How the liberal professoriate arrogantly denigrated and rejected the deeper intellectual, moral, and spiritual needs of an aspiring generation...

I

The Creation of a Conservative Intellectual, 1960-1965

Richard J. Bishirjian

HISTORIANS AND STUDENTS of American politics are beginning only now to analyze how political conservatives became a dominant *political* force in the United States. That is the case, in part, because too many of these scholars are liberal partisans, and they find it difficult to admit the fact that liberalism, as a belief system, is dead. In the immediate future, therefore, it may fall to those of us who participated in the conservative movement to write the history of our own success, even though, in doing so, we risk emphasizing our own personal experience. On the other hand, our account of our own personal experience of America—almost forty years ago—is an important datum in the interpretation of what occurred.

My account begins with my own experience of feeling intellectually ill-at-ease at that moment in American history that the administration of John F. Kennedy was inspiring thousands of young Americans to idealistic service on behalf of the state. We, my future conservative colleagues and I, were representative of the course that the American nation ultimately took, but, conversely, we were also despised, denigrated, and rejected by our professors. That condescension by America's intellectuals remains the hallmark of our colleges and universities.

These feelings of animosity were mutual, since we were dissatisfied with the view of America that dominated our professors' lectures. We did not know why, but we knew that what they propounded was wrong. We were struggling, as was the nation, to understand ourselves, to make some sense of the intellectual poverty in which we found ourselves, and, we were struggling to find our place in history and in the world. In that sense, we thought we knew better than our professors, and we struggled to shape our own understanding of ethics, of American history and foreign policy, and to create values antithetical to those dominant in American intellectual circles. We lived in a divided country, dominated, on the one hand, by ideas of the "best and brightest" of our professors and transmitted to the larger Ameri-

RICHARD J. BISHIRJIAN, *a long-time contributor to* Modern Age, *received his Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame in 1972 under the direction of Gerhart Niemeyer.*

can public through the political elite, and the print and electronic media—and, on the other hand, an America whose outlines were becoming clearer to us. We engaged in this reconstruction of America virtually at the same time that leftist students were engaged in the creation of new values and destructive New Left movements that would destroy the Democratic Party and the New Deal coalition that brought it to power.

In reflecting on those times, my strongest recollection is that the ideas of America's elites did not resonate in my soul, and my discovery that many of their most cherished truths were throwbacks to the Progressive era that could be traced to the ideology of Woodrow Wilson. Other ideas, ideas that sought not to understand but to change history, were imported from nineteenth-century European ideologies and mass movements. In other words, liberalism had nothing new to say to the intellectual and spiritual needs of my generation, and we felt that our elected officials were mouthing platitudes which even they did not believe.

Structurally, America was fast becoming a centralized, bureaucratically administered, secular state, with power concentrated in Washington, and we were uncomfortable with that. There was also confusion about our goals as a nation, particularly in foreign affairs, and what our responsibilities were internationally. Our professors extolled the virtues of service to the secular state, but that appeal did not reach us in our mind's eye.

Before we knew that there was a "New Class," we were appalled by the Kennedy Administration's failures in foreign policy, by the anti-business attitude our professors manifested, and we became concerned that no one took the Soviet threat seriously. The adulation showered upon President Kennedy by the American print media, moreover, was silly, at best, and ominous in its intensity. Kennedy's presidency was hardly the fulfillment of the American idea. And, as American Catholics were to learn later, John F. Kennedy was as secular a mind as ever graced the Oval Office. When the Administration-supported surrogate invasion of Cuba died at the Bay of Pigs due to an obvious failure of nerve on the part of the young president, I recoiled in astonishment. This was followed by Kennedy's loss of nerve in Berlin. Why was this happening?

Not that I had any answers myself. I recall reacting negatively, for example, to the hoary anti-communist rhetoric of the American Legion that I encountered in my high school years as a debater and competitive orator at events sponsored by the American Legion. The defense of what was left of the American public philosophy had fallen to those who were intellectually unequipped. Those good, honest, working-class men and women associated with these patriotic organizations were simply out of their league in a contest with *The New York Times*, with Harvard professors, and with a budding broadcast television media led by Edward R. Morrow, Chet Huntley, David Brinkley and Walter Cronkite. I was also disturbed by the rapid secularization of American life and by the decline of religion and its public celebration. Prayer in the public schools was little substitute for religious training, yet even that had been ruled to be unconstitutional. America had chosen to run, not walk, towards a cultural crackup.

