

and the higher journalism—than they were ten years ago, or twenty. This is important because, however much the political or social climate turns against them, liberals are able to retreat to this stratum for incubation, thence to re-emerge, when the weather patterns change again, like seventeen-year locusts.

Some reorientation may be in order. Conservatives have spent a lot of sweat constructing forums for their own ideas and breeding grounds for their own talent. They acted on the quite reasonable assumption that liberals would not help in this enterprise. But they may have lost sight of the goal—which should be, not to maintain a permanent set of parallel institutions, but to march through the institutions which exist.

What we ultimately want on campuses is not a hundred-and-first alternative newspaper, but a situation in which a conservatively inclined kid heels the *Harvard Crimson*—with the attitude that, if he is good and he works hard, he may become editor in chief. What we ultimately want for that kid when he graduates is not a one-way ticket to Powertown—but the opportunity, and the encouragement, to go to Washington, or New York, or Los Angeles, or the academy—wherever ideas are minted and marketed. Along these lines, the best news I've heard recently was that one of my acquaintances has gone to *U.S. News & World Report*, and another to the *New York Daily News*. The best news of all will be when such career moves aren't newsworthy.

It ought to be doable. We've been around a while. There are enough of us, and there is a vacuum: The ideas which keep liberal culture going, suffering and sex—who got screwed, and who gets laid—have gotten a little tedious. Don't you think?

*Richard Brookhiser is managing editor of National Review.*

#### VICTOR GOLD

Behold America's liberals. Eight years removed from the White House and they still can't get their act together for the 1988 presidential race. Conservatives celebrate this latest manifestation of the liberal crack-up, but the ugly American truth is that despite four Republican victories in the last five presidential elections, the heralded conservative "revolution" has been a one-dimensional thing—a political current running against a cultural tide that continues to move the country leftward.

A myth commonly shared by self-congratulating conservatives and self-denigrating liberals is that we live in the age of Reaganism, a rightward reaction

to the New Deal, New Frontier, and Great Society. We follow the election returns, see the liberal agenda rejected—at least, on the presidential level—and conclude the tide has turned. But the leading social indicators—education, the arts, the media—argue otherwise. They remain preponderantly liberal, purveying a cultural *Zeitgeist* that brings even a conservative President to pay obeisance to liberal sacred cows and shibboleths.

The image of Ronald Reagan in the White House driveway, clasping hands in a mindlessly liberal publicity exercise, stays with me. Nor can I forget that when this conservative President became vulnerable during the last years of his Administration, he opted to pacify the liberal gods by naming as his chief of staff a "moderate" Republican; which is to say, one attuned to the cultural Spirit of the Times. Not to forget the *Post* and the three major television networks.

What "Hands Across America" doesn't tell us, Howard Baker as Ronald Reagan's major domo in the White House does: that conservatives may win political battles but liberals are still winning the cultural war, in the end dictating the true national agenda. Ronald Reagan's America? Stop kidding yourselves, conservatives. It all belongs to Ted Koppel.

*Victor Gold is The American Spectator's new National Correspondent.*

#### DANIEL HENNINGER

One hallmark of the two-term presidency of a popular conservative has been the persistent unhappiness of conservatives in the midst of success. The evidence of success is abundant.

Since 1980, the governments of the United States, Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, India, Australia, and New Zealand have incorporated degrees and aspects of Reaganomics into their public policies. Generally speaking, all have come to believe that the private economy creates national wealth, that deregulation and denationalization enlarge the private economy, and that tax policy and growth are related. Prior to 1980, political truth was thought to be the direct opposite of these propositions. The world has changed. Incrementally it will be a better place because of the conservative presidency, and surely this is one purpose of politics. But conservatives are unhappy, mostly with each other.

At dinner parties, conservatives agree on the conservative President's failings, but once past the failing President agreement ends. A Bushite presidency is "unacceptable." Bob Dole isn't a conservative and Jack Kemp's position on Social Security and the welfare state is troubling. Neoconservatives

don't trust the New Right, and the New Right launches surgical strikes against the neocons. Howard Phillips has the highest standards since Cato the Younger. Black conservatives bad-mouth each other in private. Certain supply-siders can't be invited to the same party. AIDS testing has replaced abortion as the ultimate conservative single-issue litmus test.

