

had gone all the way to libertarianism—thereby embarrassing the bullying foreign policy of the U.S. of A. no end, and establishing a beacon-light for the world.

-M.N.R.

## A New Right

The Reagan coalition, unlike the Goldwater movement, contained many diverse elements. Two of these were the traditionalist (or paleo) conservatives and the anti-traditionalist (or neo) conservatives. Barely speaking at the best of times, these two groups are now at war.

### The Two Sides

The paleoconservatives are cultural traditionalists who reject the egalitarian movements that have wilded their way through America. They share the Founding Fathers' distrust of standing armies, look to the original American foreign policy of isolationism as a guide to the post-Cold War era, and see the welfare state as a moral and Constitutional monstrosity.

Opposed to the post-FDR imperial presidency, paleocons believe in a republican form of government as versus a mass democracy—which they see as leading to the welfare state—and they reject internationalist crusades to spread global democracy.

Patrick J. Buchanan, the most important conservative in the country, speaks for paleoconservatives (and libertarians) when he calls for "a new foreign policy that puts America first, and not only first, but second and third as well."

The neoconservatives, on the other hand, are cultural modernists who endorse the forced integration and redistributionism of civil rights. They believe in an imperial presidency, the welfare state, and mass democracy, and they seek to enact these ideas worldwide through U.S. military intervention. (So devoted are they to democracy that neocon theologian Michael Novak once compared the "birth of democracy in history" to the "birth in Bethlehem," a metaphor uncomfortably close to sacrilege for a Christian.)

The neocons can be summed up as "New Class" intellectuals seeking to "rationalize, legitimize, defend, and conserve the managerial regime" of the New Deal and the Great Society, says journalist Samuel T. Francis. From that regime they derive their social and political power, and in its service they have sought to coopt the Right.

### A Short History of Neoconism

When the neocons joined the conservative movement in the late 1970s to fasten themselves to the Reagan campaign, conservatives were delighted. The neocons may have come from the Left, but they were staunch anti-communists and top intellectuals, or so their publications proclaimed.

Most conservatives didn't realize this was not the neocons' first conversion, however. Some neocons started out as Trotskyite communists, then became democratic socialists, then liberal Democrats, then conservative Republicans. Others remained social democrats. The neocon leaders made effective use, however, of the Marxist tactics they had learned in the internecine battles at City College of New York.

Functioning as a disciplined cadre, they systematically put their followers in positions of power and punished anyone who stood in their way. "They operate exactly like a Communist cell," says a writer for *The Wall Street Journal*, itself heavily neocon influenced.

Here's a minor case study in how the neocons function: in 1988, neocon academic Allan Bloom invited budding neocon Francis Fukayama of the State Department to the neocon Olin Democracy Center at the University of Chicago. There he delivered a paper, which was published last year in the neocon journal *The National Interest* and trumpeted in *The New York Times* and its Sunday magazine as the most important article of 1989. Fukayama then received a lush book contract from a neocon-influenced publisher; his future is assured.

Fukayama, a right-wing Hegelian, claimed in his article, "The End of History?," that socialism has been eternally vanquished by the democratic welfare state. There will be no more ideological battles, only an "endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns, and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands."

All varieties of determinism repudiate the proper view of history as the sum of purposive human actions, but as with Hegel and Marx, there is a sinister purpose to Fukayama's inevitability theory.

We can think of Hegel, confirms philosopher David Gordon of the Ludwig von Mises Institute, as the first neocon. Hegel agreed to a role for the market and private property, but only if regulated by the state; he endorsed the sort of

conservative welfare policies later enacted by Bismarck; he believed in war as necessary for the moral health of the people; and he endorsed a sovereign executive unfettered by the laws of morality.

Fukayama wants us to believe that a similar system is inevitable for all time, courtesy of History. But despite Fukayama and the neocons, the real issue is not socialism vs. the welfare state, but freedom vs. statism, an option they seek to obliterate for conservatives, and for America.

### The First Battle

The first intra-Right battle in the Reagan administration took place over the directorship of the National Endowment for the Humanities. This bureaucracy dispenses many millions in academic patronage, and the neocons knew that not only do ideas have consequences, but that paid dispensers of ideas were essential to their planned control of conservative think tanks and foundations. NEA grants could buy them a lot of influence in the academic world, where the average professor—conservative, liberal, or libertarian—will sell his soul, such as it is, for a few thousand dollars.