When I reflect that J. Edgar Hoover's *Masters of Deceit* reached an enormous audience not only because of Hoover's reputation, but also because he, and, possibly, Catholic Bishop Fulton Sheen, were the only public figures who articulated a public philosophy to a citizenry hungering for someone to resolve the intellectual confusion and conflicts of those times, I realize how low the state of

intellectual culture in America had fallen.

I was searching for some understanding of the historical moment and it was slowly dawning on me that the University of Pittsburgh—where, in September 1960, I was enrolled as a freshman—was something very different from anything I had experienced before. I had known mundane corruption in my boyhood growing up in Pittsburgh. I saw money paid for votes and policemen take payoffs from prostitutes on their beat. Frankly, I was tolerant of all that, as I now see, because it did not seem to affect the greater public good and because I understood that people always will act as the human beings they are.

But the University of Pittsburgh was different. I sensed the presence of real spiritual danger, and I experienced, for the first time, an anger that I had never known before. That anger, I believe, though motivated by other forces, fueled the campus disturbances of the 1960s. The University of Pittsburgh was—in microcosm—like all other universities in the United States, then and now, endowed with the same qualities that have occasioned over the years such books as William Buckley's *God and Man at Yale* (1951), John LeBoutillier's *Harvard Hates America* (1978), and Dinesh D'Souza's *Illiberal Education* (1991). I knew nothing of these matters when I applied to Pitt in 1960. Had I known otherwise, I probably would have attended a small Lutheran college like Valparaiso in Indiana or Grove City College. What I did not know, I now realize, could and did hurt me—to the core of my being.

The University of Pittsburgh, by the time I arrived, had developed into a secular institution whose social science faculty was dominated by the detritus of leftist intellectual and mass movements. This institution, that was even then the largest employer in Allegheny County, had literally set itself up in opposition to the traditional culture that supported it.

The city of Pittsburgh at that time was a myriad tapestry of ethnic groups. Most students I met—like myself—were second generation Americans and most were the first in their family to attend college. Yet the closest a student could get to an appreciation of his ethnic roots at the University was by taking a course in which a required text was a tract by Josef Stalin on the nationality problem. Daniel Patrick Moynihan's and Nathan Glazer's appreciative work on ethnicity had not been published, and the deracinated professoriate at Pitt abhorred the particular, the unique, the diversity of Pittsburgh's religious and ethnic groups. They were committed to a larger, politicized, agenda than that given in this efflorescence of cultural and religious life that surrounded the Cathedral of Learning. Typically, wealthy immigrants were asked to contribute to brick and mortar, not the designation of academic chairs—and Pitt has exceptionally beautiful nationality classrooms lavishly decorated by contributions from ethnic groups of the region.

In my music appreciation class, I remember that we examined any and all aspects of music, but my teacher appeared uncomfortable when students in class recognized that one of Beethoven's themes was taken from a German hymn. Religion, apparently, was for the "backward." For those sensitive students interested in contemplating the depth of the soul and who thirsted for knowledge about the psyche, the psychology department at Pitt offered a Skinner box. In fact, I earned at least five credits in behavioral psychology by operating successfully my own Skinner box.

In political science, my chosen major, I could choose courses from a wonderful array of liberals of all types and varieties, but not one political conservative. There was a Democratic Party politician, Ed Cook, who taught American state

and local politics; a New Deal liberal, and Chairman of the Department, Holbert N. Carroll, who taught Constitutional Law; positivist political theorist, John Chapman; Carl Beck, master of "systems" theory—what I came to call the science of comparative rectangles—and an assortment of other leftists. Many years later when I was teaching at the University of Dallas I met Carl Beck at an Annual Convention of the American Political Science Association and decided that I might as well say hello. I introduced myself saying my name and extending my hand. Beck replied sneeringly, "I know who you are!"

Obviously, I had committed some offense when I was at Pitt—an offense that knew no name—then. I was "politically incorrect." This atmosphere did not merely discriminate against young conservative undergraduates. I recall going to the office of distinguished linguist and visiting Mellon professor at Pitt, Mario Pei, who was a regular contributor to *Modern Age*, to ask that he become faculty sponsor of the Society for Conservative Studies. Pei's annual essay in *Modern Age* on what he called "weasel words" made delightful fun of the ideological degeneration of our common language, but, confronted with a clear offer to assist some conservative students at the University of Pittsburgh, he told me that he would have to *think* about it. I returned in a week and Pei said that for him to sponsor our little conservative group would cause "trouble," and apologized that he could not lend his name to our efforts.

