the benefit of fellow Bonesmen. Britain's *The Economist* explains: "Membership means adopting a secret name, dining at the club's 'tomb' and taking part in such rituals as recounting one's autobiography and — reputedly — sexual history while lying naked in a coffin."¹³

In his 1986 book, *America's Secret Establishment: An Introduction to the Order of Skull & Bones*, former Hoover Institution Research Fellow Antony Sutton listed four steps in the group's initiation ceremony: "... the initiate has to lie naked in a sarcophagus ... [and] tell the 'secrets' of his sex life to fellow initiates. Patriarchs dressed as skeletons and acting as wild-eyed lunatics howl and screech at new initiates [who] are required to wrestle naked in a mud pile."¹⁴

Bonesmen must solemnly swear to refrain from divulging anything that goes on behind "The Tomb's" imposing walls. Ask one of these elitists about the group or its rituals and you'll find him honoring a pledge that requires him, at the mere mention of Skull & Bones, to leave the room.

In 1991, a Connecticut journalist gained access to a portion of the inner sanctum courtesy of a construction worker. As reported in the *Danbury (Conn.) News-Times* for October 6, 1991, the amiable workman simply brought the inquiring individual, with whom he had enjoyed an outdoor lunch, inside the building when he returned to work. The *News-Times* reproduced an eerie photo taken during this unauthorized penetration. Accompanying text described "a weathered bas-relief of two skeletons facing [one] another. The ghouls' fingers are pressed to their lips. They look as though they're swearing each other to secrecy about the exclusive club."

Fame magazine reported in 1989 that four women were brought inside "the Tomb" by a dissident member. Details about a room filled with artifacts from Hitler's Third Reich remained embedded in their memories. One told Yale graduate Steven M.L. Aronson, author of the *Fame* article:

The most shocking thing — and I say this because I do think it's sort of important — I mean, President [George H.W.] Bush does belong to Skull and Bones, everyone knows that — there is, like, a little Nazi shrine inside. One room on the second floor has a bunch of swastikas, kind of an SS macho Nazi iconography. Somebody should ask President Bush about the swastikas in there. I mean, I don't think he'll say they're *not* there. I think he'll say, "Oh, it wasn't a big deal, it was just a little thing in a little room," which I don't think is true and which I wouldn't find terribly reassuring anyway. But I don't think he'd deny it because it is true. I mean, I think the Nazi stuff was no more serious than all the bones that were around, but I still find it a little disconcerting.¹⁵

George H.W. Bush's son, George W. Bush, our nation's 43rd president, is also a Bonesman. Traditionally, many of Yale's most talented and brightest underclassmen have hoped to be tapped by Bones because special privileges follow. Ron Rosenbaum, another Yale graduate, related in "The Last Secrets of Skull and Bones," an article published by *Esquire* magazine in

1977, that Bonesmen have “the contacts and connections” for “a guaranteed job with one of the Bones-dominated investment banks or law firms.” Drawing on information he’d gathered about the group’s initiation ceremony, Rosenbaum wrote:

... the Bones initiation ritual of 1940 went like this: “New man placed in coffin — carried into central part of building. New man chanted over and ‘reborn’ into society. Removed from coffin and given robes with symbols on it [sic]. A bone with his name on it is tossed into bone heap at start of every meeting. Initiates plunged naked into mud pile.”¹⁶

Early in 1992, while campaigning in New Hampshire, Republican presidential aspirant Patrick Buchanan made reference to “George Bush’s Skull and Bones foreign policy.” That remark immediately stimulated Bonesman Bill Buckley to pen a column excoriating Buchanan and defending the group.¹⁷ Its message could be summed up as, “No one should give a hoot if George Bush is a member of Skull & Bones.”

Readers of the Buckley column learned little about Skull & Bones other than that the “senior society at Yale” exists, and that “its proceedings are conducted in secret.” Buckley declined to address the repeated allegations about its sexual emphasis, Nazi paraphernalia, and weird rituals. The column admitted nothing while excusing everything.

Toward the end of his senior year (1950), Buckley was offered, then denied, the opportunity to speak during Alumni Day by Yale secretary Charles Lohmann and Yale president Charles Seymour. He beefed up the planned speech and had it published as his celebrated book, *God and Man at Yale*. It catapulted him to national fame. (See Chapter 4.) Yet both Lohmann and Seymour were Bonesmen. One wonders if the two influential members of this branch of the powerful elite were, by barring Buckley’s Alumni Day address, cleverly setting the stage for one of their own to become an important Establishment asset.

In any case, Skull & Bones does exist and, as long as it remains secret and its members continue to secure strategically important posts, suspicions about its influence will remain. If a few playful college students formed a club in order to cavort foolishly behind closed doors, it would largely be their business. But when high officials of this nation and others holding influential positions come from a secret organization replete with questionable and even sinister rituals, it’s *every* American’s business.

After graduating from Yale, Buckley soon became a nationally known author with both *God and Man at Yale* and *McCarthy and His Enemies* (coauthored with brother-in-law L. Brent Bozell). Let us now take a look at the contents of and the circumstances surrounding publication of the two volumes that launched Buckley’s rise to national prominence.

Chapter Four — Two Books Propel Buckley to Prominence

... *the publication of God and Man at Yale had made him an overnight national notable.*¹
— Charles Lam Markmann

After being chosen by his peers for the post of chairman of the *Yale Daily News*, Bill Buckley had a prestigious forum for his views. The Buckley-led team assumed control of the newspaper in the middle of his junior year (February 1949), and he wasted no time in using his columns to attack godless materialism. He also blasted Communism and Communists while vigorously defending the Smith Act, which outlawed Communism and gave the government power to prosecute leaders of the Communist Party USA.* In one editorial, he targeted the hypocrisy of liberals who were quick to protest the appearance in America of Nazi-approved musicians while remaining silent about the arrival of those from the Soviet Union.

Attracting immediate campus-wide attention, Buckley created a sensation when he began aiming his editorial guns at the pronouncements of anthropology professor Raymond Kennedy. The veteran instructor's popular sociology course for freshmen and sophomores was consistently over-subscribed. Buckley himself never formally enrolled, but he attended as a not-for-credit observer. After listening to Kennedy's discourses, he wrote that the most popular professor at Yale "has made a cult of anti-religion," was guilty of "undermining religion through bawdy and slap-stick humor," and had committed an "injustice" to Yale and its students.²

The furor created by that editorial led to a huge outpouring of letters in response. Students, department heads, and faculty members defended Kennedy, who also submitted his own letter justifying his views. The controversy sparked a mini-revolt among the newspaper's editors. Undaunted, Buckley continued his personal crusade against Communism and atheism, even employing the word "conspire" when describing what Communist leaders in America were up to.

Buckley also wrote a series of editorials assailing Yale's policy of allowing faculty members academic freedom. He wanted the university not only to champion Christianity, but also to condemn "communism, socialism, collectivism, and government paternalism inimical to the dignity of the individual."

The Buckley year as the newspaper's chairman ended in February 1950. Detractors and fans alike agreed that, under his leadership, the *Yale Daily News* had reached new heights in influence and readership. University President Charles Seymour had even made a practice of enclosing some of Buckley's editorials in response to alumni complaints that the university had become too liberal. Buckley biographer John Judis casually mentioned another Buckley achievement: "He had been the first choice of Skull and Bones, the secret senior honor society, many of whose members went on to high government posts while maintaining their ties with fellow 'Bonesmen.'"³

Only days after Buckley ended his term at the helm of the paper, college secretary Charles Lohmann requested that he deliver the student speech at the annual Alumni Day celebration set for February 22nd. That invitation triggered a series of events that propelled the young Yale celebrity into the national spotlight.

The purpose of Alumni Day was no secret: Spur older Yalies to donate to their alma mater. The entire day's proceedings were largely a lovefest, but Buckley prepared a speech repeating, even intensifying, the condemnations of Yale that had already appeared in his editorials. It urged the administration to require the faculty to foster Christianity and free enterprise, and to discipline some of the professors he had previously assailed.

A week before the event, Lohmann suggested that Buckley rehearse the speech before a private group. Suspecting that an attempt to dictate its content was in the works, he declined and then, two days in advance, sought publicity by giving a copy of his speech to the Yale News Bureau. It was quickly brought to the attention of Lohmann and Yale President Charles Seymour, both of whom expressed outrage at what they read.

Alumni Director Carlos Stoddard immediately demanded that Buckley revise his text. Buckley agreed to do so, but intended only to make cosmetic changes. He informed Stoddard of his willingness to rework the speech, but threatened that if his changes were not accepted, he would withdraw entirely from the program. President Seymour promptly accepted the withdrawal offer, and Buckley never gave the speech. He opted, instead, to expand its subject matter into what would become *God and Man at Yale*.

Shortly after graduating in June 1950, Buckley married Patricia Taylor, the daughter of a wealthy industrialist from Vancouver, British Columbia. The couple returned to New Haven, where he spent mornings teaching Spanish at Yale, and afternoons and evenings writing *God and Man at Yale*.⁴ He completed the manuscript the following April, and his quest for a publisher ended when Henry Regnery of Chicago accepted it. Following its release in October 1951, Buckley's father paid his son \$16,000 for the rights to the book, and Bill promptly sent \$10,000 to Regnery to launch a publicity drive.

In the Foreword, Buckley wrote:

I propose, simply, to expose what I regard as an extraordinarily irresponsible educational attitude that, under the protective label "academic freedom," has produced one of the most extraordinary incongruities of our time: the institution that derives its moral and financial support from Christian individualists and then addresses itself to the task of persuading the sons of those supporters to be atheistic socialists....

I myself believe that the duel between Christianity and atheism is the most important in the world. I further believe that the struggle between individualism and collectivism is the same struggle reproduced on another level. I believe that if and when the menace of Communism is gone, other vital battles, at present subordinated, will emerge to the foreground.

Of Religion Department Professor T.M. Greene, Buckley wrote: "he replies ambiguously when asked if he believes in the divinity of Christ."

Of a Professor Schroeder, chairman of the Religion Department, he offered: "Mr. Schroeder does not seek to persuade his students to believe in Christ, largely because he has not, as I understand

it, been completely able to persuade himself.”

Buckley noted that another faculty member of the Religion Department, Professor Erwin R. Goodenough, had once described himself as “80 percent atheist and 20 percent agnostic.”

And Buckley claimed that Professor Raymond Kennedy “subverted the faith of numbers of students who, guilelessly, entered the course hoping to learn sociology and left with the impression that faith in God and the scientific approach to human problems are mutually exclusive.”⁵

God and Man at Yale also contained a lengthy chapter crammed with passages from economics textbooks that were required reading. Buckley presented convincing evidence that the books promoted socialism, Keynesianism, and other collectivist nostrums while disparaging individualism, free enterprise, and limited government.

Was Bill Buckley’s main goal the exposure of Yale’s subversion? Was his ardent defense of Christianity and free enterprise the underlying purpose of his book? Or had he written it primarily to draw attention to himself and to establish a national reputation?

Since Yale is a private university, it is, as Buckley noted, within its rights to abandon Christianity and free-market economics. Revealingly, Buckley did not object to the school’s desertion of its traditions; he merely believed that certain criteria should be met while doing so. Near the conclusion of the book he wrote:

I cannot repeat too often that I have cause to object to current Yale policies only if there exists a disparity between the values the alumni of Yale *want* taught, and those currently *being* taught in the field of economics.⁶ [Emphasis in original.]

But alumni do not establish a school’s policies; its leaders do. Buckley claimed that, as long as the alumni supported it, he would accept the faculty’s promotion of socialism, Keynesianism, and collectivism. For that reason, he would also withdraw his complaints about attacks on Christianity. And as for “the duel between Christianity and atheism,” it wouldn’t be an issue at Yale, he concluded, if the alumni didn’t care.

In effect, Buckley didn’t defend either free enterprise or Christianity as they pertain to Yale. He insisted that both should be subject to the whim of alumni opinion. A principled stand would have condemned Yale outright for teaching socialism and atheism, not agree to accept either if a majority of alumni agreed.

In the closing pages of *God and Man at Yale*, Buckley suggested that other Yale graduates ought to consider breaking with the university. He wrote: “But no one not apathetic to the value issues of the day, I repeat, can in good conscience contribute to the ascendancy of ideas he considers destructive of the best in civilization.”⁷ Far from adhering to his own counsel, however, he sent his only child, Christopher, into the grasp of Yale’s atheists, socialists, and academic freethinkers.

Charles Markmann perceptively noted that the major effect of *God and Man at Yale* was to make Buckley “an overnight national notable.” That may have been the book’s main purpose. Reviewers from the right heaped praise on it. It won surprising acclaim in the Establishment’s *Time* and *Life* magazines and in a host of kindred newspapers. The Buckley name rapidly became a household word in conservative and liberal circles alike.

Markmann, who made little effort to conceal his distaste for the entire Buckley family, delighted in pointing to comments given by the book’s leftist critics. For instance, he quoted this blast by McGeorge Bundy in *The Atlantic Monthly*: “As a believer in God, a Republican, and a Yale graduate, I find that the book is dishonest in its use of facts, false in its theory, and a discredit to its author and the writer of its introduction.”⁸ Before preparing his review, Bundy spent a full day with Yale’s new president, A. Whitney Griswold, going over what they thought should be said. Griswold insisted that the book stemmed from Buckley’s “militant Catholicism,” and that it advocated “religious controls that we got rid of a couple of hundred years ago.”⁹

Journalist John Chamberlain, who wrote the book’s introduction and was reproached by Bundy for having done so, had once been a socialist, but had moved steadily away from the left, and in 1956 helped to found *The Freeman* (the monthly publication of the free-market Foundation for Economic Education). A 1925 Yale graduate, Chamberlain did not subscribe to Buckley’s attack on Yale’s treatment of religion, but he was impressed with the book’s condemnation of deficiencies in the university’s economics department.

Former Yale Professor Fred Rodell, some of whose students, according to Markmann, nicknamed him “Fred the Red,” concluded in his review in *The Progressive* that the book was “muddled, dishonest, inaccurate, sloppily argued, and dull.”¹⁰

Attacks from the Left helped skyrocket Buckley to prominence as a new hero of the Right. Had Yale and the litany of leftist reviewers ignored *God and Man at Yale*, (the regular fate of most conservative books), Buckley would have had to figure out some other way to gain attention. **

Markmann, alternately amused and repulsed by Bill Buckley, observed:

God and Man at Yale is especially important because it was, to mix one’s Biblical figures though hardly inappropriately, the star in the east that was to lead the wise men of the Right to the Rose of Sharon, and too because it offered to a broader public than Yale an insight into not only the fanatically sincere beliefs of its author but also the reprehensible means by which he was only too ready to further his high moral cause.¹¹

Sincere beliefs? Moral cause? The book did make Buckley a celebrity amongst conservatives, especially those who espoused Christianity. And it did “lead the wise men of the Right” to him. But the book wasn’t the stirring defense of Christian values that many claimed it to be. *God and Man at Yale* did little harm to the university while generating a remarkable amount of attention for Buckley.

In 1967, the now-famous editor/author announced his candidacy for a post on the Yale

Corporation, which oversees the university. He ran as an opponent of the slate of candidates already selected by a prestigious nominating committee. Again pointing to the university's pronounced "liberal bias," he further condemned the "almost total lack of conservatives on the faculty" and complained that the students "don't have access to the conservative point of view."

To gain ballot position for the 1968 election, he had to secure the signatures of 250 Yale graduates, which he quickly obtained. About 30,000 alumni (the most ever) voted, but Buckley lost to Cyrus R. Vance, who joined the CFR that same year, and served as secretary of state in the Carter administration.

Buckley's campaign against Yale never measured up to the reputation he personally gleaned from the book. Its most notable result was not to change university policy, but to make him a nationally prominent figure.

* * *

McCarthy Gets the Buckley Treatment

*... what he [Senator Joseph McCarthy] did do was set back the anti-communist cause, and he did that by these very reckless exaggerations that he engaged in....*¹²

— William F. Buckley, Jr.

Buckley worked for a brief period in 1952 at *The American Mercury*. When an article he wrote about mushrooming "liberal" dominance over our nation's affairs was rejected by a senior editor, he walked out. John Chamberlain, the respected senior editor of *The Freeman*, immediately sought to hire him. Having written the introduction to *God and Man at Yale*, Chamberlain thought he could attract its increasingly famous author. But Buckley declined the invitation.

In 1952 the nation was becoming increasingly polarized over Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy's anti-Communist efforts. Buckley and brother-in-law Brent Bozell decided to submit an article about McCarthy to *The Freeman*. The project quickly evolved into a book-length manuscript. When Henry Regnery agreed to publish it, Senator McCarthy agreed to supply needed information.

McCarthy and His Enemies finally emerged in 1954.¹³ While it was one of the few books of its time (or any era, for that matter) defending McCarthy's attempts to counter Communist penetration of the U.S. government, it was nevertheless larded with criticism of the senator. Members of McCarthy's staff didn't care for the manuscript, and the senator himself withheld endorsing it. Buckley biographer John Judis claimed that Mrs. Jean McCarthy "became furious at the criticisms of her husband and advised him not to endorse the book."¹⁴ Viewed as a whole, the book may have been a defense of the government's right to bar security risks from government employment and expose their presence in sensitive posts, but it was hardly pro-McCarthy.

Judis reported that one reviewer found "sixty-three critical references to McCarthy in the text."¹⁵ Several other reviewers supported "McCarthyism" but did so in a manner that undoubtedly delighted McCarthy's detractors. For example, Buckley and Bozell claimed to be

firmly in McCarthy's camp even if, as they put it, the senator's methods, "out of ignorance or impetuosity or malice,"¹⁶ had led to action being taken against some government official who had done nothing wrong. But the book cited no such instances. The undocumented criticism amounted to actual condemnation.

Widely held but erroneous historical mythology holds that Senator McCarthy's supposedly "reckless" methods wreaked havoc on a long list of innocent persons. Buckley and Bozell not only failed to contest that view, they bolstered it. The book was, on balance, welcome grist for the anti-McCarthy mill. It clearly was *not* the impassioned defense of McCarthy it has been frequently touted to be.

Was McCarthy guilty of publicly targeting and harming innocent citizens? As early as February 20, 1950 (he had launched the public phase of his anti-Communist effort 11 days earlier during a speech in Wheeling, West Virginia), the Wisconsin senator was badgered by fellow senators to release the names he had been given of suspected Communists in the State Department. His colleagues implored him to do so during an open session on the Senate floor, where everything stated would become public knowledge. He vigorously resisted, stating:

The names are available. The Senators may have them if they care for them. I think however, it would be improper to make the names public until the appropriate Senate committee can meet in executive session and get them. I have approximately 81 cases. I do not claim to have any tremendous investigative agency to get the facts, *but if I were to give all the names involved, it might leave a wrong impression. If we should label one man a Communist when he is not a Communist, I think it would be too bad.*¹⁷
[Emphasis added.]

This concern for the reputation of others was repeated by McCarthy during numerous other confrontations. He never harmed any innocent person.

In 1971, John Birch Society founder Robert Welch began expanding his own critique of Bill Buckley's career. Numerous interruptions and other pressures forced him to put the project aside, and it was never finished.¹⁸ We repeat Welch's comments about *McCarthy and His Enemies* from this book's Foreword:

But the man who invented the expression "damning with faint praise" would have been exhilarated beyond measure on finding, by reading Buckley's book, how beautifully this could be done by a real expert at the job. The book, while pretending to explain and justify McCarthy, is far more industriously concerned with pointing out what were presented as his errors and his faults — which were made more damning because they were supposedly seen through the eyes of a friend who was disposed in McCarthy's favor. This book, in its subtle way, fitted exactly into the general strategy for destroying McCarthy.

McCarthy was striving to rid the government of unquestionably disloyal, highly placed individuals — a task worthy of any elected official. The question should have been then (as now): How else should he have approached the problem? For several years, he used legitimate

authority to expose government employees who were disloyal, and to demand that they be removed. For that, he received unprecedented vilification.

The pivotal crisis for McCarthy came when he aimed his searchlight at top administration officials who were working behind the scenes to block his investigation. These included Attorney General Herbert Brownell, presidential advisor Sherman Adams, Ambassador to the UN Henry Cabot Lodge, and Assistant Secretary of State William P. Rogers. When he sought to question them after discovering their determination to sabotage his work, he was stopped cold by the directive issued by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on May 17, 1954 that established a bogus claim of “executive privilege.”¹⁹ Officials of the executive branch thereafter referred to the Eisenhower order as justification for refusing to cooperate with McCarthy’s investigation.

In *McCarthy and His Enemies*, Buckley and Bozell claimed that McCarthy had committed an egregious blunder in his famous 1950 Wheeling, West Virginia, speech. They even took a swipe at his lengthy June 14, 1951 Senate address that revealed the previously hidden left-wing and pro-Communist record of General George C. Marshall. That speech was later published as a book entitled *America’s Retreat From Victory*.²⁰ It arguably instigated the wrath of McCarthy’s pro-Communist and *anti-anti-Communist* enemies more than anything else the senator ever did. Marshall was a hero of the leftists and internationalists who already had a powerful grip on Washington; and they were not happy when the record of one of their own — especially one so highly placed and highly esteemed — was exposed.

In an appendix to the the original edition of their book, Buckley and Bozell granted that Marshall deserved to be labeled “America’s most disastrous general,” and that his career “did decisively aid the Communist cause.” But they insisted that “Marshall’s loyalty is not to be doubted,” and that “McCarthy deserves to be criticized” for his speech exposing Marshall’s record. They concluded: “McCarthy’s judgment here was bad.”²¹

Again, this was hardly a defense of McCarthy. Nor was it a reasonable response to the solid information he had presented about Marshall. The truth about McCarthy is that the incredibly excessive venom directed at him wasn’t generated by mistakes on his part. It was provoked, instead, by the Establishment’s determination to shield Communist-fronters and actual Communists from exposure by McCarthy’s carefully conducted investigations, and to intimidate into silence others who might seek to expose Communist subversion.

The most important point about the Buckley/Bozell criticism of McCarthy, however, is that it came from the Right and enjoyed a degree of respectability within conservative circles that no leftist could have achieved. McCarthy wasn’t vilified because he was wrong, or mean-spirited, or reckless. He was targeted because he was correct and because he used his powerful position as a committee (and subcommittee) chairman to counter internal subversion. Any authentic defense of McCarthy would have stressed that point.

In 1996, Regnery published a new edition of *McCarthy and His Enemies*. It included not only an unabridged reproduction of the original work, but a new eight-page introduction written by Buckley. This supposed “friend” of McCarthy mentioned without refutation some unnamed person’s wildly erroneous charges that “McCarthy died of drink, cheated on his taxes, lied in his

election campaign, and malingered in the Marines.” Buckley then wrote of the book he had co-authored in 1954:

It does not pretend to describe McCarthy’s active career, either as a senator or as a human being. It is a fragmentary inquiry into those particular issues which, among other things, called McCarthy to the attention [of others]: the issue of security procedures in the government, of McCarthy’s charges, of the tumult that ensued. It is a study (by no means uncritical) of the rhetoric used by McCarthy to make his case.²²

This 1996 update focused on “the McCarthy problem” as if the senator, not Communist subversion in government, was the primary matter to be explored. Buckley wondered “whether McCarthy was morally fit to champion his [own] cause.” He referred to numerous slurs aimed at the senator and allowed them to stand unchallenged. Then, ever anxious to protect his own image with those who still despise the very mention of the Wisconsin senator’s name, Buckley distanced himself from any connection to the grudging bit of pro-McCarthy sentiment contained in the book by attributing it to his deceased coauthor:

... Mr. Bozell even after advertising shortcomings which had not previously been acknowledged by his supporters, registered our support of the Senator.²³

In other words, whatever meager defense of the senator appears in the book was actually Bozell’s doing. Translation: “Blame Bozell! I am now part of the Establishment, and as a condition of remaining in its good graces, I must abandon any hint of support for McCarthy.”

By 1996, however, it had become increasingly easy to document from information gathered both in America and in the former Soviet Union that McCarthy’s charges had been correct. Buckley deferentially made this point by reproducing in his 1996 Introduction the comments of a “Yale scholar” that had originally been published in the May 1995 Yale Alumni magazine. Though unnamed by Buckley, that scholar is Bruce Fellman, who acknowledged that his own research left him:

... with the chilling feeling that in one sense, at least, the notorious Joseph McCarthy was right: Communists marching to a Moscow drummer were abroad in the land and looking for secrets, including atomic secrets, to pass on to their Soviet sponsors.²⁴

Here again, Buckley cited someone else, not himself, in reluctant support of McCarthy. And he could have cited several other testimonials confirming that the senator had been on target. For instance, in his 1989 book *Loyalties*, Carl Bernstein discussed the Communist Party membership of his own parents, and his father’s plea that he delete any reference to it in his book because “You’re going to prove McCarthy right...”²⁵

Similarly, in 1990, University of London researcher Roger Scruton revisited the McCarthy era and stated in a column published by the *Los Angeles Times*: “The fact is, however, that McCarthy was right.”²⁶

Eventually, even the *New York Times* for October 18, 1998 published “Rethinking McCarthyism,

if Not McCarthy,” in which author Ethan Bronner reluctantly admitted that some scholars “have flirted with the rehabilitation of McCarthy himself.”²⁷

Bronner even quoted Buckley as saying, “McCarthy’s excesses have to be taken in context of the other work he did.”²⁸ Once again, specific “excesses” alluded to by Buckley were neither specified nor documented in the article.

During a June 28, 1996 interview on PBS, Buckley was asked by host David Frost if he had any regrets regarding what he had written about McCarthy. He responded at once, “I do,” then explained:

The book that Bozell and I wrote concentrated on the [Senator Millard E.] Tydings hearings, and in our judgment we were correct in saying that he was much more right than wrong up until then, but what he did do was set back the anti-communist cause, and he did that by these very reckless exaggerations that he engaged in after that period.²⁹

Frost didn’t ask Buckley for examples of the alleged “reckless exaggerations,” and Buckley did not volunteer any. But Frost did ask for further affirmation that McCarthy had indeed “damaged the cause of anti-communism,” to which the usually articulate Buckley responded curtly: “Yeah, he did.”³⁰

The real story about Joe McCarthy, not found in either the Buckley/Bozell book or in *National Review*, reveals that:

- McCarthy was correct in claiming that the U.S. government had been penetrated by Communists working to subvert the American system.
- He was extremely careful not to question the reputations of persons whose actions and associations could not be shown to be subversive.
- He was betrayed by Senate colleagues who voted to condemn (not censure) him on two trumped up charges, neither of which had anything to do with the widely publicized claim that he repeatedly engaged in “exaggerated accusations.” One of the charges for which McCarthy was condemned faulted him for failing to respond to a mere “invitation” to appear before a Senate investigating panel — an “invitation” he hadn’t even received until several days *after* he was supposed to appear! The other claimed that he had dishonored the Senate by accusing some of his Senate colleagues of aiding the Communist cause.

No censure or condemnation of a senator had ever before (or has ever since) been voted for alleged “disorderly speech.” Indeed, prior to the McCarthy episode, no such proposal to curtail free speech had ever been offered in the Senate. McCarthy was the target of an unprecedented *ex post facto* move to malign his reputation that violated both Senate rules and the spirit and letter of the First Amendment.

- He was attempting to shift the focus of his inquiry from Communist Party membership to the far more important Establishment arena where highly placed government officials were

protecting Communists and impeding his legitimate investigation.³¹

The 1996 republication of *McCarthy and His Enemies* did little to harm Buckley's reputation among those who recoil at any mention of McCarthy's name. Nor did it address many of the most important issues brought to public attention by the courageous Wisconsin senator. And coauthor Brent Bozell had passed away and was unavailable for further comments of his own.

While never stated explicitly, the underlying thrust of *McCarthy and His Enemies* subtly paralleled Buckley's 1952 performance in *The Commonweal* contending that the threat of Soviet Communism required the creation of a "totalitarian bureaucracy within our shores." It did nothing to close the developing gulf between the emerging Buckley-style neoconservative internationalists and the Old Right noninterventionist stalwarts of the pre-Buckley days, among whom could be found Garet Garrett, H.L. Mencken, Rose Wilder Lane, John T. Flynn, and the *Chicago Tribune's* Robert McCormick. The importance of the casting aside of the Old Right and the emergence of the Buckley Right is clearly and devastatingly detailed by Justin Raimondo in his *Reclaiming the American Right*.

John T. Flynn had written an accurate account of McCarthy's record in his 1954 booklet, *McCarthy: His War on American Reds*.³² But it never received the attention that the Buckley/Bozell work attracted.

Flynn labored diligently to convince the American people that a larger concentration of the enemies of freedom could be found in Washington than in Moscow. He supported McCarthy's efforts, and for good reason: He believed that an individual may have a right to be a Communist, but no Communist had a right "to be employed in the American army, the American State Department, the radar installations, atomic energy laboratories and other government departments." Flynn also championed McCarthy's crusade because of its "value as a battering ram against the statist Liberal Establishment."³³

The Redhunter

Early 1999 saw the emergence of Buckley's *The Redhunter*,³⁴ a novel about Joseph McCarthy. It is as adept at character assassination as any volume ever written about the senator.

In *The Redhunter*, Buckley took liberties that a factual book would never permit. The book recounts historical incidents in which McCarthy played a central role. But Buckley put words in McCarthy's mouth that he never uttered, invented situations that never occurred, and distorted the events that did take place.

The naming of many real-life individuals gives the book an aura of legitimacy when portraying its chief character. But Buckley repeatedly mentions McCarthy's supposed penchant for "booze," whether the senator was conducting business, socializing, or vacationing. McCarthy's medal-winning service with the Marine Corps during World War II is also mentioned — and trivialized. Buckley's depiction of the senator's first run for elective office is rife with distortion and falsehood. The novel even has McCarthy cheating on his taxes, an accusation that had been leveled by the senator's enemies. But Buckley doesn't mention that an official investigation of the matter not only established McCarthy's innocence, but resulted in a sizable refund to the

senator from the IRS. Rather than cheating, he had overpaid!

As might be expected, Buckley's book reinforced the false claim that McCarthy damaged the anti-Communist cause. One character concludes that the senator's supposed recklessness "had as an enduring result the discrediting of anti-communist activity." The McCarthy presented by Buckley isn't the real Joe McCarthy, but rather a creature whose words and deeds add to the carefully created caricature of the man the Establishment and its Communist arm were determined to destroy, and have continued to vilify.

As we have seen, Bill Buckley first gained national attention with *God and Man at Yale*, and later acquired an undeserved reputation as a champion of Joseph McCarthy and a principled opponent of Communism. It was now time to launch *National Review*. But first, let us take a look at his ties to the Central Intelligence Agency.

*The Smith Act made it a crime "to advocate and teach the duty and necessity of overthrowing the Government of the United States by force and violence." Upheld by the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson in 1951, it was later gutted by decisions of the Warren Court.

**It is noteworthy that Yale president Charles Seymour, with whom Buckley tangled as a student, joined the Council on Foreign Relations at its inception in 1921. And A. Whitney Griswold, who succeeded Seymour as Yale president in the midst of the stir caused by Buckley's book, joined the CFR in 1940. They were both certified members of the very Establishment that Buckley himself would eventually join.

Chapter Five — Into the Central Intelligence Agency

*I'm convinced that the whole National Review is a CIA operation.*¹
— Murray N. Rothbard

On June 25, 1950, a few weeks after Buckley graduated from Yale, North Korea invaded South Korea. President Truman promptly committed our nation to its first undeclared war. When Buckley expressed concern about being called back into the Army, Professor Willmoore Kendall urged him to apply for a position with the Central Intelligence Agency in order to avoid further military service. Others were doing it, he said, why not you? Buckley biographer John Judis described the agency during that period as "a popular haven for Yale and other Ivy League graduates" who were anxious to stay out of uniform.²

Buckley took to the idea at once, so Kendall contacted James Burnham, one of his old friends from their days in Trotskyite organizations. (Burnham's background is detailed in Chapter 6.) Burnham was holding down a post at the CIA's Office of Policy Coordination. Buckley met him in Washington and the two began their long association. Through Burnham, he also met E. Howard Hunt, an OSS veteran who had become a CIA covert operative and would later achieve

unwanted fame as a key figure in the Watergate scandal that led to Richard Nixon's downfall.

Burnham explained to Buckley that Hunt was about to be assigned leadership of a CIA operation in Mexico, and that he and Hunt saw in Buckley a highly intelligent American who was fluent in Spanish and had even recently resided in Mexico. The two also applauded Buckley's opposition to "Stalinism," a term revealing Burnham's Trotskyite past. The pair offered Buckley a post within the CIA, which he accepted, though not at once.

Buckley's marriage plans and his intention to complete *God and Man at Yale* stood in the way. But he agreed to join the CIA team once his book was published. By May 1951, all hurdles had been overcome, so he and his bride went off to Washington to begin his CIA career. After three months of training, the Buckleys set up residence in Mexico City. For years, the only information known about his specific assignment during his year with the agency was Hunt's revelation to Judis that both he and Buckley were working "to encourage anti-Communists to challenge Communists for leadership in the trade unions, professional and artistic organizations, and student organizations."³

The CIA: On America's Side?

To understand the significance of Buckley's association with the CIA, it is necessary to take a closer look at the history of both his chief mentor, Willmoore Kendall, and the CIA itself. The professor had served with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the CIA prior to joining the Yale faculty.

Formed in 1947, the CIA is the direct successor to the World War II-era OSS led by Colonel (later General) William Donovan. Donovan made it his policy to fill the OSS with actual Communists. His excuse for doing so was that the Reds he chose were better able to work with Communist groups throughout Europe and Asia and were reputed to be strong opponents of the Nazis and the Japanese.

In his 1972 book, *OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency*, R. Harris Smith reported that Donovan deliberately recruited veterans of the Communist-front Abraham Lincoln Brigade who had fought alongside the Reds during the Spanish Civil War. When confronted by the FBI with evidence that some of his men were Communist Party members, Donovan replied, "I know they're Communists. That's why I hired them."⁴

The harsh reality about these OSS Communists, however, is that they devoted most of their efforts to neutralizing and destroying indigenous anti-Communist organizations and individuals in both Europe and the Far East. OSS personnel did little or nothing to impede the Nazis and Japanese; the thrust of their activity was described by James Burnham himself in his 1954 book, *The Web of Subversion*, as "pro-Soviet, for the defense of the Soviet Union and the world revolution." Burnham added that the "comfort, gold, arms, [and] supplies" provided by the OSS went to pro-Communists in the "resistance, guerrilla and other clandestine groups ... [in] Yugoslavia, in north Italy, in many of the French and German operations, and sporadically within the confused China situation..."⁵

In 1954, Robert Welch (who would found The John Birch Society four years later) wrote his

small book *The Life of John Birch*⁶ detailing the heroic exploits of the missionary who became the Army Air Corps' most important intelligence specialist in China. Welch reported that late in 1944, John Birch, while attached to our nation's 14th Air Force in China, learned that he was slated for transfer to duty with the OSS. Because he had firsthand knowledge of the questionable personnel and activities of the OSS, he balked. His objections were more substantive than the usual complaints about reassignment heard from military personnel. Birch, who was described by fellow officer Captain William Drummond as "absolutely fearless, completely unselfish, never thinking of his personal discomfort or danger," was well-known as an exemplary soldier who would never question an order for personal motives.