Using *The New York Times*, which managing editor A.M. Rosenthal turned into a virtual neocon house organ, they attacked the president's first choice for the NEA, Southern historian and literature professor M. E. Bradford. Paleocon Bradford, a scholar of immense learning and gentle character, was called a Southern reactionary and Neanderthal. There was even a whispering campaign to brand him as a racist, though no evidence was ever produced.

An open charge, one the *Times* harped on, was that Bradford was insufficiently respectful of Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln—a proponent of big government, federal hegemony, the income tax, a dictatorial presidency, loose construction of the Constitution, and fiat-paper money—is a hero to neocons (even though his racial views resemble David Duke's). But why should uncritical approval of Lincoln have been a Reagan litmus test in the 1980s?

Another accusation was that Bradford opposed federal control of education. This was supposed to be Reagan's view, so it ought not to have been effective, no matter how shocking the *Times* found it.

Day after day, Bradford was called a caveman. As is so often the case, the smear worked and Irving Kristol's choice, William Bennett, was installed in Bradford's place.

Bennett used the NEH effectively to reward neocons, and they in turn promoted him for Secretary of Education. When he got that job, he made effective use of its even larger slushfund and bank of jobs, while drastically expanding the central government's control over local schools. The neocons, who tend to think civilization starts and ends in New York City, see all local—and especially rural and small-town—influences as baleful prejudices to be stamped out. Thus their centralizing mania.

Along with the National Endowment for the Humanities, the neocons took over the grant-making National Endowments for the Arts and Democracy, not to speak of entire divisions of the National

Security Council and the Defense and State Departments through neocons Richard Perle and Elliott Abrams.

### A Neocon Decline?

Everything seemed to be going their way until the Iran-Contra affair—largely a neocon operation—was exposed and

Abrams, a crown prince of neocon as son-in-law to Norman Podhoretz and Midge Decter, was accused of giving false testimony to Congress.

During Iran-Contra, neocons were gradually forced out of the State, Defense, and the National Security Council, and even where they remained, they lost power. Contributing to this decline was the poor performance in the Republican primaries of their candidate, Jack Kemp, despite years of coaching by Kristol.

The neocons still wield a lot of power through Carl Gershman's National Endowment for Democracy, Jack Kemp's HUD, Bennett's Drug War, and Dan Quayle's office under Kristol's son, Bill, but the White House—now controlled

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by an older Northeastern elite—is much less friendly.

## Anti-Semitism and the Neocons

Although there are Jews on both sides of the conservative battle, most neocons are Jewish. That ought not to make any difference. But given the neocons' willingness to use any weapon in their battles, perhaps it was inevitable that anti-Semitism would be ascribed to their opponents.

Anti-Semitism is a ghastly philosophy, and a charge of anti-Semitism can therefore do great harm. As it ought to, when true. But when untrue, it must be accounted the most vicious smear in American politics.

Paleoconservative godfather Russell Kirk said—in one line of a long talk at the Heritage Foundation—that some neocons “mistake Tel Aviv for the capital of the United States.” Decter, a Heritage trustee, called the remark a “bloody piece of anti-Semitism.” But that is nonsense.

The neocons do see a unique role for Israel, both as foreign-aid recipient and as a hinge of U.S. foreign policy. In the 1970s, some became conservatives specifically, they said, to protect Israel from the “post-Vietnam neo-isolationism” of the Left. The neocons have the right to disagree with Kirk; they do not have the right to smear a scholar and man of his rectitude.

Neocons even persecuted Paul Gottfried, a Jewish paleocon, for supporting Kirk and saying that Christian anti-Semitism and “Jewish anti-Christian prejudice” are evil, and that too many neocons are guilty of the latter. Gottfried, a

nationally known political philosopher, was as a result denied a teaching post at a Catholic university.

Neocons organized to pressure the university into withdrawing its job offer. Gottfried was, they said, a “self-hating Jew” not dedicated to “the security of Israel.” Podhoretz reproached him as “more Christian than Jewish.” That struck many as an odd argument to make to a Catholic university. Even odder, it seems to have worked.

## The Rockford Battle

At the center of the paleo-neo battle have been the paleoconservative Rockford Institute in Rockford, Illinois, and its influential magazine, *Chronicles*. Editor Thomas Fleming had published an article by libertarian Bill Kaufman on Gore Vidal as a man of the Old Right. Despite Vidal's many ideological and cultural shortcomings, it was a persuasive piece. But no one could have seen it as a literary thermonuclear device.