I also recall that in my senior year I wrote an essay on Edmund Burke and John Randolph that was accepted for publication in the university's literary magazine, *Ideas and Figures*. Upon its publication, I discovered that editor Jeff Rackham placed a footnote at the end of my essay that read: "Editor's Note: The university is a place for the formation and free expression of ideas. The philosophy expressed in this article is not necessarily that of *Ideas and Figures*, but is published here in the belief that it will contribute to the further understanding of one area of political thought."

The title of my essay? "A Vocabulary of Conservatism."

So blatantly politicized to the left was the environment at Pitt in 1964 that I could not publish a student's attempt at a scholarly essay on Edmund Burke and John Randolph of Roanoke without a politically correct disclaimer.

I recall that I was blamed by a liberal classmate on the day President Kennedy died for creating an environment that led to the assassination of the President of the United States!

No wonder my editors at *Ideas and Figures* felt that they were doing me a favor by allowing my essay to be published, but wanted to warn readers that I was possibly dangerous to free inquiry. An environment of supreme intolerance to all but the politically correct had been created—an environment that continues today at Pitt, and in all "academic" institutions in the United States—and those of us who raised our heads in dissent became outcasts. Had I been informed in my political science classes about the theory of toleration, I would have asked myself, what had become of the liberal principle of toleration at the University of Pittsburgh.

Only two more remembrances are needed to describe the so-called "university" education that existed at Pitt.

My course in world history was assisted by a graduate student who clearly aspired to become a Communist Party member; and the most notorious member of the History Department had fought in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade during the Spanish Civil War.

I was selected for participation in a university program for gifted students that was administered by a trained psy-

chologist. I do not quite remember what the benefits for participating in this program were, but I do remember that after I told the program administrator that I believed there was evil and that it was a real force in the world, I was dropped from the program.

I erred, when I decided to go to Pitt, and, then, I erred after I got there. It happened that the Chairman of the Physical Education Department was a member of my church and I was invited to meet him upon my arrival at Pitt. At the young age of 18, and disgusted with the tedium and mindlessness of my high school education, the last thing I wanted to do was meet the Chairman of the Department of Physical Education—and I told him as much.

Four years later, when I realized that only the English and the Physical Education Departments were committed to keeping body and soul together, I went to this same gentleman and apologized. I told him that I was wrong and that of all the Departments at Pitt, I considered Phys Ed to be the best. And I meant it.

It took me two years to figure out which teachers to take and not to take. In the good column were Richard Tobias, recently president of the Faculty Senate, and the late Charles Crow, Shakespearean scholar. With Tobias I read Burke and with Crow I took everything he taught. Those were the days before deconstructionism reigned supreme and I recall telling Frank Meyer, a *National Review* editor we invited to speak at Pitt, that even though I was a political science major, I had more credits in English. "At least they couldn't ruin Shakespeare," I said, and Frank nodded in agreement.

Also in the good column was an otherwise unappetizing professor, John Chapman. A positivist, Chapman had a precision of mind that attracted me to theoretical studies even if Chapman's political theory represented the last gasp of positivism. And though my grades were less than gentlemanly—it is tough learning falsehoods—I did well in Chapman's political theory courses and in my private reading.

From 1961 to 1964 I read every and any book I could get my hands on to try to figure out what was going on. I sensed that some moral disease had afflicted our best educated classes, a corruption of the soul that had been transmitted to our political and cultural leaders also. But I did not yet understand why. So I read almost every published work of Edmund Burke, Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind*, Richard Weaver's *Ideas Have Consequences*, Friedrich Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* and his *Constitution of Liberty*, Peter Stanlis, Frank Meyer, James Burnham, William F. Buckley, the essays of Stanley Parry and of Mario Pei published in *Modern Age*, Ludwig von Mises's *Bureaucracy*, and countless tomes on classical economics. If it had been written and cited in *National Review*, *Modern Age*, or the *Intercollegiate Review*, I read it.

Unfortunately, what I learned from my reading did not quite hang together. Something was wrong, and I attended every lecture conducted by the Society for Conservative Studies to try and find out what it was. As a result, I had the precious opportunity to meet personally Friedrich Hayek, William Rusher, Frank Meyer, Eliseo Vivas, Russell Kirk, William Buckley, and many others.

Liberalism was, now, my adversary. Liberalism, as I later came to understand it, was an "ideology"— a false idea and "second reality" that creative intellects had devised to replace the reality given in being that they willfully rejected. Liberalism, unfortunately, is the dominant intellectual convention of the United States in my time.

