

LOOKING FORWARD

George Bush with Victor Gold/Doubleday/\$18.95

Victor Gold (without George Bush)

The Presidential Candidate's Book first surfaced as a political art form when Nathaniel Hawthorne published his monumental biography of James Buchanan, circa 1856. Quite possibly you've forgotten the work. Perfectly understandable. Whether books of this kind are remembered or forgotten depends on the future success of their subjects. Who, for example (save its relentless author), now recalls Harold Stassen's *Where I Stand*, a Presidential Candidate's Book aimed at limning Stassen's vision of America, circa 1948?

True, in Buchanan's case, the man did win the election. Other than that,

Victor Gold is The American Spectator's national correspondent and an old hand at presidential campaign flackery.

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however, he has come down through the years as one of the worst losers ever to occupy the Oval Office, a President not having the good public relations sense either to embroil the country in a war or get himself shot. So much for Nathaniel Hawthorne's vision of post-Mohican America.

On the other hand, John F. Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage*, in which the author defined his vision in terms of the political heroism of others, did well by both Kennedy's campaign and his place in history. Even today *Profiles* is regularly checked out of libraries by high school civics students and aspiring presidential candidates in search of a winning literary format of their own.

In *Looking Forward*, described by its publisher as the first autobiography ever written by a sitting Vice President, George Bush has chosen as his format not a broad-gauge history, like Kennedy's, or a visionary book of "new ideas," like Stassen's or Gary Hart's, but an updated version of the Hawthorne approach, i.e., Bush's story comes first-person, in the manner of recent sagas by such disparate entrepreneurs as Lee Iacocca, Chuck Yeager, and Ed Koch, all of whom turned out their life stories *with or as-told-to* a collaborator, i.e., flack.

The process works this way: the autobiographer, in a series of tape-recorded sessions, fills in the dramatic details of his life. The tapes are then transcribed, edited, and sent back to the subject for revision. A tone is established—informal and anecdotal, as if the subject were seated in the reader's family room, sipping a Coors and shmoozing about the good old days ("I'll never forget the time . . ."). As readers of *Iacocca*, *Yeager*, and *Mayor* know, a generous dollop of score-settling and now-it-can-be-told bitchiness is also part of the sales package, e.g., Iacocca on Henry Ford II, Yeager on the Air Force brass, Koch on Mario Cuomo, Jimmy Carter, the United Nations, and assorted other "wackos."

From the outset, however, *Looking Forward*—the title derives from a Teddy Roosevelt maxim—comes up short on the gossip-mongering front.

Bush was U.S. envoy to China, for example, when then-House Speaker Carl Albert came to town and drank himself under Mao's Great Hall table. A marvelous story, as told by others who witnessed the scene, but despite the strong remonstrances of his collaborator, Bush didn't include a hint of it in his book. Instead, those interested in Albert's drinking habit will have to rely on the raconteurship of his good friend and Democratic colleague "Tip" O'Neill, who makes much of it in his autobiography, *Man of the House*.

Regrettably, there are other instances of Bush's wimpish failure to catch the autobiographical spirit of the times. It would be interesting to read Bush's version of conversations held between him and O'Neill—as well as President Reagan and O'Neill—to find out whether, as O'Neill would have us believe, he invariably left them at a loss for words; or to learn what was said at Cabinet meetings when George Shultz took on Cap Weinberger, Weinberger took on David Stockman, and Stockman took on the world.

But that, as Bush stuffily informs us early on, isn't what he had in mind when he undertook to write his autobiography. Giving "fair notice" in his author's preface, he cautions that if any reader expects to discover "untold secrets" about the Reagan Administration, complete with the inside story on closed-door meetings and Cabinet disputes, "you'll be disappointed."

Indeed. That being the case, one might wonder why a sitting, standing, or running Vice President—for that matter, any Washington luminary—would even bother to dictate his memoirs into a tape recorder. But Bush apparently has his own autobiographical agenda, aimed at readers interested in the more achromatic aspects of American political life, e.g., the way the Vice Presidency operates, how the media affect our presidential selection process, the degree to which bullshit phrases like "vision of the future" and "new ideas" pollute the political dialogue. (Bush doesn't think much of either, nor of the liberals' claims that they alone are "compassionate" and "responsive" to social issues.)