Like many paleocons, Fleming comes from the Southern agrarian tradition that values America's heartland farms and towns over its big northeastern cities. For these views, he has been smeared by the neocons as a “nativist.” But after the Vidal article, Podhoretz and Decter declared Fleming, *Chronicles*, and Rockford “enemies” who countenanced anti-Semitism.

How so? Jews tend to live in big cities, so criticizing urban culture smacks of anti-Semitism. And besides, Vidal was their bitter personal enemy who had called them “Israeli Fifth Columnists.”

In answering these charges, Rockford pointed to *Chronicle's* Jewish editors and writers, and to the fact that nothing even remotely anti-Semitic had ever appeared in

the magazine. But the neocons only redoubled their efforts, next using their disciple Richard John Neuhaus, a Lutheran minister who ran Rockford's Center for Religion and Society in New York City.

Neuhaus and Fleming had been at odds for a long time. After hearing Fleming make an “insensitive remark” about AIDS, Neuhaus said “How can you say that, when we all have so many close friends who have been struck down by this terrible disease?”

“Close friends?” answered Fleming. “I don't know anyone who has AIDS. I don't know anyone *who knows anyone* who has AIDS.” Neuhaus would never speak to Fleming again.

When Podhoretz and Decter declared war, Neuhaus gladly volunteered for “the neocons' smear campaign,” a Rockford official told me. Neuhaus “badmouthed Rockford to our donors while spending our money hand over fist.” An attack on Rockford from Rockford's offices by a Rockford employee using Rockford money left the Institute no alternative but to fire Neuhaus and quickly, although the action was noisily criticized by the neocons and their allies as “ill-mannered.”

*The New York Times* then ran a front-page story on the affair, bringing the paleo-neo fight into the open. Other national coverage followed.

Even spurious charges of bigotry are hard to refute. But in this case they didn't work, and Rockford has emerged as an even more influential advocate of traditional culture; *Chronicles* has continued to gain in circulation and prestige.



## A Neocon Error

Not since Iran-Contra had the neocons made a serious mistake. But Kirk, as Mr. Conservative, is widely beloved, and so is Rockford. The attacks backfired, and for the first time, the neocons themselves became the issue.

This is something they like to avoid, for despite all the resources they control, there are not very many of them. As a *Wall Street Journal* writer told me: "No one has ever found more than 37."

The neocons use "a certain amount of smoke and mirrors," added a paleo journalist. "But this split is blowing away the smoke and breaking their mirrors." The neocon edifice seems impressive, but "pull back the curtain on this Wizard of Oz, and it's only Irving Kristol standing on a stool."

In an attempt to counter their small numbers, the neocons have started reaching out to an older Establishment, and aligning themselves with such Trilateralist intellectuals as Samuel Huntington of Harvard, who has received millions in Neocon money.

In an early Trilateral Commission study, Huntington looked back with nostalgia on the good old days when "Truman had been able to govern the country with the cooperation of a small number of Wall Street lawyers and bankers." But too many people questioned the "legitimacy of hierarchy, coercion, discipline, secrecy, and deception"; they "no longer felt the compulsion to obey" those of "superior rank."

The solution? 1) Muzzling the press, especially newsmen skeptical of "authority and institutions"; 2) tightening federal control of higher education, which too often

works "at cross purposes" with elite authority; and 3) restoring the presidency to dominion over "foreign policy and international economics." These are neoconservative goals as well.

In Irving Kristol's *National Interest*, neocon columnist Charles Krauthammer has openly endorsed the Trilateralist foreign policy: America must "integrate" with Europe and Japan in a "super-sovereign" entity that is "economically, culturally, and politically hegemonic in the world."

## A Reconciliation

Just as the paleo-neo split widens, an older break is healing, much to the neocons' alarm. For if there is anything they dislike more than paleoconservatives, it is libertarians.

The Old Right, born in opposition to the New Deal and World War II (the neocons' two favorite historical events), encompassed people of very different ideologies, although all were cultural conservatives. From monarchists to anarcho-capitalists, they worked together against the policies of Roosevelt and Truman.

The coalition broke down during the Cold War, but with the breakdown of communism itself, the Old Right is back: paleocons are joining with libertarians against the common enemy: what Sobran calls "that 800-pound gorilla in Washington, D.C." Not just any libertarians, however, but the culturally conservative "paleolibertarians."

It is not a difficult melding. Paleolibertarians agree with paleoconservatives, and disagree with neoconservatives, on most ideological issues.