A piece of advice for conservatives as they prepare for the possible election of a second conservative President: If you wish to live in a country where people really stand on principle, move to Italy. Italy has eleven political parties, though of course there aren't eleven significantly different theories of how to run Italy or anywhere else.

In the United States, we manage to divide the world and all its problems into two major problems. After dominating the political agenda for many years, one of the two American parties became so prideful and self-righteous that it began demanding full internal loyalty and public support for each of its discrete parts. A conservative connected these dotty people into a group portrait called the San Francisco Democrats, and the party's presidential hopes collapsed. Not having the White House isn't fun. Ask a Democrat.

This is not meant as an appeal to "pragmatism," a code word for selling out the best part of one's position. Sharp debate and discussion are important. The ideas with which Ronald Reagan separated his party from its dispiriting past policies emerged from years of political argument. But conservatives should remain aware of the danger inherent in their politics. Conservative factions tend to insist on the rightness and primacy of their opinions. They are principled. It remains to be seen, however, whether conservatives are ready to offer themselves to 79 million voters as a coherent movement or as principally a lot of opinionated people.

*Daniel Henninger is chief editorial writer of the Wall Street Journal.*

#### LEWIS E. LEHRMAN

There can be no Conservative New Age in the absence of a Conservative Party of Principle. Just as the American Whigs of the 1840s foundered on the narrow commercialism of tariffs, central banking, and internal improvements, so, too, do the Republicans of the 1980s founder after the success of tax rate reductions. As Abraham Lincoln rebuilt the shattered remnants of commercial Whiggery upon the unshakeable ground of first American principles—"free men, free labor, free soil"—so, too, must the modern Republican party be restored upon the very first American principle which the par-

ty has all but forgotten—"that all men are created equal"—at home and abroad; and that *all* are "endowed by their Creator with" the inalienable right to life, the inalienable right to liberty, the inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness—at home, and abroad.

The first American principle must now become the practice of party leadership: and such leadership must begin by elevating, to primacy in the party platform, the first of the enumerated inalienable rights set forth in the Declaration and in the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution—the inalienable right-to-life. For liberty was made for life; not life for liberty.

In the end, all else will be unavailing for the mercantile Republican party. For no lasting American party of principle can today be established upon the ground of narrow self-interest, no matter how economically plausible. From Democrats and Republicans, any argument to the contrary must itself betray the fundamental American proposition as set forth in the Declaration of Independence—the animating spirit of our laws.

*Lewis E. Lehrman is founder of the Lehrman Institute, a public policy forum.*

#### JOSEPH SOBRAN

Give Garry Wills his due. He's only saying what Tom Bethell has said in these very pages. Conservatives have been the biggest believers in the Reagan magic.

Reagan gave conservatism a beachhead in Washington, but he didn't follow through. For a few rounds he was dazzling; then, when he seemed about to score a knockout, he ran out of gas and spent the better part of a year trying to rope-a-dope his way through the Iran-contra mess.

From early in his first term it became clear that the Administration was being stage-managed by those notorious "people around the President." (Remember our war cry: "Let Reagan be Reagan!") As he waved to the crowds and cameras, the real regime seemed to carry on—and change hands—independently of him. We got Baker I, Regan, Baker II. And Nancy: she wanted him to go down as a "peace" President, so we got sporadic jerks toward arms control. Underlings arranged secret initiatives—secret not only from Congress but from the President himself—so as to provide him with "plausible deniability." And boy, was it plausible.

No wonder conservatism got little real traction. Genuine Reaganites, both within and without the Administration, have been continually frustrated by White House staffers whose instinct

*(continued on page 51)*

Andrew Ferguson

## CAN BUY ME LOVE: THE MOONING OF CONSERVATIVE WASHINGTON

Is the Unification Church conservative, or just rich?