As such, liberalism must be distinguished from the virtues of liberality, toleration, and magnanimity. Liberalism

as I experienced it at Pitt was ungrateful, illiberal, devoted to increasing state power, and, as I saw in my daily existence at Pitt—*very* intolerant. "Why," Ed Cook, the Democrat Party politician who had a tenured position in Pitt's political science department asked me in class, "don't you care for people?" Professor, I told him, I respect people and believe that if you leave them alone they'll do just fine. It is you who does not care for people because you want to control them.

Not bad for a twenty-year old! On the other hand, I did not get an "A" in Ed Cook's course in State and Local Politics.

All my readings outside of my university courses were interesting, and had given me some good arguments, but I was no more than a debater looking for arguments to use in public debate. Conservatism is not, by itself, a philosophy to live by, a way of truth. Important though it is for politics—after all, it taught me about limited government, and gave me an appreciation of constitutional restraints on power and the relationship between economic and political freedom—conservatism is a political theory linked to an attitude of spirit and mind, not a political *philosophy* by which the greater universe becomes visible and which, to me, was still invisible despite an enormous amount of reading.

My Lutheran religion did not have the toughness of reason, the strength of argument, and the rigor of human thought in quest of truth. I had lived twenty years and was about to graduate from university, but knew nothing of philosophy—not a word! As a result, I had not discovered that there is a philosophic mode by which the human intellect may participate in the divine. To be sure, I did experience God's presence through my life of prayer and attendance as a communicant in my parish church. Unlike today, when the Social Gospel is more likely to be taught at Mass, in chapel or the synagogue, I, mercifully, could look to Sunday service as respite from the combative ideologies that were dominant in my university courses.

Yet my ignorance of philosophy was a tragic handicap, and, in retrospect, it is clear that I had joined the "conservative movement" in an attempt to fill a perceived vacuum in my intellectual life. Let me offer a word of warning, however. "Movements" in the correct meaning of the word are not conservative and the conservative "movement" is not really one.

Historically, "movements" are anti-traditional and ideologically motivated revolutionary currents. A typical "movement," for example, is communism or National Socialism, with distinct characteristics: they reject reality; they attribute the deficiencies in reality to others and make enemies of those "responsible"; they promise resolution of the conflicts in existence; and they promise that, when those conflicts are overcome, history will have been concluded. "Communism is the riddle of history solved," is typical language by a "movement" leader such as Karl Marx.

Political conservatism in the United States does not fit the mold since it finds reality to be good and knows that no human action can fully conclude a process that transcends the limits of human history.

Still, something was happening in American politics in 1961 and I had walked smack into it. By recognizing myself as a "movement conservative" I was simply giving a name, albeit an imperfect one, to something that I was living. Being a part of what we called the "conservative movement" was to recognize the social aspect of the political ideas that caused us to come together. We were a community and in that sense we should call this the "conservative community," not the conservative "movement."

So, even today, and being very uncomfortable in its usage, when we "movement" conservatives get together we often discuss how someone who is in a conservative government—say in the Reagan or the Bush administrations—was not a "movement conservative." Bob Tuttle, President Reagan's third director of presidential personnel, Constance Horner, George Bush's second director of presidential personnel, as well as a host of other luminaries in the Reagan and the Bush Administrations, managed to scramble to the top, but without the philosophical commitment that such positions require.

John Sununu, for example, is fundamentally—intuitively—conservative, but he is not a "movement" conservative. In 1982 I was working as a legislative assistant to Senator Alfonse M. D'Amato (R-NY), probably one of the brightest men in the United States Senate and more principled than his colleague, Dr. Daniel Patrick Moynihan. D'Amato's pollster, and my friend of many years, Arthur Finkelstein called and asked me to arrange a lunch with a young politician-educator from New Hampshire, John Sununu. I took Sununu to lunch at the Hunan Restaurant across from the Hart Senate Office Building. We ordered Kung Pao Chicken, fried dumplings, and Hunan beef and I listened as Sununu told me about his children, his academic and consulting career, and his political aspirations. "Dick," Sununu told me, "I am going to run for Governor of New Hampshire so I can block Jim Baker from getting the Republican presidential nomination for George Bush."

Throughout the presidency of Ronald Reagan, my friends and I could discern the differences between those who were allegedly conservative and those few "movement" conservatives who had been given the opportunity to serve the president. We were acknowledging a kinship with one another, a sharing in a common enterprise of which we were very proud, and yet, in the technical sense, we knew that that of which we were a part was different from a political "movement" or "cause." The term "cause" was first critically used by Richard Hooker in his opus, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, to describe the destructive works of the Puritan "cause." No, we conservatives were not engaged in destructive actions of that sort; we intuitively sensed that we were a part of the regenerative life of the nation itself.