General Claire Chennault, who commanded the American forces in China and whose admiration for Birch was boundless, responded to Birch's distaste for the OSS by assigning him the special status of "on loan" to the OSS, rather than formally transferring him to the agency. Welch related in his 1954 book that Birch "stated publicly, and officially, that he had rather work as a private for Chennault than as a colonel for the OSS."⁷

Birch obviously had learned about the OSS from his personal experience with some of the Communists and pro-Communists selected by the agency's leader, William Donovan. Robert Welch stated that during World War II, Donovan "frequently threw the weight of American supplies, arms, money, and prestige behind the Communist terrorist organizations of Europe and Asia." He continued:

Almost typical of the selections by Colonel Donovan of high-level personnel for this agency were the cases of Leonard Mins, Milton Wolff, and George Wuchinick. Mins, a member of a well-known Communist family, himself trained in Moscow and in Communist-operated revolutionary schools elsewhere, a former officer in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade which had been organized by the Soviet secret police to promote Communist terror in the so-called Spanish Civil War — this man was given the job of gathering and analyzing information on the Soviet Union for the OSS. Wolff had been a commanding officer of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade when it had been recruiting gullible young American idealists to fight in the Communist butcher unit without letting them know it was a Soviet police instrument. When some of these young American dupes found out the truth in Spain, and rebelled against the Communist leadership, they were summarily executed. Wolff has since refused to state under oath whether or not he took part in these executions of American boys. But as a member of OSS he served as one the most influential and trusted representatives of the American government in Italy during the war years. Wuchinick, also a graduate of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, found the opportunity as a member of the OSS to work closely with Tito in Yugoslavia and with the Communists in China.⁸

It would be comforting to believe that the Communists employed by the OSS were discharged when the organization became the CIA. But such was not the case according to numerous authorities, including intelligence specialist Frank Capell. Writing in 1971, Capell pointed to the Communist background of such key OSS operatives as Carl Aldo Marzani, Irving Fajans, Robert Talbott Miller III, Philip Keeney, Donald Wheeler, and Jane Foster Zlatovsky. He claimed that when the organization was renamed, "OSS employees went directly into the Central Intelligence

Agency,” which William Buckley joined in 1951.⁹

When Willmoore Kendall served in both spy organizations, he was still a Trotskyite. However, not everyone who served in either or both agencies should automatically be deemed disloyal. Indeed, it is from the testimony of some of these patriotic OSS/CIA veterans that the pro-Communism of these agencies has been documented. Capell wrote:

Lyle Munson, an anti-Communist who served in both the O.S.S. and the C.I.A., has observed that the American public “has logically assumed that the operational arm of the C.I.A. was a hard-hitting and militantly anti-communist organization, since the only avowed enemies of this country are the communists.” This, he tells us, “has proved to be a tragic misconception, the truth being that the operational arm of the C.I.A. has been the haven for more left-of-center dreamers, social climbers, draft-dodgers, do-gooders, one-worlders and anti-anti-communists than any other single department or agency in Washington.”¹⁰

In his 1970 book *Donovan of OSS*, Corey Ford identified Allen Dulles and John McCone as chief Donovan lieutenants.¹¹ Each would later become the director of the CIA. Dulles and McCone were never Communists, but both also became heavyweights within the Council on Foreign Relations. Dulles had served on the CFR’s board of directors since 1921 (the year the Council was founded) and was its president from 1946-1950. Other CFR members who became CIA directors were Richard Helms, James Schlesinger, William E. Colby, George H.W. Bush, and Stansfield Turner in the 1970s; William J. Casey, William H. Webster, and Robert M. Gates in the 1980s; and R. James Woolsey, John M. Deutch, and George J. Tenet in the 1990s. The CIA became a virtual division of the CFR and the world-government-promoting Establishment.

During the early years of the Eisenhower administration, the CIA’s practice of funding domestic leftists and out-and-out subversives came to the attention of Army Major General Arthur Trudeau, our nation’s director of military intelligence. He complained to superiors that the CIA was helping Communists in America instead of opposing them, and suggested that the agency ought to be investigated and cleaned up. For his effort, Trudeau was promptly removed from his post by Eisenhower aides, transferred to the Far East, and effectively silenced.¹²

Undeterred, the CIA continued to foster and fund subversive activities. Senator Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) commented in his April 1967 newsletter that there might indeed be some real anti-Communists functioning within the agency, but “they have worked under ‘no-win’ guidelines.”

Other chroniclers of the CIA’s history have supplied details about the agency’s attempts to assassinate anti-Communist leaders Chiang Kai-shek of Free China and Syngman Rhee of South Korea.¹³ Additional CIA betrayals of anti-Communist efforts include the failed 1956 Hungarian revolt, the fiasco at Cuba’s Bay of Pigs in 1961, and the no-win Contra effort in Nicaragua during the 1980s.¹⁴

In his 1976 book *Kissinger: The Secret Side of the Secretary of State*, Gary Allen wrote:

In the early 1950s, it was CIA agents who broke into the offices of Senator Joseph McCarthy. This came at the time the famous anti-Communist claimed he had been given evidence of pro-Communist infiltration, corruption, and dishonesty within the CIA itself....

It was the CIA, you'll remember, that first declared Fidel Castro was an anti-Communist; that said the East Germans would never try to build the Wall; that promoted Ahmed Ben Bella, Achmed Sukarno, Ho Chi-minh, Gamal Nasser, Patrice Lumumba, and literally scores of other Communist butchers.¹⁵

A CIA policy from its inception was that the way to oppose Communism was to support socialism. That these two "isms" share a common goal of destroying freedom — and differ only in the route to be taken to achieve that goal — is a fact so patently obvious that CIA backing of socialists could never have stemmed from mere stupidity.

We have no reluctance in claiming that, in general, the CIA is not and never has been on the side of a free and independent America. And it was OSS and CIA veteran Willmoore Kendall, with a Trotskyite past, who profoundly influenced William Buckley during his four years at Yale and then steered his pupil into the CIA. Kendall later became a key player in launching Buckley's *National Review* magazine.

Buckley would eventually acknowledge his CIA experience in *On the Firing Line*, a book about his long-running television program. In commentary sandwiched between transcripts of selected interviews, he wrote:

It is true that I was in the CIA. I was a "deep cover" agent, which meant that not even my family (exception: my wife, after she was cleared, which took three months) could know that the reason I was in Mexico had nothing to do with the ostensible reason I was there (to inquire into, with the view of possibly resurrecting, commercial interests once owned by my father). I kept my secret rigorously, never mentioning the CIA to anyone after my resignation and return to the United States in 1952....

People continue to ask me what I did in the CIA, and I continue to say that what I did is a secret. I have volunteered only that (a) the training I received was exactly the training received by my fictional protagonist, Blackford Oakes, in *Saving the Queen*; (b) I didn't kill anybody or do anything exciting; and (c) if I had been captured and tortured, I would not have been able to give out the name of a single fellow CIA operative other than that of my boss, Howard Hunt.¹⁶

In his 1997 book, *Nearer, My God: An Autobiography of Faith*, he again discussed the period in 1950 when, after graduating from Yale, he gave Willmoore Kendall a green light to instigate his CIA employment. After repeating some of his previous revelations, he wrote:

The initial overture from a youngish man whom I met at an off-campus restaurant in New Haven informed me that if I were accepted, the Central Intelligence Agency would

want me as a deep-cover agent, which meant: no observable traces whatever to the CIA.... Three or four times during the fall and winter of 1950 I was interviewed or questioned at odd addresses — “safe houses,” as now designated, usually in New York.... The schooling I had in Washington as a deep-cover trainee I detailed twenty-five years later in my novel *Saving the Queen*. When I left Washington, I didn’t know the real identity of a single one of the dozen men who trained me.¹⁷

All of which strongly suggests that the year Buckley spent in the CIA placed him in an assignment that was neither routine nor small-time. Would working with Mexican students or inquiring about his father’s interests merit “deep cover” status?

The Hunts and Buckleys developed a very close relationship while in Mexico. Shortly after the two began working together, Hunt and his wife Dorothy were granted permission by the Buckleys to designate them in a will as legal guardians of the Hunt children in the event they became orphaned or separated from their parents. Hunt reportedly left the CIA 20 years later, just prior to the Watergate affair. Shortly after details about his role in the famous break-in became known, Dorothy Hunt was killed in a plane crash while carrying \$10,000 in cash on her person.

Had Hunt actually separated from the CIA? Was Dorothy Hunt herself a CIA operative? Questions remain as they do about most “deep cover” CIA operatives. In *Nearer, My God*, Buckley wrote that after he arrived in Mexico, and after he had become friendly with the Hunts, “I was not aware that during those months in Mexico I was under rather formal observation by her.”¹⁸ It would seem that Howard Hunt wasn’t the only member of his family working for the CIA.

Hunt ended up in prison for his role in Watergate, and the Buckleys did indeed become guardians of the Hunt children. At Buckley’s direction, *National Review* launched a drive to assist Hunt financially, and Bill donated personal funds to help his one-time CIA boss and longtime close friend. When Dorothy Hunt died, Buckley surfaced as executor of her will.

For years, Buckley drew on his knowledge of the CIA to write a series of spy novels featuring the character Blackford Oakes, thought by many — and hinted at by Buckley — as a personification of what had been Buckley’s own CIA aspirations. In *Saving the Queen*, Oakes is a World War II veteran and Yale graduate who joins the CIA to avoid serving in the armed forces during the Korean War — exactly paralleling Buckley’s past. But far from Buckley’s own supposedly unexciting career in the CIA, the fictional Oakes becomes a central figure in an international plot involving the Queen of England and the theft of America’s nuclear secrets.

In 1995, Buckley released *The Blackford Oakes Reader*, which profiled 10 characters from his spy novels. In the Introduction, he provided a revealing motive for having created Oakes:

I thought to attempt to write a book in which it was never left in doubt that the CIA, for all the complaints about its performance, is, when all is said and done, not persuasively likened to the KGB.... The point I sought to make, and continued to do so in subsequent novels, is that the CIA, whatever its failures, sought, during those long years in the

struggle for the world, to advance the honorable alternative.¹⁹

Here we have Buckley admitting that he wrote the novels to romanticize the CIA and defend it from charges that it had long been working *against* this nation's best interests, even functioning as the American equivalent of the Soviet KGB.

After the Agency

Buckley claims he left the CIA in 1952. At that point in his career, *God and Man at Yale* was selling well, buttressed by the many reviews it received from both conservatives and liberals. Demands for speeches were pouring in, as were offers for jobs as editor of *The Freeman* and *The American Mercury* (the latter was the most prestigious of the few conservative journals in existence at the time). With a year of CIA duty under his belt, the important details of which he kept under wraps, he headed for New York and editorial duties with *The American Mercury*.

Meanwhile, Bill's older sister, Priscilla, was holding down an important post at the European desk of the CIA in Paris. She, too, would later become a central figure at *National Review*.²⁰

In *On the Firing Line*, Buckley claimed that his CIA service first received widespread airing from Yale University's Reverend William Sloan Coffin, another CIA veteran. While conversing with Coffin in 1973, Buckley blurted out that "my boss in the Agency was Howard Hunt." As a consequence of what he termed his "slip," Buckley reported that "Bill Coffin promptly told someone else about my past and — it became a part of the public record."²¹

When Howard Hunt's Watergate difficulties were in the news in 1974, Buckley's affiliation with the CIA became more widely known. Forced to admit that he had served with the agency more than 20 years earlier, he became the target of widespread charges that he was still doing so. The *Boston Globe*, one of our nation's most passionately liberal newspapers, threatened to attach mention of his relationship with the CIA to each of Buckley's op-ed columns appearing in its pages.²²

Even within *National Review's* professional family, revelations about Buckley's CIA connection caused anxiety. As a young man, Garry Wills had joined the magazine's staff in the summer of 1957. He and Buckley developed an extremely close relationship until Wills became infatuated with the civil rights movement and began echoing leftist opposition to the Vietnam War. The two slowly drifted apart, and Wills began writing his own syndicated column. Their breakup was the subject of some of Buckley's columns. When information about his former mentor's CIA past became known, Wills attacked both Buckley and *National Review* in a series of scathing columns of his own. Referring to Bill and Priscilla Buckley, James Burnham, and Willmoore Kendall, Wills wrote in January 1995:

Was *National Review*, with four agents of the CIA on its staff, a CIA operation? If so, the CIA was stingy; and I doubt it — but even some on the editorial board raised the question. And the magazine supported Buckley's old CIA boss, Howard Hunt, and publicized a fund drive for him.²³

Here was a former close Buckley associate openly speculating that the CIA had played a role in

establishing, perhaps even controlling, *National Review*. Like many others, Wills considered association with the CIA more reprehensible than praiseworthy. He believed that service with the agency should never be equated with serving in the military. Instead, it was something to be shunned because of its secrecy, and especially because of its interference in the affairs of other nations.

Buckley responded in print to Wills' indictment with surprising ferocity. The incident became the final straw in the deteriorating relationship between the editor and his erstwhile star pupil. Others might criticize Buckley about other matters and remain within his circle of friends. But to suggest that he never actually left the CIA, or that his magazine might be a CIA front, irked him intensely and prompted unusually sharp rejoinders.

Had Hunt not bared Buckley's CIA connection, it might never have become widely known. Buckley himself studiously avoided mentioning it. He was willing and proud to point to other past connections, including his CFR membership, but he kept his CIA service hidden until it could no longer be kept quiet.

Murray Rothbard was another early Buckley ally and contributor to *National Review*. A brilliant libertarian economist and champion of Old Right values, he broke with Buckley in 1959. John Judis noted:

Rothbard remains, to this day, suspicious of *National Review's* Cold War stance: "I'm convinced that the whole *National Review* is a CIA operation," he says.²⁴

It was while he was in Mexico in early 1952 that Buckley authored his revealing *Commonweal* article cited earlier. At the time, the editor of *Commonweal* was James Burnham's brother, Philip. During that era, American conservatives were united in opposition to the Truman administration; they emphatically loathed Communism; and they rightly feared and detested big government. Yet, while employed by the CIA, the man who would later shape much of the conservative movement was telling readers of a small but influential Catholic journal that "Big Government for the duration" and an accompanying "totalitarian bureaucracy ... even with Truman at the reins of it all" were steps America should undertake. The article was undiluted Trotskyism. It promoted the idea that the way to combat Soviet Communism was to build an all-powerful and socialistic executive branch here in the United States. Had Trotsky been alive, he would undoubtedly have applauded. The slain Russian revolutionary's American disciples, Kendall and Burnham, had tutored the young Yale graduate well.

Some of America's remaining noninterventionists, then as now disdainfully and inaccurately referred to as "isolationists," objected vigorously to Buckley's heresy. Among the most outspoken was author and Old Right veteran Frank Chodorov. Referring to the escalating Cold War, Chodorov held that the supposed war against Communism would ultimately transmogrify into a war to Communize America.²⁵ He had capably summarized Buckley's *Commonweal* recommendations.

The *Commonweal* article included a revealing example of another Buckley practice: reversing course after providing reasonably sound perspective. He began it with a strong condemnation of

“the State,” which he claimed was the people’s “domestic enemy.” But he then executed a swift U-turn and called for big government, a totalitarian bureaucracy, centralization of power in Washington, etc.

The Funding Fathers

On June 28, 1996, the Public Broadcasting Service aired a televised tête-à-tête featuring host David Frost and guest Bill Buckley. Among other revealing comments, Buckley admitted that *National Review* “lost 19 million dollars”²⁶ in its early years. To illustrate what this meant in current terms, he added: “In constant dollars it comes to about 45 or 46 million.”*

When Frost asked if any of the loss had been made up with his own funds, Buckley responded, “Not much, a certain amount was,” and he mentioned “speaking fees, that kind of thing.” These, he acknowledged, brought very little in the way of relief for the magazine’s river of red ink. Frost didn’t pursue the matter further, so viewers were left to speculate where the millions of dollars to cover the huge losses came from.

To whom does the youthful owner of an upstart new magazine turn to make up such a sizeable shortfall? And even more to the point, how could anyone in Buckley’s position incur such losses without knowing in advance that the astronomical deficits would be covered by others? And would he not then be beholden to such benefactors?

Who provided the \$19 million? Fundraising appeals were repeatedly sent to *National Review*’s subscribers, producing many thousands of dollars, but nowhere near \$19 million. In the 1950s, even two or three million dollars would have been an astonishingly large sum for someone to pour into a special-interest, small circulation magazine. Obviously, *National Review*’s role was deemed to be so important that some unknown backer or backers paid handsomely to keep the magazine alive.

It is now evident that Buckley used his magazine and his attendant celebrity status to pursue several high-priority Establishment goals. He seized control of the conservative movement, denied respectability to its Old Right stalwarts, debunked the idea of conspiracy, and worked to undermine those who espoused either non-intervention in the world’s affairs and/or strict adherence to the Constitution’s limitations on federal power.

It certainly would have made sense for an Establishment-controlled entity to provide the millions to keep *National Review* functioning. So the question must be asked: Did *National Review*’s money tree grow in the CIA’s orchard? We may never know, but CIA money did finance other publications, so the suggestion is eminently plausible.

Thomas W. Braden, an OSS veteran and CFR member, became a high CIA official in 1951, the same year Buckley joined the agency. According to Braden’s own admissions, his CIA division set up 20 dummy foundations to funnel money secretly to such leftist outfits as the National Student’s Association, described by Braden as “a CIA front.”²⁷ In 1967, he revealed that he had supplied as much as \$2 million per year to Jay Lovestone, a founder of the Communist Party USA and editor of its newspaper, *The Communist*.²⁸

Also in 1967, Braden authored a *Saturday Evening Post* article, entitled “I’m Glad the CIA Is Immoral,” in which he proudly admitted that the agency had provided funds through its foundations to left-wing U.S. labor leader Walter Reuther and socialist labor leaders in Europe. He boasted that he gave “cash, along with advice, to other labor leaders, to students, professors, and others,” all of whom were leftists.²⁹

In 1983, years after he had formally left the CIA’s employ, Braden casually remarked during an appearance on CNN’s “Crossfire” that the agency had also financed the Communist Party newspaper, *Daily Worker*.³⁰ The CIA financed favored publications on the left; could it have also financed some on the right? Could it have helped keep *National Review* afloat? The money Buckley needed could readily have been channeled covertly to the magazine through one or more of the dummy foundations mentioned by Thomas Braden. Could Buckley’s series of CIA-enhancing novels have been a partial *quid pro quo* for agency support?

Recall that Buckley’s closest adviser at Yale, Trotskyite/OSS/CIA veteran Willmoore Kendall, had introduced him to Trotskyite/OSS/CIA veteran James Burnham who then placed him in a CIA post. Why wouldn’t the CIA back *National Review*? The agency was poised to steer America’s conservatives into the arms of Trotskyites who had held key CIA positions, and who were now top staffers at the Buckley-led magazine.

Buckley’s magazine has also used its influence to heap scorn on those who contend that conspiracy lies at the root of many of America’s problems. Buckley knew that The John Birch Society’s Robert Welch had criticized the CIA. Repudiation of both “the conspiracy theory” and its advocates, including enemies of the CIA, could best be accomplished by someone with “conservative” credentials. Buckley and his *National Review* were ideally suited for the job.

National Review would also prove useful in whitewashing the CIA. In its July 12, 1966 issue, James Burnham groaned that the organization he had served for so many years had been victimized by “a very bad press.” So he saluted it and insisted that it was “more consistently anti-Communist” than other government agencies. One of its problems, he maintained, stemmed from the publicity it received. Advocating total secrecy, he wrote:

From the point of view of effective performance, CIA should have no official press relations; none of its officers should be publicly identified; nothing should ever be officially admitted about its activities, whether mistakes or triumphs.... Mum’s the word, mum’s *always* the word from headquarters. An effective CIA sort of organization must be, in short, professional.³¹

The former CIA officer admitted in this article that “anonymity, concealment and public ignorance are, however, incompatible with traditional notions of democracy and responsible government.” But he nevertheless opposed the creation of a “congressional watchdog committee” being considered by the Senate.

Burnham speculated openly about the possible effect of his recommendations, even questioning whether the CIA might become an invisible government. Answering his own query, he concluded: “Of course. There is no escaping the dilemma: either professionalism and secrecy or

ineffective performance.” He wanted “professionalism” in both of its assigned duties, which he described as “the gathering and analysis of intelligence (i.e. information) on the one hand; special (i.e. clandestine) operations on the other.”³²

The CIA establishment must have been delighted to have Burnham persuade conservative Americans that the organization was capably carrying out its “more consistently anti-Communist” mission. Burnham had done his bit to burnish the agency’s increasingly tarnished image for readers of *National Review* and devotees of Bill Buckley.

While there has been no verification of CIA funding of *National Review*, a detective investigating the matter would ask, “Cui bono?” (Who benefits?) Who benefited most when *National Review* was kept alive with substantial infusions of cash? What entity, other than the Establishment of which the CIA is an important part, has been as well-served by the “no-conspiracy” campaigns carried out by Buckley and *National Review*?

Angleton, Golitsyn, and Buckley

Soviet KGB official Anatoliy Golitsyn defected to the United States in 1961. Thirty years later, Bill Buckley wrote a column about his early association with Golitsyn. In it, he offhandedly revealed further details about his association with the CIA.

Golitsyn had been a high-ranking officer in the Kremlin’s worldwide clandestine service, spending 15 years in Soviet intelligence work where his lofty position brought him into direct contact with top Soviet officials, including Josef Stalin. Increasingly disillusioned by the crimes of the USSR, and armed with information he had received from high Soviet sources about a long-range strategy designed to defeat its adversaries, he decided to warn the West. But once he left the USSR and came to the United States, he ran into a wall of opposition from U.S. intelligence experts at the CIA. So thoroughly was his information discounted and his credibility questioned that he began to fear for his life. Eventually, he was also repudiated by William Buckley.

Had it not been for the CIA’s chief of counterintelligence, James J. Angleton, the astonishing Golitsyn revelations might never have reached the public. Golitsyn sought to convince CIA officials that there would soon be a complete turnabout in Communist strategy. In 1963, almost everyone at the CIA scoffed at Golitsyn’s contentions, prompting Angleton to have Golitsyn transferred to his supervision.

One of Golitsyn’s important revelations claimed that the Sino-Soviet split, a major justification for massive U.S. aid programs to the USSR, was a cleverly concocted ruse. Was there a split? In his 1984 book *New Lies For Old*, he wrote:

The feigned disunity of the communist world promotes real disunity in the noncommunist world.... False alignments, formed with third parties by each side against the other, make it easier to achieve specific communist goals, such as the acquisition of advanced technology or the negotiation of arms control agreements or communist penetration of Arab and African states. In Western eyes the military, political, economic, and ideological threat from world communism appears diminished.³³

Had that analysis received the respect and attention it deserved when Golitsyn first posed it in the 1960s, the Establishment would have been deprived of its key excuse for showering the USSR with our tax dollars and other largess. There would have been no justification for “bridge building,” “peaceful coexistence,” “détente,” or whatever else might benefit the supposedly mellowing Kremlin. Americans would not have been persuaded that, because of the growing challenge to freedom posed by Red China, it was in our nation’s interest to supply the USSR with every conceivable form of aid, including missile delivery systems and other strategically important military equipment and technology.**

Golitsyn also told his CIA handlers that the Soviet government would soon begin a long-planned scheme he called a false liberalization. It would include a complete reorganization that “would be spectacular and impressive.” He claimed that “formal pronouncements might be made about a reduction in the communist party’s role; its monopoly would be apparently curtailed.... The KGB would be ‘reformed.’” But the West must be wary, he cautioned, because the reorganization “would be calculated and deceptive in that it would be introduced from above.”³⁴

Other warnings he tried to impart in the 1960s included his predictions that the Berlin Wall would come down,³⁵ the Warsaw Pact would be dissolved,³⁶ East and West Germany would be reunited,³⁷ and there would emerge “a younger leader with a more liberal image, who will continue the so-called ‘liberalization’ more intensely.”³⁸ Perhaps the most important claim made by this extraordinary individual centered on his repeated insistence that the goal of all of these tactics was “the establishment of a neutral, socialist Europe.”³⁹

History has confirmed the accuracy of Golitsyn’s predictions. The Berlin Wall did come down; the Warsaw Pact was dissolved; East and West Germany are reunited; and a younger leader with a more liberal image emerged in the person of Mikhail Gorbachev. Golitsyn either made some astonishingly lucky guesses, or he should have been heeded from the day he set foot on U.S. soil.

James Angleton was forced out of the CIA in 1974. Writing in *New York* magazine, Aaron Latham speculated that Henry Kissinger was behind the dismissal. As to why CIA Director William Colby fired the 22-year veteran, Latham wrote: “The answer seems to involve Angleton’s belief that détente is a trick and that Henry Kissinger had fallen for it.... Directly or indirectly, Kissinger may have passed the word that Angleton should be phased out.”⁴⁰

Angleton’s termination occurred partly as a consequence of his unyielding defense of Golitsyn, but also because he remained convinced that the CIA itself had been penetrated by Soviet agents. He passed away in 1987. Four years later, the CIA discovered that a high official at the agency’s Soviet desk, the traitorous Aldrich Ames, had been spying for the KGB for years, and that his efforts had compromised much of the CIA’s work while endangering its agents. After the Ames case became known, even the *New York Times* had to admit that the CIA should have heeded Angleton.⁴¹

After leaving the CIA, Angleton maintained contact with Golitsyn who, because he was still afraid for his life, remained in seclusion in the United States. Then in 1991, Buckley wrote his

column discussing Angleton's having brought Golitsyn to meet him "about 15 years ago."⁴² That would have been about 1976. Buckley explained that the Soviet defector was searching for someone to help put his voluminous notes into readable English.

Based on the conservative, anti-Communist reputation Buckley had carefully cultivated, and with Angleton's recommendation as a consequence, Golitsyn believed that he could trust Buckley; that Buckley was the man who could do the job he required. In his column, however, Buckley reported that he had listened to the frightened Russian for three hours, but then refused the man's request. He promised instead to find someone else to help Golitsyn, but the unnamed person he claimed to have chosen also declined the offer. In retrospect, as Buckley admitted in his column, he provided Golitsyn with no help whatsoever and even contributed to the delay in having Golitsyn's voluminous information published.

Buckley scoffed at Golitsyn's contention that the Sino-Soviet rift was fraudulent, noting that such a belief was "a sacred article of faith of the John Birch Society." He ended the August 12, 1991 column by noting that Golitsyn's "book came out, a few years later, and was widely unnoticed."⁴³

Contrary to Buckley's assertion, however, *New Lies For Old* was widely noticed, especially by Establishment figures who were anxious to keep its message from the public. The CFR's *Foreign Affairs*, along with *National Review* and the *Library Journal*, portrayed it as worthless. But in the aftermath of the breakup of the USSR, sales increased dramatically. Buckley mentioned it in his column but avoided giving its title. Had he done so, many of his readers might have obtained copies and judged the book for themselves, creating an embarrassment, even a setback, for Buckley.

More invective was showered on Golitsyn's thesis in a PBS "Frontline" program and in British author Tom Mangold's *Cold Warrior*. Both portrayed Angleton as an eccentric and disruptive screwball while savaging Golitsyn and his message. Eventually, however, former CIA official George A. Carver wrote a well-deserved tribute to Angleton that appeared in the *Washington Times*.⁴⁴

That Golitsyn's warnings had substance cannot be denied in light of the unfolding events over the past dozen years. In the wake of the breakup of the Soviet Union, additional huge amounts of Western aid have flowed to Russia and the nations of Eastern Europe. In each of these nations, former Communist leaders are now portrayed as "democrats" who have been anointed with what Golitsyn predicted would be "a more liberal image." Where is all of this leading? Golitsyn's answer: "'Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals' would turn out to be a neutral, socialist Europe."⁴⁵

According to his own 1991 account, as far back as 1976, Buckley could have helped spread the Golitsyn message to the American people. But doing so would have revealed a major strategic move in the conspiratorial drive to herd all nations together under the twin banners of socialism and world government. He demurred, opting instead to undercut the Soviet defector.

In that 1991 column, Buckley also chose to describe the post he filled for the CIA during

1951–52 as one of “deep cover,” noting that this type of assignment requires agents “never to reveal what it was they did while in service.” He further noted that he considered his CIA “oath still binding” 30 years later.

After having kept his CIA service hidden for many years, Buckley began to not only publicize it, but boast that he had been an “agent” involved in a “deep cover” assignment, not some low-level bureaucratic task. His use of the term “agent” is significant, since many lower level CIA employees are never referred to with that term. Further, if his pledge never to reveal details about his assignment was still binding (Is it still?), has he remained continuously subject to CIA direction since 1952?

*The 1996 equivalent of \$19 million in 1957 would have been approximately \$106 million — far more than the “45 or 46 million” suggested by Buckley.

**Senator William Armstrong (R-Colo.) reported to the Senate on April 13, 1982: “In the last 10 years alone, the United States and other Western nations have sold to the Soviet Union and its satellites more than \$50 billion worth of sophisticated technical equipment the Communists could not produce themselves. This equipment has been used to produce nuclear missiles, tanks and armored cars, military command and control systems, spy satellites, and air defense radars. In addition, the Soviets have been able to purchase entire factories, designed and built by Western engineers and financed in part by American and Western European banks.”

Chapter Six — The First Team

*But National Review’s masthead was heavily weighted with former leftists preoccupied with fighting communism.*¹
— John B. Judis

Having studied under Trotskyite/OSS/CIA veteran Willmoore Kendall at Yale, Buckley was introduced by Kendall in 1950 to Trotskyite/OSS/CIA veteran James Burnham, who was still on the CIA payroll. Both mentors would help him realize his dream as *National Review* was born. Even more than to Kendall, Buckley turned to Burnham for guidance and assistance as the magazine moved from the drawing board to publication.

At *National Review’s* 25th Anniversary celebration in 1980, Buckley said of Burnham, “Beyond any question, he has been the dominant intellectual influence in the development of this journal.”² He republished his 1980 comments when Burnham passed away in 1987.

Among other tributes appearing in *National Review* after Burnham’s death, perhaps the most relevant came from Sidney Hook, Burnham’s old comrade from their Marxist days. Hook recalled that while they shared teaching assignments at New York University in the 1930s, “Jim expressed vigorous criticisms of the existing economic system and strong sympathies for revolutionary socialism.” Hook continued:

Word of Jim's political development soon got about among radical students. To my amazement I discovered that by 1933 he had established some working arrangements with members of the YCL (Young Communist League) at NYU, to whom I had become anathema.... So impressed were they with Jim's grasp of issues that they reported their find to Earl Browder, Secretary General of the U.S. Communist Party, who was at the time looking for more reliable and less critical intellectual fellow-travelers.³

Subsequently, Browder invited Burnham to become a cog in the Communist Party machine. The invitation was rejected. But Burnham did join the Communist-controlled American Workers Party. From that launching pad, according to Charles Markmann,⁴ Burnham rose to become a leader of the Trotskyite anti-Stalinist Left. His preference for Marxism's relatively slow march toward totalitarianism led him to condemn Stalin for betraying what Burnham and other Trotskyites considered to be a great cause.

During the 1930s, Burnham joined many others in believing that Soviet socialism was evil only because it was led by the likes of Stalin. When the Soviets and Nazis formed an alliance in 1939, however, Burnham began to have serious doubts about his position, and by 1940 he parted company with the Trotskyites. He even moved away from Marxism, although he never developed an affinity for free enterprise. He wrote in his letter resigning from the Workers Party: "I consider that on the basis of the evidence now available to us a new form of exploitative society (what I call 'managerial society') is not only possible as an alternative to capitalism but is a more probable outcome of the present period than socialism."⁵

Burnham's 1941 book, *The Managerial Revolution*,⁶ developed this theme. He claimed that the world was becoming dominated by a society of administrators, managers, and middlemen who alone could be relied upon to make things happen. As Justin Raimondo suggested, "This is the philosophical legacy of Marxist materialism, which Burnham never abandoned; he merely peeled off the Marxist veneer."⁷

At this stage, Burnham's ideal managerial state was Hitler's Germany. It seemed obvious, however, that he allied himself with whatever movement seemed likely to dominate society. Raimondo continued:

When collectivism of the Left looked as if it might be winning, he was a Leninist; when Hitler was the master of Europe, he was awed into reverence for managerialism, Aryan-style; when the United States stood astride the postwar world, with a monopoly on nuclear weapons, he called on America to set up a world empire.⁸

In 1943, Burnham authored his *magnum opus* entitled *The Machiavellians: In Defense of Freedom*.⁹ In it, he attacked both Marxists and Old Right conservatives, while championing his own brand of managerialism, which at its core was a sophisticated form of socialism. Raimondo's opinion of the book led him to label Burnham "the first neoconservative." As such, Burnham never advocated the system of limited government on which the United States had been founded and on which its prosperity depended. Yet there was no doubt that he was an

anti-Communist, as verified by his welcome and enlightening survey of the Communist penetration of the U.S. government entitled *The Web of Subversion*.¹⁰ This book, however, couldn't be classified as a defense of freedom, especially the economic freedom that all Communists and socialists seek to destroy. It merely confirmed the pervasive extent of internal Communist subversion without proposing a remedy. As he wrote in the concluding chapter:

I have intended this book to be an orderly review of the recorded facts concerning the web of governmental subversion, and nothing more. The problem of the cause and cure of modern subversion, and still the more general philosophical issues to which subversion is related, are outside of my present range.¹¹

Burnham also excused several presidents and other top government officials who were responsible for opening the doors and allowing Communists to attain government positions. Explicitly discounting the view that any were disloyal Americans, he explained:

There is no possible ground for suggesting that Presidents Roosevelt and Truman — or their Republican appointees such as Frank Knox, John McCloy, William J. Donovan and Robert Patterson — were in the smallest degree disloyal. However, it is certain that they, and most of us, have been ignorant of what needs to be known about the Communist enterprise.¹²

Burnham claimed that these U.S. leaders were blameless because of their alleged ignorance both of what the Communists had in mind and of the escalating number of atrocities and other monstrous crimes they were perpetrating. By defending FDR from any hint of disloyalty, however, he was also defending the prime architect of the New Deal — the plan for America supported by the Communists, socialists, and *neoconservatives*.