Not that the Vice President shows complete disdain for the modern reader's taste for the personal. In early chapters he tells a great deal about himself, material that runs counter to certain widely held perceptions.

Bush is not, for example, the product

"Look up and not down; look out and not in; look forward and not back; and lend a hand." A Bull Moose party slogan in 1912, the line was taken from a sermon delivered by U.S. Senate Chaplain Edward Everett Hale.

of a New England Brahmin family, as is generally reported in media profiles. His father, Prescott Bush, came out of Columbus, Ohio; his mother, Dorothy Walker, was a native of St. Louis. The family moved from the Middle West to the South (Kingsport, Tennessee); to Milton, Massachusetts, where George, the second of five children, was born; then to Greenwich, Connecticut, where the future Vice President lived until, age 17, he joined up to become a naval aviator after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

Bush also recounts (for the first time in his own words) the story of his being shot down in a bombing raid on the Japanese-held island of Chi-chi Jima, a wartime incident that earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross. He tells of his postwar years at Yale and, in a more introspective vein, the desire he and his wife Barbara had to "break away" from their Eastern roots; which led him to Texas in 1948, into the oil business, and, after building his own off-shore company, into politics.

As Bush tells it, *Looking Forward* was originally intended as an autobiographical résumé of the ten years, 1967-77, that saw him arrive in Washington as a congressman; move on to New York City as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations; then back to Washington as chairman of the Republican National Committee; across the Pacific to China as American envoy to Peking; and again back to Washington as director of the Central Intelligence Agency. With the coming of Jimmy Carter's Snopes Administration, the Bushes headed back to Houston, George "taking notes and talking into my tape recorder" in the months that followed.

"Then, as often occurs in the life of a book, a funny thing happened on the way to the printer," he writes. "I was bitten by another bug and found myself spending long days and nights campaigning in Iowa, New Hampshire, and other presidential primary states. In July 1980, I became Ronald Reagan's running mate. . . . In January, 1981, I was sworn in as Vice President . . ."

Seven years later, the bug still bites, the only difference being that now George Bush is in a position to have both his book and his presidential campaign. Whether either is remembered in the years ahead depends, as always, on the future success of its subject: Oilman Bush, Congressman Bush, Ambassador Bush, Chairman Bush, Director Bush, Vice President Bush . . . President Bush? That remains, as a candidate once said to his collaborator-flack, to be seen. For those readers interested in conjecture along those lines, *Looking Forward* may be your dish of tea; or, as it were, bottle of Coors. □

THE JESUITS: THE SOCIETY OF JESUS AND THE BETRAYAL OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Malachi Martin/Simon and Schuster/\$19.95

John R. Dunlap

Malachi Martin's fourteenth book since he left the Jesuit Order in 1964 is just about as gamy as hinted by the subtitle, a condition that makes it much less careful than its readers have the right to expect. It is the work of a rogue scholar, broadly sympathetic in its portraits of major figures but wildly expressive in its treatment of big events.

In that mode, Martin joins, for example, an engaging sketch of warmth and energetic devotion in Pedro Arrupe, the man, to an impressionistic image of duplicity and cocksureness in Pedro Arrupe, the Jesuit Superior General. Arrupe, Martin tells us, steered the 31st (1965/66) and the 32nd (1974/75) General Congregations of the Society of Jesus onto paths of New Age sociopolitical enthusiasm, with an attendant "tide of fatuities and stupidities": of disenchantment, defection, dissension, trendy experimentation, and, worst of all, a treacherous "war against the papacy."

When Ignatius Loyola founded the Society of Jesus in 1540, he had in mind something different from the mission of any other religious order in the Catholic Church up to that time. Shaped by a conversion from worldly ambitions and by several years of fiercely ascetic spiritual molding, Ignatius was nonetheless a man of action, a Basque nobleman and former soldier who had little taste for monastic formalism. One of the followers he had attracted during a stint at the Sorbonne remarked that the "Company" saw themselves as "contemplatives in action." Their new religious order—approved by Pope Paul III amid the turmoil of sixteenth-century Europe and a Church rife with corruption—would be mobile and adaptable, bound by a military-like rule more absolute than that of other religious orders but unencumbered by medieval practices and monkish habits. Given such character there was certain to be trouble between the Church and the Company.

