



## Going Rove

THE IDEA that the “far right” is on the cultural warpath is, like most liberal canards, the exact opposite of the truth. See, for example, the sort of treatment handed out to the victor in Delaware’s GOP senatorial primary. The conservative Catholic Christine O’Donnell, a 46-year-old Sarah Palin knockoff, was immediately held up for ridicule on account of her views on . . . onanism! A video of her made more than 20 years ago, in which she advocates chastity before marriage and denounces masturbation as, well, yucky, immediately went up on MSNBC, and the left-wing blogs followed up with a frenzy of chortling. Chastity! Anti-Onanism! In Washington, D.C.? It’ll never happen.

The snickering had hardly subsided when Rachel Maddow and Keith Olbermann acquired an unlikely ally: Republican grand strategist Karl Rove. Appearing on FOX News, he lashed out at O’Donnell:

Look, she believes she’s going to win, and that’s what a candidate ought to believe. I think the questions about why she had a problem for five years with paying her federal income taxes, why her house was foreclosed on and put up for sale by the sheriff, why it took 16 years for her to settle her college debt and get her diploma after she went around for years claiming she was a college graduate . . . these

and other troubling sort of personal background things, she thinks she’s explained them. I think a lot of voters in Delaware are going to want more than she’s offering to them right now. We’ll see . . . I mean 48 days from now, we’ll see if these issues matter or not and if she wins, more power to her. She’s right on the issues, but I think the voters of Delaware are not just going to want to know “Are you right on the issues?”, but do you have the character, and record, and background that gives me the confidence you’re the right person for the job.

Setting aside the merit of O’Donnell’s candidacy, and the intriguing question of just why the Machiavelli of the Bushian Old Guard would go after the candidate of his own party in such grossly personal terms, let’s look at what indicates a lack of “character” from the Rovian perspective.

Number one on his list: anyone who can’t make his mortgage payments. That right there eliminates a large and growing segment of the population from ever running for office. O’Donnell attended a sheriff’s sale of her foreclosed home and got a good friend to buy it back on her behalf—clearly an example of moral turpitude if ever there was one. As for her college loan: At least she repaid it when she could. But such arguments fall on deaf ears as far as

our elites are concerned; financial problems are not part of their universe. Sure, they’ve heard people “out there” are having a hard time of it, and Republican insiders like Rove are perfectly willing to use this to regain power, but as for admitting these serfs to the halls of power—it’s unthinkable.

In her speech to the Values Voters summit, O’Donnell lit into what she described as “the ruling class”—the D.C. “cocktail circuit,” the “small elites” that expropriate our tax dollars and try to dominate our lives: “The small elite don’t get us,” she averred. “They call us wacky, they call us wing nuts. We call us ‘we the people.’”

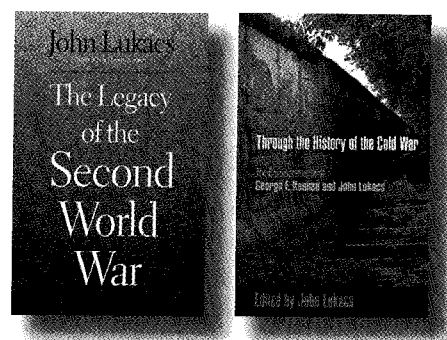
“We don’t want to take our country back,” she went on to say. “We are the country.”

O’Donnell didn’t mention Rove by name, but if anyone personifies the ruling class in this country it is Señor Rove, who is so out of touch with the country and what’s happening in it that he thinks it’s good politics to go on television and denounce someone for not making her mortgage payment. He thinks it’s “smart” to go after someone who had trouble paying back her college loan. Such a man is deaf, dumb, and blind to what’s going on around him: deaf to the cries of his countrymen, who are suffering through what many believe is America’s Second Great Depression; dumb enough to believe his disdain will do anything but blow back on him and his cronies; and blind to the crisis of his own party, which brought on this disaster in partnership with their Democratic clones.

The Tea Partiers may not lead Americans out of the wilderness, but at least they know the country has lost its way. Our ruling elite is content to go along in the same old way, making the same mistakes and taking their cut off the top, hoping the crisis will pass. It won’t. The O’Donnells of this world may not have all the answers, but they are beginning to ask the right questions—and that’s an auspicious start. ♦

# Cold War, Warm Friends

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.



*The Legacy of the Second World War*  
by John Lukacs  
New Haven: Yale University Press  
201 pp., \$26.00

*Through the History of the Cold War:  
The Correspondence of George F.  
Kennan and John Lukacs*  
John Lukacs, ed.  
Philadelphia: University of  
Pennsylvania Press  
276 pp., \$39.95

**THE LEGACIES OF EVERY WAR** include controversy regarding its origins, its prosecution, its conclusion, and its material and political results. In the case of World War II, John Lukacs argues that among its major legacies was the Cold War, whose cause was the rigid division of Europe agreed upon by Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin while hostilities yet continued. As for the Cold War itself, its legacy was the debate, heated to the point almost of rhetorical violence, over the origins of that phenomenon and the extent to which the two sides—East and West, communist and free world, the Soviet Union and the United States—bear moral responsibility for it.

One of these books deals with the first of these issues, the other with the second—and so much else as well.

World War II, John Lukacs believes, was the work of one man, and one man alone: Adolf Hitler. But that man was enormously complex, at once *sui generis* (as indeed every human being is) and

the product of Europe's almost infinitely complicated history. Among that history's salient elements, the immediate cause of Hitler, and thus of World War II, was, Lukacs claims, democracy—the source of both nationalism and socialism in Europe and on the North American continent. Following the Revolutionary Age in Europe that ended with the revolutions of 1848-49, a series of wars occurred; wars not between classes, as Marx and the revolutionists themselves had expected, but between nations. "Both nationalism and socialism came out of the democratization of the world that Tocqueville foresaw, examples of which reach back to centuries even before the Modern Age." Hitler's peculiar genius allowed him to recognize that socialism, to succeed, must be national, not international;

that the struggles of classes meant less than the conflicts of nations; that the sentiments and ideas of people, anchored within their nationality, were stronger and deeper than propositions of their material conditions. In sum, he proposed a marriage of nationalism and socialism—but with emphasis on the former.

One of the fundamental differences between the world wars was that the first conflict was a war between states rather than between classes and the various political

ideas supporting them.

[I]n 1939-1945 there were millions of internal, not only external, enemies of their governments, Communists in different states across the world whose sympathies (and, on occasion, allegiances) were to the Soviet Union. There were other millions whose sympathies (and, on occasion, allegiances) were for Hitler's Germany and Imperial Japan.

Yet as Hitler subordinated socialism to nationalism, so (as Lukacs has argued over the entirety of his career) did Joseph Stalin. Stalin was fully aware of the weaknesses of international socialism, for which, in any event, he cared little. (According to Lukacs, he detested ideologically committed communists, considering that they were not to be trusted.) He believed, as did Churchill but not Roosevelt, in the division of Europe. But his interest lay in ensuring the security of the Soviet Union, not in communizing Eastern, let alone Western, Europe. Churchill, perhaps sensing this, was eager to agree upon the postwar division of Europe while the war still lasted; Roosevelt did not, partly because he liked Stalin, approved of the Soviet Union (to which the American public also was sympathetic), and did not wish to quarrel with its leader; partly, also, because he hoped to win the war in Asia with Stalin's help after the