Something, clearly regenerative, had been astir in the United States since Robert Taft—too late to equip the nation intellectually to engage the murderous Stalin and Mao Tse-tung with policies more vigorous than the policies America's liberal elite pursued—but this regenerative, restorative force had not yet come into its own. That historical development was still in process in 1961, but that regenerative development is what we have come to call the conservative "movement."

In its inarticulate form conservatism can be easily portrayed as mindless, reactionary, and negative. In truth, there exists a body of knowledge that makes up a consistent political philosophy in America that deserves the name "conservative." Unfortunately, the civilizational process in the West, in development since, at least, the French Revolution, has attracted our finest intellects to destruction as opposed to reconstruction.

Why are most creative people and intellectuals not philosophical conservatives? This question is often asked, and the answer is really quite simple. Since the French Revolution, the creative among us have been encouraged by civilizational currents to destroy traditional society and institutions. In twentieth-century America, it is only since Robert Taft that we have begun to shape a political philosophy and to become an

effective social force to preserve traditional American institutions, traditions, and attitudes from these attacks. Those who participate in this creative act are replicating a similar restorative force that gave shape to the American Revolution and the Founding of 1787. The "spirit of '76" that inspired a heroic rebellion was uniquely American, and equivalent to the revolution against liberalism that took place in the United States after World War II.

Nevertheless, rebellions, like revival meetings, need institutional structure. The War of Independence did not automatically convey a working political system to replace colonial rule. That was the task of the Founders, who engaged in the political debates in the states leading up to the Philadelphia Convention and the Ratification Debates.

Modern political conservatives take inspiration from both the Revolutionary War and American Founding. I have come to believe that the conservative movement which led me and thousands of others to rebel against the dominant ideology of America in the twentieth century has more in common with the Spirit of '76 than the Founding of 1787. And, in some ways, modern conservatism and the eighteenth-century revolution are not the same thing.

Twentieth-century conservatism is of a kind by itself, wholly new, philosophically deeper, and responsive to the current crisis, not the past. In responding to that crisis a great deal of time, thought, and energy has been given to critiquing the absence of a coherent political philosophy, the reigning liberal ideology and the many ills with which it has infected the American people, ethical relativism and policies for redistributing wealth. The generation that founded our country could rely on an enlightenment consensus that gave them their political ideas. They did not need to create them, merely apply them in new ways.

We, however, were not so blessed. Commencing in the 1950s and 1960s, conservatives in the United States had to give a great deal of emphasis, labor, and time to the recovery of a philosophical tradition that went far beyond the Enlightenment. We conservative students of that period participated in that restorative effort by acquiring the intellectual and the philosophic skills to fight those who taught us at university. That was what we were challenged to do, and which we accomplished. But, it was not easy.

What I am suggesting is that something was afoot at that moment in American history, 1960-65, that led thousands of working-class students to find their voices and fashion themselves into a political force. We were not made into conservatives out of whole cloth, however. We came to university with fundamental conservative values that were challenged by intolerant liberal professors who disdained our religious beliefs, our love of country, and our acceptance of authority, and, in facing up to that challenge, we found our voice.

Let me ask here, what was it that we had in common, that bound us together and shaped our response to the challenges presented by our teachers? For myself, and the majority of the conservative students I met during my intellectual journey, that common tie was not only modest means, but Christian faith.

On the Left, also, amongst the secular souls who would become known as the "60s Generation," a spiritual emigration was occurring. The "60s Generation," the generation of Woodstock, the New Left, the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the anti-Vietnam War Movement, was being prepared for action even as we conservatives rallied for Barry Goldwater. But by what forces? For certain, the failure to fashion an effective public philosophy by the generation of the Great Depression and World War II

left a vacuum in American public and intellectual life that those of the Right and of the Left were, unbeknownst to us, attempting to fill with new ideas and new forms.

The key in the radicalization of our fellow liberal students was their college and university professors who had turned them against their fathers' intellectual neglect. We conservative students, however, were fighting our professors, if not in defense of our fathers, in defense of the American experience against those who sought to trash it. The liberal students of the day, on the one hand, were converted by their professors from conservative values to the values of relativism, collectivism, statism, and the belief that state power should be captured for the advancement of an ideology. We, on the other hand, and on our own, chose to defend God, country, and home.