Can any sober student of 20th-century America continue to doubt that — though they were not Communists — FDR and Truman intended to drag our nation into a socialist quagmire of their own design? Was not this goal, and the coercive manner in which they sought to achieve it, evidence of disloyalty to our nation? Both the Roosevelt New Deal and the Truman Fair Deal spawned a maze of big-government controls, increased taxation, and expansion of federal bureaucracy. These departures from true Americanism added up to socialism with a vengeance.

Both Roosevelt and Truman were also deeply committed to internationalism in general and the United Nations in particular. The combination of domestic socialism and the steady transfer of U.S. sovereignty to a world government that marked their administrations were also centerpieces of the Trotskyite/neoconservative agenda. James Burnham not only condoned this agenda, he defended those who were working to bring it about.

Burnham also defended both his former OSS/CIA boss, William Donovan, and the premier Establishment figure of his day, John J. McCloy. We noted earlier the harm attributable to Donovan during his tenure at the OSS. McCloy, the consummate New York-based internationalist, was assistant secretary of war during World War II where he approved an order allowing Communists to become officers in the U.S. Army. He served as a disarmament specialist during the Kennedy administration and chaired the left-funding Ford Foundation and

the internationalist Atlantic Institute. He later won appointment as chairman of the board of the Council on Foreign Relations.¹³

The 1970 *Annual Report* of the CFR included a special tribute to McCloy, who had recently resigned as its board chairman after 17 years at the helm. Commenting that “his years of leadership have been years of exceptional fruitfulness for the Council,” the accolade noted that he was responsible for “new programs” for the organization, such as “the new International Affairs Fellowships for younger men and women, and the fellowships for the military.” Burnham’s willingness to overlook McCloy’s lifetime of service to the Establishment (McCloy joined the CFR in 1939) says a great deal about Burnham’s own worldview.

In his 1964 book, *Suicide of the West*, which he subtitled “An Essay on the Meaning and Destiny of Liberalism,” Burnham underscored his contention (shared by Buckley) that America’s problems were in no way the result of a conspiracy. America, both held, was instead being victimized by stupid liberals who had no underlying intent to destroy freedom. Yet, in *The Web of Subversion*, Burnham had applauded actions “taken against other sections of the Communist conspiracy.”¹⁴ In 1964, he was willing to label the enemy a “conspiracy,” but he later denied the existence of that conspiracy.

His use of the word “suicide” in his 1964 book’s title is curious. Burnham explained why he chose it:

My intention in using the word “suicide” is purely cognitive. It seems to me an appropriate and convenient shorthand symbol for dealing with the set of facts I have just reviewed, the facts showing that: a) Western civilization is contracting rapidly; b) this contraction cannot be accounted for by the material power of any agency external to Western civilization; c) it cannot be accounted for by any Western deficiency in material power or resources; d) it must therefore derive from structural or non-material internal factors.¹⁵

As is obvious, Burnham went to extreme lengths to avoid the conclusion that a conspiracy did indeed exist. Prior to the publication of *Suicide of the West*, he had already joined with Buckley and others at *National Review* to excoriate Robert Welch and The John Birch Society precisely because they had concluded that conspiracy lay at the root of America’s problems. Welch contended that determined leaders of a conspiratorial clique were busily destroying freedom in America and throughout the world. But Burnham, Buckley, and company did their utmost to keep such a conclusion from gaining any respectability with their readers.

After scrutinizing 15 years of Burnham’s output in books and *National Review* articles, Murray Rothbard commented: “In a lifetime of political writing, James Burnham [showed] only one fleeting bit of positive interest in individual liberty; and that was a call in *National Review* for the legalization of firecrackers!”¹⁶

Back in 1953, Burnham had terminated his on-again-off-again 25-year teaching career at New York University. He had also parted company with the CIA-funded American Congress for Cultural Freedom he had founded and led.¹⁷ His neutrality regarding Joseph McCarthy, whom

he did not defend but was unwilling to denounce, likely cost him favor among high CIA officials. McCarthy's attempt to investigate the CIA had provoked the agency to institute a purge within its ranks of anyone who would not openly condemn the Wisconsin senator.

Burnham then moved to northern Connecticut, where he lived in semi-retirement with funds from investments and a small inheritance. He also continued to write. When Buckley visited Burnham's home in 1955 to share plans to start a new magazine, his old friend didn't hesitate to express interest in becoming part of the venture.

Frank S. Meyer

Another key individual Buckley sought out to serve on the magazine's initial editorial board was Frank S. Meyer, described by Markmann as "another recent defector from the orthodox Communist Party, in which in the 1930s, he had begun to distinguish himself as a theoretician and detector of heresies."¹⁸ Meyer had risen within the Party to become a member of its National Committee and the leader of the "Workers School of Chicago," one of the Party's top training bases for recruits.¹⁹

John Judis pointed out that "Meyer had entered Princeton at the same time as had Burnham, but had left after two years to study at Oxford. While a graduate student at the London School of Economics in 1932, he had joined the Communist Party. When he returned to the U.S., he became the educational director of the Communist Party in the Illinois-Indiana region...."²⁰

Of his break with Communism in the 1940s, Meyer said: "I fretted for a dozen years in the Communist Party because I hated its repressiveness: I went Right for release from authoritarianism."²¹ Markmann claims that Meyer later viewed himself as a "radical libertarian." After joining the staff of *National Review*, he led a rather reclusive life in Woodstock, New York, and carried out his duties for the magazine via telephone and the mail.

In a tribute to Meyer following his death in 1972, James Burnham noted the deep commitment his fellow senior editor at *National Review* had once made to Communism:

Frank was an anti-Communist who had been a Communist. Not a radical or leftist or sympathizer or fellow traveler or pro-Communist; not a worker who joins the Party because he has been led to believe it is fighting to improve the lot of the working class or an intellectual who goes slumming in the revolution for awhile, rather as his Victorian forebears sowed their oats in the red-light district; not a rank-and-file Party member or a routine functionary. Frank was a Communist of "the cadre." What it means to be that sort of Communist you may learn analytically from Frank's remarkable study *The Moulding of Communists*....²²

In *The Moulding of Communists*, Meyer recounted his deep involvement in Communism (from 1931 to 1945) and a subsequent 15-year period of "reorientation" during which he helped launch *National Review*. He wrote:

[This] book reflects fourteen years of active leadership, theoretical and practical, in the Communist movement, followed by fifteen years of reorientation and deep

consideration of this modern tyranny over the human mind and spirit.²³

Burnham's tribute noted that the "fifteen years of reorientation" were "to continue for another twelve years into Frank's last hours." Obviously, the scars Meyer earned during his years as a Communist were extensive, yet Buckley always presented him and his writings as unquestionably reliable, with no hint that Meyer was still trying to find himself.

In *The Moulding of Communists*, and in Buckley's 1970 anthology subtitled *American Conservative Thought in the Twentieth Century*, Meyer did give some evidence of a sincere break with his past. In one passage, he insisted upon "an objective moral order as the foundation of respect for the value and integrity of the individual person and therefore the only firm foundation of individual freedom."²⁴ In the tributes that appeared in *National Review* after Meyer's death, both Buckley and Brent Bozell noted his death-bed conversion to Catholicism.

Still, Markmann claimed that "others" weren't persuaded that Meyer had completely cleansed himself of his Communist past. To buttress that assessment, he cited a comment from an unnamed "fellow-Conservative" who said of Meyer, "...he still desires a sort of Communist Party formation in which there should be discipline, there should be organization. Again, he's always looking about for deviates to expel — in part because he does believe that they are dangerous and in part because it's a matter of habit."²⁵

For many years, each issue of *National Review* carried Meyer's thoughts in a column captioned "Principles and Heresies." He believed it was his calling to be the theoretician of American conservatism, its definer and guardian. Buckley sanctioned this self-assigned role. Though Meyer claimed to have fled from "authoritarianism" when he left the Communist Party, that trait often surfaced in his writings, including his contribution to *National Review's* continuous campaign to deny The John Birch Society "respectable support." (See Chapter 9.)

More of the Team

Buckley also turned to Willi Schlamm, a former Communist who had come to America after the 1938 Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia. Right away, Schlamm began writing for *The New Leader*, an influential leftist publication. Like Burnham, he became an anti-Communist while remaining a leftist. He was eventually hired by *Time* magazine, where he, former Communist Whittaker Chambers, and former Trotskyite John Chamberlain comprised a small anti-Communist circle within Henry Luce's empire.

Buckley biographer John Judis wrote of Schlamm, "He had little interest in right-wing economic doctrine, and he had nothing but contempt for the right-wing isolationists and libertarians..."²⁶ In short, he was another neoconservative. Though he wanted desperately to start his own magazine, Schlamm reluctantly agreed to become part of Buckley's *National Review* venture. Judis added, "Buckley's willingness to work with Schlamm was significant. By joining forces with Schlamm ... Buckley was turning his back on much of the isolationist and anti-Semitic Old Right that had applauded his earlier books and that his father had been politically close to."²⁷

Buckley also trekked with Willmoore Kendall to visit Whittaker Chambers at the Maryland farm made famous as the hiding place of the famous "Pumpkin Papers" documenting Chambers'

association with Soviet spy Alger Hiss. Several return trips led to a request that Chambers, too, join the staff of the new magazine. Here was another ex-Communist who, like so many of Buckley's choices, could properly be labeled a neoconservative. Chambers eventually joined the *National Review* board and contributed a few articles to the magazine.

But Chambers soon found himself at odds with his associates over their belief that the USSR was militarily stronger than the United States. His attempt to influence the *National Review* staff on this point failed, mostly because Buckley himself repeatedly promoted the notion that the Soviets were military giants.

Like most members of the *National Review* team, Chambers was neither a fan of the free enterprise system nor an opponent of government controls. Markmann quoted Chambers' attitude:

History tells me that the rock-core of the Conservative Position, or any fragment of it, can be held realistically only if conservatism will accommodate itself to the needs and hopes of the masses — needs and hopes which, like the masses themselves, are the product of machines.... A conservatism that cannot face the facts of the machine and mass production, and its consequence in government and politics, is foredoomed to futility and petulance.... [It will produce] those gigantic yields and that increased man-hour productivity whose abundance spells bankruptcy and crisis — or controls.²⁸

Chambers' perspective dovetailed nicely with Kendall's majoritarianism and Burnham's managerialism, with hints of Trotskyite socialism. It did *not* square with American-style free enterprise and competitive capitalism.

With his team taking shape, Buckley sought financing. He estimated that it would take \$450,000 in addition to the \$100,000 pledged by his father to get the magazine off the ground. He and Schlamm failed to obtain any help from several men whom Judis labeled "the old isolationists typified by the *Chicago Tribune's* Colonel McCormick, and extreme right-wing Texans like H.L. Hunt." These Old Right types apparently wanted nothing to do with the internationalists and anti-Communist leftists with whom Buckley had surrounded himself.

Whirlwind fundraising netted Buckley only about two-thirds of his projected budget. Much of what he did accumulate came as small donations from individuals who hoped that the magazine would become an important voice in saving the nation not only from Communism, but from collectivism and internationalism.

Despite falling short of their announced financial target, Buckley and his associates plunged ahead. The first issue of *National Review* appeared on November 19, 1955. CIA veterans on the staff at *NR's* outset included Buckley, Burnham, and Kendall. Most other staffers were former Communists or socialists. Years later, Judis noted how far the original roster leaned to the left:

But *National Review's* masthead was heavily weighted with former leftists preoccupied with fighting communism. Besides Burnham, Kendall, and Schlamm, the contributors included Max Eastman, Morrie Ryskind, Ralph deToledano, and former Communists

Frank Meyer, Freda Uitley, and Eugene Lyons. Meyer himself would become a senior editor in 1957. Except for [Frank] Chodorov, who was a Buckley family friend, none of the right-wing isolationists were included on *National Review's* masthead.... [And their position] would not be welcome, even as a dissenting view, in *National Review*.²⁹

Charles Lam Markmann also thought it curious that so many former leftists comprised the core staff. He noted, for instance, that Max Eastman

... had been a leading radical during the First World War, when he was a Socialist and the editor of *The Masses*, which was suppressed for its opposition to the war. He had then founded another radical publication, *The Liberator*; later he had spent considerable time in Russia and had returned in disillusion, which grew with time until it sent him as far Right as the *Reader's Digest*, of which he became a contributing editor. But he had shone on the Left not only as a political publicist but also as a literary critic of considerable quality, as well as a poet.³⁰

Those who dominated *National Review* at its inception, therefore, were ex-Communists, Trotskyites, socialists, and CIA stalwarts who deplored the excesses of Communism but who had no objection to steering America away from personal freedom and national independence. Yet this was the magazine that was supposed to provide pivotal opposition to America's increasingly dominant Eastern Establishment, whose elitists had long been laboring to undermine our nation's independence and erode the people's freedom!

The premier issue of *National Review* included a "Publisher's Statement" signed by Buckley, in which he noted that 120 investors had supported the launching of the magazine and that, of these, "over fifty men and women of small means invested less than one thousand dollars apiece in it." What were the hopes of those investors? Why did Buckley create the magazine?

Buckley answered by insisting that *National Review* would be a "vigorous and incorruptible journal of conservative opinion." Indeed, he continued:

It stands athwart history, yelling Stop, at a time when no one is inclined to do so, or to have much patience with those who so urge it.³¹

He guaranteed that *National Review* would target many of the harmful attitudes, causes and programs infecting America. They included, he wrote: "radical social experimentation," "socialism," "centralism," "relativism," "the New Deal," "Liberal orthodoxy," "the irresponsible Right," "the practicing Communist," "a gigantic, parasitic bureaucracy," "a thousand different pressure groups," and "a cynical contempt for human freedom."³²

All of which was well and good as far as it went, appealing as it did to many concerned and frustrated Americans. In November 1955, *National Review* definitely filled a conservative void in the arena of political opinion.

From the outset, the magazine expressed deep concern about a Soviet threat. It criticized the Eisenhower administration for entering into negotiations with the Kremlin. It honored Buckley's

pledge by attacking social experimentation, bureaucracy, and growing socialism. Within its pages, one could also find humor, though much of it was rather sophomoric. Even its most discerning readers, among them Robert Welch (who would found The John Birch Society three years later), perceived it as a breath of fresh air in a world being smothered by liberalism. Having sent a personal contribution of \$1,000 to help get the magazine off the ground, Welch responded to another of Buckley's pleas for funds two years later with another \$1,000 to help keep it alive.

But it wasn't long before *National Review*, the "incorruptible journal of conservative opinion," began renegeing on its founder's pledges. In 1960, the magazine carried an article by Ernest van den Haag that found merit in the economic preachments of British socialist John Maynard Keynes.³³ The architect of the Roosevelt administration's fraudulent contention that a nation could spend its way into prosperity, Keynes not only helped steer America away from free enterprise, he led the charge that resulted in the removal of precious metal-backing of the dollar. Praise of Keynes in *National Review* was a wake-up call, though few Buckley supporters recognized its significance at the time.

Though it was unclear to many early readers, hindsight shows that *National Review* began performing as should have been expected: It presented warmed-over Trotskyite views featuring strong anti-Communism, subtle internationalism, and a gradual shift toward acceptance of socialistic controls.

Buckley and most of his team clearly knew where they intended to take the American conservative movement.

Chapter Seven — Buckley, Kissinger, and Rockefeller

*The appointment of Henry Kissinger by Richard Nixon to his critical post is very good news, say we.*¹
— William F. Buckley, Jr.

During 1968, Jeffrey Bell served as a campaign worker for Richard Nixon's successful run for the presidency. By 1972, he held a post at the Washington-based American Conservative Union. And in 1978, he upset liberal Senator Clifford Case in the New Jersey Republican primary but lost to Democrat Bill Bradley in the general election.

An article by Bell in the July 24, 1972 issue of *The Nation* noted that "it's one of the more interesting untold stories of the Nixon transition that, probably more than any other man, Buckley was responsible for Kissinger's appointment."² Nixon had appointed Kissinger national security adviser. In other words, Bell knew what many conservative Americans didn't know, and would have been shocked to learn: William Buckley and Henry Kissinger enjoyed a close relationship. Yet Buckley was widely believed to be the polar opposite of the anti-conservative Rockefeller Republicans typified by Kissinger.

Henry Alfred Kissinger's family emigrated to the United States from Germany in the 1930s. Young Henry's service with the U.S. Army during World War II earned him early citizenship. By 1950, with financial help from the Rockefeller Foundation's Fellowship for Political Theory, he earned his bachelor's degree from Harvard University. From Harvard, he also earned a master's degree in 1952 and his doctorate in 1954.

Along the way, the budding Rockefeller protégé won successive appointments as executive director of the Harvard International Seminar, associate director of Harvard's Center for International Affairs, and director of the center's Special Studies Project. He received additional financial support from the Rockefeller Brothers Trust Fund. If ever a man could be said to be a Rockefeller creation, it is Henry Kissinger.

Gary Allen's 1976 book, *Kissinger: The Secret Side of the Secretary of State*, supplied more details about the Kissinger career. Allen reported that the Kissinger-led Harvard International Seminar "was later found to be financed by the Central Intelligence Agency."³ During his days at Harvard, Kissinger launched *Confluence*, a magazine which Allen noted "came under the close scrutiny of the Defense Department because of its pro-Communist bias." John Judis related that during this period, the busy Kissinger "invited Buckley to make yearly presentations before his prestigious international-relations seminar."⁴

Buckley himself later wrote about his close association with Kissinger in his 1974 book, *United Nations Journal*:

We have been friends for many years. We met in the mid-fifties when he was at Harvard, and serving also as editor of *Confluence*, an academic quarterly.... A year or so later, he asked me to go to Harvard to lecture at his international seminar.... He repeated the invitation every year.... He was then closely associated with Nelson Rockefeller....⁵

Putting it all together, we see that Kissinger was running a CIA-funded program at Harvard University in the mid-1950s. He invited Buckley, a recent CIA "deep cover" agent, to be one of its speakers. Kissinger started a magazine that was so pro-Communist that it was monitored by the Defense Department. Yet Buckley was supposed to be an aggressive anti-Communist. Was Kissinger being hoodwinked by Buckley? Or Buckley by Kissinger? Or did their mutual ties with the CIA assure both that their agendas squared?

A member of the CFR since 1956, Kissinger served on its staff, then as a professor at Harvard University, and later as a top advisor to Nelson Rockefeller. He became a recognized figure within the Establishment in 1957 when the CFR published his book, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*.⁶ All the while, he maintained his close friendship with Bill Buckley.

By 1968, Kissinger had high hopes that his patron, New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller, would capture the Republican nomination for president. When Richard Nixon prevailed, a disappointed Kissinger swallowed hard, but immediately contacted Buckley for help in meeting the victorious nominee. Buckley helped arrange it and, at Kissinger's later request, also arranged a second meeting soon after Nixon's November triumph. With considerable assistance from Buckley, Kissinger was appointed as assistant to the president for national security affairs (a post

commonly known as “national security adviser”), from which he would eventually be elevated to secretary of state.

Buckley recalled in his 1974 book about his UN experience that he received a telephone message from Kissinger following his initial appointment. The grateful Rockefeller protégé effused: “You will never be able to say again that you have no contact inside the White House.”⁷

Buckley further reminisced in *United Nations Journal* about his frequent contacts with the president’s top security advisor:

I met him perhaps a dozen times in the first four years. I remember the very first meeting. It was the spring of 1969, a Friday. Could I go down to see him? I told him it would have to be a Sunday, or not again for ten days as I was off on a lecture tour. “I’ll send a jet for you,” he said. We discussed the details, and I told him I would take the ten o’clock shuttle back to New York. “No,” he said, “the jet will take you back.” He paused over the telephone. “This,” he said, “is going to ruin academic life.” My escort officer, aboard the little White House jet, was an amiable, young-looking colonel — Alexander Haig.^{8*}

Buckley’s “contact inside the White House” became the primary architect of a U.S. foreign policy that gave most conservatives fits. In what he termed his “first official act,” Kissinger addressed the United Nations General Assembly with Buckley in the audience as his special guest. He informed the UN that the American people “have sometimes been disappointed because this organization has not been more successful in translating its architects’ hopes for universal peace into concrete accomplishments.”⁹

That “disappointment” had actually become complete disillusionment for the many conservatives who had become convinced that the U.S. ought to withdraw completely from the world body. They knew that the UN’s architects at the 1945 San Francisco conference included more than a dozen U.S. Communists led by Alger Hiss, a Soviet delegation led by Andrei Gromyko, and several score CFR members led by U.S. Secretary of State Edward Stettinius. It was arguably the greatest collection of internationalists and world government devotees ever assembled under one roof.¹⁰

In his maiden speech as national security adviser, Kissinger told the UN General Assembly:

But, despite our disappointments, my country remains committed to the goal of a world community. We will continue to work in this Parliament of Man to make it a reality.¹¹

While he employed the euphemistic phrase “a world community,” rather than the more realistic “world government,” his commitment to the United Nations and its long-range goal of world rule has never wavered.

Kissinger served as national security advisor from 1969 to 1973, during which time he completely overshadowed Secretary of State William P. Rogers. The foreign policy team led by

Kissinger arranged for:

- The initial opening to Communist China, which led eventually to diplomatic recognition for that country's murderous Communist regime and further betrayal of the Free Chinese on Taiwan.
- Assistance to the USSR for construction of its Kama River truck factory. Equipment cleared for export to this huge facility included machine tools, automated production lines, milling machines, heat treatment furnaces for metal parts, and both the design of and equipment for an enormous foundry. Without their knowledge, American taxpayers financed the Kama River project through loans to the USSR supplied by the U.S. Export-Import Bank. By December 1971, the Commerce Department admitted that the Kama plant had "military potential."¹²
- Steady increases in strategic aid and trade to the Soviet Union, enabling the Kremlin to develop missiles and aim them at U.S. cities. During this period, perhaps the most strategically important items were machines capable of manufacturing miniature precision ball-bearings. Officials of the Defense Department attempted to block the granting of an export license for these machines manufactured by Vermont's Bryant Chucking Grinder Company and no one else. In 1972, however, Kissinger overruled the Defense Department and approved the license. The Soviets were thereby able not only to enhance their ability to place multiple warheads atop their missiles, but to increase the accuracy of the missiles as well.¹³
- A monster grain deal that benefitted the USSR while driving up U.S. bread prices.¹⁴
- Negotiations with the North Vietnamese that led the way for the Communist takeover of South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, *and* the abandonment of many American POWs known to be alive in Communist prison camps.¹⁵
- Shuttle diplomacy between Middle East adversaries that was so pro-Communist that Soviet Ambassador to the U.S. Anatoly Dobrynin announced that his good friend Kissinger had represented *both the U.S. and the USSR* in the talks.¹⁶
- A campaign of "reconciliation" with Cuba, even as Castro was being kept in power by massive transfusions of economic aid from the USSR, and while the Cuban dictator was repaying his Moscow patrons by stationing tens of thousands of Cuban soldiers in Angola to protect the Communist government of that nation.¹⁷
- Diplomatic support for the Marxist terrorists who seized control of Rhodesia (now known as Zimbabwe).¹⁸
- Additional steps leading to the eventual delivery of the American canal at Panama to the Marxist dictatorship in Panama. It was Kissinger who went to Panama in February 1974 to sign an agreement with Panama's foreign secretary, Juan Antonio Tack, to cede U.S. sovereignty over the Canal Zone and the Canal to Panama. Kissinger later played a key role in completing the arrangements during the Carter administration.¹⁹

These are some of the major accomplishments of the man who held his strategically important post after having been recommended for it by the nation's "premier anti-Communist conservative"!

Eventually, as Kissinger's consistently incredible record became known to an increasing number of Americans, some *National Review* readers wrote to ask Buckley why he continued to champion this powerfully placed architect of disastrous U.S. foreign policy. Buckley didn't answer the inquiries himself. Instead, he had Publisher William Rusher send a form letter stating his own opposition to "some" of Kissinger's deeds, but emphasizing: "I do think he is a patriotic American."²⁰

None of Kissinger's damaging "accomplishments" dissuaded Buckley from continuing to support his longtime friend. Nor, for most Americans, did they seriously impact Buckley's reputation as a conservative.

In 1968, when Nixon named Kissinger as his national security adviser, Buckley lost no time praising the selection. While principled conservatives expressed anger at Nixon for reaching into Harvard University for a man with demonstrably strong ties to the Rockefellers and the CFR, Buckley threw his weight, and that of his magazine, behind Kissinger. Expressing his delight with the selection, he wrote:

The appointment of Henry Kissinger by Richard Nixon to his critical post is very good news, say we. Say also a lot of other people, some of them unreliable judges of just what kind of a man the President of the United States ought to be listening to when it comes to foreign policy. Let us leave it that Mr. Kissinger is a practiced diplomatist, a finished scholar, a member of the faculty of the country's senior university, that he has stood at the right hand of Nelson Rockefeller: so that the profile is almost universally pleasing. But Mr. Kissinger is something a little unusual, and we choose to believe that it is this in him which above all commended him to the attention of Richard Nixon: he is a realist, a patriot, he sees a problem whole, is sometimes maybe a little dreamy on disarmament matters — but one cannot walk away from any of his books or articles, or know something about the history of his contributions to American strategic thinking, and be less than grateful for his appointment, and confident that he will render great service.²¹

When President Nixon nominated Kissinger to be secretary of state in September 1973, Buckley pointed admiringly to Kissinger's shrewdness while urging Senate confirmation. "I for one do not doubt the sanity of his intentions," he stated.²²

As far back as May 1958, Robert Welch, whom Buckley would later expend great energy disparaging, chided the *National Review* editor for suggesting that Kissinger be appointed to a minor non-government committee formed to investigate Radio Free Europe. Welch, who would launch The John Birch Society later that year, was unaware that Buckley was already a close friend of the Rockefeller protégé when he wrote:

We think the neatest trick of the year was performed by Bill Buckley of *National Review* when, on proposing a non-government committee to study what is wrong with

Radio Free Europe, he suggested Henry A. Kissinger as a member of that committee. We expect any day now to hear that General Douglas MacArthur has suggested to President Eisenhower that Adlai Stevenson be made chairman of a committee to study what is wrong with Foreign Aid. It's a topsy-turvy world....²³

In a February 1979 column about the sudden death of Nelson Rockefeller, Buckley approvingly quoted Rockefeller's view that "but for the fact that Kissinger was born abroad and therefore constitutionally disqualified, he would certainly be nominated by acclamation by either of the national political parties for president."²⁴

In a March 1982 column that included excerpts from one of Kissinger's books, Buckley gushed, "It isn't often that great historical figures are given the powers to vouchsafe a prose so penetrating in meaning and noble in tone that it comes near to transfiguring the events described."²⁵ As an example of his cherished friend's prose, Buckley chose Kissinger's mournful comments about "the horrible fate of the peoples of Indochina since 1975 — the mass murders, the concentration camps, the political repression, the boat people...." Never mind that Kissinger had helped to set the stage in Indochina for those very horrors.

In July 1983, Buckley cheered President Reagan's appointment of Kissinger to lead a commission to study conditions in Central America. He acknowledged that most conservatives opposed naming the former secretary of state to any post, but he insisted that they "have not done their homework and are coasting on old stereotypes." Ignoring Kissinger's track record, Buckley claimed that anyone who was "familiar with what Henry Kissinger has said and done during the past 10 years" would be delighted with the president's choice.²⁶

In September 1988, Buckley defended presidential candidate George Bush's selection of Kissinger as one of his campaign advisers. In response to further conservative outrage, he told his readers: "I was for 25 years in near day-to-day company with the foremost anti-Communist strategist of our time, the late James Burnham. I rank second only to Burnham the insight, the skills, the imagination and the constancy of Kissinger. In enlisting the aid of Kissinger, Bush is doing his country and himself a singular service."²⁷

Defending Kissinger's Betrayal of China

In a free-swinging "Firing Line" debate at the University of Mississippi on October 14, 1997, Kissinger and Buckley teamed with Senator Trent Lott (R-Miss.) and businessman James Barksdale in a debate about the continuation of Most Favored Nation (MFN) status for China. Holding the opposing view were the Family Research Council's Gary Bauer, former California Governor Jerry Brown, Senator Tim Hutchinson (R-Ark.), and columnist Arianna Huffington.

The high point of the confrontation came when Huffington accused Kissinger of being unwilling to condemn trade concessions for China because of "your financial interests — after all, you do have a lobbying and consulting firm ... which does represent many businesses, many companies that do business in China."²⁸

Kissinger immediately expressed "regret" that the subject had been broached, insisting that his

company's profits from transactions with China were minuscule. Whereupon Huffington then forced him to admit that he had just concluded an agreement with the Disney Corporation to represent its interests in China. She further charged Kissinger and other advocates of China trade with knowing "about the slave labor camps, about the forced abortions, about the torture and execution of dissidents." She suggested that the reason men like Kissinger turn a blind eye to such outrages is "because they value free trade more than they value freedom, commerce more than justice, and the rule of money more than the rule of law."

Pinned to the wall, Kissinger reached into the neoconservative bag of tricks and accused his adversary of "isolationism" and of being an advocate of "aggressive nationalism." During the exchange, Buckley backed Kissinger, insisting that continuing MFN status for China was "the correct decision," and that the move was supported by "every living ex-president, secretary of state and national security adviser." With perhaps one or two exceptions, those individuals shared membership with him and Kissinger in the Council on Foreign Relations.

Turning to the sort of semantic jujitsu he regularly employs in debates, Buckley stressed that China had moved from being a "totalitarian state ... to the authoritarian state of today." It is unlikely that China's oppressed millions would understand the difference!

The Mississippi "Firing Line" debate was not Kissinger's first attempt to defend the brutal Beijing regime. In 1989, after Communist China's tanks had rolled over the students in Tiananmen Square, ABC's television cameras raced to Kissinger's Connecticut home for his comments. Without hesitation, he advised, "I wouldn't do any sanctions." A few weeks later he wrote in a newspaper column: "No government in the world would have tolerated having the main square of its capital occupied for eight weeks by tens of thousands of demonstrators...."²⁹

Kissinger's commercial ties to China had been noted by the *Wall Street Journal* several weeks after the Tiananmen Square slaughter. *Journal* staff reporter John Fialka revealed details about Kissinger's "limited partnership set up to engage in joint business dealings with a ministry of the Chinese government."³⁰ China could count on Kissinger to oppose sanctions that might pose a threat to the former secretary of state's lucrative business ventures. And Kissinger could count on Bill Buckley to blunt conservative opposition to those ventures.

In June 1994, Kissinger further revealed his pro-China preference. President Clinton was facing sharp criticism for seeking to grant an extension of China's MFN status. Mr. Clinton refused to link the lucrative trade designation to China's abominable human rights record, especially its one-child-per-family, enforced sterilization, compulsory abortion, and slave labor policies. Without the MFN status, the burgeoning U.S.-China trade would shrink, along with Henry's profits. So a syndicated column coauthored by Kissinger and former secretary of state (and fellow CFR member) Cyrus Vance characterized Kissinger's blood-soaked profits as "American commercial interests." It stated:

President Clinton made a difficult but correct decision in extending most-favored-nation status to China and to decoupling that status from the objective of promoting better human rights in China.... If we had cut off MFN, China would surely have retaliated against American commercial interests.³¹

Perhaps. But those commercial undertakings were benefiting the Beijing regime more than the U.S. by providing the wherewithal for China to build and modernize its People's Liberation Army, and to illegally fund Bill Clinton's 1996 re-election campaign.

Though few Americans realize it, China is developing plans to defeat the United States militarily. On September 18, 1997, Dr. Michael Pillsbury of the Pentagon's National Defense University testified before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. An authority on Chinese military affairs, and a translator of numerous People's Liberation Army documents, Dr. Pillsbury noted:

... numerous Chinese books and articles suggest an active research program has been underway for several years to examine how China should develop future military capabilities to defeat the United States.... China's military capabilities in 20 years could pose major challenges to U.S. forces.³²

This distinguished China specialist provided information about previously unknown Chinese programs to develop laser weapons, anti-satellite weapons, high-powered microwave weapons, electric rail guns, and other advanced military items. Only a few years ago, impoverished China could not even dream of amassing such sophisticated weaponry. Now, with huge profits gained from slave-labor industries whose products are sold in the West courtesy of Henry Kissinger among others, the Chinese are now able to flex frightening military muscles.

Bill Buckley evidently sees no problem with having his revered friend profit from doing business with a regime planning "to defeat the United States."

In Bed with Nelson

Which brings us to what Buckley thought of Kissinger's patron, Nelson Rockefeller. In a November 1968 column that appeared a few days after Richard Nixon was elected president, the nation's "leading conservative" showered the New York governor with praise, calling him "a very capable man, and in foreign policy, a very realistic man [with] a firm anti-Communist commitment"; "an expert administrator [who] profoundly believes in the necessity of national strength." Buckley concluded: "In other words, he would make a good secretary of defense."³³

Nelson Rockefeller as secretary of defense? One has to wonder at this point how Buckley could have maintained any credibility with conservative Americans. Earlier in the year, he had urged the selection of liberal CFR member John Gardner (Lyndon Johnson's Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare) to be Richard Nixon's running mate. Rockefeller and Gardner were ideological clones. Judis wrote that this Buckley suggestion "made Nixon's jaw drop,"³⁴ and offered his own version of the developing Buckley-Rockefeller ties:

Under Burnham and Kissinger's influence, Buckley no longer shared the Right's enmity toward Nelson Rockefeller. When Gerald Ford nominated Rockefeller to be his Vice President in August 1974, Buckley, who had urged him to nominate former U.N. Ambassador George Bush, nonetheless defended Ford's choice.... And he defended Rockefeller against his conservative critics. "Rockefeller likes to be first in all things,

and he is not likely to acquiesce silently in the progressive military debilitation of the United States,” Buckley wrote in his [August 1974] column.³⁵

Shortly after Nelson Rockefeller’s sudden death, Buckley revealed in a February 1979 column how he had been brought to meet the powerful New York governor by Henry Kissinger “some years ago...in 1967–68.” Rockefeller had turned to Kissinger to arrange the meeting because he knew that Henry and Bill were close friends. Buckley wrote:

Nelson Rockefeller obviously wished to convince me that he was profoundly anti-Communist. I always believed this true of him.... Kissinger believes he would have been a great president. I think it is altogether possible that this is true.³⁶

In his “personal documentary” entitled *Overdrive*, Buckley further describes his close relationship with both Kissinger and Rockefeller:

I remember greatly resenting it one Saturday a few years ago (before the age of videocassettes) when Pat [his wife] reminded me we were scheduled that Saturday night as guests of the Nelson Rockefellers, who were giving a big party at Pocantico in honor of Henry and Nancy Kissinger. This meant I would miss “All in the Family.” But life is full of such pitfalls — and at 8:30 on that fabulous terrace, we sat down in our designated seats; and lo, the man seated next to Pat and me was none other than Carroll O’Connor — Archie Bunker: who proved a charming dinner companion.³⁷

History shows that Nelson Rockefeller was an arch enemy of true conservatives. He had labeled them “extremists” during the 1964 presidential campaign, and he had calculatingly undermined any chance that Barry Goldwater might capture the White House. Rockefeller’s divisive speech and disruptive antics at that year’s Republican Convention proved to be a dagger in the heart of the Arizona senator’s prospects. Those who were aware of the Rockefeller pre-1964 past were hardly surprised.