Perhaps to anticipate the objections that, from its beginnings, the Society's relationship with Rome has been intermittently rough-edged, Martin draws a few sketches of early Jesuit squabbles

John R. Dunlap teaches English at Santa Clara University.

with the Holy See. We are treated, for example, to a run-in between Pope Sixtus V and Claudio Acquaviva. Elected in 1581, Acquaviva was the Society's fifth Superior General and by all accounts among the three or four (of twenty-eight) strongest leaders in the Order's history.

He was not a biddable man. When Sixtus demanded, in 1590, that Jesuit theologians retract their views "on certain points of doctrine," Acquaviva responded in the manner to which he was temperamentally suited: he threatened the Pope with a deluge of Jesuit protest against the proposed decree. Sixtus, whom Martin calls "one of the most arrogant Popes ever to succeed St. Peter in Rome," backed down. But Martin tells us nothing about the "certain points of doctrine"—which involved complex clerical in-fighting and bitter accusations by Dominican theologians of Jesuit "laxism" on matters of sexual morality. What Martin does say is that Acquaviva's blatant opposition to the Pope somehow differed in substance from more recent Jesuit wrangling with the Holy See regarding, among other things, "basic Roman Catholic rules of morality," which Martin doesn't define.

Indeed, Martin seems all too eager to contrast an unambiguous Jesuit greatness in the glory days of their "first 150 years" with the sad state of the Order over the past generation. In his sketch of early Jesuit history, you will find no shadows in the brilliant glare—nothing, for example, about the Galileo affair, which had Jesuits on both sides of the dispute, nor even a nod to the Jesuit adventure in Paraguay, which, according to historical analysts less romantic than the British playwright Robert Bolt or the Jesuit liturgist C. J. McNaspy, began as a noble experiment and gradually degenerated into a paternalistic exercise in social engineering.

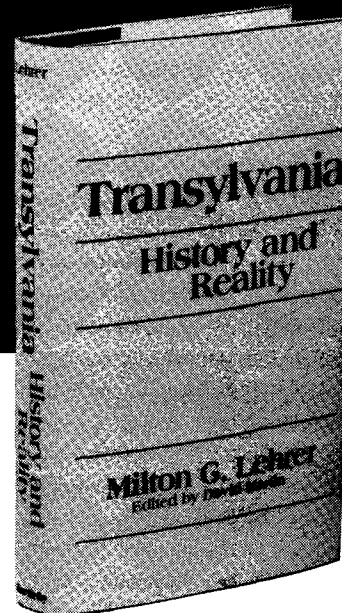
But the convenient omissions are nothing compared to the weird untruths that crop up in this book, beginning with the dustcover, which refers to Martin as an "eminent theologian." Prominent chatterbox, yes—but Martin's Jesuit training was in Semitic lin-

guistics and Biblical archaeology, a background that served him well in his *King of Kings*, a lush novelization of the story of David. The appellation "eminent theologian" acquires some plausibility only in Martin's nasty sniping, by which he does Hans Küng one better in referring to the late and truly eminent Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner as "subtly vicious." Martin's hostility towards Rahner—whose thought had great influence on John Paul II and who tried in 1970 to inject some sense into his less thoughtful colleagues—is mystifying.

Another odd remark: "Properly speaking, Liberation Theology was a Jesuit creation." Granted, a few liberation theorists are Jesuits (notably Juan Segundo, whose five-volume *Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity* may find good use someday as therapy for insomniacs); but, properly speaking or otherwise, the acknowledged father of liberation theology is the Peruvian priest Gustavo Gutierrez, whom Mar-

tin astonishingly misidentifies (four times in four different parts of the book) as a Jesuit. Nor is there any hint in *The Jesuits* that liberation theology is already a passing fad, if not quite as moribund as yesteryear's claques of Teilhardian groupies with whom Martin shadowboxes in one chapter.

The goofiest sections of this book, though, are Martin's purely fictive entries. In a note at the back (among precious few notes, citing even fewer exact sources for the hundreds of quotes rippling through the text), Martin tells us: "Certain confidential sources of materials within the Society and the Roman Curia provided both information and commentary throughout." Plausible enough; gossip is a staple of the religious life, and ex-Jesuit Martin doubtless has contacts. But when Martin records every word, gesture, blink, cheek-tic, elevated eyebrow, and raised voice in a closed meeting between John Paul II and his leading cardinals or in a private show-down between Paul VI



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