This total rejection of traditional culture by our peers and university professors had its mirror image in our enthusiasm for Barry Goldwater. Intuitively, we understood that it was necessary to support Goldwater and that though he was reluctant, at first, to seek the mantle of leadership of the Republican Party, these were times that required courage, and we sensed that Goldwater would, ultimately, run. I remember those days vividly because it was clear that President Lyndon Johnson was not telling the truth about his commitment, nor the magnitude of the commitment needed, to win the war in Vietnam. Not only that, we were not told why we had men fighting in Vietnam, except for some mention, as I recall, of the "right to self-determination." In reality, Johnson had not thought the matter through, was not committed to fight to win, and wasted the lives of thousands of Americans in the name of an ideology that failed in 1918.

"Self-determination" is a Wilsonian ersatz principle of international relations that stands opposed to the true principle of statecraft—"national interest." Our national interest should govern our actions in foreign affairs. Only after a careful and full consideration of the American national interest—I should say only after prudential consideration—and only when the national interest can be articulated so that the American people understand, only then should we put American troops in the line of fire. It is certainly good for nations to determine their own fate. But it is not a moral obligation of the American people to die so that others may realize their nationhood.

For that reason, I was most uncomfortable during the Bush Administration when President Bush justified foreign intervention because of the actions of "dictators." That too is a Wilsonian pejorative that interprets international relations in terms of a theology of democracy and justifies any and every American intervention abroad by an appeal to morality. Too often, those appeals to actions that are contrary to the national interest are couched in moralistic arguments.

That is not to say that we should not have been engaged in a war in southeast Asia, say, on behalf of the national interests of the United States. But all the necessary thinking, analysis, and presentation of that proposition to the American people had not been done. Nor had there been a commitment to pursue a strategy of winning the war. In fact, there was very little thought beforehand, no commitment to win, and much lying to the American people by such "moralists" as Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, and, yes, John F. Kennedy. This is not my opinion. The American people recognized that as a fact and denied the Democratic Party the presidency of the United States for a quarter of a century, from, essentially, 1968 to 1992.

The 1964 presidential campaign was a truly "ideological" war, waged on American soil, in which the nation was polarized between the forces of light and the forces of darkness, and, like all "ideological" divisions, with it came a violation of basic civility, toleration and statesmanship with which democratic contests ought to be waged. From that experience in 1964 came the myriad of changes in attitudes that mark politics in our time as the dirtiest business on earth—unsuitable for men of principle.

The media's loss of objectivity and lock-step negative reporting of the Goldwater campaign effort ignored Lyndon Johnson's control of corporate campaign contributions through the threat of termination of defense contracts and the secret planning to expand the numbers of American troops in Vietnam—and *we*, the conservatives, were effectively portrayed as "Fascists."

Clearly, the American establishment, including our university professors who did not honor the title "professor," the print and electronic media, and the political establishment, including Pennsylvania's Republican Governor, Bill Scranton, and the liberal wing of the Republican Party led by Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York, were not about to allow an avowed conservative to become president of the United States. That precious promontory was reserved for folks like them—not us.

We who worked in that campaign were witnesses to the orchestration of all the forces of intellectual liberalism and liberal culture to repel the invasion from the heartland, and deny the American people the awareness that they had a straightforward choice between two distinct philosophies of government.

"A choice, not an echo"—Goldwater's campaign theme—was true only in the sense of what Goldwater intended. He wanted to offer the American people a choice between limited government, free enterprise, and the strict construction of the Constitution versus the politics of an intrusive, bureaucratic, centrally administered state led by a man who had enriched himself and his family by abuse of his political office.

Against the juggernaut led by President Johnson stood Barry Goldwater, who knew he would lose, but who chose to run rather than give up the contest to a man he called a "crook." But, instead of having the opportunity to offer the American people a choice for limited government, Goldwater was portrayed as a malicious simpleton with vague longings for the military system of Hitler's Germany and an aching to plunge the world into nuclear war.

The demonization of Goldwater was over. Johnson was elected President of the United States, and I picked up my copy of Eric Voegelin's *New Science of Politics* at Pitt's bookstore, went home, and waited for the acceptance letter from Notre Dame's graduate program in Government.

I had been admitted to Duquesne University's School of Law in Pittsburgh. I had an abiding passion for politics and political theory, however, and I read with interest Father Stanley Parry's essays on American political thought that appeared in *Modern Age*. Stanley Parry, CSC, was a member of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, the University of Notre Dame's founding religious order, and former Chairman of the Department of Government.

Now, here was a place, surely, that would give me a break from the beating I had taken at Pitt. I sent off my application, and wrote a letter to Stanley Parry in which I enclosed a long paper on Edmund Burke that I had written for Professor Tobias, and waited while I turned to Voegelin's *New Science of Politics*.