When New York’s Rockefeller Center was built in the 1930s, Nelson and his mother were given the task of selecting and installing a mural at the entrance to the main building. The artist they selected was Diego Rivera, a Mexican Communist, who proceeded to adorn the wall with a likeness of V.I. Lenin championing the Communist cause.

This brazen indication of anti-Americanism proved too controversial even for the Rockefeller family. With great reluctance, because he approved of Rivera’s message and feared only the public’s reaction to it, Nelson had the mural replaced. He sought to have it removed intact so that it could be displayed at the family’s Museum of Modern Art, but the task proved to be impractical and the work was destroyed. Nelson’s authorized biographer, Joe Alex Morris, noted, “It was typical of Rockefeller that he held no resentment against Rivera, although the artist wouldn’t speak to him for years.”³⁸

Nelson was welcomed into the Council on Foreign Relations in 1936, several years before younger brother David. Already a committed internationalist, he was appointed assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs by Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Nelson's enthusiasm for world government and his chumminess with Communists landed him a spot on the U.S. delegation to the UN's 1945 founding conference in San Francisco. In the mid-1950s, while serving as a presidential special assistant, he helped to prepare the way for the first summit meeting between President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Nikita Khrushchev that served primarily to legitimize the Kremlin leader.³⁹

An early advocate of ties with Communist China, Nelson stated in a November 1959 speech in Oregon that "our contacts with China are not as intimate as ultimately they will have to be." In another speech, delivered in Philadelphia on May 26, 1960, he proposed the creation of a "Soviet role, for example, in the fields of scientific research, from health to weather control and ... in specific projects of economic cooperation in areas of need."

By January 1967, he and pro-Soviet Ohio industrialist Cyrus Eaton announced an "alliance" between their newly formed International Basic Economy Corporation (IBEC) and the Soviet government. Its purpose: To build synthetic rubber and aluminum plants in several Communist-dominated nations. At the time, our nation was at war with Soviet-supplied North Vietnam. Helping the Soviet Union and its satellite nations while U.S. forces were being killed by Soviet-supplied weapons in Southeast Asia ought to have occasioned treason trials for those involved. Yet, Nelson Rockefeller was the man Bill Buckley believed "would make a good secretary of defense" or even "a great president."

Kissinger and the Abandonment of POWs

Buckley has remained close to Kissinger despite the latter's leading role in abandoning America's POWs after the Vietnam War. According to a 1991 Republican Senate Staff report, immediately after Kissinger and North Vietnam's Le Duc Tho signed the January 27, 1973 Paris Peace Accords which ended the fighting in Vietnam, Kissinger hand-carried a secret letter promising billions in aid to the Hanoi government.⁴⁰ The very existence of this February 1, 1973 letter, signed by President Nixon, was kept from Congress and the American people. With no knowledge of this remarkable commitment, and of the fact that the fate of remaining POWs depended on fulfilling it, Congress passed legislation barring funds for "reparations" to North Vietnam.⁴¹

The Senate staff report further stated that the congressional prohibition against "reparations" indicated to North Vietnamese leaders that none of the aid promised in the Nixon letter would be forthcoming. Lt. Col. Stuart A. Herrington served as a military intelligence and liaison officer with the North Vietnamese and Chinese from 1973 to 1975. He testified that North Vietnamese officials informed him that POWs would be returned once the promised payments were made. In his 1983 book, *Peace With Honor? An American Reports on Vietnam 1973-1975*, Herrington wrote that U.S. casualties under North Vietnamese control would be accounted for and prisoners returned if the U.S. will "fulfill its commitment to contribute money to 'heal the wounds of war.'" Herrington recalled a frank statement by North Vietnamese POW negotiator Captain To, who acknowledged: "Of course we have information on many of your MIA personnel.... [W]e want to give them back. But why should we give them to you for nothing? Your government ... must pay. That is your obligation...."⁴² Once Congress forbade "reparations," the Vietnamese reneged on their pledges to return many of the POWs and MIAs they were holding.

The Defense Department claimed that at least 5,000 men should have been returned, but only 591 actually made it back. The Senate staff report claimed that the others had become “bargaining chips,” and even referred to them as “hostages.”

On April 13, 1973, without mentioning the letter sent by the president and delivered by Kissinger, the Defense Department falsely declared: “There are no more prisoners in Southeast Asia. They’re all dead.”⁴³ The awful truth is that they were indeed as good as dead from that moment forward. The Nixon letter’s unfulfilled promise had sealed their fate.

This letter’s existence was revealed years later when a group of congressmen visited Hanoi and were told about it by the Vietnamese. During a September 1978 probe into the still-unresolved plight of our POWs and MIAs, Representative Frank McCloskey (R-Ind.) scolded Undersecretary of State Philip Habib (CFR) for his previous denials that any such “secret memorandum” existed. Habib responded: “I didn’t know of the existence of the letter ... either.”⁴⁴

For a number of years after the shooting ceased, reports of live sightings of Americans in the former war zone continued to surface. But no more POWs were ever returned. After forcing our men to fight under restrictions that guaranteed their defeat, the behind-the-scenes maneuvering of the Nixon-Kissinger team further guaranteed that most of the captured Americans would never be repatriated.

Rather than condemning Henry Kissinger’s pivotal role in the abandonment of our POWs, Buckley eventually wrote a ringing defense of his friend’s conduct. In 1992, Kissinger testified before a Senate committee investigating the still-unresolved plight of the POWs. Fortunately for Kissinger, fellow CFR member Senator John Kerry (D-Mass.) chaired the committee. The erstwhile secretary of state’s appearance afforded an opportunity to posture as a champion of the POW cause, and Senator Kerry made sure that no tough questions were asked. He gave Kissinger free rein to state his version of the events that were still plaguing POW family members, veterans groups, and others.

Buckley dutifully parroted Kissinger’s version of the events. Were any MIAs detained by the North Vietnamese at the close of the war? Buckley’s September 1992 column quoted Kissinger: “Personally, I have no proof whether Americans ... were kept behind by Hanoi.” How about POWs? “Some prisoners may — I repeat may — have been kept behind by our adversaries. No prisoners were left behind by the deliberate act or negligent omission of American officials.”⁴⁵ Buckley’s spin implied that nothing further could be done for the unaccounted-for POWs and MIAs. The column could have been written by Kissinger himself. As could the Kerry Committee’s questions that avoided mention of the infamous Nixon letter Kissinger had taken to Hanoi. It amounted to Buckley saying to his friend, “You lie and I’ll swear to it.”

Buckley and the Bilderbergers

In 1975, columnist Nicholas von Hoffman sought to defend a group known as the Bilderbergers in an article he penned for the *Washington Star*. He noted that participants in recent annual meetings of the group included “David and Nelson Rockefeller, Robert McNamara, Baron

Edmond de Rothschild, William Paley, chairman of the board of CBS, Senator William Fulbright, Cord Meyer of the CIA, *William F. Buckley*, and George W. Ball....” (Emphasis added.)⁴⁶ Von Hoffman went to great lengths to insist that nothing sinister transpired when such U.S. powerbrokers met secretly with their European counterparts.

The annual Bilderberg confabs derive their unusual name from Oosterbeek, Holland’s Bilderberg Hotel, the site of the first such meeting in 1954. They bring together 100–150 of the top leaders of the U.S. and Western European nations for several days of secret discussion at a plush resort somewhere in the Western world. No press coverage is allowed, and no one is permitted to reveal what transpires.

Journalist Robert W. Lee has speculated that the Bilderberg movement was launched as a reaction to the anti-Communist McCarthy movement of the early 1950s. He pointed to a conclusion reached by Medford Evans that “the essence of McCarthyism is patriotism [while the] essence of Bilderbergism is internationalism.” Evans believed that the Bilderberg conferences “were instituted to carry on the work of dismantling American sovereignty which McCarthy had interrupted.”⁴⁷

Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands co-chaired the annual sessions with David Rockefeller until 1976, when he was disgraced after being linked to a bribery scandal. After a 1971 Bilderberg meeting at Laurance Rockefeller’s Woodstock Inn in Vermont, Bernhard told an inquiring reporter that a topic of discussion during the meeting was “a change in the world role of the United States.”⁴⁸ Earlier, he told his authorized biographer, Alden Hatch, that the attendees were seeking ways to alter the thinking of “people who have been brought up on nationalism to the idea of relinquishing part of their sovereignty to a supranational body.”⁴⁹ Bilderbergers have never relished the idea of an independent United States.

Bilderberg meetings have been attended by such high-ranking U.S. officials as Dean Rusk, J. William Fulbright, Robert McNamara, Cyrus Vance, Walter Mondale, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Gerald Ford, Alexander Haig, Peter G. Peterson, Vernon Jordan, and Bill Clinton. Some of the prominent journalists, past and present, who have participated include C.D. Jackson of Time Inc.; Max Frankel, James Reston, Thomas L. Friedman, and C.L. Sulzberger of the *New York Times*; Katharine Graham and James Hoagland of the *Washington Post*; Robert L. Bartley and Peter R. Kann of the *Wall Street Journal*; Bill Moyers of the Public Broadcasting System; William P. Bundy of the CFR’s *Foreign Affairs*; Peter Jennings of ABC News; and columnists Joseph Kraft, Joseph C. Harsch, George Will and, of course, William F. Buckley, Jr.

After eight years at the highest levels of the Nixon and Ford administrations, Kissinger returned to the private sector in 1977, but did not abandon the arena of power politics. Having attended his first Bilderberg session in 1957, he has since attended virtually all of its gatherings. In 1975, he brought his close friend William Buckley to the conference in Cesme, Turkey. And in April 1977, he and Buckley traveled with CFR Chairman David Rockefeller and *Foreign Affairs* Editor William P. Bundy to the 25th annual Bilderberger Conference at the Imperial Hotel in Torquay, a luxurious seaside resort 140 miles southwest of London.⁵⁰

As a journalist, Buckley could have revealed interesting details about these get-togethers, but he

wrote nary a word about them, opting instead to honor the pledge that participants keep quiet about what goes on behind the closely guarded doors.

A Reuters dispatch, however, did report a few details about the 1977 Bilderberg gathering:

A hundred of the West's most powerful men met behind closed doors this weekend to discuss issues and strategies that could reshape Western policies.

The Bilderberg Conference, often described as “the most exclusive club of the Western establishment,” met at the English coastal town of Torquay only two weeks before Western leaders are to hold a summit conference in London.

In an atmosphere of rigid secrecy, with each delegate pledged to secrecy, bankers, economists, politicians and leading technocrats exchanged views on how to preserve the Western way of life. Participants included Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of West Germany, former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger and David Rockefeller, chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank.

Delegates are selected by a conference steering committee. Expenses are met from private funds.... This year's conference, the 25th, was guided by three main topics — problems facing the mixed-economy countries, United States-European relations, and the relations of the West with the third world.⁵¹

When U.S. cabinet officials, corporate executives, and prominent media personalities meet in deep secrecy with European prime ministers, international bankers, and world-government-advocating journalists to reshape U.S. policies, alter the “world role” of our nation, and contribute to “relinquishing part of their sovereignty to a supranational body,” it is hardly extreme to characterize the gathering as conspiratorial.

Over the years, Bilderberg meetings have constituted for aspiring politicians what debutante balls are for young ladies anxious to move into adult social circles. Ambitious and pliant office seekers are introduced to the big time of international politics, carefully scrutinized, and selected for future advancement if they pass muster. That Bill Clinton attended the 1991 meeting at Baden-Baden, Germany, and soon landed in the White House, should not be considered coincidental.⁵² And Bill Buckley's involvement in this internationalist movement is another indication that his conservative reputation is fraudulent.

First, Buckley joined Skull & Bones, then the CIA, followed by membership in the CFR and participation in the clandestine Bilderberger gatherings arranged by David Rockefeller and his European cronies. He went to one shadowy, secretive, sovereignty-eroding endeavor after another. And all the while he emphatically denied the existence of a conspiracy, opting instead to tear down those who disagree while striving to hide or whitewash the conspiratorial deeds of his Establishment friends.

*Haig joined the CFR in 1974 and served as Ronald Reagan's first secretary of state.

Chapter Eight — Debunking Conspiracy

*None dare call it bull---t.*¹
— National Review

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Gary Allen's *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* sold more than five million copies. Buckley's *National Review* devoted a mere one-third of a page to reviewing this bestseller in its September 29, 1972 "Books In Brief" section. The review's concluding sentence crudely summarized the message Buckley wanted to send: The reviewer wrote, "None dare call it bull---t." The vulgarity was fully spelled out in the magazine.

That terse, caustic commentary rejected and ridiculed Allen's thesis. It emphatically placed the magazine and Buckley totally at odds with the growing number of Americans who were concluding that our nation's continuing descent into a bureaucratically controlled domestic superstate and a world government threatening to destroy our national sovereignty were the result of sinister design. Based on evidence supplied by Allen and others, newly awakened citizens were now daring openly to call America's problem "a conspiracy," and were pointing to the CFR as one of its major seats of power. But *National Review* had from its outset disputed the conspiracy view.

Within a year of *National Review's* inaugural in 1955, leftist editor John Fischer of *Harper's* magazine accused Buckley of using his new publication to propagate a "conspiracy theory of liberal control." He claimed that *National Review* was not "an organ of conservatism, but of radicalism." Fischer's complaint about "conspiracy" brought an immediate response from Buckley. John Judis made note of it, but failed to recognize its significance. Buckley wrote in the August 1, 1956 issue of *National Review* that the position of his magazine:

... is that our society behaves the way it does because the majority of its opinion makers, for various reasons, respond to social stimuli in a particular way — spontaneously, not in compliance with a continuously imposed discipline.²

In other words, Buckley immediately disassociated himself from any belief that a conspiracy was increasing its grip on our nation. *National Review's* attitude was that the harm done to America and its institutions resulted "spontaneously" and that whoever might be causing it was not acting under "imposed discipline."

Over the years, *National Review* has occasionally referred to "conspiracy," but only when pointing to past history, such as horrors emanating from the Soviet Union. There have been few hints that anything smacking of deliberate treason has taken root within the United States. In September 1958, the magazine editorialized about the death of French Nobel Prize winner (for chemistry) Frederic Joliot-Curie. The piece ended by noting that he "died a member of the Central Committee of the French section of the Communist world conspiracy."³ The account implied that Moscow served as headquarters of a world conspiracy, but the key word, "conspiracy" (the occasional use of which obviously encouraged Robert Welch and others to

assist Buckley in his new venture) soon disappeared almost entirely from the magazine, except when cited to ridicule those who claimed that one existed.

John Fischer's criticism was soon echoed by such left-wing publications as *The Progressive* and *Commentary*. (*Commentary* had already become one of the leading neoconservative journals.) Both portrayed Buckley's new magazine as a "bore" and even "duller" than the Left's ponderous journals. It is curious that leftists bothered to mention *National Review* at all. Each large or small brickbat from liberals gave Buckley an opportunity to respond with comments that delighted his investors while persuading conservative readers that they had at last found someone and something worthwhile.

The attention Buckley and his publication received from seeming opponents was *déjà vu*. Had Yale's authorities and other prominent reviewers merely ignored *God and Man at Yale* instead of loudly denouncing it, Buckley would have had a much steeper climb to becoming a nationally known *enfant terrible* and a conservative icon for many concerned Americans.

The matter of conspiracy continued to dog the "incorruptible journal." There was increasingly credible evidence that deliberate treachery, extending over many decades, was aggravating our nation's problems. Alarm bells were sounding from official bodies and from individuals whose impressive credentials gave their pronouncements a high degree of credibility. When *National Review* arrived on the scene, many expected that those warnings about conspiracy would be amplified in its pages.

What were some of those warning signs?

1. At the end of the 1940s, many leaders of the Communist Party USA were tried and convicted for violating provisions of the anti-sedition Smith Act. The act held that the CPUSA was not a political party in the usual sense, but rather a key part of a conspiracy seeking to destroy this nation. (Information gleaned from Moscow's files after the breakup of the Soviet Union confirmed that millions of dollars in direct payments had been transferred from Stalin's government to CPUSA coffers.) After an appeal of this celebrated case, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the verdict in a 6-2 ruling in which Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson concurred with the classification of the Party as a key constituent of a "conspiracy."⁴

2. In June 1951, Senator Joseph McCarthy took to the floor of the U.S. Senate to document the pro-Communist record of General George C. Marshall. Near the conclusion of his 60,000 word speech (later published in book form) he stated: "This must be the product of a great conspiracy, a conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous such venture in the history of man.... A conspiracy of infamy so black that, when it is finally exposed, its principals shall be forever deserving of the maledictions of all honest men."⁵

3. Senator William Jenner (R-Ind.) served on the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security during the early 1950s and was its chairman beginning in 1953. Under his leadership, the panel issued a report entitled *Interlocking Subversion in Government Departments*, which, based on extensive hearings, detailed the existence of four Communist espionage networks operating within the U.S. government. The Subcommittee stated with emphasis that *two of these rings had*

not been exposed. And they never were exposed, because efforts to shed light on them were soon terminated. The report reached 12 major conclusions, one of which pointed to “Members of this conspiracy....” (Emphasis added.) It stated further that Communists had “carried on a successful and important penetration of the United States Government.”⁶

4. In the “Afterword” to their 1954 book *McCarthy and His Enemies*, Buckley and Bozell expressed hope that the spirit generated by Joseph McCarthy would “infuse American foreign policy with the sinews and purpose to crush the Communist conspiracy.”⁷

5. In 1956, the House Committee on Un-American Activities published a series of reports entitled *The Communist Conspiracy: Strategy and Tactics of World Communism*. Filling nearly 2,000 pages, these documents bluntly labeled the threat to America a “conspiracy.”⁸

6. In August 1956, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover wrote: “Yet the individual is handicapped by coming face to face with a conspiracy so monstrous he cannot believe it exists. The American mind simply has not come to a realization of the evil which has been introduced into our midst.”⁹

While these and other chilling testimonials about the existence of a conspiracy within our borders generally identified Moscow as its international headquarters, they also raised many questions about the inability — even the unwillingness — of America’s leaders to mount an effective counterattack. Such warnings (even the comment about conspiracy by Buckley and Bozell in their book about McCarthy) were discounted by *National Review*. There was to be no suggestion in this journal that an internal enemy was striving to undermine the United States as a free and independent nation.

In August 1956, at about the same time that FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was warning of “a conspiracy so monstrous” that one “cannot believe it exists,” Buckley offered his contrary view that America’s problems were occurring “spontaneously, not in compliance with a continuously imposed discipline.” In effect, he was saying, “Don’t listen to Hoover, the House Committee, or the Senate Subcommittee. Ignore even my own statement in *McCarthy and His Enemies*. The bad that happens to our nation is the result of spontaneous stupidity, not orchestrated design.”

Buckley’s magazine did publish some sharp criticism of the Eisenhower administration, but none of its writers would conclude, as Robert Welch would later emphasize, that Eisenhower’s misdeeds — and those of some of his predecessors and associates — were part of a conspiratorial plan. In fact, as the following examples show, virtually *any* explanation of the Eisenhower years was tolerated except conspiracy.

On January 11, 1956, *National Review* published Brent Bozell’s harshly critical survey of the first three years of the Eisenhower-Dulles foreign policy. He characterized 15 separate incidents as cave-ins, accommodations, and concessions to the Soviet Union and Communist China. Included were such treacherous acts as informing South Korean and South Vietnamese officials that the U.S. would oppose liberation of the Communist-controlled northern halves of their nations; concealing recently released information about FDR’s betrayals at the Yalta wartime summit; borrowing the phrase “peaceful coexistence” from Lenin to excuse our nation’s

pro-Soviet foreign policy; acquiescing in Soviet rule over the captive nations of Eastern Europe; and working to silence Chiang Kai-shek's opposition to UN membership for Communist-dominated Mongolia.

Could all this have occurred “spontaneously”? Were our nation's leaders merely blind and bumbling fools?

National Review's February 2, 1957 issue included Frank Meyer's update that he termed the “betrayal of our allies” and the “bankruptcy of U.S. foreign policy.” He pointed to the Eisenhower administration's pathetic response to the takeover of the Suez Canal by Egypt's Nasser; the abandonment in 1956 of the Hungarian freedom fighters after they had been assured that U.S. assistance would arrive; and the implicit green light given the Soviet Union to gain a strategic foothold in the Middle East. He accused President Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles (both of whom belonged to the CFR) of basing the nation's foreign policy on a pattern of “surrender, surrender, and again surrender.”

But, once again, such deficiencies were portrayed as the result of bad mistakes and/or witless leadership, and nothing more. There was no suggestion of a deliberate pattern or willful misconduct.

Shortly after the Meyer article appeared, economist Henry Hazlitt supplemented the list of Eisenhower administration failings. But in his February 9, 1957 *National Review* piece entitled “Timetable To Disaster,” Hazlitt also discounted the possibility of conspiracy, excusing America's leaders of culpability because they had acted “unknowingly of course.”

In December 1957, Buckley himself scolded President Eisenhower for his sorry leadership. During a forum in New York City sponsored by *National Review*, he excoriated Ike for having allowed the “problem of internal security” to grow “to a state worse than that under Mr. Truman.” Insisting that “Mr. Eisenhower must, inevitably, be repudiated,” Buckley lamented that he didn't expect anything to be done because “Eisenhower does not take stands, except against McCarthy and the Bricker Amendment.”* His remarks were later published in *National Review*.¹⁰

Throughout the nation, however, concern about conspiracy continued to grow despite *National Review's* efforts to scotch it. Fueling the awakening was The John Birch Society, which Robert Welch founded in December 1958. Welch had concluded as early as 1934 that America was being made over “into a carbon copy of thousands of despotisms that have gone before.” Years of additional research led him to the conclusion — which he stated unequivocally — that a conspiracy was increasing its grip on our nation. He pointed to its effects in and out of government, maintaining that its ultimate goal was a new world order in which American independence and personal freedom would be sacrificed on the altar of a totalitarian world government.¹¹

Welch refused to make excuses for the seemingly stupefied reaction of top government officials to Soviet advances. Instead, he constantly pointed out that the U.S. government was helping the USSR as part of “a gigantic conspiracy to enslave mankind; an increasingly successful

conspiracy controlled by determined, cunning, and utterly ruthless gangsters, willing to use any means to achieve its end.”¹²

As the Birch Society grew, it challenged Buckley’s influence on the thinking of conservative and anti-Communist Americans. Buckley had clearly signaled his determination to shield his readers from considering conspiracy, but some were listening to Robert Welch’s contrary view. So Buckley directly addressed Welch and conspiracy in a March 1963 *National Review* article entitled “Quiet Conspiracy At Work.” At its outset, he stated that his purpose was to counter “Mr. Welch’s fascination with the conspiracy as the operative agent of our decline and fall.”

In this revealing piece, Buckley admitted that the Soviet Union was guilty of conspiracy, since its agents had acquired our atomic secrets through the efforts of “the Fuchs-Rosenberg apparatus” and scientists “Martin and Mitchell who eloped to Moscow” and divulged intelligence gathered after many years working in sensitive American posts.

But those incidents were old news. There was no acknowledgment of contemporary conspiratorial activity or its influence on our nation. As a sop to those who believed that history is frequently shaped by conspirators, Buckley pointed to events more than a century old, such as Thomas Jefferson’s charge that conspirators of his day were trying to scuttle the republic and create a monarchy; Andrew Jackson’s insistence that a conspiracy lay behind the formation of the Bank of the United States; and Abraham Lincoln’s claim that conspirators were plotting to spread slavery. But he intimated that even those ancient assessments were not necessarily accurate because “conspiracy talk may be naïve and may be deplorable.”

To buttress his own denial regarding the existence of a *current* conspiracy, he applied the time-worn tactic of condemning both sides: those who emphatically hold that America is threatened by such a force and those who just as emphatically deem the idea to be rubbish. After suggesting that “the truth lies somewhere in between” those opposing views, he stated:

I tend to fear not that the pendulum is going too far in the direction of Mr. Robert Welch, but too far in the direction of nonchalance about the fact that a) conspiracies do exist, and b) that they do accomplish great purposes.¹³

Here, Buckley had applied Hegelian dialectics. He discarded both absolute affirmation (thesis) and absolute negation (antithesis), leaving as the only remaining alternative a compromising middle ground (synthesis) containing a false or misleading conclusion. Political compromisers regularly employ this tactic, as do those who espouse situation ethics. They have us living in an inconclusive “gray area” where virtually nothing is morally certain and no one can speak with authority.

To summarize Buckley’s position, conspiracies occasionally had existed in the past, but none existed in 1963. Regular readers of *National Review* would seldom be energized to take action to expose and counter the deliberate treachery that was steadily undermining America. After a steady diet of Buckley’s journal, potential activists would slowly become anesthetized and do nothing to oppose the organized destruction of their nation. Eventually, Buckley abandoned even minuscule concessions about any conspiracy.

However, after the Soviet Union ceased to exist, he again contended that its leaders, and they alone, had acted conspiratorially. During the June 1996 PBS interview mentioned earlier, he stated:

My feeling always about Castro was that he should be regarded as a salient of a global conspiracy centered in Moscow.¹⁴

“Always”? How could Buckley have “always” regarded Castro as “a salient of a global conspiracy centered in Moscow” when he had so often debunked the very notion of conspiracy? Before Castro seized control of Cuba on January 1, 1959, and on numerous occasions thereafter, Robert Welch and his *American Opinion* magazine had warned emphatically that Castro was the product of conspiratorial activity emanating both from Moscow and Washington.¹⁵ (See Chapter 13 for more information about these warnings.)

A thorough study of what Welch had written about Castro, and about other deliberate anti-American policies implemented by Washington, convinced many Americans that a conspiracy was indeed operating and had achieved great influence within our government, the mass media, and other segments of our society.

Whether or not a conspiracy exists is of crucial importance. What a person concludes about that issue will determine how he responds to our country’s problems. It will dictate the actions undertaken, and the leadership to be followed, when taxation, regulations, controls, bureaucracy, and Big Brother government begin displacing limited government and personal freedom. It will shape a response when American sovereignty is being transferred piecemeal to a new world order.

Concluding that willful conspirators rather than mere bumbling do-gooders are at the root of such problems stimulates activity because of human nature’s most powerful instinct: self-preservation. Most who decide that the disastrous transformation of America is the work of deliberate evildoers will do whatever they can to save their country, themselves, and their loved ones.

But those who become convinced that the damage being done results from well-intentioned mistakes will do little except grumble. Even while witnessing the ongoing destruction, they will shrug their shoulders, continue working to keep their heads above water, and naïvely expect others in government and elsewhere to eventually see the error of their ways and take corrective action.

Further, as any physician will attest, an accurate diagnosis of a problem is essential before proper corrective action can be taken. A response to stupidity will differ significantly from a response to planned treachery. Those who refuse even to consider the possibility of a conspiracy are also those most prone to be deceived and victimized by it.

At the very time Bill Buckley was leading Americans away from an awareness of conspiracy, former Eisenhower administration Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson was sounding an

alarm and seeking to steer the people of this nation in the opposite direction. Pointing an accusing finger at Moscow, but expressing even more concern about leaders in government and society within the U.S., he targeted the Supreme Court for “willfully and disastrously” undermining the Constitution, the Washington politicians for “openly and brazenly” sending billions of dollars to avowed Communists, and the president for advancing a policy “to turn over our own armed forces to the United Nations.” After recounting these and other frightening developments, he thundered in a December 1963 speech:

Communism is not a political party, nor a military organization, nor an ideological crusade, nor a rebirth of Russian imperialist ambition, though it comprises and uses all of these. Communism, in its unmistakable reality, is wholly a conspiracy....¹⁶

The underlying thrust of Benson’s message amounted to a call for action, not a pathetic shrug of one’s shoulders or a frail hope for the best. He called on Americans to “resist the influence and policies of the socialist-communist conspiracy wherever they are found — in the schools, in the churches, in governments, in unions, in businesses, in agriculture.”¹⁷ He also endorsed The John Birch Society, repeating an earlier statement in which he had described the Society as “the most effective non-church organization in our fight against creeping Socialism and godless Communism.”

Recall that Bill Buckley’s editorial in the inaugural issue of *National Review* stated that the magazine “stands athwart history, yelling Stop, at a time when no one is inclined to do so, or to have much patience with those who so urge it.” But rather than working to stop the conspiracy, his efforts have been directed at stopping those who would expose and rout it. He has played the role of a pied piper, leading those under his influence away from the understanding needed to motivate them to become involved in the fight to save their country.

It wasn’t a group of misguided liberals who met in secret at Georgia’s Jekyll Island in 1910 to hammer out the details leading to the creation of the Federal Reserve. One of the seven plotters, Frank Vanderlip of the Rockefeller-controlled National City Bank of New York, likened himself to a “conspirator” when he wrote about the event 25 years later. In an article entitled “Farm Boy to Financier,” appearing in the *Saturday Evening Post* for February 9, 1935, Vanderlip asserted:

Despite my views about the value to society of greater publicity for the affairs of corporations, there was an occasion, near the close of 1910, when I was as secretive — indeed as furtive — as any conspirator.... I do not feel it any exaggeration to speak of our secret expedition to Jekyll Island as the occasion for the actual conception of what eventually became the Federal Reserve System.¹⁸

Conspiracy was, and remains, a key aspect of Ford Foundation financing of left-wing and Communist groups. The 1953–1954 Special Committee to Investigate Tax-Exempt Foundations headed by Representative Carroll Reece (R-Tenn.) sent its research director, Norman Dodd, to interview Ford Foundation president H. Rowan Gaither. In a burst of candor, Gaither admitted that he was acting under directives “issued by the White House ... the substance [of which] was to the effect that we should make every effort to so alter life in the United States as to make possible a comfortable merger with the Soviet Union.” When Dodd asked Gaither if he would

make those plans a matter of public record, the Ford Foundation leader stated, “This, we would not think of doing, Mr. Dodd.”¹⁹

Courageous Hungarian freedom fighters, urged on by Radio Free Europe broadcasts, rose up against their Soviet slavemasters in October 1956. Rep. Michael Feighan (D-Ohio) described what happened:

You will recall the revolution broke out on October 23, 1956, and that by October 28, the Hungarian patriots had rid their country of the Russian oppressors. A revolutionary regime took over and there was a political hiatus for five days.

Then the State Department, allegedly concerned about the delicate feelings of [Yugoslavia’s] Communist dictator Tito, sent him the following cable assurances of our national intentions in the late afternoon of Friday, November 2, 1956: “The Government of the United States does not look with favor upon governments unfriendly to the Soviet Union on the borders of the Soviet Union.”

It was no accident or misjudgment of consequences which led the imperial Russian Army to reinvade Hungary at 4 a.m. on the morning of November 4, 1956. The cabled message to Tito was the go-ahead signal to the Russians because any American school boy knows that Tito is Moscow’s Trojan Horse. It took less than 48 hours for him to relay this message to his superiors in the Kremlin.²⁰

The Hungarian revolt was crushed. Note that Congressman Feighan pointedly stated that the action of the State Department “was no accident or misjudgment of consequences.” It was, in other words, planned to happen as yet another move on the conspiratorial chessboard.

Nor was Professor Carroll Quigley describing the actions of mere liberal ideologues when he approvingly wrote of the “secret society” to rule mankind in his monumental *Tragedy and Hope*.²¹

Conspiracy-driven betrayals by U.S. leaders delivered China to Mao Tse-tung’s Communists in 1949; prevented U.S. victories in the Korean and Vietnam wars; brought Castro to power in 1959, and solidified his grip in 1961 by abandoning the anti-Castro Cuban freedom fighters at the Bay of Pigs; and undermined anti-Communist forces in the Belgian Congo, Rhodesia, South Africa, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. U.S. leaders also strengthened the United Nations and ignored the U.S. Constitution by arranging for U.S. military forces again to wage war under UN authority, as in 1991 in Iraq.

Kendall Bares Buckley’s Goal

As noted in Chapter 1, Medford Evans was an early contributor to *National Review*. He became closely acquainted with the original Buckley team but soon departed as did several others. In the October 1973 issue of *American Opinion*, Evans reviewed Charles Lam Markmann’s book about the Buckley family. At one point he recounted the details of a revealing conversation he had with Willmoore Kendall in 1961. The two *National Review* veterans met in Dallas and visited Army General Edwin A. Walker, who had recently resigned from the military and announced his intent

to devote his time and energy to the fight for “Christian liberty and American independence.”

Walker’s superiors had suppressed his no-nonsense, anti-Communist “Pro-Blue” program for the troops under his command in Germany. A key aspect of the program focused on exposing subversion *within* the U.S. government. Walker’s educational effort didn’t blame moles from Moscow or some other foreign capital for repeated disastrous decisions. He believed, and did not hesitate to state, that domestic Communists and pro-Communists had become dominant in some departments of the U.S. government.

When ordered by officials in Washington to terminate the “Pro-Blue” program, Walker returned home to do battle with those he claimed were America’s well-entrenched enemies. He didn’t simply retire; he resigned and forfeited his pension in order to begin his personal crusade unhindered by government restrictions.

General Walker had asked Evans to be his principal assistant, while Professor Willmoore Kendall was one of several journalists who journeyed to Dallas to interview Walker and report his dramatic story. Evans related that after meeting with the general:

Kendall and I, still restless, went to a hamburger joint on Harry Hines Boulevard to drink coffee, reminisce about the past, and especially speculate about the future. After some comparatively idle talk Willmoore said to me: “Medford, I don’t suppose there is any chance you could get Walker to let up in his campaigning against Communism, is there?” I replied: “No, Willmoore, not a chance. You could stand him up against a wall and shoot him, but you couldn’t make him quit speaking out against Communism.” (I thought Willmoore was just testing. He certainly was not jesting.) “I don’t suppose,” he continued, “there is any chance that you would even advise him to let up, would you?” I replied: “No, Willmoore, not a chance. You could stand me up against the same wall, but I would never advise him to quit fighting Communism.”