But to rescue the libertarian ideal, and make such an alliance

possible, good libertarians had first to hivel off what Murray N. Rothbard called "the hippies, druggies, and militantly anti-Christian atheists" of the Libertarian Party.

Inspired

by Rothbard—founder of the modern libertarian movement—a fast-growing group of paleolibertarian scholars, clergy, businessmen, and journalists has broken with the libertines. Rothbard and Fleming then organized the first meeting of the paleo alliance late last year at the Rockford Institute. Other sponsors were the Ludwig von Mises Institute and the Center for Libertarian Studies.

Called "Beyond the Welfare-Warfare State: Setting the Agenda for the 1990s," the conference brought together a host of paleos from both camps, including Bradford, Gottfried, Fleming, Rothbard, Sobran, and the present writer.

A second meeting took place in 1990 to establish a new scholarly society. Designed to promote a convergence among paleo-libertarians and paleo-conservatives, and discussion of the ideas of liberty and Western civilization, it was named after John Randolph

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of Roanoke. Randolph, whom Russell Kirk in his great book called a "libertarian aristocrat," said: "I love liberty; I hate equality."

The Randolph Club will have about 100 members—scholars, journalists, and businessmen—by invitation only. The presidency will alternate between a conservative and a libertarian, and its first meeting—in Dallas next October—will produce a paleo- alliance book.

The officers are Fleming, president; Rothbard, vice president (and next year's president); Burton S. Blumert of CLS, treasurer; and Michael Warder of Rockford, secretary. The other two board members are Allan Carlson of Rockford and myself.

Another gathering took place this month at the Philadelphia Society's annual meeting in Chicago, with a standing-room-only dialogue on the future of the Right featuring Rothbard, Anthony Harri- gan, and Donald Devine, sponsored by the Rockford Institute.

At a time when neocons—like all statist—s—are intellectually bankrupt, conservatives are preoccupied with getting jobs in the state apparatus, and libertarians are still zoning in the Age of Aquarius, the paleo alliance is the only exciting

development on the Right. I expect to see the people associated with the John Randolph Club set the agenda for the 1990s and beyond. (An earlier, shorter version of this article appeared in *The New American*.)

- L.H.R., Jr.

## Arts and Movies

*Driving Miss Daisy*, directed by Bruce Beresford, with Jessica Tandy, Morgan Freeman, and Dan Aykroyd.

*Driving Miss Daisy* presents a loving and favorable view of race relations in the Old South.

*Driving Miss Daisy* is a wonderful picture, and it should have won all the Academy Awards. A gentle, richly-detailed tapestry of a movie, it lovingly, warmly, and perceptively evokes life in the Old South from the late 1940s until the early 1970s. Here are race relations as they were, can be, and should be.

Bruce Beresford is the superb Australian director who brought us *Breaker Morant*, and he orchestrates truly stunning acting performances, especially from the three principals: Messrs. Freeman and Aykroyd and Miss Tandy. The film is based on the semi-autobiographical play by Alfred Uhry; a wealthy Jewish widow in Atlanta, becoming too old to drive herself, employs a Negro driver, only ten years younger

than herself. Morgan Freeman, the driver, is benign, courteous, deferential and dignified, and the originally imperious Tandy eventually comes to regard Hoke, the driver, as her best friend.

As many of the reviews pointed out, neither Aykroyd nor Tandy looks Jewish, Tandy being far closer to a prototypical WASP-Grant Wood type. To hear Yiddish spoken by Miss Tandy comes as a bit of a culture shock. But the acting is so superior that this really makes no difference. There are some wonderfully tart bits, as Miss Tandy denounces her daughter-in-law: "with her nose, she shouldn't have all those reindeers and Santa Clauses on her lawn." (Oddly enough, the daughter-in-law, Patti Lupone, is the only one of the major actors who looks Jewish, even though she isn't.)

Although the major film critics grudgingly admire *Driving Miss Daisy*, they obviously don't like it very much—precisely because it presents a loving and favorable view of race relations in the Old South. In fact, they mainly protested because their own favorite film of 1989—the raucous black power-oriented *Do the Right Thing* from Spike Lee—was frozen out of Academy Award contention. Well, tough, guys.

All this illustrates an important cultural point: that while Academy Award tastes too often welcome the sentimental and the pretentious, they are leagues ahead of the professional critics, who generally go for the morally and esthetically corrupt visions and pronouncements of the avant-garde. All the more reason to cherish a gem like *Driving Miss Daisy*.

- Mr. First Nighter