Eric Voegelin published *The New Science of Politics* in 1952. Originally given

as six lectures on "Truth and Representation" at the University of Chicago in winter, 1952, under the sponsorship of the Charles R. Walgreen Foundation, Voegelin's editors at the University of Chicago Press gave the book its misleading title. Twelve years later, I came upon the book and I asked myself, why had not one of my professors at Pitt—when I was there from 1960 to 1964—recommended it to me?

As I read the book, I realized that at work was a substantial intellect far greater than any I had encountered in my readings or university classes. But, more particularly, even though I did not comprehend ninety percent of what I was reading, I did comprehend the essence of parts of it. In particular, Voegelin discusses the civilizational process in which the Christian expectation of spiritual fulfillment after death becomes immanentized in intellectual and political movements that seek a this-worldly salvation. Voegelin remarks that his analysis seems "rather elemental," and he asks why, if this is the case, did not the theorists who formulated these movements see the fallacy? Since he could not explain "seven centuries of intellectual history by stupidity and dishonesty," what was the reason? I then read the passage I have read many, many times and to which, invariably, literally hundreds of commentators on Voegelin return:

> Ontologically, the substance of things hoped for is nowhere to be found but in faith itself; and, epistemologically, there is no proof for things unseen but again this very faith. The bond is tenuous, indeed, and it may snap easily. The life of the soul in openness toward God, the waiting, the periods of aridity and dulness, guilt and despondency, contrition and repentance, forsakenness and hope against hope, the silent stirrings of love and grace, trembling on the verge of a certainty which if gained is loss—the very lightness of this fabric may prove too heavy a burden for men who lust for massively possessive experience.

Nothing I had read to that moment—or thereafter—moved me more than this passage, and I knew, suddenly, that I had found the intellectual guide I had sought for so long. And, I wept. Perhaps that describes the spiritual condition of those of us who sought to overcome the ethos of America in the 1960s.

What I did not reckon upon was that in little more than a month and a half, arriving in South Bend, Indiana, in January 1965, I would be sitting in Voegelin's graduate seminar on modern political thought and auditing his undergraduate class.

South Bend, Indiana, is one of those unfortunate geographic locations where Catholic religious orders sometimes founded institutions. The Jesuits, to their credit, tend to locate their universities near centers of population—and power—such as Washington, D.C. (Georgetown), and Loyola of Chicago, New Orleans, and Los Angeles, as well as New York (Fordham), San Francisco (University of San Francisco), and Boston (Boston College). The Congregation of the Holy Cross, alternatively, sought remote, provincial sites and South Bend, Indiana, fit the bill.

This geographic and intellectual backwater also had the distinct disadvantage of extremes of hot and cold weather, including blinding snowstorms, hurricane-force winds, and tornadoes. A more unsatisfactory place for human habitation and the life of the mind—especially my habitat and my mind—could not have been found by otherwise intelligent souls.

Upon my arrival at South Bend airport from Pittsburgh, which by comparison seemed like a major city, the temperature was seventy degrees. When I awakened the next morning, I had to

buy a pair of galoshes since a foot of snow had fallen. That experience with South Bend was typical. On the other hand, I was not there to do anything but study. My tenure was probationary. Bad grades, even those earned from long suffering under intolerant professors, are still bad grades. Also, I barely had enough money to pay for tuition, books, rent for a room, and meals in the cafeteria. Dining in town was out of the question. In one single instant, this otherwise intelligent young man had reduced the quality of his life by fifty percent—at least. I was ecstatic.

I could not wait to enroll in the classes of Stanley Parry, Eric Voegelin, Gerhart Niemeyer, and Paul Bartholomew, a more compatible group of intellects than which I had ever been honored to meet. Little did I know that these were men under siege. Father Parry had been removed from the Chairmanship of the Department of Government by the calculated act of a committed liberal secular mind who happened to be President of the University, Father Theodore Hesburgh. Hesburgh had made a decision to "upgrade" the university, and Stanley Parry, CSC, was in his gunsights.

Even good old Democratic Party politician Ed Cook, my American politics professor at Pitt, knew who Father Parry was when I told him that I was going to Notre Dame. Stanley Parry had lent his name to a number of conservative political organizations, including the presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater, and it must have caused the Reverend Hesburgh great discomfort when the head of the Ford Foundation in New York told him that his university was a haven for right-wingers like Father Parry. Parry had to go—and he did. The presidents of universities run by religious institutions of the time did not pay courtesy calls. The decisions they made stuck. Hesburgh had to rid his university of conservatives—after all, his former law dean, Clarence Manion, was continuing to sully Notre Dame's good name by his "Manion Forum of the Air," featuring none other than "Dean" Manion. This must have stung Hesburgh badly, as when he was called to Washington to hear a briefing on foreign policy at the Department of State, and out walked Professor Gerhart Niemeyer. Hesburgh didn't have to travel to Washington to see the likes of Niemeyer, and he must have prayed nightly to be rid of those who were costing him big bucks. The "smart" money was not going to universities that featured prominent conservatives.