Then came the shocker. “Then I’m afraid,” said Willmoore Kendall, of O.S.S., Yale, and *National Review*, “that Walker is going to lose his respectable support.” I asked: “What do you mean respectable support?” Kendall was explicit: “I mean *National Review*.” At the time it took no bravado for me to reply: “Then that is just too bad for *National Review*.”

Later Willmoore wrote me a letter from Oklahoma City, returning his motel key which he had inadvertently taken away, and expressing his regret that he and I could no longer be on the same side. Personally, he said, he wished me well (and he said the same of another former *National Review* contributor), but as for the great issue, and this is verbatim: “C’est la guerre.”²²

Kendall’s parting comment, of course, translates to “That’s war.” It would later become obvious that the war to which he was referring was not between anti-Communists and pro-Communists, but rather over the question of whether the American people should be informed about a conspiracy’s grip on their nation. The Kendall/Buckley-style war strategy would feature repeated denial that there was a conspiracy behind Communism, even while portraying the Red menace as

nearly invincible. Americans could then be persuaded to accept higher taxation, increasingly onerous controls, and an array of international alliances leading to world government, all under the guise of opposing the external Soviet threat.

The *National Review* team fostered the notion that Communism's might was immense, yet it largely ignored the extent to which U.S. aid and trade with the USSR and its satellites had created the alleged Red monster. Frightened Americans were being persuaded that our nation had little choice but to submit to a world government as an alternative to nuclear destruction.

In tandem with this propaganda war, CFR member Lincoln P. Bloomfield authored a remarkably blunt 1962 State Department-funded study entitled *A World Effectively Controlled By the United Nations*.** In it, he perhaps unintentionally bared the hidden rationale undergirding aid to the Soviets, "... if the communist dynamic were greatly abated, the West might well lose whatever incentive it has for world government."²³ There has never been any clearer or more succinct statement about the strategy under which the world-government promoters operated. Nor can any reasonable person avoid concluding that a conspiracy had arranged all of this.

According to Bloomfield, world Communism was so frightful that a "world effectively controlled by the United Nations" was an eminently reasonable alternative. He called for the UN to achieve "a relative monopoly of physical force" and a world where "the nations are disarmed to police levels."

In his 1973 review of Charles Lam Markmann's book about the Buckley, Medford Evans recalled a statement by Richard Nixon indicating that Willmoore Kendall's *c'est la guerre* threat on behalf of Buckley and *National Review* was indeed serious. After Buckley had used his influence (magazine, newspaper columns, speeches, etc.) to condemn and isolate The John Birch Society, and after he and Richard Nixon had become allies in the Establishment wing of the Republican Party, Nixon declared:

Buckley's articles cost the Birchers their respectability with conservatives. I couldn't have accomplished that. Liberals couldn't have either.²⁴

Evans concluded his 1973 review with this observation: "The basic purpose of *National Review* may well be to contain 'respectable' conservatives. I'm glad to report that some of us believe in liberation, not containment."

Buckley's relationship with Kendall then gradually deteriorated. Markmann stated that during Kendall's years at *National Review*, his "complex nature burgeoned there until his inability to agree long with almost anyone and the zest of his pogroms against various other chieftains of conservatism sent him once more into the wilderness."²⁵ Kendall eventually left the magazine's headquarters, but continued to submit articles, and his name remained for a time on the masthead.

Returning to full-time teaching, Kendall completely severed his ties with *National Review* in 1963. Years later, in the magazine's 25th anniversary issue (December 1980), Buckley recalled the split:

I had a happy evening with him there [in Los Angeles] in 1963, returning a day or two later to New York where at one of our periodic editors' meetings it was suggested that if Willmoore was really going to have to cut down on his work for *NR* as drastically as he had done for two years, he should be re-situated on our masthead as "Contributor" rather than as "Senior Editor" — a proposal I routinely sent off to Willmoore as reasonable. He replied with a sundering blast; followed by a silence he maintained right up until his death (heart) in 1967....²⁶

But Kendall hadn't been silent in 1961 when he telegraphed Buckley's resolve to deny "respectable support" to those conservatives who disagreed with their non-conspiratorial stance about the source of America's ills. In keeping with that resolve, Buckley has for decades waged a war on Robert Welch and The John Birch Society. That war is the subject of the next chapter.

*The Bricker Amendment stated that no treaty entered into by the United States government could override any provision of the U.S. Constitution.

**"Prepared for IDA in support of a study submitted to the Department of State under contract No. SCC 28270, dated February 24, 1961."

Chapter Nine — Targeting Robert Welch and The John Birch Society

*And William Buckley Jr. played the indispensable role of casting out the movement's Birchers, haters and conspiracy theorists.*¹
— Paul A. Gigot

Paul Gigot is a regular columnist for the *Wall Street Journal*. At the time he penned his praise of Bill Buckley for "casting out" the Birchers, he held membership in the Council on Foreign Relations (from 1988–1993). Two of his superiors at the *Journal* are Editor Robert Bartley and Chairman and Publisher Peter Kann. Both are also members of the CFR and both have frequented sessions of the elitist Bilderberger group. Managing Editor Paul E. Steiger and Deputy Editor Daniel Henninger are additional *Journal* executives whose names can be found on the CFR's membership roster. Why wouldn't they salute Buckley for playing his "indispensable role"!

These Establishment-connected *Journal* figures regularly advance the cause of internationalism at the expense of national sovereignty. They ardently backed U.S. entry into NAFTA and the GATT-created World Trade Organization, and they have cheered as America has deepened its subservience to NATO and the UN. In short, they have long been key players in promoting the internationalism portion of the neoconservative agenda.

Neocon godfather Irving Kristol revealed that *Journal* heavyweight Robert Bartley contacted him in 1972 in order to introduce *Journal* readers to neoconservative views. He described the beginning of their long relationship in his 1995 book *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea*. Explaining how he and like-minded associates had moved into the Republican Party, Kristol wrote:

One important agent in this transformation was *The Wall Street Journal*, a newspaper that, at the time, few American intellectuals had ever seen, much less read. But it turned out that a young conservative journalist in their Washington bureau, Robert Bartley, had been reading *The Public Interest* and sensed that something of interest to conservatives — a fresh wind, as it were — was happening. He rang me up for an interview and in May of 1972 his article about *The Public Interest*, “Irving Kristol and Friends,” appeared. It was favorable almost (but not quite) to the point of embarrassment, and suddenly we had national exposure. A few years later, Bob was appointed editor of the editorial and op-ed pages, and I became a frequent contributor to those pages. More important, the editorials themselves began to reflect, in some degree, the mode of thinking to be found in *The Public Interest* — analytical, skeptical, and implicitly ideological in a way we did not ourselves at that time appreciate.²

That “mode of thinking” is neoconservatism, a view chock full of the internationalism that The John Birch Society has combated since its inception. It explains Paul Gigot’s slur of the Society, linking the organization with “haters.” And his praise of Buckley for supposedly casting the JBS out of the conservative movement came as no surprise.

The Attack on Welch

The Buckley team began sniping at John Birch Society founder Robert Welch in 1959, when his fledgling organization was only five months old. In April of that year, *National Review* treated its readers to “Folklore of the Right,” an article written by ex-Communist Eugene Lyons.³

Highly critical of Welch’s published claim that Boris Pasternak’s 1958 novel *Doctor Zhivago*⁴ was loaded with sophisticated disinformation, Lyons relied heavily on ridicule. Welch had earned *National Review*’s wrath not only because he focused on “conspiracy,” but also because the Buckley magazine had earlier published a favorable review of Pasternak’s book.

Welch’s comments about *Doctor Zhivago* had appeared in his own *American Opinion* magazine in February 1959.⁵ He insisted that Pasternak was dangerously wrong in asserting that the only negative aspect of Communism was the wickedness of its current leaders. He also countered Pasternak’s claim that Communism was essentially a noble ideal needing only time and some moral tweaking to realize its inevitable triumph. This was unvarnished Trotskyism (and nascent neoconservatism). Welch felt that someone had to expose Pasternak’s falsehoods, including the double standard by which the Russian author condemned Czarist Russia while legitimizing the ruthless regime ushered in by Lenin.

In his book, Pasternak had one of his characters state:

But what gave unity to the nineteenth century, what set it apart as one historical period?

It was the birth of socialist thought. Revolutions, young men dying on the barricades, writers racking their brains in an effort to curb the brute insolence of money, to save the human dignity of the poor. Marxism arose, it uncovered the root of the evil and it offered the remedy, it became the great force of the century.⁶

By the late 1950s when Pasternak penned those words, “the great force of the century” had already murdered tens of millions in Russia and elsewhere and, with brutality unexcelled in all history, had established police-state tyranny over the nations of Eastern and Central Europe. Could Pasternak have been unaware of that record? Could Buckley and *National Review* have honestly overlooked Pasternak’s inclination to sweep the Communist bloodbath under a rug?

Welch also strenuously objected to Pasternak’s assertion that both the Russian people and the Soviet armed forces were in 1940 totally loyal to the Communist government, especially when threatened by Germany’s invasion. *Doctor Zhivago* included the following passage as if it represented the typical reaction of the Russian people when Hitler’s forces marched into their country:

... the war came as a breath of fresh air, a purifying storm, a breath of deliverance....
And when the war broke out, its real horrors, its real dangers, its menace of real death were a blessing ... and they all took a deep breath and flung themselves into the furnace of the mortal, liberating struggle with real joy, with rapture.⁷

Welch claimed that this was a monstrous fabrication. He noted that the victims of Soviet tyranny actually gave Hitler’s army such an enthusiastic welcome that German forces captured Kiev without firing a shot. He informed his readers that Russian officers had to aim pistols at the backs of their troops to get them to oppose the German army as it moved toward Stalingrad. And he pointed to the remarkable defection to the German side of Russian General Andrei Vlasov and a large number of Soviet troops to fight with Vlasov and the Germans against their countrymen.

Before publishing the Lyons article, Buckley advised Welch that it was about to appear. While poring over Buckley’s voluminous files, John Judis found Welch’s friendly reply: “I shall not mind in the least your publishing Gene Lyons’ criticism.”

But the piece by Lyons was more than honest criticism; it was a vicious attack. After seeing it in print, Welch strongly protested to Buckley that the article “consisted of holding up to complete and sarcastic ridicule a theme to which we had given careful and considered argument, in which we still believe future history will prove to have been entirely correct.”⁸ To which Buckley responded, “I do not encourage in *National Review* editorial sniping at other conservatives. I OK’d Gene Lyons’ project because I believed that its central purpose was the rectification of a grievous mistake.”⁹

Welch had made no “mistake.” Only nine weeks later, *National Review* indirectly supported the accuracy of his view by publishing the pro-Communist background of a man named Angus Cameron.¹⁰ Cameron was the author of a highly favorable review of *Doctor Zhivago* that had appeared in *The Promethean Review*, a periodical he had launched with known Communist Albert Kahn. He had earlier distinguished himself as a Communist sympathizer who supplied

articles to Communist publications, sponsored Communist front groups, and published Communist and pro-Communist books. *National Review* had even suggested that he was a likely member of the Communist Party. That he had heartily approved the message in Pasternak's novel bolstered Welch's position.

But the Buckley magazine didn't mention Cameron's praise for the book, and no apology to Welch was forthcoming. The Welch indictment of *Doctor Zhivago* as Communist propaganda has stood the test of time.

Who Was Robert Welch?

Among individuals with whom Robert Welch was personally and professionally associated, he had established a solid reputation as a historian, philosopher, successful businessman, and political realist. Consequently, he had attracted quite a following among the many industrialists he'd come to know through years of involvement in business associations. After decades of watching the takeover of America's institutions by forces bent on socialism and world government, he launched his own crusade in 1958 to restore and preserve the American system. He named it The John Birch Society.

Earlier, in his 1952 book *May God Forgive Us*,¹¹ Welch supplied copious details about the betrayal of China by the Truman administration's State Department, the refusal of our leaders to allow U.S. forces to win the Korean War, and the politically motivated dismissal of General Douglas MacArthur. That same year, he threw his energy into the unsuccessful Taft-for-President campaign, where he witnessed firsthand numerous behind-the-scenes power plays that stole the Republican nomination from Senator Robert Taft and awarded it to former Democrat and new liberal Republican Dwight Eisenhower. (Though the Council on Foreign Relations was little known in 1952, Eisenhower had joined it in 1949.)

Welch worked with the pro-McCarthy forces in the 1950s and occasionally shared a speaker's platform with the embattled Wisconsin senator. When the Senate unjustly turned on McCarthy, Welch's fear that conspiratorial forces were increasing their control over the nation's affairs intensified.

His next book, *The Life of John Birch* (1954), recorded the remarkable deeds of the young American Army captain who was murdered by Chinese Communists only a few days after World War II ended in August 1945. It documented the shocking attempt by our government to shield the Communists from blame for Birch's death, apparently to help preserve the myth that the Chinese Communists were merely idealistic agrarian reformers.

Though active in the National Association of Manufacturers, and hard at work running the sales and advertising divisions of the Massachusetts-based James O. Welch Company, Welch still managed to carry on the voluminous correspondence that earned him the confidence of many concerned Americans. In 1956, he started his own magazine, originally known as *One Man's Opinion* (later *American Opinion*).

Then, in December 1958, he gathered 11 of his best-informed and most supportive followers to present his plan to create an educational army he would christen The John Birch Society. Since

he didn't expect such busy business leaders to back an undefined venture, he laid out his program during a meticulously crafted, two-day, book-length speech. He identified three major threats to human civilization in general, and to the United States in particular: Communism, collectivism, and a loss of faith that had spawned a plague of amoral men. He stated his deep understanding of the fundamentals of good government, some economic realities, and a firm grasp of the importance of solid leadership in any undertaking. He concluded by asking his friends for their help in the formation of a unique, new organization to promote less government, more responsibility, and a better world.* They enthusiastically gave it, and The John Birch Society was born.

Welch meant business. He had no intention of pulling his punches to gain liberal acceptance, and no thought of playing games in the face of what he clearly believed was a momentous fight for personal and national survival. He called the enemy what it was then — and still is today — a “satanic and diabolical conspiracy.” He sought help to fight a “world-wide battle, the first in history, between light and darkness; between freedom and slavery; between the spirit of Christianity and the spirit of anti-Christ for the souls and bodies of men.”¹²

His marathon speech was subsequently published as *The Blue Book of The John Birch Society*. Copies were distributed widely, and Americans of all races, colors, creeds, and backgrounds began rallying to the new movement. Members were promised a steady stream of information about what was happening in America and elsewhere, and were given an agenda containing suggested programs that would sound an alarm and ultimately assist their fellow citizens in choosing principled political leaders. Welch also sought to inspire members and others to conduct their lives according to enduring principles, and to work as a team that could sway government officials to abide by the strict limitations contained in the U.S. Constitution.

Among the earliest members of The John Birch Society were William Buckley's mother and sister, both of whom obviously saw merit in Robert Welch and his organization.

The Birch Society was something new in America, and possibly in the world. Welch designed it to be an alternative medium of information, a person-to-person crusade working in the cities and towns of America. There would be magazines, books, recordings, films, a speakers bureau, and a continuing monthly agenda. Elected officials were to be encouraged to resist pressures from the Left and do what was best for America.

Most of all, there would be solid information and meaningful direction supplied by a man who had demonstrated that he knew what he was talking about and had the energy and talent to organize and build a grassroots effort. Welch also possessed the rare ability to inspire others to action.

The Society Becomes Anathema

After the mocking article by Eugene Lyons, for several years Buckley and the team at *National Review* mentioned Robert Welch in only a few instances, but always in a petty, nit-picking manner. Nevertheless, Welch continued to urge members of the JBS to subscribe to Buckley's journal. During his two-day oration in 1958, he had stated:

I think that *National Review* especially, because it is aimed so professionally at the academic mind, should be in every college library in the United States, and if possible in every fraternity house.¹³

During 1959 and 1960, Welch continued to promote *National Review* to his growing membership. It included many former political neophytes who had become energized by Welch. Unlike other groups and publications competing for the already-informed, the Society was building the conservative and anti-Communist movement by reaching and then recruiting previously uninvolved grassroots Americans.

But Buckley disagreed with Welch, even resented the competition, and began contending that the Society's impact was negative. In a "Dear Bob" letter to Welch on October 21, 1960, Buckley stated that the differences between the Society and *National Review* were "very grave indeed." He hoped, however, that their "personal friendship" would not "deteriorate."¹⁴ Welch responded in his characteristically gentlemanly manner by acknowledging that indeed there were "differences between us," but he urged the man he thought was a friend "not to fret yourself over the whole matter."¹⁵

The Society's April 1961 members' *Bulletin* again urged JBS faithful to subscribe to *National Review*. But Buckley responded by attacking Welch's conspiracy views in the April 22, 1961 issue of his magazine. The friendship Welch sought to maintain had clearly become a one-way effort.

Meanwhile, Robert Welch and his organization attracted increasing national attention, especially from those internationalists and leftists who recognized that the fledgling group possessed great potential to upset the plans of their conspiracy to rule mankind. Though comprised of only a few thousand members as the decade of the 1960s began, the Birch Society's intent to meld a confused and largely ill-informed American public into a knowledgeable and determined pro-American force had marked it for destruction.

The first major broadside was instigated by America's Communist Party press shortly after the Society's second anniversary. The February 25, 1961 issue of the West Coast-based *People's World* featured an article entitled "Enter (from stage right) the John Birch Society." (Parentheses in original.) The falsehood-laden smear had little potential by itself to cause the Society any substantial harm; it appeared in a newspaper that proudly identified itself as an organ of the Communist Party USA. But it was promptly followed by a blistering array of unfounded but remarkably similar charges in key segments of the popular mass media.

Significantly, several of the falsehoods that had appeared in *People's World* were repeated within days by American newspapers and magazines, and in radio and television reports. The *People's World* article had referred to the Society's local chapters as "cells." So did *Time* magazine¹⁶ even after its reporter spent several hours interviewing Welch and listening as he pointed to the factual errors published by the Communists — including their use of the word "cells."

People's World named only four members of the Society's 26-man national Council. The *Time*

reporter was given the entire roster and informed that one of the four named by the Communists had resigned for personal reasons several months earlier. But the *Time* article listed only the same four Council members, including the one who had resigned. The magazine's reporter was given a copy of *The Life of John Birch* but nevertheless erroneously reported that John Birch had been a captain in the U.S. Navy, not the Army.

The *Time* representative emphatically assured Welch during a three-hour interview that he and his colleagues had already conducted extensive research about the Society. But it became obvious that most, if not all, of the *Time* article about the Society had been written before the reporter ever visited Society headquarters and met Robert Welch.

Still, the original smear in *People's World*, and the subsequent torrent of attacks in the mainstream media, not only failed to reverse the Society's growth, they brought the organization to the attention of many Americans who had already become concerned about the direction their country was taking and the manner in which the news they were receiving from the popular press was being slanted. Something more had to be done to hamstring, and hopefully destroy, the Society. What better than to have a well-known conservative, whose ties to the Establishment weren't known, join in the attack.

Buckley Targets Robert Welch, Then the JBS

Early in 1962, Buckley gathered his editorial staff for a brainstorming session to determine what to do about Welch and the Society. He strongly favored launching a frontal assault.

John Judis reported that Publisher William Rusher and Senior Editors Brent Bozell, Frank Meyer, and William Rickenbacker disagreed. They wanted the magazine to "direct its fire at Communists and liberals rather than at fellow conservatives." But, wrote Judis, "with Burnham's and his sister Priscilla's support, Buckley went ahead anyway." Judis also noted that Rickenbacker complained in a message to Buckley that "Burnham 'fiercely desired to annihilate Welch.'"¹⁷

The Buckley plan led to publication of a six-page editorial entitled, "The Question of Robert Welch."¹⁸

Buckley's salvo wasn't an attack on the Society per se, or on its members whom he described as "men and women of high character and purpose." Its sole target was Robert Welch. Buckley insisted that the Society's founder and leader was "damaging the cause of anti-Communism" with his conspiracy-laden views. It was the same charge he had leveled against Joseph McCarthy a decade earlier.

In those six pages, Buckley distorted major positions held both by Welch and the Birch-affiliated and Welch-led *American Opinion* magazine. He claimed that Welch, "in words he used publicly in the summer of 1960," had stated that "the government of the United States has been 'under the operational control of the Communist Party.'"¹⁹ From personal and close association with Welch for more than 15 years, this writer can verify that the Society leader never pointed to the "Communist Party" as the conspiracy's controlling force. Instead, he would always refer in such instances simply to the "Communist conspiracy," a fundamentally important distinction that a

man of Buckley's experience would surely have understood.

Welch always considered the Communist Party an enemy, but insisted that there was a great deal more to the Communist conspiracy than the small political arm it had spawned. And, regarding the degree of control of our government by the master conspiracy itself, *American Opinion* had published its estimate that "the degree of control over political and economic life" in our nation exercised by the Communist conspiracy in 1961 had reached 50–70 percent, far short of the "total operational control" Buckley claimed.²⁰ Buckley's repeated denunciations of U.S. policies seemed to jell with the Welch assessment, except that Buckley always attributed the harm being done to bumbling liberalism or gross stupidity.

Buckley's February 1962 editorial also took aim at Welch's contention that the failed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba "was a plot by Fidel Castro and his friends in the U.S. government ... to make Castro stronger." But Buckley never once alluded to Welch's trailblazing reports, both before and after the bearded revolutionary had seized Cuba, insisting that Castro had been a Communist all of his adult life and that he had received enormous assistance from highly placed individuals within the U.S. government.²¹ His June 1961 comments about the botched Bay of Pigs invasion, which Buckley sought to ridicule, included:

When all the smoke has cleared away, Fidel Castro will have emerged far stronger than ever, ... not only from having put down a revolt, but as the Communist David who had defeated the great capitalist Goliath.²²

That is precisely what occurred. Welch had simply relied on a pattern of similarly staged events from other countries.

Buckley also accused Welch of "bearing false witness" about Dwight D. Eisenhower. He wrote: "Mr. Welch, for all his good intentions, threatens to divert militant conservative action to irrelevance and ineffectuality."²³ When making that charge, he should have been looking at himself in a mirror.

In his six-page attack, Buckley focused on Welch's then-private 300-page manuscript that had analyzed Eisenhower's career. Entitled *The Politician*, Welch decided to publish it in 1963 in self-defense.²⁴ Buckley had cleverly and deceitfully obtained a copy of the manuscript, obviously intending to lift a mere passage from it to harm its author.

Throughout 1957 and 1958, as noted earlier, Buckley published a litany of critical commentaries about Eisenhower and his administration. According to *National Review*, Ike had betrayed, among others: 1) constitutionalists within the Republican Party; 2) Senator Joseph McCarthy; 3) supporters of the Bricker Amendment (which sought to affirm the supremacy of the Constitution over treaties and executive agreements); 4) the 1956 Hungarian Freedom Fighters; and 5) the entire Cuban nation that fell victim to Castro, who had then benefited immensely from assistance rendered by U.S. diplomats and key elements of the Establishment media.

National Review and Buckley also scolded the Eisenhower team for its "passion to federalize social and economic functions," and for its willingness to act "as a sounding board for

Communist propaganda.”²⁵ Robert Welch agreed, but fell into disfavor with Buckley for refusing to ascribe what was happening to error and stupidity.

Buckley forwarded his anti-Welch tirade to Senator Barry Goldwater, Senator John Tower, Ronald Reagan, and others. He then published their letters agreeing with his condemnation of Welch.²⁶ But his office also received numerous protests from Welch’s supporters, many of whom had been encouraged to subscribe to *National Review* by the man Buckley had attacked. Judis reported:

The immediate effect of Buckley’s attacks against the John Birch Society was a loss in subscriptions and financial support for the magazine. In a letter to Buckley in Switzerland, Rusher reported that in all *National Review* had received 350 letters, almost all of them critical, including about seventy cancellations and twenty disavowals of support from \$100-plus donors.²⁷

The Buckley biographer added that, nevertheless, the attack on the JBS “was an important step forward for Buckley, for *National Review*, and the conservatives who looked to them for leadership.” In what way was it important? Judis explained:

Buckley’s attack on the John Birch Society also transformed him as a public figure. He was no longer the pariah of the McCarthy days. He was a public representative of the new conservatism that television producers and college deans could invite to appear without provoking an outcry. Whether intentional or not, Buckley’s attack on the John Birch Society prepared the way for his own celebrity.²⁸

That conclusion is indisputable. But the attack on Welch was dishonest; it cost Buckley and his magazine some valuable support; and it created a rift in the conservative movement. Did any of that bother Buckley? Not in the least. What he lost was more than recompensed by his new acceptance with “television producers and college deans,” and by his becoming a respectable conservative celebrity whose presence would not provoke “an outcry.”

Yet, unlike Welch’s John Birch Society, Buckley had no grassroots organization, no letter-writing campaigns, no pamphleteering programs, no book publishing arm, and no credible strategy for victory. What he did have was a magazine structured for a generation of arm-chair conservatives conditioned to accept defeat with grace and good cheer.

Buckley certainly succeeded in persuading many fine Americans to shun The John Birch Society. But he rarely criticized the JBS or its founder for the actual stands they had taken. Instead, he attacked numerous distorted caricatures he had created. Those waging war on America from the shadows could count on efforts from Buckley and his magazine to marginalize and de-legitimize their most effective foes.

Robert Welch on the other hand, true to his determination to keep peace within the growing conservative movement, responded to Buckley’s stinging attack with a call in the next JBS *Bulletin* to fight only the conspiracy. He prefaced his comments about Buckley’s 1962 attack with four lines from an Edwin Markham poem:

He drew a circle that shut me out —
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in!²⁹

Again, the main issue motivating Buckley to target Welch was the latter's emphasis on conspiracy. Yet, most of *National Review's* own luminaries had been involved in clandestine work, and were steeped in the concept of conspiracy — not in theory, but in practice. Buckley himself had spent nearly a year in the CIA. Willmoore Kendall had moved from Trotskyite Communism to the OSS to the CIA. Frank Meyer won a role at *National Review* after being a leader in both the British and American Communist parties. James Burnham, like Kendall, went from Trotskyism to the OSS and the CIA. That each of these individuals would supply enormous amounts of information about serious government deficiencies, while scoffing at the notion of conspiracy, was strange indeed.

Unlike Welch, Buckley and his team aimed arrows at mere leftist ideology. They sought to convince readers that intelligent individuals promoting socialism and pro-Communism were ignorant of the harm they were doing. Welch, however, was not crusading against ideologues, or against ideas that remain harmless until implemented. He was determined to expose those who were doing the implementing. He insisted that America's most important enemy wasn't an amorphous ideology, but an organized conspiracy comprised of real persons.

In 1964, *National Review* ignored its previous condemnations of the Eisenhower presidency and published an essay by James Kilpatrick urging that the former president be named Barry Goldwater's vice presidential running mate. The epitome of an Establishment Republican, Eisenhower was well-known as an adversary of virtually anyone who refused to toe the liberal, internationalist line. *National Review* had itself documented that fact, but it no longer mattered. Once the existence of Welch's critical manuscript about Eisenhower had been published, lauding Ike and recommending him for additional high office was a subtle way to besmirch Welch.

The Attack Escalates

The Society withstood a flood of negative publicity over the next few months, but continued growing despite the brickbats. Buckley kept up his sniping, with little additional effect. But he revved up his anti-Birch engines once again with three August 1965 newspaper columns that targeted not just Robert Welch, but the entire Society. And the October 19, 1965 issue of *National Review* devoted its cover story to a no-holds-barred fusillade captioned, "The John Birch Society and the Conservative Movement."

This comprehensive attack began with an editorial, followed by the republication of Buckley's three anti-JBS columns. Meyer and Burnham weighed in with their own two-page articles. A question and answer section, and brief comments by several Buckley friends, rounded out the piece. The main conclusion claimed that the Society was a detriment to the movement Buckley insisted was his to lead.

Seeking to debunk the notion of conspiracy, Meyer's contribution attributed America's problems

to mere “liberalism.” He accused Welch of holding positions that were “less and less represented by the conservative outlook.” For example, he wrote:

The culmination of this process was signaled in the August (1965) Bulletin of the Society when the slogan, “Get US out,” was transformed from an anti-UN slogan to a Get US out of Vietnam slogan, placing the Birch Society alongside SNCC [Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, a deceptively named revolutionary group], Staughton Lynd, the sit-inners and the draft-card burners....³⁰

Contrary to Meyer’s disingenuous claim, there had been no such transformation of the Society’s famous anti-UN slogan. Welch had severely criticized the way the Vietnam conflict was being waged, and had at one point *merely speculated* that the need might eventually arise to have the slogan applied to both the UN and Vietnam.

Burnham amplified the Meyer falsehood, even maintaining that Welch had adopted the “pacifist-Commie line” in calling for the U.S. to pull out of Vietnam. But Welch had never issued such a call and had even noted that the slogan was being misinterpreted by others, not altered by the Society. Burnham, however, was even more venomous than Meyer when he claimed:

It may be added that he [Welch] advances no other proposal with respect to the Vietnam affair, which is the most critical challenge currently confronted by the United States.³¹

Scrutiny of what Welch had actually written two months earlier reveals Burnham’s duplicity. Welch had advised:

The most desirable way of carrying out the exhortation about Vietnam, of course, would be by winning the war quickly and completely, putting the very few remaining real anti-Communists of any stature in Vietnam firmly in power, to the great relief and happiness of the long-suffering Vietnamese people, and coming home after issuing an ultimatum which would keep the red murderers of Hanoi and Peiping from even looking in the direction of Saigon.³²

Burnham’s assertion that Welch had offered “no other proposal” was, in other words, a willful lie.

Welch responded to the *National Review* screed with a pamphlet entitled “Wild Statements,” in which he noted in passing that the staff of Buckley’s magazine included numerous ex-Communists. He then pungently observed, “... it has always puzzled us why some of the ex-Communists consider themselves so much smarter than those of us who were never dumb enough to fall for the Communist line in the first place.”³³

Addressing Burnham’s flagrant duplicity in ignoring what he had actually recommended about Vietnam, Welch wrote:

The omission makes crystal clear, of course, that the critic was not concerned with

spreading truth, but only with seeing how much damage he could do to The John Birch Society. He was obviously hoping that only a few of his readers would ever catch up with his intellectual crime. Which seems a bit naïve for so brilliant a man when you consider that fully one-third and perhaps one-half of the present circulation of that periodical was created for it through the endorsement and efforts of The John Birch Society.³⁴

Welch added that friends of his who were also friends of Buckley had informed him of the latter's pledge: "I am going to destroy The John Birch Society."³⁵

During the ensuing years, Welch stepped up his efforts to analyze the unfolding tragedy in Vietnam. In 1967, he wrote two important booklets about the war. In *The Truth About Vietnam*, he excoriated President Johnson for conducting a war that "is as phony as a nine dollar bill." In that same essay he concluded: "In this writer's opinion, we should never have become involved in Vietnam at all. But, regardless of how we got there, or who put us there, we are too deeply involved today to have any honorable way out except through victory. It should be our determination not to escalate this war, nor to prolong it, nor to muddle through it, but *to win it*."³⁶ (Emphasis in original.) Later in 1967, in *More Truth About Vietnam*, he supplied convincing evidence that "at least eighty percent of the sinews of war are being provided North Vietnam by Soviet Russia and its European satellites," and that most of it had originated in the United States.

As the war continued to escalate, Welch launched a petition drive calling on Congress to halt U.S. aid and trade to the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites. Such assistance, as he repeatedly pointed out, was sustaining North Vietnam's war effort and thereby killing American military personnel. Society representatives delivered many bundles of petitions, each bundle containing 50,000 signatures, to numerous U.S. senators, and similar bundles of 20,000 signatures to dozens of House members. By July 1971, petitions containing a total of 1.7 million signatures had been delivered to Congress. Welch later directed the petition effort to the White House, and Society members gathered additional hundreds of thousands of signatures which were delivered to President Nixon urging him to put a stop to the aid and trade that were bolstering our Communist enemies.

American Opinion magazine published a steady stream of articles calling attention to the treasonous policy of allowing U.S. aid to flow to Red countries that served as the arsenal for North Vietnam, even as our forces were forbidden to win the war. "Vietnam: While Brave Men Die" appeared in June 1967. In May 1968, *American Opinion* reported the candid statements of many U.S. military leaders who protested being hobbled by the administration as they tried to do their jobs. In January 1969, the magazine published further solid information about the no-win policies being forced on our troops, and about the increasing aid to the Soviets and their satellites that was in turn finding its way to Hanoi.

While Robert Welch and The John Birch Society were working to right the wrongs of our Vietnam policy, Buckley and his colleagues did everything they could to impede those efforts.

At one point in his personal contribution to *National Review's* October 1965 attack on Welch

and the Society, Buckley wrote:

There are many people we went to school with, people who had been our colleagues on college faculties, friends and acquaintances of ours who are newspapermen, priests, merchants, bankers, intellectuals, and non-intellectuals, who favor domestic policies that we criticize as leading toward socialism, and global measures that we judge may help Communism rather than, as they contend, enable us to avoid a Third World War. We can hardly believe, as Mr. Welch's doctrine would require, that all of these people are carefully trained Communist hypocrites.³⁷

Wait a minute! Welch never believed or disseminated the viewpoint that "all of these people" are "carefully trained Communist hypocrites." He formed The John Birch Society precisely for the purpose of awakening, informing, and inspiring "all of these people."

Buckley and his colleagues had obviously been poring over the Society's publications. They were doing so, at least in part, as a result of Welch's generosity. In January 1964, Buckley had written to Welch: "Dear Bob: I am anxious to continue to read your Bulletins. They used to come regularly, but don't any more.... Could I hear from you, or from one of your assistants, on this subject? With best personal regards, Bill."³⁸

Even though Buckley had already attacked and belittled Welch, the Society leader sent a cordial response: "Dear Bill: Under separate cover, today I am mailing you copies of our August, September, and December (1963) Bulletins.... And I am making an exception to the rule now, by putting you on a list to receive each Bulletin automatically every month, with our compliments.... Sincerely, Bob."³⁹

When the October 1965 Buckley-led assault appeared, the Society's chain of American Opinion Bookstores carried, among other offerings, a total of 33 books written by 13 individuals whose names appeared on *National Review's* masthead as editors, contributors, etc. Included were books by William F. Buckley, Frank Meyer, and James Burnham — the same James Burnham who, in his parting October 19, 1965 shot, insisted that "responsible conservatives" were of the opinion that "any American who seriously wants to contribute to his country's security and well-being and to oppose Communism will have to stay clear of the JBS."