*There are many ways to reach Washington, D.C. There are highways, minor roads in the city, small towns to go through, avenues and lanes—many ways, roads through which you can reach the destination. If anyone discovers a shortcut to Washington, D.C., many people will seek it.*

—The Rev. Sun Myung Moon

No incident better illustrates the newborn respectability of the Unification Church—a.k.a. the Moonies—within the conservative movement than the recent resignations at the *Washington Times*. When William Cheshire, the *Times*'s editorial page editor, and four members of his immediate staff walked out on April 14, charging the newspaper's owners with editorial interference, there was some fear among conservatives—and some delight among liberals—that the resignations would cripple Washington's conservative newspaper in its ongoing quest for respectability.

Of course, at any other newspaper, Cheshire's charges would be merely silly. It is a given in journalism that owners direct—indeed, have an obligation to direct—the editorial policy of their newspapers. But the *Washington Times* is not any other newspaper. Since its founding in 1982, the employees have worked under an "iron-clad" agreement from their employers that they would have total editorial independence, free from even the appearance of control. It's been generally assumed that the paper's credibility rested on the agreement, because the owners of the paper are high-ranking officials of the Unification Church—popularly known, until recently anyway, as a cult.

For this reason the paper's editors responded with great force to

Cheshire's allegations. After making similar charges of editorial interference, the *Times*'s first editor, James Whelan, had resigned in 1984, declaring, in high melodrama, that he had "blood on his hands" for conferring respectability on the Moonies by running their paper for them. The *Times*'s present editor, Arnaud de Borchgrave, a well-respected veteran journalist, was unequivocal in asserting that the autonomy agreement had not lost its integrity: "There has never been a hint of a whisper of a suggestion of editorial control from the owners. The minute there is is the minute I resign." Every current *Times* staffer that I spoke with echoed de Borchgrave's statement.

The relative merits of the byzantine charges and counter-charges arising from the Cheshire incident are not at issue here. For the most interesting thing about the ruckus and the unambiguous denials from the *Times*'s editors is that the editors needn't have bothered. As the controversy quickly

faded, many conservatives were taking the line, *sotto voce*, that even if Cheshire's charges were true and the church was exerting control over the paper's content—well, what of it? "After all," one conservative activist said to me, off the record (it is difficult, I soon discovered, to get conservatives to talk on the record about the Unification Church), "aren't the Moonies pouring \$30 million a year into the *Times*? [The most quoted figure is \$35 million.] If you pay the piper, you get to call the tune."

One prominent conservative who will go on the record is Paul Weyrich, president of the Free Congress Foundation. "It's always been my position," he said, "that if they own the newspaper then they should be allowed to set the editorial policy of that paper. Most people I talk to seem to feel that way. Now, the people on the inside of the paper of course are concerned with what might happen if the paper ceased operation. They'll have to go get other

jobs in journalism, and I think they see [the autonomy agreement] as a sort of insurance policy for their future. But people on the outside that I know just assume that whoever owns the paper can determine its editorial policy."

The intent of the agreement, of course, and the reason *Times* staffers insist on its inviolability, is to insure that the *Washington Times* is taken seriously as an alternative voice in Washington, as a legitimate source of news, and not as a propaganda sheet for "a church that's somewhat unpopular," as Wesley Pruden, the *Times*'s managing editor, put it. And the paper is taken seriously in Washington, and not solely by conservatives. What's more, the weekly *Insight* magazine, a *Times* subsidiary, has become, under the stewardship of John Podhoretz (the former executive editor for news, who recently left to join *U.S. News & World Report*), one of the most consistently enjoyable and informative reads in journalism.

But the crucial point is that for many conservatives a close association with the church is no longer considered distasteful, or something to be wary of. And to the extent the church's involvement in the conservative cause provokes discomfort, it does so largely for reasons of P.R. "The Unification Church has settled itself into the landscape of Washington as a good influence," said William Rusher, publisher of *National Review* and a member of the *Times* editorial advisory board. The conclusion: among Washington's conservative movement, the Moonies are legit.

It was not always thus, of course, and for most Americans who concern themselves with such things, the Unification Church probably still connotes the bizarre mind-controlling, kidnapping cult it was taken to be in the seventies. A glance at the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* from those years



Andrew Ferguson is assistant managing editor of *The American Spectator*. Research for this article was undertaken with the assistance of Kenneth Kleinfeld, Wayne Barber, and the Cult Awareness Network of Chicago, Illinois.