The association in the popular mind of Catholicism, anti-communism, and Notre Dame was just too much for this secular-minded liberal, Democrat Party supporter, Kennedy family friend, favorite of the liberal elite, political appointee, jet-setter, and, yes, fundraiser extraordinaire, Theodore Hesburgh, CSC. Not too many years ago, Hesburgh and all the other presidents of Catholic universities in the world met in Rome with Pope John Paul II. They sat in a circle with the Pontiff, who gave each an opportunity to introduce himself and summarize his expertise. When it came to Hesburgh's turn, he identified himself and announced that his expertise was raising money.

For a good Catholic fundraiser in President John F. Kennedy's America, apparently, football was okay; but not anti-communism, nor even philosophical conservatism.

My first experiences with the "new" Notre Dame were enlightening.

The Chairman of the Department was a specialist in Latin American studies, John Kennedy. A big, affable, liberal Democrat with a sensitive and intelligent face, Kennedy was Hesburgh's choice to succeed Stanley Parry as Chairman of the Department of Government. At that historical moment, Parry,

Voegelin, and Niemeyer constituted the strongest faculty in political theory in America, and, with the exception of Voegelin's group at the University of Munich, most probably in the world. With two or three careful additions—most certainly not Kennedy—Notre Dame could have become the strongest political theory department in the nation. That title would soon go by default to the University of Chicago where Leo Strauss presided, and later to Claremont Graduate School, where Leo Strauss's students, principally, Harry Jaffa, Martin Diamond, and others congregated.

Instead, Hesburgh allowed liberal political ideology to dominate his judgment, and he turned over the Department of Government to conventional minds. That was bad enough, but Hesburgh's hand-picked Chairman of the Department, Kennedy, decided to use his resources to build a Latin American studies program. Latin America? Take a backwater graduate institution along the St. Joseph's river like Notre Dame, have it focus on a backwater region like Latin America, and you seal Notre Dame's fate as a third-rate graduate program in Government. For that we may thank Father Hesburgh.

Since I was arriving at Notre Dame in mid-term—American presidential elections, unlike Congress, do not follow the academic year—I had to gain personal permission to enter Niemeyer's graduate course, "Communist Ideology," in mid-term.

Niemeyer, a German émigré who fled Nazi Germany, first went to Spain, and then to the United States. He had been trained in jurisprudence in Germany, became a specialist in international law, and served in the U.S. Department of State. His contract at Princeton was not renewed, however, when, in response to a colleague's playing the *Internationale* on the piano at a faculty party, Niemeyer responded by playing the *Star Spangled Banner*. Niemeyer was a gifted theorist and a gifted musician. If only he had not been a musician, he might have been allowed by his intolerant colleagues to remain at Princeton.

When Father Parry offered Niemeyer a position at Notre Dame in the 1950s, he accepted. Notre Dame, at the time, was an extraordinary institution which carefully took the best émigré talent with an affinity for Catholic education, including Waldemar Gurian, founder and editor of the *Review of Politics*; Theodore Kertesz, the former Hungarian diplomat, teaching international relations; Niemeyer in theory; the theologian and political theorist I. H. Bochenski; and Eric Voegelin, and many others.

My first meeting with Niemeyer was an experience to remember. Niemeyer was well known for his seriousness, his awareness of the "class" distinction between students and faculty, and the difficulty of his courses. I also sensed something more when I met him, since, arriving as I did in mid-semester, he acutely asked me where I had been. I immediately thought that I better have the right answer. Telling him, for example, that I needed a break from undergraduate school would not be good, nor was it true. So, even though I was gun-shy from the campaign in which working for Goldwater was a social stigma, I owned up and told him that I had just finished work on the Goldwater campaign and could not go to school in September. I really did not know Niemeyer, and I wasn't quite sure that this was the best approach. But it was the truth. Much to my surprise, his voice became less stern and he said, "Well, welcome aboard," and invited me to dinner at his home. "Dinner at Niemeyer's home? Are you joking," my new classmates asked. "No student is ever invited to Niemeyer's home." I then knew that I was, indeed, "home."