Then, in March 1968, Buckley expressed his own thoughts about what should be done in Vietnam:

... we need to hit back with such weapons as we are in position to use which spare us the most precious commodity we have, the American soldier. If that is not what Vietnam is all about, then we should get the hell out.⁴⁰

That, of course, parallels the recommendation made by Robert Welch three years earlier. Yet, Buckley had allowed his senior colleagues to savage Welch for supposedly failing to offer any reasonable proposal to end the war successfully — and for suggesting that the time might come when we might have to, in Buckley's later words, "get the hell out."

The 1970s and 1980s also found Buckley regularly taking cheap shots at the Society. Then on October 5, 1990, he stepped aside after 35 years as *National Review's* editor. Reporting on the move, *Washington Post* staff writer E.J. Dionne wrote:

In looking back, Buckley believes that the magazine's most important accomplishment was "the absolute exclusion of anything ... kooky" from the conservative movement. One of *National Review's* most notable battles was waged against the John Birch Society.⁴¹

Buckley notwithstanding, The John Birch Society not only survived, but flourished.

*"Less government, more responsibility, and — with God's help — a better world" would become the Society's official slogan.

Chapter Ten — Friends and Former Colleagues See Through Bill

*[Buckley] created a cleavage between Republican highbrows and Democratic commoners which effectively destroyed all prospect of concerted conservative political action. He was rewarded with liberal acceptance as the spokesman of "conservatism."*¹
— General Thomas A. Lane

As William Buckley's commitment to the Establishment's internationalist and socialist agenda became increasingly obvious, many once-close allies and friends parted company with him. The neoconservative positions he increasingly espoused, the leftists with whom he began to associate and lionize, and the attacks he leveled against other conservatives became too much for them to stomach.

Young Americans for Freedom

The repudiation of Buckley by Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) in 1977 was a wake-up call for many Buckley enthusiasts. YAF had been launched at a September 1960 gathering of approximately 80 young conservatives at the Buckley family mansion in Sharon, Connecticut. It set out to organize conservative alternatives to the leftist cadres that dominated many college campuses. Though its manifesto, entitled "The Sharon Statement," hadn't been written by Buckley, he enthusiastically endorsed it.

The YAF declaration began by stressing the importance of every individual's "God-given free will." It emphatically declared that the purpose of government is merely "to protect" economic and political freedom. It underscored the fundamental importance of the U.S. Constitution, free market economics, and national sovereignty. And it not only condemned "international Communism," it advocated "victory over, rather than coexistence with, this menace."

Buckley was viewed as YAF's ideological leader and policy guru. But that relationship evaporated in August 1977 during a YAF convention in New York City. With 500 young

members convened under a banner proclaiming “Freedom Not Socialism,” YAF’s leaders blasted their founding host for his lengthening list of indefensible pronouncements and associations. Their superstar, they concluded, had become a heretic.

YAF’s indictment of its once-revered hero targeted his CFR membership, attendance at Bilderberg meetings, hobnobbing with and defending Henry Kissinger, calling for the legalization of marijuana, and supporting the giveaway of the Panama Canal. In contrast to an array of indefensible positions taken by Buckley, the young activists urged the U.S. to allow South Africa to work out its own problems free from outside meddling, grant diplomatic recognition to then-anti-Communist Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and quit the United Nations because it was “an apparent tool of International Communism.”²

Buckley was present and witnessed the intensity and disgust of these young conservatives firsthand. He even poured salt in their wounds by bringing Henry Kissinger to the gathering and demanding that his close friend be given an opportunity to speak.

Buckley’s conspicuous identification with sundry enemies of conservatism since the 1977 YAF confab confirms that the YAF’s action was entirely justified. In 1986, the young conservative group produced and circulated a brief but potent pamphlet outlining the terrorist and pro-Communist career of South Africa’s Nelson Mandela. Quoting passages from Mandela’s own statement, “How To Be a Good Communist,” the YAF broadside pulled no punches in showing that the South African firebrand and his Communist-dominated African National Congress (ANC) deserved to be shunned rather than backed by the U.S.

Earlier in September 1982, the Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism had reported that, of the 22 leaders of the ANC, 11 were members of the South African Communist Party and half of those were also members of its terrorist “Spear of the Nation” military wing.³ Yet Buckley, during a September 1986 “Firing Line” program, maintained that if he were a black living in South Africa he would advocate violence to overthrow the government and would even join the ANC. Pressed by shocked admirers to explain, he claimed that South Africa’s blacks had “no solid alternatives” other than joining the Communist-led rebellion.⁴ But there were alternatives available to black South Africans including the leadership offered by Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Buckley’s stand ignored the large numbers of South African blacks who were vehemently opposed to the pro-Communist agenda of Mandela and the ANC. He also sidestepped the continuing migration of large numbers of blacks *into* pre-Mandela South Africa from neighboring countries. They were only too glad to flee unceasing tribal warfare and its accompanying deprivations, and were obviously unpersuaded that — for blacks — South Africa was an unbearable hell hole, Buckley’s remarks notwithstanding.

Kevin Phillips

In 1968, Alabama Governor George Wallace challenged the monopoly enjoyed by America’s fraudulently sanctified “two party system” by running for president on the American Independent Party. He surprised the political Establishment by securing ballot position in all 50 states and then carrying five states in the November election. His repeated insistence that “there

isn't a dime's worth of difference" between top Republicans and Democrats resonated with millions of Americans.

Even worse from the standpoint of the elitists who dominated both major parties, Wallace clearly intended to build on his 1968 success for the future. The Establishment needed help in slowing down, or even stopping, the Wallace bandwagon. Once again, it was Buckley to the rescue. He interviewed Wallace on his "Firing Line" television program and no sooner had the program begun than Buckley wanted to know why "two hundred prominent conservatives [harbored] a surprising hostility toward George Wallace." Wallace told his host that he spent his time speaking "to the people ... and I don't [even] know any prominent conservatives."⁵

As the Wallace phenomenon gathered momentum, Buckley sought to blunt it with a cover article in *National Review* authored by Senator Barry Goldwater. Citing a need to preserve the "two party system," the Goldwater piece was captioned "Memo To Conservatives: Don't Waste a Vote on Wallace."⁶ Goldwater claimed that the formation of another political party "could mean disaster for America," and he urged his readers to vote for Richard Nixon.

Journalist Kevin Phillips was one of many who had moved from Buckley ally to Buckley critic. By the early 1970s, he had established his own reputation as a respected conservative commentator. After Buckley utilized his magazine to denigrate Wallace, Phillips publicly charged *National Review's* chieftain with having gone soft. Retaliating, Buckley accused Phillips of the high crime of seeking to bring an unworthy Southerner into the ranks of respectable conservatism. Phillips responded to Buckley's arrogance with a column in which he asserted:

Hell, Wallace isn't going to hook up with Squire Willy and his Companions of the Oxford Unabridged Dictionary. Nor can we expect Alabama truck drivers or Ohio Steelworkers to sign on with a politics captivated by Ivy League five-syllable word polishers.... Most of the "New Conservatives" I know believe that any new politics or coalition has to surge up from Middle America ... not dribble down from Bill Buckley's wine rack and favorite philosopher's shelf.... There was, of course, a time when Bill Buckley was anti-establishment — back in the long-ago days when he was an Irish nouveau-riche cheer leader for Joe McCarthy. But since then, he's primed his magazine with cast-off Hapsburg royalty, Englishmen who part their names in the middle, and others calculated to put real lace on Buckley's Celtic curtains.⁷

Buckley had indeed become the Establishment's invaluable house conservative, positioned to diminish or silence critics of those who were leading the nation into socialism and world government.

Phillips' sharply worded barbs about "Squire Willy and his Companions of the Oxford Unabridged Dictionary," and his further dig about "the Ivy League five-syllable word polishers," pointed to a hugely annoying Buckley trait. Buckley's snobbish ways hadn't a ghost of a chance of building a coalition that might break the Establishment's grip on America. Many of the Middle Americans sorely needed to create such a force were indeed repulsed by Buckley's patronizing elitism.

Consider a passage Buckley wrote describing President Nixon's economic policies. It caught the attention of Robert Sherrill, who included it in an article about Buckley in *The Nation*. Buckley stated:

His dalliance with and insecure instrumentation of interventionist fiscal economics reflects nothing more than the regnant confusion among economic theorists, and the acquiescence even by free market economists in the proposition that it is a political necessity to talk imperiously in the economic seas, even though we all know that the President sits on the throne of King Canute.⁸

If you had trouble trying to decipher Buckley's meaning, bear in mind the Alabama truck drivers, the Ohio steelworkers, and the additional millions who make up Middle America. If these decent people are to become informed and galvanized into action, it won't result from Buckley's ostentatious, polysyllabic gibberish.

General Thomas A. Lane

Retired Army General Thomas A. Lane was a staunch conservative who would at one time have considered it a compliment to be considered a Buckley ally. In his 1974 book *The Breakdown of Old Politics*, General Lane noted that several once-popular liberals who had abandoned their leftist views found themselves "suddenly ignored, cast into oblivion" by the nation's elite. As examples, he cited Malcolm Muggeridge and John Dos Passos. He then wrote:

William F. Buckley, Jr., learned about the obstacles which confront every attempt to illuminate the liberal shadows. He made his peace with the liberal powers by launching an attack on the John Birch Society, bracketed with "McCarthyism" as the bogeymen of the liberals. He created a cleavage between Republican highbrows and Democratic commoners which effectively destroyed all prospect of concerted conservative political action. He was rewarded with liberal acceptance as the spokesman of "conservatism."

The general had trenchantly perceived what other conservatives could not or would not see. Continuing, he noted that Buckley

... was given a television program by Public Broadcasting Service, nominally to represent the conservative ethic but actually to interview prominent liberals. Thus he fulfilled the liberal mission of publishing the liberal philosophy, with only a mild Buckley dissent. The networks would not of course do the reverse. They would not commission Howard K. Smith to conduct a program of interviewing conservatives, for that would put conservative views before the people.⁹

Medford and Stan Evans

Medford Evans and his son, M. Stanton Evans, were early and eager associates of Bill Buckley. As noted previously, Medford's name appeared on *National Review's* inaugural masthead under "Associates and Contributors." Stan's name would follow soon after.

Of the two, the elder Evans parted company with Buckley first. Some of his sharply worded commentary appeared in an earlier passage in this book. Writing in the March 1985 issue of

American Opinion, he reflected on his relationships with both Robert Welch and Bill Buckley: “I may be unique in having been both a fan and a friend of both men, and subsequently having been disappointed (disillusioned) by the younger of the two — in large measure, though not exclusively, because of his vicious, prolonged satiric abuse of the elder.”¹⁰

Evans pointed to Buckley’s constant harping on Welch’s extensively documented critical biography of Dwight David Eisenhower, which held, as Evans put it, that Ike “was *in effect* an abettor of the Communist Conspiracy ... and that the United States government in general was ‘under operational control’ of that conspiracy.”¹¹ Evans agreed, and he resolutely stood shoulder to shoulder with Welch in believing that the actual Eisenhower record stood in stark contrast to the popular image of a tough old warrior who always worked for America’s best interests. He found Buckley’s sneering, disdainful attitude about the matter to be extremely offensive.

Welch’s *The Politician* offered a mountain of never-refuted evidence to back up his assessment of the former president. Yet, even while repeatedly scoffing at the book’s inferences and conclusions, Buckley studiously avoided any attempt to refute its factual content. Indeed, he wouldn’t even mention the book’s title. After all, anyone curious enough to know why Welch could have arrived at such a harsh conclusion about Eisenhower, or angry enough to seek to refute it, might buy the book if they knew its title.

Buckley sought to give the impression that Welch had written a wildly irresponsible attack on a widely revered American. To the contrary, most of those who actually read *The Politician* and judged it for themselves recognized it as a serious, convincing profile of the 34th president. One such person was Herman Dinsmore, former editor of the international edition of the *New York Times* (1951–1960). After reading *The Politician*, he issued this statement:

Reading *The Politician*, which I have just done during December [1969], was for me quite a revealing experience. It is hard for a professional newspaper man to confess that so many things, which he thought were just happening, were actually being made to happen by sinister and conspiratorial forces. But in all honesty the confession must be made. *The Politician* was a real eye-opener, which causes all kinds of mysterious pieces, of a puzzle that still bewildered me, to fall rapidly in place. I recommend the book emphatically to every patriotic American who wants to understand not only what is now taking place all around him, but also *why*. This book is the product of historical research of the first order.¹²

Evans offered the following unflattering summary of Buckley’s campaign against Welch and the famous book about Eisenhower:

While this position of Welch’s was too shocking for comprehension by many Americans, it was understood well enough at *National Review*, where similar assessments had often been made in less forthright terms.... My own view is that Bill Buckley went to war with Robert Welch *not* because he thought Welch was wrong, but because he knew Welch was right. If the charge that Eisenhower promoted Communist interests had been so absurd as to fall of its own weight — which Buckley continually implied — there would have been no need for an Eisenhower adherent to dignify

Welch's charges with denial. Yet Buckley, who as a matter of fact was *not* an Eisenhower adherent, never ceased to vilify Welch for so directly attacking Eisenhower.¹³

Stan Evans was never as close to Robert Welch as was his father. An early Buckleyite, it was he who wrote the "Sharon Statement" launching Young Americans for Freedom in 1960. A journalist who at one point in his career served as editor of the respected *Indianapolis News*, his work was regularly published in both *National Review* and its companion *National Review Bulletin*. But by 1973, he'd had enough. He resigned from the magazine stating: "I feel increasingly out of phase with the drift of things at *National Review*, particularly the book section and the political coverage."¹⁴

In a separate comment to Buckley's biographer, Evans said of the man he had once admired: "He perceived himself as a bridge between us and the [Nixon] administration and not as someone being in the opposition."¹⁵

Acting as a "bridge" between conservative Americans and the non-conservative Nixon administration became habitual with Buckley. He continued his type of bridge-building in subsequent years. One glaring example occurred when the Establishment-favored giveaway of the Panama Canal and the Panama Canal Zone came before the Senate for ratification. Buckley dutifully echoed the internationalist position favoring the sellout.

The Canal Zone was sovereign U.S. territory and the Canal had been American-built, American-operated, and American-owned during its entire existence. Beyond its strategic value during any future war, its importance stemmed from the fact that its major users were commercial vessels which either began or terminated their voyages in the United States. The battle lines were quite clearly drawn: Conservatives committed to retaining U.S. control of the vital waterway and protecting our nation's sovereignty versus Establishment internationalists anxious to further water down U.S. military capability and independence.

While supposedly trying to make up their minds about the two pacts (two related treaties were involved), Buckley and James Burnham were given an inspection tour of the Canal Zone by Henry Kissinger. Soon thereafter, Buckley announced his support for the giveaway in an April 1977 column. Stan Evans, who had strongly opposed ratification, later commented:

One can argue that Buckley's participation in the Panama Canal debates might have been the critical factor in getting those treaties passed, because it gave a shelter to the [Senator] Howard Baker who otherwise would have had pretty rough going. They would have been in a very exposed position, carrying Jimmy Carter's and Henry Kissinger's position, and the fact that so prominent a conservative as Bill Buckley was in favor of those treaties gave them cover.¹⁶

The Senate eventually ratified each of the treaties in March 1978 by a razor-thin vote of 68–32 (67 "yea" votes were required for passage). The deal included \$400 million for the Panamanian government, which was then headed by the America-hating Communist dictator Omar Torrijos.

Buckley would later provide similar cover for other moves favored by his close friend Henry Kissinger or by the entire Establishment of which he and Kissinger were very much a part.

The List Grows

Henry Paolucci was a stalwart member of the Buckley-backed Conservative Party of New York State. A college professor who published and distributed his own newsletter, he was persuaded by the party leaders to be their nominee for the U.S. Senate in 1964. That poorly financed effort, however, managed to attract only 200,000 votes in the heavily populated state. Once a certified Buckleyite, he eventually found himself abandoned by the man he expected would lead the nation away from liberalism and internationalism.

In the March 1973 issue of his “State of the Union” newsletter, Paolucci wrote: “But now the dikes are down. Almost every issue of *National Review* these days, for instance, carries an abject editorial apology for Nixon policies which must make its author blush to write it.”

The disillusioned professor expressed further disagreement when he found the names of Walt W. Rostow (CFR) and Henry Kissinger (CFR) on Buckley’s roster of “hardliners.” Applying that term to Kissinger especially rankled Paolucci, who wrote:

Conservative acquiescence in the appointment of Henry Kissinger to make foreign policy for the Nixon administration is the most tragic thing that has happened to our union since the Civil War. Had he served in his present post under a Rockefeller, or Kennedy, or Humphrey administration, Kissinger would have been as bad as Rostow; but at least we would have had a united Conservative front to oppose him. William F. Buckley himself would long since have denounced the man as chief architect of the no-win war doctrine that has been our ruin in Vietnam.... To this day, Kissinger remains virtually immune from serious criticism from “respectable” Republican Conservatives.¹⁷

It is worth noting that Walt Rostow, whom Buckley had also labeled an anti-Communist “hardliner,” had been denied a security clearance three times during the Eisenhower administration. His subsequent nomination for a post in the Kennedy administration was blocked for cause by State Department security chief Otto Otepka. But Robert Kennedy and Secretary of State Dean Rusk engineered the forced retirement of Otepka and eased Rostow into the post by issuing a waiver.¹⁸

Prior to his appointment, Rostow had been a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he authored a CIA-funded book entitled *The United States in the World Arena*. One of its conclusions stated:

It is a legitimate American national objective to see removed from all nations — including the United States — the right to use substantial military force to pursue their own interests. Since this residual right is the root of national sovereignty ... it is therefore, an American interest to see an end to nationhood as it has been historically defined.¹⁹

Buckley described this man as a “hardliner.” Evidently, the litmus test for Buckley was past association with the CIA, current membership in the CFR, and/or a willingness to sacrifice American sovereignty on the altar of world government.

For his forthrightness, Henry Paolucci was cast adrift by the Buckley-led conservatives in New York.

Murray Rothbard was another whose name appeared on the early roster of contributors to *National Review*. A free-market economist, he had written numerous valuable books including *America’s Great Depression* (1963), *What Has Government Done To Our Money?* (1981), and *The Mystery of Banking* (1983).

A strong noninterventionist and fiery opponent of big government, he contended that the flood of propaganda about Soviet military might was serving as an excuse for liberals to build a leviathan government in Washington. He parted company with *National Review* in the early 1960s and became a sharp critic of Buckley. In January 1992, while rejoicing over what he saw as the rebirth of the “Old Right” in the presidential candidacy of Patrick Buchanan, he stated during a speech to the John Randolph Club:

... what happened to the original Right, and the cause of the present mess, is the advent and domination of the right wing by Bill Buckley and *National Review*. By the mid 1950s, much of the leadership of the Old Right was dead or in retirement. Senator Taft and Colonel McCormick had died, and many of the right-wing congressmen had retired. The conservative masses, for a long time short on intellectual leadership, [were] now lacking in political leadership as well. An intellectual and power vacuum had developed on the right, and rushing to fill it, in 1955, were Bill Buckley, fresh from several years in the CIA, and *National Review*, an intelligent, well-written periodical staffed with ex-Communists and ex-leftists eager to transform the Right from an isolationist movement into a crusade to crush the Soviet God that had failed them....

And so, with almost Blitzkrieg swiftness, by the early 1960s, the new global crusading conservative movement, created and headed by Bill Buckley, was almost ready to take power in America. But not quite, because first, all the various heretics of the Right, some left over from the original Right, all the groups that were in any way radical or could deprive the new conservative movement of its much desired *respectability* in the eyes of the liberal and centrist elite, all these had to be jettisoned. Only such a denatured, respectable, non-radical, *conserving* Right was worthy of power.²⁰
[Emphasis in original.]

Rothbard also described Buckley as “the prince of excommunication, the self-appointed pope of the conservative movement.” One after another, this “pope” and his publication sought to anathematize all the non-respectables who were, in fact, the authentic conservatives.

Howard Phillips (no relation to Kevin Phillips) was one of the young conservatives present at the founding of Young Americans for Freedom. A fixture in Washington-based conservative circles for more than three decades, he was a solid Buckley booster in his early days. But he, too,

wincing as he witnessed his hero become ever more deeply entrenched in the Establishment.

In *Thunder on the Right*, Alan Crawford quoted Phillips as saying:

Buckley, for all the good work he has done, is simply not on the cutting edge of America's politics anymore. His positions on legalizing marijuana and passage of the Panama Canal treaties were a great disappointment. He really isn't with us anymore.²¹

Journalist and author **Ralph de Toledano** was also listed as a "Contributor" in the early days of *National Review*. He, too, drifted from the magazine and, by 1970, felt compelled to remind Buckley "how in 1960 it was me against *National Review* on Nixon and now today *National Review*, in the words of a friend, seems to have become an administration house organ."²²

Daniel Oliver had been *National Review's* executive editor. As the magazine became an increasingly predictable mouthpiece for, rather than critic of, Establishment politics, he became disenchanted, commenting:

I think what people miss is its being anti-establishment, but it can't be because Bill's establishment now.²³

Don Feder, a staff editorialist for the *Boston Herald*, joined the ranks of nationally syndicated columnists in the late 1980s. A lifelong conservative, he would at one time have labeled himself a Buckleyite. But he also eventually recognized the change in the man he had lauded as "a founding father of modern conservatism."

Feder's December 20, 1995 column was headlined "Bill Buckley's no conservative." A strong defender of the cultural aspects of conservatism, Feder claimed that his former hero "is drifting into other orbits." He took issue with Buckley's calls for legalizing marijuana, licensing prostitution, and defending "some of the goals" of the homosexual rights movement. Noting that Buckley had started labeling himself a libertarian (Buckley's recent collection of essays carried the subtitle "Reflections of a Libertarian Journalist"), Feder concluded:

William F. Buckley Jr. is many things — always witty and often insightful (when he isn't ostentatiously obfuscating). A conservative, he's not.²⁴

These are only a few of the many individuals who have condemned Buckley's steady abandonment of principle-based conservatism. While some became aware of the trend earlier than others, they all agree that "America's premier conservative" does not merit that title. Indeed, some now contend he never did.

William Buckley should be re-classified as an Establishment minister of deception — a pied piper bent on leading conservatives into confusion and irrelevance.

Chapter Eleven — Undermining Morality

National Review *could have an important role here, once again guiding conservatives toward the more enlightened path.*¹
— Marvin Liebman

William Buckley has been portrayed as the guardian of mainstream conservatism. That portrayal amounted to granting him the equivalent of a blank check since he has never spelled out what he himself means by the term “conservative.”

In 1961, according to his approved biographer John Judis, Buckley signed a contract with a well-known publisher to produce “an untitled book on conservatism.” But the book never materialized. Judis speculated that Buckley balked at completing it because he “became willing to take positions on specific issues that appeared to contradict” the stands virtually everyone expected of him.²

Not only was Buckley willing to take political and economic stands contradicting his conservative image, he also began walking away from the moral standards associated with conservatism, including those traditionally upheld by the Catholic Church to which he belongs.

In his review of *William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives*, Harvard University Professor Alan Brinkley accepted without question all that Buckley had claimed about himself, including his championing of strict moral values. Brinkley took note, however, that Buckley never clearly enunciated what those values were. He wrote:

The purpose of the public world, Buckley believed, was not simply to protect individual freedom; it was also to foster a sense of civic virtue and religious morality. A good society must stand for something larger than the selfish interests of its individual members; it must embrace a set of moral and intellectual values and defend them against their enemies. Buckley never clearly defined what those values should be (other than opposition to communism, an affirmation of Catholic morality, and a recognition of the value of intellectual elites); and that failure defined his limits as a political thinker.³

Numerous stands taken by Buckley have often placed him at odds not only with traditional “Catholic morality,” but even with the more generalized mores of Western civilization. Consider for instance the contrasting attitudes held by Buckley and the Birch Society’s Robert Welch regarding the “girlie” magazine *Playboy*.

In the late 1960s, a *Playboy* official offered Welch what was then the relatively princely sum of \$5,000 for an interview. Welch’s response to the offer, without hesitation, was that he would not consider lending his name to a magazine he abhorred. And that was that! On the other hand, Buckley jumped at the chance on numerous occasions to write for *Playboy*.

There are many reasons for our nation’s precipitous moral decline in recent decades, one of

which has been the enormous distribution, and increasing acceptance, of bawdy magazines. When *Playboy* first arrived on the scene in the early 1950s, national moral standards were far more strict than today. *Playboy's* pioneering success led to a flood of similar publications, some even more degrading of women. In addition to pornographic depictions, most such magazines also editorialize heavily in favor of what they term “liberating America from puritanical morality.” While they cannot be held totally responsible for the erosion of our nation’s moral principles, their impact has been significant.

Robert Welch recognized and was alarmed by what was happening. Inquisitive reporters or curious friends often asked him to identify America’s single greatest problem. Most expected him to point to the advance of Communism, the United Nations, the Federal Reserve, mushrooming federal regulatory powers, usurpations by the Supreme Court, or other political or economic threats.

But his response never changed. “Moral decline is the greatest enemy we face,” he would insist. He explained that the loss of moral fiber made an individual less able and/or less willing to speak out against evil and take action to oppose it. It also weakened the resolve to resist temptations to cooperate with or even participate in conspiratorial steps taken to undermine our nation’s institutions.

Welch frequently summarized his view with a poignant statement by 19th-century British historian James Anthony Froude: “Morality sees further than intellect.” Welch employed this observation as the theme of the first editorial, in the very first issue, of his magazine *One Man’s Opinion* (later *American Opinion*). Books could be written on that powerful concept. Welch also believed that “America needs good men, not smart men.” For good men, he insisted, would always try to do what is right, while men who were merely smart could use their mental prowess for evil purposes.

The statistics in just one area of our culture should alarm every American. Divorce and the resulting breakup of families was relatively rare and widely subject to social stigma only a few decades ago. But America is now notorious for its crumbling family structure. Figures compiled by the U.S. government show that one-third of births are to unmarried mothers, and abortion still claims over one million victims every year.⁴

The hedonistic lifestyle based on sexual “liberation” (promoted among men by such magazines as *Playboy* and among women by *Cosmopolitan* and other avant-garde periodicals — as well as by movies and television) has contributed dramatically to driving a wedge between husbands and wives and trivializing the institution of marriage. Yet, like an adolescent schoolboy in a locker room, Bill Buckley often went out of his way to emphasize his association with *Playboy*. During a 1981 interview with the conservative newsweekly *Human Events*, he was asked if he could point to any shortcomings or regrets about what he had accomplished over the past 25 years. He responded:

I said 10 or 12 years ago — I think in the *Playboy* interview in 1970 — that I was disappointed by the shortage of good writers....⁵

Why did he bother to mention *Playboy*? He was being presented as the premier conservative leader. *Human Events* told its readers that he “carried the conservative banner in battle against the Liberal Establishment.” By referring so matter-of-factly and unnecessarily to *Playboy*, he enhanced that magazine’s image among conservatives.

In 1985, Buckley again went out of his way to favorably mention *Playboy* while addressing his audience at the 30th anniversary celebration of *National Review*. Citing a visit he once had with President Nixon, he recalled:

“My novel sensual sensation,” I told *Playboy*, “is to have the President of the United States take notes while you are speaking to him.”⁶

He had reasons to mention the magazine. *Playboy* had just paid him handsomely for the right to publish an excerpt from *Who’s On First?*, one of his novels.⁷ In 1969, the pornographic publication published George Gilder’s complimentary portrait of Buckley wherein Gilder referred to the *National Review* editor as “the asp-tongued scourge of the left and liberal establishment.” A former Nixon speech writer, Gilder told *Playboy*’s five million readers that Buckley has “much to say that the liberals badly need to hear.”⁸

In his book about the Buckley family, Charles Lam Markmann didn’t overlook Buckley’s *Playboy* connection. He noted that as a result of a “Firing Line” interview with *Playboy* founder Hugh Hefner, “thousands of television watchers were easily persuaded by Buckley that *Playboy* and its publisher, Hugh Hefner, sought to destroy religion.” But Markmann then added the telling indictment: “Buckley did not mention the fact that he very gladly accepted Hefner’s checks for articles that Buckley wrote for *Playboy*, whose hypocrisy, however, he was busily denouncing.” One of those checks amounted to \$3,500 for a single article.⁹

In his July 1985 column entitled “*Playboy* Needs Your Help,” Buckley discussed a letter he had received from the magazine’s editorial director seeking the use of his name to blunt a boycott of stores selling *Playboy*. Buckley didn’t inform his readers of his decision regarding the request. But, with somewhat macabre humor, he acknowledged:

I add this, that I have frequently written for *Playboy*, as I would write for any journal that addressed five million readers. And I gave a straightforward answer to the question why I did this, feeling as I do, in a *Playboy* interview published fifteen years ago. I write for *Playboy*, I said, because it is the fastest way to communicate with my seventeen-year-old son.¹⁰

And make no mistake: Buckley was well aware of the implications of dignifying lewd magazines. In a 1986 article he authored for the *New York Times Magazine*, he stated that “social sanctions against disgusting behavior — disgusting? — lose vigor if they go uncodified, and even then they lose vigor if the ethos that supports the laws is attenuated.... The rediscovery of sin would cause us to look up and note the infinite horizons that beckon us toward better conduct, better lives, nobler visions.”¹¹

The urge to rediscover sin was obviously meant for others. Buckley has also included *Penthouse* magazine, which is even sleazier than *Playboy*, in his repertoire of outlets.

In 1982, Buckley produced the spy novel *Marco Polo, If You Can*, featuring his fictional CIA agent Blackford Oakes. A lengthy excerpt appeared in *Penthouse* magazine sandwiched in amongst the magazine's visual fare of explicit photos, suggestive cartoons, and advertisements for products targeting the sexually obsessed.

The subtitle *Penthouse* selected for its pages reveals why the magazine was interested in the Buckley piece: "Amanda Gaither and Blackford Oakes were CIA agents and sometime lovers...." The excerpt included Buckley's lurid details about a sexual overture by Oakes, Amanda Gaither's acquiescence, and their ensuing illicit liaison.¹²

An earlier Blackford Oakes novel, *Saving the Queen*, placed Buckley's chief character in bed with England's queen. Even John Judis noted Buckley's penchant for "peppering his [Oakes] politics liberally with easy sex."¹³ This is hardly the sort of fare that will, in Buckley's words, "beckon us toward better conduct, better lives, nobler visions." Nor is it consistent with the moral principles taught by the Catholic church to which Buckley claims adherence.

Playboy's officials were first attracted to Buckley soon after a famous 1962 Buckley-Norman Mailer debate. The magazine published the entire confrontation in early 1963. From then on, Buckley's work repeatedly appeared in the pages of the morally debased magazine.

In 1982, he was interviewed about his taste in suits, ties, and shoes for *Playboy Fashion*. And in 1985, he wrote an article for *Playboy* entitled "Redefining Smart."¹⁴ All of this while seeking to become America's "respectable" conservative by, among other things, bashing Robert Welch, who adamantly spurned invitations to profit from those who were undermining America's moral fiber.

Respecting Homosexuality

In 1992, after describing Buckley as his friend and fellow activist for 35 years, and dubbing him "the founder of modern American conservatism and the prime articulator of its philosophy,"¹⁵ Marvin Liebman confessed that he had been a lifelong homosexual. In the prologue to his book, *Coming Out Conservative*, Liebman described his longing to have Buckley promote the homosexual "lifestyle" to conservative Americans as "mainstream."

Liebman's book appeared two years after he confessed his homosexuality in a "Dear Bill" letter published in the July 9, 1990 issue of *National Review*. The letter subsequently appeared as an appendix in *Coming Out Conservative*, where it was followed by Buckley's short "Dear Marvin" response to his friend's plea for a degree of tolerance that would keep homosexuals from becoming "victims of small-mindedness, prejudice, fear, or cynicism."¹⁶

Liebman, another leftist on the original *National Review* team, had been from "1938 to 1945 ... a devout member of, successively, the Young Communist League and the Communist Party, resigning in protest at what he regarded as the unjust expulsion of Earl Browder, who had long

been the party's leader."¹⁷ As a political strategist and fundraiser, he worked intimately with Buckley on numerous projects favored by conservatives, including *National Review*, Young Americans for Freedom, the American Conservative Union, and the Committee of One Million Against the Admission of Communist China to the United Nations. His out-of-the-closet book stressed that he and Buckley shared a close social life in addition to their professional relationship. Referring to Buckley and his wife, Liebman stated: "I had spent almost every weekend of the past thirty years with them — almost a lifetime!"¹⁸

National Review provided the main forum for Liebman's "coming out" and, in so doing, afforded homosexuality an aura of acceptance. Liebman claimed that his condition "is how I was born; how God decreed that I should be," and that "sexuality isn't a belief, it's a factor of birth."¹⁹ Refusing to take a firm stand for traditional moral standards, Buckley raised only the possibility that Liebman had distorted reality, claiming in his response: "There is of course argument on the question whether homosexuality is in all cases congenital." Buckley added that there is a need for "exercising toleration and charity towards homosexuality and homosexuals."²⁰

Liebman had good reason to expect sympathetic treatment from Buckley because *National Review* had years earlier opened its pages to other arguments favoring "gay rights." In 1974, it published an appeal for acceptance of homosexuality authored by David Brudnoy and Ernest van den Haag.²¹ And the September 12, 1986 issue included an article-length letter captioned, "Letter From a Friend: A Conservative Speaks Out for Gay Rights."²² Therein John Woolman (a pseudonym) claimed: "... the first theory we must reject is the traditional view that the purpose of sex is procreation." Yet was it not the Lord God Himself who told Adam and Eve to "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth"?

Woolman further declared, "The persecution of homosexuals is deeply rooted in the Judaeo-Christian tradition,"²³ and he sought to refute Joseph Sobran's article entitled "The Politics of AIDS" published in *National Review* in May 1986.²⁴ After the Woolman missive appeared, syndicated columnist John Lofton noted the budding controversy and pointed out that Sobran — a senior editor of *National Review* at the time — had not been alerted by his colleagues at the magazine about the forthcoming publication of the article-length "letter."²⁵

Sobran's article had noted that homosexuals were seeking "to use the power of the state to compel social acceptance" of their behavior. But homosexual behavior, he claimed, had already led to serious consequences:

Nobody died at Three Mile Island, but an accident there brought down strict controls — and moral opprobrium — on the nuclear-power industry. Thousands have died of AIDS, and more thousands are going to die of it, but no serious restraint or even censure has been placed on sodomite promiscuity.²⁶

In August 1992, after Buckley had retired as editor and become editor-at-large (though still its commander-in-chief as the magazine's sole stockholder), *National Review* published British homosexual Matthew Parris' favorable reviews of two books promoting the homosexual "lifestyle." The thrust of each was a demand for laws granting equal rights to homosexuals.²⁷

Buckley added his personal call for special laws protecting homosexuals in a September 1992 column. He stated:

These should include professional security for gays in all public employment, and in private employment except those occupations in which teachers are expected to act as role models: specifically, in schools for children.²⁸

Thus the Establishment-favored leader of the conservative movement urged using the force of government to coerce employers to hire or retain homosexuals. Such a stand constitutes a decided attack on the fundamental right to select one's own employees as well as a refusal to condemn morally repugnant practices.

Buckley also took aim at our nation's centuries-old prohibition against homosexuals in the military, asserting: "Surely common sense and experience call for eliminating the discriminatory provisions that now hypothetically keep gays out of the military and out of the sensitive agencies."²⁹

His stand is partly based on the absurd notion that everyone has a right to serve in the nation's armed forces. But the military legitimately excludes persons who fail to meet standards for height, weight, age, physical condition, even mental competence. In other words, service in the military is a privilege to be earned, not a right to be demanded. The question, then, is: Does the military have any substantive reason to exclude homosexuals? And the answer is that official U.S. policy has held that it unquestionably does, and has since the country's founding (until the Clinton administration). That policy, still on the books after 200 years, appears in Department of Defense Directive 1332.14, which states:

Homosexuality is incompatible with military service. The presence in the military of persons who engage in homosexual conduct or who, by their statements, demonstrate a propensity to engage in homosexual conduct, seriously impairs the accomplishment of the military mission.

This clearly enunciated policy was formulated because experience had shown that the presence of homosexuals destroys unit cohesiveness. Anyone who has served in the military knows that the need for men to work close together in small detachments is a key to success in battle. Any breakdown in the willingness of military personnel to perform as a team, including putting one's life on the line for other members of the unit, will diminish the unit's effectiveness and make its members more prone to becoming casualties.

Beyond that crucial objection, however, there is another predictably deleterious effect of opening the military to homosexuals. The very possibility of being thrown into close contact with sodomites, in circumstances where individuals live and work together in tight quarters with little or no privacy, would dampen the desire of many Americans to serve, and would drive from the military some who are already serving. Parents holding traditional beliefs would undoubtedly suggest other careers for their youngsters, and most clergymen would steer young parishioners away from the services. After all, would not homosexuals tend to gravitate to a profession where

prospects for seduction abound?

Opening up the military to homosexuals would effectively weaken our nation's ability to defend itself, and would undoubtedly diminish the proficiency and morale of our armed services.

These are only a few of the considerations Buckley dismissed as he added his name to the list of those who claim that keeping homosexuals out of the military is unwise and unfair.

In December 1992, Buckley's syndicated column attacked the Defense Department's long-standing contention about the incompatibility of homosexuality with military service. He claimed, "This would appear on the face of it to be simply wrong." Regarding the Department's assertion that the mere presence of those who "demonstrate a propensity to engage in homosexual conduct seriously impairs the accomplishment of the military mission," he seemed astonished, asking "How, exactly?"³⁰

Buckley's position regarding homosexuality has helped to weaken national — especially conservative — revulsion to a degrading practice that corrodes moral standards, has cut short an untold number of lives, and threatens to weaken national defense.

Buckley has also called for the legalization, not only of marijuana, but of all drugs,³¹ and has also openly urged that prostitution be legalized.³²

In March 1966, nearly seven years before the Supreme Court's odious *Roe v. Wade* pro-abortion decision, Buckley suggested in a column that "the Catholic Church should reconsider its position" regarding laws against abortion.³³ *National Review* had also published Claire Boothe Luce's call for permissive abortion laws. Like Buckley, Luce is a Catholic. When prominent self-proclaimed Catholics oppose the strict anti-abortion position of their church, they give the pro-abortionist cause a huge boost. Buckley and his fellow "Catholic conservative" colleagues may well have emboldened the Supreme Court to render its fateful 1973 ruling.

In response to Buckley's pro-abortion column, Brent Bozell (Buckley's brother-in-law and one-time coauthor) sent a sharp letter to *National Review* insisting that the column "reeks of relativism" and that "Mr. Buckley writes in this instance as though he had never heard of the natural law."³⁴ By 1971, Bozell would state in an interview that "it is a hindrance to be William Buckley's brother-in-law, because people are under the assumption that I share his views. I do not. He is the right-wing establishment. I consider myself outside the establishment."³⁵

Patricia Bozell, Buckley's sister, expressed her own outrage at what Buckley had done. She insisted that "the awesome responsibility for the change in moral attitudes [in America] can be laid in significant part to the likes of Mrs. Luce and her Catholic friends at *National Review* who play the democratic game, the secular game, and the pluralistic game in violation of their faith."³⁶ Even members of his own family castigated him for abandoning traditional morality.

In his April 10, 1990 column, Buckley left the question of a woman's "right" to abort her fetus open to argument. After positing the incredible falsehood that "Theology teaches that the

conscience is supreme,” he stated, “If abortion is objectively wrong, a society may nevertheless wish to abide by the woman’s right to pursue her own conscience and proceed to abort.”³⁷

Buckley declined to mention which “theology” teaches that conscience is supreme. In truth, it is neither Catholic theology nor, for that matter, the theology of many other faiths. Neither Catholic theology nor our secular laws condone the notion that serious crimes are not crimes if the perpetrators’ consciences say they are not. Believing that “conscience is supreme” is akin to sanctioning the “do your own thing” situation ethics that infects our culture.

A passage in his 1981 book *Overdrive: A Personal Documentary* sought to assure Buckley’s readers that he remains a faithful Catholic. He tells of driving “to St. Catherine of Siena in Riverside” to attend “a most beautiful service there” one Sunday morning.³⁸ But the same book contains the following passage, which is hardly consistent with traditional Catholic tenets:

The character in my novels, Blackford Oakes, has in him a streak of self-indulgence of a most masochistic character. I confess I have it too. I remember as a young adult reading *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. There is a scene there where the man and girl, fleeing the cops in their car, have an accident, crawl out of the wreck in the woods, the police not ten minutes away and closing in; and suddenly his lust overwhelms him and he says to himself, I must have her, *I simply don’t care* what the consequences are.³⁹ [Emphasis in original.]

Nearer, My God

Late in 1997, Doubleday released Buckley’s *Nearer, My God: An Autobiography of Faith*.⁴⁰ After a lifetime of professing the Catholic faith, Buckley felt an urge to tell the world why.

But *Nearer, My God* didn’t live up to its title. It was in no way an autobiography of the author’s faith, since it fails even to summarize his beliefs. It was, instead, another exercise in anecdotal posturing and name-dropping. Buckley gushed about his affinity for Catholicism, but repeatedly turned to others for *their* attitudes about fundamental points of Catholic doctrine, avoiding confessions of his own.

In a review published widely in Catholic newspapers, Fr. J. Michael Buckley (no relation to William F. Buckley) noted the same deficiency:

Nowhere in this effort does the author reveal anything about his own relationship with God. He professes belief, yes, but he does not reveal anywhere how that belief has guided his daily life or affected his major life decisions.⁴¹

Buckley supplied the comments of such Catholic converts as Richard John Neuhaus, George Rutler, Russell Kirk, Jeffrey Hart, Ernest van den Haag, and Wick Allison on such matters as women priests, divorce, birth control, and remarriage. But he avoided the topic of homosexuality, perhaps because he is already on record with an attitude about it that is completely at odds with Catholic teaching.

He did include a short footnote reiterating his disdain for the unwavering Catholic prohibition

against abortion, stating sarcastically, “The demand to baptize abortion is very rare, the general position among Catholic dissenters being that those who abort, or collude in bringing about an abortion, are yes sinners, but so is your old man.”⁴² In other words: Everybody does it, so you might as well join the crowd. Of the church’s condemnation of birth control and contraception, Buckley remained skeptical, claiming an “incomplete understanding.”

Martin Luther King

At one point in *Nearer, My God*, Buckley praised the “specifically Christian commitment” of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Yet he knows full well that King consorted with known Communists, condemned this nation, and was an out-and-out philanderer. King also championed the cause of the Viet Cong during a period when the remains of 500 U.S. soldiers per week were being shipped home to grieving families.

Buckley’s own publications in the 1960s strongly condemned King’s deeds and statements. The April 25, 1967 edition of *National Review Bulletin*, for instance, revealed that King had “linked himself into a virtual united front with the Communists” in his opposition to the Vietnam War. It also cited King’s April 5, 1967 New York City speech where he compared the U.S. government to the Hitler regime, while claiming that the U.S. was “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world.” Even *Life* magazine would describe that speech as “a demagogic slander that sounded like a script for Radio Hanoi.”⁴³

King’s earlier dealings with known Communists and Communist frontiers were such a poorly kept secret that the FBI sought and obtained permission from Attorney General Robert Kennedy to maintain surveillance on King’s offices, hotel rooms, and telephones. The resulting evidence, and testimony of persons close to King, filled 14 file cabinets. A court challenge resulted in a federal court order that all of the tapes and transcripts remain sealed in the national archives for 50 years (until 2027).⁴⁴

During the debate over making King’s birthday a national holiday, Buckley threw his support behind the idea with both a syndicated column and a *National Review* editorial. In contrast, as the debate reached a peak in 1983, the conservative Washington newsweekly *Human Events* published a lengthy report entitled “The Radical Record of Martin Luther King.” It noted that King had portrayed U.S. troops in Vietnam as “foreign conquerors and oppressors” and had termed North Vietnam’s Communist dictator Ho Chi Minh as “a national leader and the innocent victim of American aggression.”⁴⁵

Ignoring King’s sordid record in *Nearer, My God*, Buckley instead penned a flattering characterization describing King as a leader possessed of “great eloquence and great courage.” He called for “King’s sanctification” and claimed that his utterances sprang from “Christian dogma.” Amidst the gushing, there appears this historically obtuse assertion: “Thomas More was everything Martin Luther King was, except that his skin was white.”⁴⁶

Incredible! The great English jurist, long revered as “Saint Thomas More” by a grateful Catholic Church, was beheaded by King Henry VIII after a life that did *not* include debauchery and was *not* marked by secretly consorting with his country’s enemies. Buckley’s crass comparison revealed more about himself than about either More or King.

Chapter Twelve — Buckley’s Harmful Legacy

*If he had not done a considerable amount of good, he could never have done so much harm.*¹
— Medford Evans

When he began the climb to national attention, Buckley definitely filled a void. He brought an intellectual verve to the conservative side of the political debate and spiced it with wit. He offered a welcome life preserver to young Americans on college campuses who were being swamped by a rising tide of liberalism.

Early on, Buckley skillfully addressed the concerns of many on the Right, both young and old. He and his colleagues targeted President Eisenhower’s deficiencies, intensely opposed Communism, saluted the efforts of congressional investigatory bodies working to rid our government of subversives, and derided the ineptitude and subversion in the Kennedy administration. Even though Buckley and *National Review* weren’t telling the whole story, it seemed to many that they had not left anything of importance out. Readers believed that increasingly wider distribution of the magazine would somehow reverse the statist and defeatist course being followed by our national government.

But, as Medford Evans sadly concluded in 1979, because Buckley had initially done “a considerable amount of good,” he had positioned himself to do a great deal of harm. The tactic of gaining credibility in order to betray the cause one feigns to advocate is not without historical precedent.

For one example, consider the revelations of Anatoli Granovsky, who served the Kremlin as one of its most highly regarded agents during the 1940s. He eventually defected to the West when he could no longer stomach working for a criminal regime. His gripping 1962 autobiography, *I Was an NKVD Agent*, is the case history of a Soviet agent placed in the enemy camp as a pretended opponent of Communism who was thereby positioned to do great harm to the anti-Communist side. (We do not mean to suggest that Buckley ever received directions from Soviet officials.)

Granovsky described how he received intensive training in Moscow prior to being sent into Germany as a supposed defector from Communism. His orders directed him to convince German authorities in his host country that he was a determined foe of the USSR. If he succeeded in gaining that reputation, his mentors knew that he would be well situated to undertake strategically important assignments. But his NKVD instructors not only told him how to proceed, they let him know what would happen if he failed to follow orders. He was given the following warning:

When you talk publicly against the Soviet Union, follow the same harmless line as fanatically as possible. Talk of purges, prisons and the Cheka. But do not draw political conclusions opposed to the Marxist-Leninist philosophy. If you do that you are finished,

finished for good.²

The ground rules given Granovsky by his Communist masters were of the same type Buckley either received from Establishment “handlers,” or he chose to follow of his own accord. *National Review*’s founder stridently opposed the Soviet Union, but refused to point out the Western (mostly U.S.) source of its vaunted power. He protested the suicidal actions and policies of U.S. leaders, but never labeled them part of an intentional plan. He ridiculed American liberals, but religiously avoided any suggestion that conspiratorial hands were applauding, encouraging and, in many instances, financing them behind the scenes. And he was especially forceful in attacking those who recognized a powerful and well-entrenched conspiracy at work and were laboring to expose and rout it.

During the post-World War II years, a constant flow of sustenance moved from this nation to the criminal regime headquartered in the Kremlin. But no amount of evidence about the shipment of equipment, technology, money, and credit could induce Buckley and his colleagues to apply the word “treason” to the ongoing process. In like manner, the USSR’s string of broken treaties, combined with the repeated spectacle of U.S. leaders begging the Soviets to sign more pacts, failed to convince *National Review* that an element of conspiracy was at the root of America’s seeming stupor.

Undoubtedly Buckley knew, as Granovsky claimed to have been instructed by his mentors, that he would have been “finished, finished for good” if he dared to step beyond certain boundaries set by those who relied on him to be the “respectable” conservative leader.

Having achieved a wide and growing audience, Buckley set himself up as the guardian of the conservative gate and chief debunker of any suggestion of conspiracy. Once his credentials as spokesman for the conservative, anti-Communist, even anti-Establishment movements became etched in stone — with pivotal help from Establishment figures themselves — he proceeded to blackball anyone who dared to suggest that willful treachery was a key factor in our nation’s setbacks, embarrassments, and frustrations. He has guarded the conservative gate and protected the conspiracy from exposure with an intensity far exceeding his disapproval of doctrinaire liberalism.

This writer was among those who were initially elated with Buckley’s *modus operandi*. My personal delight with *National Review* and its increasingly famous editor faded in the early 1960s, however, after I discovered that Robert Welch and his John Birch Society had a far more credible explanation for national and world events. (A fuller description of this writer’s personal odyssey is provided in Chapter 13.) I also found myself agreeing with Secretary of Defense James Forrestal’s penetrating observation about the cause of America’s continuing decline. In May 1949, while he was preparing to purchase a New York newspaper to combat America’s internal enemies — and just prior to his untimely and suspicious death³ — he stated:

Consistency has never been a mark of stupidity. If the diplomats who have mishandled our relations with Russia were merely stupid, they would occasionally make a mistake in our favor.⁴

To explain America's setbacks, Buckley regularly pointed to or implied nothing more than gross stupidity. Gradually for some, then overwhelmingly, that explanation no longer satisfied; there had to be a calculated plan.

Summarizing, let us list sundry Buckley "achievements" that have earned him the plaudits of the Establishment, but merit the condemnation of principled Americans.

1. He substituted an undefined "conservatism" for the explicit definition of good government found in the U.S. Constitution.

Using his influence, Buckley managed to alter, or at least erode, the political and economic standards of many Americans. His brand of conservatism led millions away from the timeless principles embodied in the Constitution. Instead of strictly limited government and undiluted national independence, Americans who looked to Buckley grudgingly accepted big government and internationalism as if they had no alternative.

Because so many Americans relied on Buckley's emphasis on mere conservatism, national leaders found it easier and less worrisome to disregard the Constitution. Buckley often shielded members of Congress from deserved wrath by supplying cover for their transgressions. Not content with ignoring the Constitution, he has even called for a constitutional convention where the venerable document could be emasculated.

Had Buckley focused on the unconstitutionality of an array of federal programs, he would have helped to slow down, maybe even stop, the rush toward total government and the flight from national independence. But, like many of the liberals he supposedly scorned, he has treated the Constitution as if it were a quaint but meaningless antique. In the process, he has enticed conservatives to grudgingly accept the socialistic inroads of the New Deal, Fair Deal, Great Society, and their progeny.

2. He shielded the conspiracy by denying its existence and targeting its foes.

From the outset of his public career, Buckley employed every means at his disposal to keep his fellow Americans from knowing about the existence of the conspiracy that is aggravating and creating our national problems. Awareness of such deliberate treachery produces a determination to become involved in programs of education and action to expose and eventually defeat the plotters. But Buckley targeted for virtual extinction anyone who carefully and competently exposed and attacked the conspiracy. He has spent a lifetime working to accomplish the conspiracy's very first and most important goal: widespread belief that it does not exist.

3. By accepting membership in the Council on Foreign Relations, he supplied dignity and cover to a key element of the conspiratorial apparatus.

Buckley certainly knew that extensive exposure of the scheming history and destructive goals of the Council on Foreign Relations would severely impede realization of the conspiracy's designs. Yet he opted instead to furnish the CFR with sorely needed legitimacy among conservatives by publicly joining it, providing space in his magazine for its spokesman to mask its poisonous

agenda, and writing for its journal, *Foreign Affairs*. In the wake of his affiliation, his fellow elitists within the organization began pointing to the Buckley name on the CFR membership roster as proof that none of the charges leveled against them or the Council could possibly be true.

4. He has spread lies and distortions about Robert Welch and The John Birch Society.

Buckley and his *National Review* colleagues produced a stream of distortions, lies, and ridicule to keep concerned Americans from soberly evaluating the perspective of Robert Welch and The John Birch Society. By doing so, they kept untold numbers of their readers from gaining access to information and documentation sorely needed for a proper understanding of world and national affairs, to say nothing of the Society's specific action program to expose and rout the conspiracy.

5. He supported individuals and positions favored by the conspiracy, thereby sowing confusion in conservative ranks.

Buckley worked to provide conservative legitimacy for Nelson Rockefeller, Henry Kissinger, Richard Nixon, John Gardner, Allard Lowenstein, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, George Bush, Newt Gingrich, and numerous other neoconservatives and internationalists. He elevated an array of conspiracy-favored initiatives from deserved opprobrium, including the Panama Canal giveaway, the UN's Genocide Convention, the UN itself, South Africa's African National Congress, anti-gun legislation, and aid to the Soviet Union.

6. He has contributed to the undermining of the nation's morality. While posturing as a believer in religious principle, he has wallowed in pornographic magazines, defended homosexuality, and issued a stream of trashy novels. In like manner, he has furnished an aura of legitimacy for harmful political moves and supplied dignity to sundry forms of immoral behavior that are battlegrounds in the ongoing culture war.

7. He led Americans away from involvement in the type of principled activism our nation sorely needs. Many concerned citizens, captivated by Buckley's magazine, columns, television appearances, books, etc., have remained comfortable in their armchairs, soaking up his pompous intellectualism and frat-level humor, rather than becoming activists with a vision of victory.

Fostering Defeatism

In March 1989, a clear-thinking Tennessean sent an incisive letter to Buckley at *National Review's* headquarters. It came as no surprise to Dr. Herman Crowder that his thoughts were never published. He did, however, share a copy of his letter with this author. He, too, contended that Buckley's efforts had aided "establishment liberals." But the perceptive Tennessean also contended that Buckley had fostered defeatism. He wrote:

Most of the time your magazine is a beguiling delight to read. It is written with such wit, style and verve that the unsuspecting reader does not realize he is gradually being conditioned to accept the idea that conservatives should be content to lose gracefully and without rancor while establishment liberals walk away with the prize. My suspicion

is that *National Review's* plan for conservatives in the U.S. is basically the same as the U.S. plan for Contras in Nicaragua: They are a token opposition to be kept alive and occasionally encouraged, but not allowed to make significant progress toward political power or the reconstruction of constitutional government.⁵

Dr. Crowder's suspicions were well-founded. For nearly a half century, Buckley has indeed "conditioned" conservatives to lose to big government and internationalism.

During *National Review's* earlier years, conservatives lost when:

- Barry Goldwater was overwhelmed at the polls by Lyndon Johnson;
- the Great Society's socialistic programs became law;
- our nation's soft-on-Communism leaders denied U.S. forces any possibility of victory in Vietnam;
- aid and trade streamed from America to the USSR where it was used to maintain Communist tyranny and kill Americans in Southeast Asia; and
- the Free Chinese were betrayed by Richard Nixon who journeyed to Beijing to bestow gifts and honors on history's bloodiest murderers.

In more recent years, conservatives suffered additional setbacks when:

- national indebtedness soared to new heights and Americans found themselves paying more for interest on debt than for national defense;
- the U.S. military became the policemen of the world for the United Nations;
- government's near-complete takeover of education and medicine sent the quality of both down as the cost of both escalated;
- immersion into NAFTA and GATT/WTO chipped away at national sovereignty; and
- an impotent Congress allowed its authority to be usurped by a power-hungry executive branch. *National Review* declined to report any pattern to these developments, and even lauded some. But whenever Buckley and his team did admit defeat, they did so with "wit, style and verve."

As we have sought to demonstrate, Buckley provided critically important support for those who are working to achieve world government at the expense of an independent United States of America.

The years may have caught up with him, but Buckley's influence continues as others seek to pick up where he is leaving off. Soon after arriving in New York, radio commentator Rush Limbaugh became the willing recipient of Buckley's attention. He would eventually inform his millions of

listeners, “If I am ever reincarnated, I hope to be given William Buckley’s brain.”

Limbaugh once described the “wonderful experience” of having spent a weekend at the Buckley home, where he enjoyed a conversation with Henry Kissinger prior to a musical program. The famous talk-show host related that he and Kissinger compared notes about the unfairness of the press. Limbaugh reported that the former secretary of state whined about “the terrible things being said by liberals about conservatives *like us*.” (Emphasis added.) Limbaugh, who can hardly be unaware of Kissinger’s career, and how he himself is being used, has done his best to perform for the Establishment à la Buckley. He, too, has done considerable good and is, therefore, positioned to do much harm.

Another example of someone whom liberals point to as one of their conservative adversaries is former House Speaker Newt Gingrich. Yet his support for NAFTA, GATT/WTO, MFN for China, UN use of America’s military, and numerous other harmful initiatives supplied the margins of victory when these proposals were considered by Congress.

But it is Buckley who has led the way. That others have followed in his wake should come as no surprise. It is our hope that the warning we have raised will minimize any future harm that he and others like him might attempt.

The Truth Must Not Be Suppressed

In his celebrated speech of March 23, 1775, Patrick Henry chided his fellow Virginians for allowing mere hope to influence their actions. His message seems pertinent to those who may be, as this author once was, under the sway of William F. Buckley, Jr. Addressing his fellow Virginians, Henry thundered:

It is natural for man to indulge in the illusion of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst and provide for it.⁶

Our portrait of America’s “respectable conservative” leader may be rejected by some who prefer “to shut [their] eyes against a painful truth.” After all, as stated by the 17th century’s Patrick Henry, there are “none so blind as those who will not see.”

But see we must. For a candid evaluation of the Buckley record has, sadly, become an imperative element of the truth that Holy Scripture claims can make us free.

William Buckley sought to destroy The John Birch Society. In our final chapter, the reader is invited to discover just how badly he failed.

Chapter Thirteen — The John Birch Society: Alive, Well, and Growing

*If there had been even one chapter of the John Birch Society in Havana prior to 1959, working to expose Castro as [John Birch Society founder] Robert Welch was at the time, Cuba would not have fallen to Communism.*¹

— Major Pedro Diaz Lanz
Former chief of Fidel Castro's air force

*I am going to destroy The John Birch Society.*²
— William F. Buckley

Major Pedro Diaz Lanz paid the above tribute to Robert Welch and The John Birch Society after defecting to the United States in mid-1959. Like many other Cubans, he once believed in Fidel Castro. So much so, in fact, that he transported supplies to Castro's guerrilla army and became chief of his small air force, a position he continued to occupy after Castro seized control of Cuba.

And why shouldn't he have embraced Castro? Wasn't the bearded one a modern-day Robin Hood who wanted to end the exploitation of the poor by the rich? Wasn't he the George Washington of Cuba? Didn't he (in the words of Herbert L. Matthews of the *New York Times*) possess "strong ideas of liberty, democracy, social justice, the need to restore the Constitution, to hold elections"?³ And weren't he and his fellow revolutionaries (again, in Matthews' words) fighting "for an ideal and for their hopes of a clean, democratic Cuba"?⁴

Major Diaz certainly thought so. And so did many others, both in Cuba and the United States, whose only knowledge about Castro came from the media. Matthews' account was particularly significant, not only because he wrote for the *Times* but because he had clandestinely visited Castro while the revolutionary was holed up in Cuba's Sierra Maestra mountains.

Castro a "Communist"? As far as the major media were concerned, the notion was preposterous, not only prior to Castro's coming to power on January 1, 1959 but for many months afterward. In July 1959, for example, *Times* correspondent Matthews still claimed: "This is not a Communist revolution in any sense of the word and there are no Communists in positions of control."⁵ That attitude was so pervasive that years later, during a 1963 press conference, former President Dwight David Eisenhower claimed, "It would have taken a genius of prophecy to know that Castro was a Communist when he took control of Cuba."⁶

But Robert Welch warned that Castro was a Communist as early as September 1958 — three months before launching The John Birch Society, four months before Castro rode triumphantly into Havana, and 39 months before Castro boasted to the world that he was a Communist in a televised speech. In that same speech, Castro acknowledged that he had kept his Communism hidden from public view "because otherwise we might have alienated the bourgeoisie and other forces which we knew we would eventually have to fight."⁷

Those forces included many beguiled Cubans. They even included some of Castro's fellow revolutionaries, such as Pedro Diaz Lanz. Ordinary Cubans, like ordinary Americans, didn't have a clue about Castro's evil intent. They had no awareness of Castro's Marxism-Leninism as presented in the September 1958 issue of *American Opinion*, wherein Welch wrote: "Now the evidence from Castro's whole past, that he is a Communist agent carrying out Communist orders and plans, is overwhelming. The evidence from his method of operation is even more so."⁸ Nor did they know that in December 1958, at the founding meeting of The John Birch Society, Welch warned: "if you have any slightest doubt that Castro is a Communist, don't. If he is successful, time will clearly reveal that he is an agent of the Kremlin."⁹

The latter statement soon appeared in print in *The Blue Book of The John Birch Society*, the transcript of Welch's two-day presentation that led to the Society's founding. But very few Americans, and virtually no Cubans, were aware in 1958–1959 of Welch's warnings, or the evidence upon which those warnings were based. On the other hand, the American people were aware of what the *New York Times* and other major media organs were saying. The *Times*, Matthews boasted, is "the most powerful journalistic instrument that has ever been forged in the free world."¹⁰ True enough. And if the *Times* had told the truth about Castro (if Welch, a private citizen, knew, isn't it reasonable to believe the *Times* was aware?), its message would have reached Havana through the Cuban people's many American friends.

A Winning Strategy

Robert Welch built The John Birch Society to provide the organized means to circumvent the major media, to inform and activate the American people, and to resist the conspiratorial drive to destroy freedom. "We do not have to be too late, and we do not have to lose the fight," he said at the founding meeting. "Communism has its weaknesses, and the Communist conspiracy has its vulnerable points. We have many layers of strength not yet rotted by all of the infiltration and political sabotage to which we have been subjected. Our danger is both immense and imminent; but it is not beyond the possibility of being overcome by the resistance that is still available. All we must find and build and use, to win, is sufficient understanding."¹¹

What kind of understanding? Welch recognized that more than a rudimentary grasp of ideology was required. In Cuba prior to Castro, Major Diaz and others had already recognized that Communism was bad, but that amount of understanding did not save them. Obviously, if the age-old fight between freedom and slavery were limited to an ideological contest conducted on a level playing field, freedom would win every time. But there was no level playing field in Cuba or anywhere else where tyranny had already triumphed.

Despots like Castro must rely on deception to accomplish their evil ends. The same is true for the Insiders who sponsor them. They must deceive since no one wants to be enslaved. This is why shining the light of exposure on conspiracy is so necessary. As Medford Evans explained in *American Opinion* shortly after Robert Welch's passing, "Welch insisted, over and over, that the danger was not a body of ideas (important as those are) so much as a body of men, particularly a group of individually capable men in league with each other — a powerful conspiracy seeking ever greater power."¹²

In fact, the top Insiders undoubtedly do not themselves believe in Communist philosophy or, for that matter, in any of the other “snake oil” ideologies they peddle. Their intent is to acquire power, and ideology for them is nothing more than a smoke screen to hide their true purpose, the widespread knowledge of which would derail their plans.

Welch also recognized that an organized conspiracy cannot be effectively exposed unless good people are also organized. This is true even when accurate information is disseminated to counter the bad. In the April 1969 *JBS Bulletin*, Welch cited several examples of the “important part” the written word has played in various battles between freedom and slavery throughout history, including Julius Caesar’s *Commentaries on the Gallic Wars* versus the works of Cicero, the writings of Voltaire and Rousseau versus those of Robison and Abbé Augustin Barruel, and the works of Karl Marx versus those of Adam Smith. Yet Welch emphasized that “these various battles have *not* been decided by the books themselves. You will note that the above authors on the side of individualism lost their fight despite the moral and literary superiority of their works. The reason for their defeat is quite simple — but extremely important. The books by the collectivists were used as part of an organized campaign — they were part of an action program — whereas the individualists tragically thought that by simply bringing out their books victory would be theirs. They were terribly mistaken.”¹³

Welch continued:

The point here is that simply publishing good books, articles, and pamphlets, and even getting them distributed, is not, by itself, enough to win this battle. This literature must be read, it must be put to use, and it must be a part of an overall, concerted plan of action. And this is exactly what The John Birch Society has been doing, and must continue to do in the future....

The members of the society have performed a Herculean task in the volume of books and pamphlets they have put into the hands of awakening Americans. But the success of this work is not in the numbers distributed and would have had no permanent value but for the fact that these various printed works fitted into an important part of the program of The John Birch Society. And herein lies an accomplishment of which to be immensely proud and one of great significance.... The discipline of the Society has done much to unify the Americanist forces and to guide them down the line of concerted action.¹⁴

The organization Welch created to expose the collectivist conspiracy — and, later, to advance the Society’s long-range goals of “less government, more responsibility, and — with God’s help — a better world” — was not confined to a central headquarters. Nor was it based on a political quick fix, such as trying to elect an appealing candidate. Without first creating sufficient understanding, trying to elect a good candidate in the face of a hostile media would be futile. On the other hand, even leftist and opportunistic politicians will respond favorably when pressured to do so by well-informed constituents.

Welch recognized that needed understanding could develop only through grassroots organization. And this is why the JBS is organized in chapters from coast to coast. He

understood that what happened in the living rooms of America would eventually determine what would happen in the halls of Congress.

Yes, the Society does have a central office. But that office — located in Appleton, Wisconsin, and staffed by about 45 employees — is set up, not to relieve the American people of their responsibilities in the freedom fight, but to supply those who join the JBS with the necessary tools and direction so that they can win the freedom fight themselves. That is, in fact, the only way this fight will be won.

In the July 1977 *JBS Bulletin*, Welch explained the importance of relying on grassroots organization and membership:

The John Birch Society set out early to build up a properly staffed educational army which was to create the only form of opposition that the *Insiders* of a Master Conspiracy did not know how to overwhelm or to destroy. This growing opposition consisted of exposing the background, methods, purposes, and progress of that Conspiracy so as to generate more public understanding of what was taking place, and a resulting grass-roots resistance to many of its projects. To some extent our activities have constituted primarily a continuation of the effort begun by Joe McCarthy. But with one vital difference. McCarthy had no grass-roots organization for implementing his arguments or extending his reach. And without such permanently *organized* popular support he and his whole effort could be, and were, completely destroyed in the six years of 1951 through 1956.

But our operation was based on the membership formula. Nor do we mean a temporary and tenuous membership in some political action group; or in some academic propaganda organization where the members' contact with headquarters was only by mail. The basic features of our organizational pattern have been continuous, palpable, and real. We required regular periodic meetings and specific activities that were carefully planned and coordinated. And the cost of supplying able officers, whom we call our field staff, for inspiring, guiding, and supervising these several thousand platoons or chapters, has been so great that not a single other American organization in this fight against the Conspiracy has even attempted to maintain a paid and professional field staff. Yet this very sound and solid core of all our effort is what caused the *Insiders* to be so disturbed and frightened by The John Birch Society that they set out almost at once to destroy it.¹⁵

This organizational concept undergirding the Society is both effective and simply grasped. After defecting to this country, Major Pedro Diaz Lanz had the opportunity to observe that effectiveness firsthand. At the end of a Society-arranged speaking tour, he wrote to Robert Welch: "I have seen with my own eyes the magnificent work you accomplished all over this beautiful land, in alerting thousands of people through the organized effort of the John Birch Society.... Thanks with all my heart for letting me work with all of you in this magnificent task."¹⁶ He even told an acquaintance that "If there had been even one chapter of the John Birch Society in Havana prior to 1959, working to expose Castro as Welch was at the time, Cuba would not have fallen to Communism."¹⁷ To fully appreciate the value he attached to the kind of

informed, organized opposition he saw in the JBS, it must be kept in mind that a single chapter seldom consists of more than a few dozen members.

A Personal Odyssey

The remainder of this chapter is best written in the first person. I have been a member of The John Birch Society since 1964 and a member of the staff since 1966. Like Major Diaz, whom I came to know, I have observed firsthand the organization's effectiveness. But the similarity between his experiences and my own does not end there. Prior to our involvement in the JBS, we were both beguiled by a supposed champion of freedom whose actions undermined the cause of freedom. In Diaz' case that man was Fidel Castro; in my own case it was William F. Buckley.

I do not mean to suggest, of course, that Buckley was ever a third world dictator, or a mass murderer, or even a Communist. Yet if it is true that the pen is mightier than the sword, the effect that Buckley's words have had in the ongoing struggle between freedom and slavery should not be ignored. Castro had a military arm, and he seized political power. Buckley commands no army and has never held public office. Yet he played a pivotal role in diverting mainstream, conservative Americans away from constitutional principles and limited government, and toward more government and more internationalism. The path he has blazed can only lead, ultimately, to the kind of total and absolute government Castro enjoys in Cuba, though on a global scale. The fact that the end result most likely will not be called "Communism" will not make it any more tolerable or benevolent.

Buckley has also harmed the cause of freedom by declaring war against The John Birch Society. He has not destroyed the JBS as he had intended to do. Yet every chapter not formed because of his efforts meant less resistance against encroaching tyranny. Moreover, he was undoubtedly far more effective than any liberal journalist could have been at stunting the growth of the JBS since he ostensibly held the same core beliefs as the conservative constituency the JBS set out to reach and organize.

I was a part of that constituency before I had heard of either the JBS or Buckley. After leaving the Marine Corps in 1960, I started employment with an electronics firm in Massachusetts. A friend at work introduced me to Buckley's *National Review* before the year ended, and I loved it. The conservatism I'd been reared on (my Dad was a fan of John T. Flynn, Joseph McCarthy, Westbrook Pegler, George Sokolsky, and Robert Taft) enjoyed a revival after several years of lying dormant.

Early in 1961, like all Americans of that period, I learned of the existence of The John Birch Society. The mass media informed me and every other American that it was a secret, fascist, un-American collection of crazies who threatened the American dream. My own reaction to what I heard and read was sorrow that such an organization could ever have been formed in my country.

The radio, television, newspapers, and magazines continued to lambaste the JBS throughout the entire year. But Buckley and *National Review* said nothing, and I wondered why. Finally, in February 1962, the magazine published a six-page editorial attacking Robert Welch.¹⁸ According to Buckley, Welch was a dangerous screwball who was unworthy of the many good

people who had signed on with the Society.

Having already been accused of being “one of those Birchers” by co-workers who heard me protesting the liberalism coming out of Washington, I developed an antipathy toward the JBS. This organization, I thought, had given liberals an opportunity to tarnish any conservative. So I read those six pages more than once, embraced Buckley’s attitude, and wrote a short note thanking him for his explanation.

I was truly surprised when my letter appeared in the magazine.¹⁹ The very day it was delivered to my home, a letter also arrived from a JBS member who obviously had seen the magazine a day or so earlier. By simply noting my city and state appearing along with my name, he found my address easily enough in the telephone book. His letter essentially asked a simple question: Was I basing my attitude about Robert Welch because of what he had stated, or because of what others had stated about him?

Good question, I thought. Other than quotes appearing in the mass media, and the few selections chosen by Buckley, I had never seen anything written by Welch. So, I wrote back to the JBS member and offered to look at whatever he thought I ought to see. My intention at that point was to show him how wrong both Welch and he were. But I found the requested information to be well-written, reasonable, tasteful, and somewhat compelling. Still, I wasn’t convinced that Welch was right and Buckley was wrong. I decided to do some more digging.

I soon found out what being a JBS member means. The man who wrote to me kept in contact. He invited me to a meeting, and I attended with two curious friends. The meeting wasn’t anything special, but we chipped in to buy a set of the “One Dozen Candles,” the paperbound, out-of-print books Welch had republished. Among these, I found John T. Flynn’s *While You Slept*, Arthur Bliss Lane’s *I Saw Poland Betrayed*, George Racey Jordan’s *From Major Jordan’s Diaries*, and other truly important books I had never come across. As I read these, I felt gratitude that Robert Welch had made them available. When I read others, both my gratitude and my concern for my country rose in tandem.

But I also wondered about Welch’s condemnation of Dwight Eisenhower. Hardly any criticism of the Society failed to mention Welch’s startling conclusion about the former president. “What did Welch actually say?” I asked when next contacted. And I was told that he’d written a 300-page letter that hadn’t been published. I wondered silently if it hadn’t been published because it couldn’t be defended. So I asked a further question: “Why would you affiliate with a man who strongly condemned the former president without knowing exactly what he said or why he said it?” And the answer to that piqued my curiosity even more. The JBS member on the phone responded, “I already know enough about Eisenhower to know that the image he has been given doesn’t match his performance.”

I had served for three years as a Marine officer while Ike was in the White House. He had been my commander in chief. Now I was being asked to conclude that I had been seriously ill-informed about what had been occurring during those years and several before. Even though I had by now read some of those out-of-print books and become increasingly concerned about much of what they related, I decided at that point to let the Birchers go their way, and I’d go

mine. But the plucky JBS member gave me a copy of *The Blue Book of The John Birch Society* and, after I read it, my concerns for my country grew more intense. Nevertheless, the Eisenhower issue held me back.

In the fall of 1963, another JBS member called to inform me that Robert Welch's book about Eisenhower, entitled *The Politician*, was now available. "How can I get a copy?" I asked. "It costs eight dollars," came the response. I honestly could not afford an extra eight dollars. (Remember, this was 1963.) I had a wonderful wife, three babies, a mortgage, and a car payment. We were a very happy family, but we were living on the edge. So I told him I'd get back to him soon.

Several months later, the two-dollar version of *The Politician* became available. I met still another JBS member, bought a copy from him, read it over the next few evenings, and decided right then and there that 1) Robert Welch wasn't a screwball; 2) Buckley was dead wrong about Welch; 3) I'd been deceived about Ike; and 4) I wanted to join The John Birch Society.

JBS Accomplishments

Over the ensuing three decades plus, my appreciation for Robert Welch and the crusade he launched has soared. Having been a part of the organization for most of my adult life, I am firmly convinced that Major Diaz was not exaggerating when he said that a single JBS chapter could have stopped Castro from coming to power. I also believe that we would be living in slavery today if Robert Welch had not founded the JBS and tens of thousands of members had not rallied to the cause, sometimes exhibiting the dedication usually associated with martyrs. And I believe the JBS today is the only force on Earth capable of preserving our freedoms. I cannot prove these things in the same way that a mathematician can prove a mathematical formula. But I believe them nonetheless. My belief has been shaped over many years of observing members in action. I know what Birchers can accomplish. I know that the only ingredient the organization needs in order to rout this "Master Conspiracy" (as Robert Welch identified it) is more members.

These statements will undoubtedly seem strange to anyone who hasn't seen the Birch Society at work as I have. After all, the major media says little about the JBS these days, and when they do, they oftentimes dismiss it as an artifact of a bygone era. But press coverage should not be equated with accomplishment, particularly when the press views the JBS as something to be ignored, even scorned. In fact, treating the JBS as insignificant is merely a sophisticated extension of the smear campaign leveled against the organization in the 1960s. From the point of view of the smear artists, one problem with giving the JBS any attention is that some people may examine the group and decide its worth for themselves, just like I and many others did during the '60s. The smear artists' solution: Treat the JBS as if Buckley really did kill it! Or, when it is mentioned, pretend that it never had any real impact and is now a ghost of its former self.

Occasionally some truth about the organization's cumulative accomplishments seeps out. Some of it can be found even in mainstream media articles intended to smear the organization. Such was the case when the May 13, 1996 *Christian Science Monitor* published a rant by Ira Straus entitled, "When Conspiracy Theory Replaces Thought." Straus should know something about how the world works, since he was once executive director of the Establishment-spawned

Association to Unite the Democracies (which seeks a federation of democracies, a stepping stone to world government). In his *Monitor* article, he complained:

For decades, the John Birch Society has spread word of the Conspiracy: The international bankers who pull all the strings. The ones who really control both the Communist conspiracy and the United States government. The Trilateral Commission. The Federal Reserve, which is ruining our money. The Council on Foreign Relations — psst, they're out to destroy the Constitution, take away our guns, and enslave us in a United Nations One-World Communist government. Their code words: "New World Order."

So runs the Birchist fantasy, spun out in dozens of books distributed in millions of copies. An estimated 5 million to 10 million Americans believe this stuff. Tens of millions more are under its influence.²⁰

Straus's estimate of JBS effectiveness could be grossly understated. The same year his article appeared, the University of Virginia and the Gallup Organization produced a joint study entitled, *The State of Disunion: 1996 Survey of American Political Culture*. The study included face-to-face interviews with a national sampling of more than 2,000 adults. According to its conclusions, 77 percent of Americans agree that "the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves." The survey additionally found that "one quarter of the population do repeatedly express the conviction that the government is run by a conspiracy; and one in ten Americans strongly subscribes to this view."²¹

In his article, Straus disparaged Americans who hold such a viewpoint as "paranoids," "crackpots," and even "dangerous — capable of blowing up federal buildings." He fumed: "Conspiracy theory is doing America real harm. Long incubating underground, it has grown into the greatest enslaver of human minds since communism. It irrationalizes thinking on every issue. It kills. It turns millions of Americans against their own country."²²

This vicious diatribe stands in sharp contrast to the University of Virginia/Gallup survey, which found: "[Their viewpoint] does not lead 'strong conspiracy' types to reject the American system as a whole or to withdraw from political participation altogether.... Not only are those who suspect an elite conspiracy likely to vote, but they are actually more engaged politically than other Americans, if writing letters and discussing politics is considered political engagement." Moreover, they "are as likely as anyone to say that the U.S. is the greatest country in the world."²³ Unfortunately, not enough of these good Americans are involved in an organized, concerted-action program to expose the Conspiracy, or the problem would already have been solved. Buckley has always worked to keep these individuals away from The John Birch Society.

The Society has played a crucial role in creating understanding about the existence, objectives, and *modus operandi* of the Conspiracy for global control. The Conspiracy's key objective is to create a world government under the United Nations, ostensibly for the benefit of all mankind but in reality for the benefit of the Insiders who would rule the world. The UN threat is not in competition with the Communist threat but is in fact another route to the same end. It is no exaggeration to say that a UN-controlled world would be a Communist-style world (in substance

if not in name). Under the UN, the Iron Curtain that once divided Europe would, in effect, engulf the entire planet.

During the height of the Cold War, many good Americans could easily detect the external threat of Communism but not the internal threat of betrayal by leaders who supposedly had America's best interests at heart. But only our leaders can surrender American sovereignty to the UN. Welch saw the danger early on, warning at the JBS founding meeting in 1958 that part of the conspiratorial plan "is to induce the gradual surrender of American sovereignty, piece by piece and step by step, to various international organizations — of which the United Nations is the outstanding but far from the only example...."²⁴ Soon thereafter he launched the Society's "*Get US out!* of the United Nations" campaign — a campaign that has not only continued to the present day but has recently been intensified.

During the 1970s and '80s, the JBS delivered to Congress over 11 million petition signatures seeking to *Get US out!* of the UN. The process of collecting those signatures included the creation of much-needed understanding. It is impossible to measure the cumulative impact of the Society's decades-long *Get US out!* campaign on public opinion, but it must be profound. Undoubtedly, the Society's campaign has been responsible for millions of Americans rejecting the dangerous notion that the UN is "mankind's last, best hope for peace" and concluding instead that the U.S. should withdraw.

This awakening has also had a major impact on Congress. There was a time when the UN was so widely trusted that no more than a congressman or two would have dared called for U.S. withdrawal from the world body. But attitudes have changed. In 1997, the *Get US out!* campaign won a limited victory when, for the first time in the history of our nation's involvement in the world organization, Congress voted on a measure calling for our nation to withdraw. Fifty-four members of the House voted for it.²⁵ Then, in 1999, Congress voted on a measure that would have cut off U.S. funding to the UN, thereby effectively ending U.S. participation. This time, 74 congressmen voted yea.²⁶ Both measures were introduced by Congressman Ron Paul (R-Texas), who commented in 1998 that "the beneficial educational impact of the John Birch Society over the past four decades would be hard to overestimate."²⁷

It would take many pages to document all the accomplishments of the JBS since its founding in 1958. Because of space limitations, a couple examples from recent years will have to suffice:

- *Killing Anthony Lake's nomination:* After President Clinton nominated Anthony Lake to be director of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1996, *The New American* (our Birch-affiliated magazine) published an important article exposing his subversive background, including his connections to the KGB-linked Institute for Policy Studies.²⁸ Birchers swung expeditiously into action, alerting others about Lake's background, especially key members of the House and Senate. The result was the scuttling of the nomination, and the Birch effort did not go unnoticed in the Establishment press. During the height of the campaign, a January 17, 1997 *New York Times* lead editorial sought to salvage Lake's selection. It noted: "The John Birch Society and other opponents are busily assembling a Lake dossier — widely circulated on the Internet — that depicts him as a dangerous radical."²⁹ Then, an op-ed piece by Douglas Brinkley in the

February 10th *New York Times* complained: “After Mr. Lake was nominated for Director of Central Intelligence, the John Birch Society and other anti-government fringe groups launched a smear campaign.... In an error-ridden article in *The New American* ... William F. Jasper ... found a pattern of anti-Americanism.... The diatribe would not be worth mentioning except that its ludicrous charges have been picked up, in slightly milder fashion, by mainstream conservative publications like *The Washington Times*....”³⁰

• *Impeaching President Clinton*: The Society launched its “Impeach Clinton Now!” campaign in November 1998, months before the scandal involving Monica Lewinsky surfaced. The Society’s network of A.C.T.I.O.N. (Activate Congress To Improve Our Nation) committees focused on the impeachable offense of bribery. A.C.T.I.O.N. provided solid evidence that the president had accepted funds for his re-election campaign from the Chinese regime and its American high-tech collaborators. In response, Mr. Clinton arranged for shipments to Beijing of militarily sensitive equipment in a scandal known as “Chinagate.” Although Clinton was not impeached for Chinagate, it is likely he wouldn’t have been impeached at all without the Birch effort.

Shortly before the House voted to impeach Bill Clinton, the *Washington Post* noted that “early impeachment activists” included “the leaders of the John Birch Society,” and that, “together, their success is a demonstration of how a determined and ideologically committed group can change the course of history....”³¹ Congressman Bob Barr (R-Ga.), one of the early voices calling for impeachment, noted: “I don’t think we would have even gotten an impeachment inquiry vote without the efforts of A.C.T.I.O.N. and other grassroots mobilization efforts.”³² Although Clinton was acquitted by the Senate, his impeachment sent a powerful message regarding abuse of power.

Both these successes were achieved decades after the Establishment fired its big guns at the JBS, supposedly leaving it for dead. The Establishment’s number one gunner was Buckley, who had told friends: “I am going to destroy The John Birch Society.”³³ How successful was Buckley? Not terribly — not when the organization he targeted for destruction is given credit for impeaching an *elected* president for the first time in American history.*

The JBS is now focusing most of its efforts on getting the U.S. out of the UN. To those who scoff that this is an unrealistic goal, I say, “That’s exactly what the naysayers were claiming with regard to our efforts to impeach President Clinton.”

Looking Ahead

When I joined The John Birch Society, I was still puzzled as to why William F. Buckley would attack such a worthwhile organization. It took me many years to conclude that Buckley knew exactly what he was doing. He attacked the JBS not because of its weaknesses but because of its strengths. He attacked it because it stood in the way of the internationalism and statism he was ushering in from the Right. He attacked it because it offered a genuine alternative to the controlled debate provided by Establishment liberals and conservatives. That controlled debate presents Americans with lose-lose choices that will lead, ultimately, to total government and world government.

Buckley is now in the twilight of his life. He has done most of the damage he could ever hope to

do. Yet the counterfeit conservatism he has minted is now being circulated by others, including William Bennett, Rush Limbaugh, William Kristol, and George W. Bush. The stakes in the struggle haven't changed, even though many of the participants have. Many years ago, in his *Commonweal* article, Buckley recommended "a totalitarian bureaucracy within our shores ... and the attendant centralization of power in Washington" as the means to fight Communism during the Cold War.³⁴ Today's neoconservatives are calling for police state powers at home and a coalition of nations under the UN in order to win the war against terrorism. As the French say: "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose" ("The more things change, the more they remain the same").

Unlike Buckley, the JBS may still be in the early morning hours of a long life, with its most productive years in the future. The organization struggled to survive after Robert Welch passed away in 1985, but over the past decade a new leadership team has strengthened its vitality and spurred it on to significant growth with a lengthening list of notable victories.

I am proud to be a part of that team. The key to ultimate success is not to "reinvent the wheel" but instead to focus on the organizational and philosophical principles Robert Welch established for The John Birch Society in the first place. By creating a principle-centered organization, Welch fully intended that the Society would thrive for decades if not centuries after his death, and that it would remain faithful to the purposes that attracted the early generations of Birchers.

The principles on which the JBS is based have given the organization tremendous resiliency and have kept it on course. As in Robert Welch's day, the JBS has the potential to expose the Conspiracy and to reverse America's slide into slavery. Yet that potential will only be realized if enough good Americans join the organization and become involved while freedom still exists.

Ironically, the top conspirators may recognize The John Birch Society's *potential* more than some JBS members do. The top Insiders know what a dedicated few can accomplish; they know what the JBS has already accomplished; and they know how much more the JBS could accomplish if it were to double, triple, or quadruple in size.

As the enemies of freedom move closer to their final destination, their true intent will become more obvious and more Americans will realize that something is wrong at the top. The Society stands poised to gather these individuals into its midst, deepen their newly acquired understanding, and enlist them in the Society's action program.

I invite readers to contact The John Birch Society. As Robert Welch often said, "Come join us in our proud companionship and in our epic undertaking."

* Andrew Johnson was impeached, but was not an elected president. He filled the vacancy created by the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

Appendix — Ignoring the Constitution, Promoting the

Establishment, and More

During his long career, William Buckley has led a sizable segment of American conservatives away from adherence to both the supreme law of the land and our nation's traditional ethical and moral standards. He has eased the way for liberals and internationalists, and for agents of a conspiracy whose existence he essentially denies, to skirt the Constitution, wage a corrosive culture war, and speed the nation along the path to a new world order.

Government officials are required to swear a solemn oath to uphold the Constitution. The first test for any politician as he considers any legislative proposal should be: Does it fall within the strictly defined boundaries established by the Constitution? Sadly, however, a chasm exists between what is constitutional — and what has been labeled conservative by Buckley and those who have been enticed to follow his lead.

Recall that Establishment spokesman Richard Goodwin lauded him in 1967 for being the Great Society's "responsible force on the right." *Time* magazine quoted Buckley's supposedly startled reply: "I'm going to dissolve at this rate. I'm not used to being treated so kindly."¹

Also in 1967, Larry L. King wondered in *Harper's* magazine: "Why is Bill Buckley the social darling of so many Establishment liberals?"² He named such leftist luminaries as Norman Mailer, John Kenneth Galbraith, and Murray Kempton. They told King that they liked Buckley for his wit, his willingness to parry with them, and above all, the "responsible" way he conducted himself.

Buckley Defines Conservatism

As long ago as October 21, 1964, Buckley mused philosophically about conservatism in a speech delivered at the New York Conservative Party's anniversary dinner. He proclaimed:

A conservative is concerned simultaneously with two things, the first being the shape of the visionary or paradigmatic society towards which we should labor; the second, the speed with which it is thinkable to advance towards that ideal society and the foreknowledge that any advance upon it is necessarily asymptotic; not, at least until the successful completion of the Society for the Abolition of Original Sin.

Many in his audience must have winced for at least two reasons: 1) his musings were ethereal to the point of being devoid of understanding; and 2) his message, for those who understood it, portrayed conservatism as a hopelessly quixotic, never-to-be-realized dream. He continued:

How this movement, considering the contrary tug of history, has got as far as it has got, is something that surpasses the understanding of natural pessimists like myself. Even so, I am guilty of yielding, from time to time, to the temptation to overstress the ideal, often at moments when the prudential should weigh most heavily. I urge you to join with me in trying to resist the temptation.³

Buckley's approved biographer, John Judis, always wavered between sympathy for Buckley's

brand of conservatism and his own preference for doctrinaire liberalism. But he believed that this speech announced Buckley's willingness to abandon principle:

These two insights — that conservatism, even on the eve of Goldwater's humiliation, was on the rise, but that conservative politics, to succeed, must mediate between the ideal and the prudential — would inform Buckley's politics over the next decades and, through his writings, would influence a great many conservative politicians. Buckley's speech to the New York Conservatives marked his final break with his own radical and pessimistic past.⁴

Continuing, Judis attributed Buckley's new course to his "becoming a public figure for whom the conservative movement was merely one audience among several." But he failed to offer an opinion about the identity of who those other audiences might be. While no one would disagree that Buckley had indeed become "a public figure," some would take issue with Judis about the timing of Buckley's departure from "the ideal," believing that he had *never* adhered to any rock-solid standard.

Response to the Soviet Threat

America's internal enemies have unrelentingly labored for a vast expansion of federal power, the watering-down and eventual nullification of the Constitution, and a transfer of national independence to a one-world, UN-controlled supra-government. History teaches that similar goals have frequently been attained during war, or in response to either a credible or contrived foreign threat. In Essay No. 8 of *The Federalist*, Alexander Hamilton warned:

Safety from external danger is the most powerful director of national conduct. Even the ardent love of liberty will, after a time, give way to its dictates. The violent destruction of life and property incident to war, the continual effort and alarm attendant on a state of continual danger, will compel nations the most attached to liberty to resort for repose and security to institutions which have a tendency to destroy their civil and political rights. To be more safe, they at length become willing to run the risk of being less free.⁵

Faced with peril from a U.S.-fed Soviet monster following World War II, the American people of our country were persuaded to accept increased taxation, burgeoning federal controls, foreign entanglements, and steady contravention of the Constitution. This is precisely what Buckley had urged in 1952: "Big Government for the duration," "a totalitarian bureaucracy," and "centralization of power in Washington." These were his early responses to a Soviet threat; and he continued to offer them.

Still, Buckley and his agenda faced a daunting problem: The Soviet Union could not be presented as a credible menace to our nation if the American people became aware that the West, especially the United States, was its chief benefactor. Robert Welch and The John Birch Society began arguing that the way to combat Soviet sabre-rattling and subversion was to stop helping the Communist regime, thereby allowing it to collapse from its inherent shortcomings. From hindsight, it is not surprising that Buckley launched the full-scale attack on Welch and the Society we described in Chapter 9.

Indefensible Positions

Buckley's career is replete with compromises, departures from the Constitution, support for the UN, protection of pseudo-conservatives as they implement the liberal agenda, and affronts to traditional moral norms. We have already presented many examples of his departures from the conservatism of his father. Here, in chronological order, we offer some additional selections:

July 1962 syndicated column:

In response to the Supreme Court decision banning prayer in public schools, Buckley recommended “adopting a constitutional amendment clarifying the difference between an established religion (which no one wants) and established non-religion (which is the end-meaning of the court’s secularist breakthrough).”⁶

Such a position implies that the High Court had authorization to rule as it did, that the Constitution and not the Court was deficient, and that the federal government should involve itself in education. All three assumptions are seriously flawed from a conservative and constitutional perspective.

January 1969 syndicated column:

Buckley lauded the “heroism” and “idealism” of Norman Thomas and referred to him as a “genial, talented, opinionated American.”

A six-time presidential candidate of the Socialist Party, Norman Thomas espoused scores of projects launched by the Communist Party USA from its founding in 1920 until his death in 1969. On the occasion of Thomas's 80th birthday, Communist Party leaders Gus Hall and Henry Winston praised him in the official party newspaper, *The Worker*, for his lifetime of work for “socialism, our common goal.”⁷ But Buckley singled him out for praise.

January 1971 syndicated column:

President Richard Nixon had recently startled ABC-TV newsman Howard K. Smith by claiming during an interview: “I am now a Keynesian in economics.”⁸

Buckley sought to defuse the resulting uproar and defend Nixon from the charge leveled by many conservatives that the President had admitted he was a socialist. He even disagreed that anyone should be upset because Nixon had identified himself with Keynes, whose policies had led to a profound leftward shift during the Franklin Roosevelt administration. Buckley admitted in this column that Keynes was “the apostle of central economic management.” He further contended: “Mr. Nixon's remark to Mr. Smith is not quite so striking a declaration of heresy....” In defending Nixon, Buckley was echoing the position of his very close friend and decades-long skiing partner, leftist Harvard Professor John Kenneth Galbraith (CFR at the time). Galbraith, a devoted Keynesian, had earlier enthused about Mr. Nixon's “great new thrust to socialism.”⁹

July 1971 syndicated column dealing with the possibility of federal imposition of wage and price controls:

Buckley wrote: “The classicists insist it wouldn’t work, that indeed it would cause great harm. I wonder, mightn’t it be worth trying?”¹⁰

To suggest that government should establish controls over wages and prices is to condone the notion that government should dominate business transactions, including each employee’s wage and benefit compensation. It constitutes abandonment of any pretense of conservative principle.

Buckley’s involvement in Starr Broadcasting, 1971:

Several of Starr’s radio stations were broadcasting a continuous stream of “acid rock” music presented by disk jockeys who applauded the drug culture and condemned any call for a U.S. victory in the Vietnam War.

A 1971 *New York* magazine article by Richard Reingold pointed out that Buckley, the chairman of Starr Broadcasting, “employed hippie disk jockeys and turned-on disk jockeys and announcers who, when not advertising head shops and skin flicks, read editorials deploring the war in Vietnam.”¹¹ In his book *Cruising Speed*, Buckley revealed his close relationship with Peter Starr: “My family apart, I am as fond of Peter as of any human being. Indeed I feel for him that special affection I reserve for anyone who has made me a million dollars.”¹² Starr was the key person behind the promotion of drugs, pornography, and anti-Vietnam rhetoric emanating from the Buckley-chaired broadcasting company.

November 1971 syndicated column:

In the immediate aftermath of the UN General Assembly’s vote to expel Nationalist China (Taiwan) and admit Communist China, Buckley advised that “the United Nations has its uses, and the United States would be mistaken recklessly to withdraw from it.”¹³

The UN, whose supporters claim that it is a guardian of peace and human rights, confirmed the contrary when it welcomed the bloody-handed Communist Chinese government and booted out the Free Chinese. The move was another reason why the U.S. should withdraw from the world body, but Buckley recommended instead merely refraining from casting votes in the General Assembly. What that move might have accomplished, he didn’t say.

National Review September 1, 1972:

“The editors of *National Review* prefer the re-election of Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew next November.”¹⁴

During his first term, President Nixon had greatly increased government’s cost, imposed wage and price controls on business and industry, completely severed the U.S. dollar from its historic link to gold, expanded treasonous aid and trade going to the Kremlin, visited Communist China, boasted “I’m an internationalist” when questioned if he were a conservative or a liberal, glorified the United Nations, and followed a liberal and world-government-promoting agenda virtually

without deviation. By endorsing the Nixon re-election bid, Buckley placed his stamp of approval on all of this.

Buckley's 1974 book *United Nations Journal*:

At the request of CFR member John Scali, permanent representative of the United States to the United Nations, Buckley accepted appointment as a delegate to the General Assembly. He served as the U.S. representative on the Human Rights Committee.

Buckley described Scali's motivation behind the request: "... he told me that the UN was not very newsworthy, and not very important, but that it could be made more important, and more important to the United States and the West, and that people who had given up on it shouldn't give up on it, they should learn something more about it, and its uses — its strengths as well as its weaknesses. Meanwhile, he said, it needs a higher public visibility."¹⁵

Acceptance of the UN post, and the book he wrote about his experience, gave a boost to the organization, especially among conservatives beguiled by Buckley. Amidst mild, non-threatening and minor criticism of the world body, Buckley concluded that the UN serves a worthwhile purpose and that our nation should not withdraw.

April 1977 syndicated column:

Buckley went on record favoring Senate ratification of the UN's dangerous Genocide Convention.

This Convention was first proposed in 1948. By 1977, it had been ratified by 75 nations, including the Soviet Union, which had no fear of its being used against the Kremlin because the Convention addresses only crimes against "national, ethnic, racial or religious groups." Soviet crimes of a genocidal nature had been classified as "political" by the Soviet leaders, a category not included in the Genocide Convention. The Convention has the potential for targeting anyone, including Americans, who might be falsely accused of genocide (the term is defined so broadly that it covers even "mental anguish") against ethnic, racial or religious groups. Bolstered by Buckley's support in several columns¹⁶ and President Reagan's backing, the Senate ratified this Convention in 1986, and the implementing legislation was approved two years later by Congress.

March 1980 syndicated column:

Buckley scoffed at criticism of the Trilateral Commission and defended Trilateralist Jimmy Carter, who had filled top posts in his administration with fellow Trilateralists.

Founded by David Rockefeller (CFR) in 1973, the Commission was first proposed by Zbigniew Brzezinski (CFR) in his 1970 book, *Between Two Ages*. The Columbia University professor praised Marxism, claimed that America was becoming obsolete, appealed for central planning, and recommended the formation of a "community of the developed nations ... through a variety

of indirect ties and already developing limitations on national sovereignty.” Brzezinski then called openly for “the goal of world government.”¹⁷ The result? With Brzezinski at his side in 1973, Rockefeller enlisted close to 300 members for the new Trilateral Commission whose goal, paralleling that of the Council on Foreign Relations, calls for nations to merge into the world government sought by Brzezinski and Rockefeller. President Carter, one of the first members of the Commission, selected Brzezinski as his Director of National Security. Yet Buckley saw no reason to be concerned about the Trilateralists.

September 1983 column:

Buckley agreed with the official U.S. and USSR responses to the downing by a Soviet fighter pilot of Korean Air Lines 007. Its 269 passengers and crew, never seen again, included Congressman Larry McDonald, then chairman of The John Birch Society. He wrote: “The only thing we know for absolute sure that has come out of this is that never again will a Korean airliner carelessly overfly Russian territory. And that, ladies and gentlemen, was the point the Soviet Union sought to make. It has made it.”¹⁸

By so writing, Buckley cavalierly excused an act of extreme barbarism.

Knight Ridder News Service dispatch, April 1986:

“Five of America’s most prominent authors have told a federal pornography commission that attempts to curb sexually explicit passages in this country’s literature would infringe on the freedom of writers to portray the truth.” One of the five writers who testified against curbing the use of sexually explicit writing was William Buckley.

Buckley might legitimately have questioned where the Constitution authorizes the federal government to establish a commission on pornography, but instead chose to fight a different battle, that of defending “eroticism.” In his letter to the commission, cited in the Knight Ridder dispatch, Buckley argued: “Sexual union as described pornographically is a corruption of eroticism,” implying that eroticism in literature (such as appears in his own novels) is acceptable.¹⁹

August 1987 syndicated column:

Buckley called for a constitutional convention for the purpose of limiting federal spending.

Even after expressing awareness about the threat to the entire Constitution should there be such a convention, Buckley concluded with a plea to “get on with it ... and we’ll give them [the Constitution’s opponents] a nice new Constitution.” But there is no need to amend the Constitution to limit federal spending; Congress can curb spending whenever a majority of its members have enough backbone to do so. Were a constitutional convention held, the congressional power to limit spending (and all other congressional powers) could be transferred

to the executive branch, and all other limitations on power could be eliminated. Indeed, the entire Constitution as we know it could be scrapped. Buckley expressed concern about such threats in his column, but called for a convention and “a nice new Constitution” anyway.²⁰

Buckley’s 1990 book, *Gratitude: Reflections on What We Owe to Our Country*, called for compulsory national service. He wrote:

“Now, if you accept the notion of compulsory schooling, then you’re saying that society has a certain role alongside parents in qualifying somebody to act as a citizen. Who said that should be confined to learning arithmetic and geography?”²¹

The notion of compulsory schooling is itself alien to the principles of liberty which undergirded the formation of this nation. And Buckley’s proposal for national service amounts to an oxymoronic “mandatory voluntarism” — a key element of the socialism practiced in Hitler’s Germany and Mussolini’s Italy. It would force productive citizens into government-created projects. Backed by liberals Bill Clinton, Michael Dukakis and Jimmy Carter, who were delighted to have the support of “a major conservative thinker,” the cost to taxpayers for implementing this completely unconstitutional boondoggle is estimated to reach \$30 billion per year, another detail ignored by Buckley.

April 1991 syndicated column:

Buckley campaigned for a federal program that would “induce 80,000 Americans, on entering college, to pledge four years in the Police Corps in return for financial aid toward their college education.”²²

Serious students of history know that there is grave danger in federal control of police work. Germany’s Gestapo, Soviet Russia’s KGB, Communist China’s state security force, and other centrally controlled enforcement agencies have always provided the muscle that keeps totalitarian regimes in power. If the federal government is allowed to supply 80,000 police to departments across the nation, it will have taken a huge step toward gaining control of the police, and a huge step on the road to totalitarian control of our own nation.

March 1992 syndicated column:

Buckley urged the U.S. government to provide Russia with direct foreign aid giveaways, a rescheduling of debt, and “tens of billions of dollars for currency stabilization through the International Monetary Fund.”

He admitted that “the American people are against foreign aid” but maintained that their resistance had to be overcome. He ignored such issues as constitutional authorization for any form of foreign aid (there is none), the near certainty of adding more red ink to the already enormous federal debt, and the questionable reliability of Boris Yeltsin and other recycled Bolsheviks. Buckley helped to neutralize conservative opposition to these proposals, all of which were implemented during the Bush and Clinton administrations.

April 1992 syndicated column:

Buckley called for the legalizing of prostitution, claiming, “Surely the reasonable approach is to license the activity.”²³

America was built on a system of laws, but also on a system of moral and cultural standards that do not countenance public approval of prostitution.

July 1992 syndicated column:

Buckley advocated passage of a new federal restriction on the right to keep and bear arms. He wrote: “It is time that conservatives gave up fanatical interpretations of the Second Amendment.”²⁴

It has been rightly stated that any government fearing arms in the hands of its citizens is a government that should itself be feared. Here, Buckley further reveals his disdain for the Constitution and the God-given rights it protects. The first sentence of Article I of the Constitution states: “All legislative powers *herein granted* shall be vested in a Congress....” (Emphasis added.) Clearly, Congress has no law-making power other than what has been “herein granted” in the Constitution. There is nothing in the body of that document authorizing the federal government to make laws relating to the private ownership of firearms. The Second Amendment underscores the absence of any such authorization. And, as Senior Fellow at the Virginia-based Future of Freedom Foundation Sheldon Richman has written, “Gun control runs aground on this simple fact: People who would use guns to break laws would break laws to use guns.”²⁵

December 1997 syndicated column:

“Conservatives must not dig in on the assumption that any great program about which Bill Clinton is enthusiastic is flighty or dangerous or both. The Kyoto Protocol will be very costly and very inconvenient in ways not even discerned. But this is the moment at which conservatives should exhibit two traits we like to think of as our own: the one being fortitude; the other, optimism.”

The Kyoto Protocol, hammered out in 1997 at a UN-sponsored conference and subsequently agreed to by the Clinton administration, has (as we write) yet to be ratified by the Senate. It would force drastic reductions in the use of fossil fuels within the U.S. for industrial and personal purposes, ostensibly to combat alleged “global warming.”

According to Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School, implementation of the proposal would the cost the U.S. 1.8 million jobs by 2010. Weather and climate researcher Dr. Hugh Ellsaesser, a retired official with the Atmospheric Science Division at California’s Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, claims that because it exempts 140 developing nations, the Kyoto Protocol would involve “transfers of trillions of dollars from the developed to the developing world” via various UN agencies.²⁶

In addition to objections based on economic considerations, a growing army of atmospheric scientists has continued to insist that the Earth is *not* warming, so there is no need for this draconian treaty. Dr. Frederick Seitz, a past president of the National Academy of Sciences, stated such a view in the foreword to Dr. S. Fred Singer's *Hot Talk, Cold Science*.²⁷ But "Mr. Conservative" once again urged conservatives to support a proposal that will, if implemented, harm the U.S. dramatically, bring our nation more in line with the world government aspirations of UN partisans, undermine the Constitution, and diminish the freedom of Americans.

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