

# The Political Science of

## Willmoore Kendall

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### I

NOW THAT the final volume of Willmoore Kendall's writings has been published, it is no doubt the proper time to ask: just what in political science did he teach? It is no easy task, and any statement such as this is certain to be less than perfect. The primary difficulty arises from the fact that much of his writing is composed of attacks on liberals who were swimming lustily with the ideological currents of the day. His criticism, often brilliant indeed, has thus to be turntable from the negative to the positive, though there are pages in which he states in a straightforward manner what his own position is. Such statements are particularly to be found in the latter pages of *Contra Mundum*<sup>1</sup> where formerly unpublished speeches and articles are offered here for the first time.

The title of the volume, *Contra Mundum*, is hardly to be praised, though Arlington House has another "contra" volume, which suggests no doubt that the publishers have too much of a liking for such a title. Not only is the title unnecessarily pretentious, but it overlooks the fact that Kendall had many supporters who were friends, and many others who always were inspired by their reading of his work. As a teacher he had a strong following of students and friends, more so it would seem than among the journalists and nonpolitical scientists who seem to have been consulted in the organization of this volume. Most unhappily, however, the introductory essay has much fiction in it and numerous denigrative pas-

sages, of which there is little need if one is seeking the political science contribution to be found in this volume. And further it would seem clear that some of the most brilliant papers he wrote have been left out, particularly speeches he made in defense of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy (because he was one of the great philosophical defenders of the Senator), and the paper that may become a classic in its area, "The 'Open Society' and its Fallacies," in the *American Political Science Review*,<sup>2</sup> which is a klieg-lighted analysis of John Stuart Mill, leaving little for the liberal to cheer about.

As a writer on political science subjects, Kendall showed a distinguished capacity for argumentative analysis. The refinement of distinction often loaded his sentences with such different and contrary matters that considerable patience is required to read them. However, his style varied from the crystal clarity of the essay entitled "Subversion in the Twentieth Century" and in some of the speeches and articles at the end of the volume to the baroque involution of his style in other articles. At the same time he was able to combine his analysis and his style with distinguished collaborators like Austin Ranney, Frederick Wilhelmsen, and George W. Carey. His ability to work with collaborators was surely another of his high capacities in the rational analysis of positions in the ideological struggles of his time. His analysis began with the questioning of a maxim commonly accepted by liberal social scientists and it moved from there to the construction of an

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argument that either convinced or drove away the angry antagonist.

## II

FROM THE TIME his active career as a political scientist began in the late 30's to his death in June, 1967, the subject of social science methodology was in constant agitation and confrontation. Willmoore Kendall was a critic of "behavioral science," the great step forward as one president of the American Political Science Association referred to it, because he said the behaviorists do not talk about the important things. Furthermore, their method of talking about behavior—in model, symbol, and mathematical formulation—does not reach man's involvement and concern (his joy or his *Angst*). And as numerous people have told me, behavioral science is what has made *The American Political Science Review* the dullest and most unreadable journal in the Western world. But Kendall never went this far in his judgment of the *Review*, for he was concerned to pull back to some sort of logical and analytical method that would illuminate the issues that were tearing at the judgments of life.

At this point it is probably proper to say that Leo Strauss was one of the men who suggested a direction in which Kendall moved. Strauss was concerned with text analysis, and what appeared to him as "secret writing" in some of the texts which founded modern political thought. That is to say, for example, Machiavelli and his great successors were out to destroy the classical and biblical tradition in the world of the intellect. Now Kendall could not go all the way along that route because he became a Catholic, and in effect a Catholic scholar in relation to modern Catholic analysis of the classical and medieval tradition. It was the work of John Courtney Murray that influenced Kendall to the greatest degree in this respect. Strauss, on the other hand, seemed set upon minimizing the period from the Christian era to Machiavelli. In his notable paper, "John Locke Revisited," he says of himself:

Kendall's own method, a "universal confrontation of the text," as he calls it, demands in principle at least, that we accept no sentence or paragraph from the *Second Treatise* as Locke's "teaching" without first laying it beside every other sentence in the treatise, and attempt to face any problem, regarding the interpretation of that sentence or paragraph, posed by the presence within the text of those other sentences. His exclusive concern is with the text, which he accuses his predecessors of having read on the assumption that it will yield up its meaning to a hasty reader.<sup>3</sup>

Text analysis goes forward to another conclusion: the meaning of a text throws light on that which surrounds it, and it even illuminates the historical circumstances in which the text came to be written. Thus, Kendall did not seek meaning from history, but rather the meaning of history from the meaning of the text.

Kendall is uninterested in Locke as the "son of his times," and judges the "historical background" of the *Second Treatise*, and Locke's biographical data, as irrelevant to the interpretation of the book.<sup>4</sup>

All of us have observed the wide variations of theme which have emerged from the historical method. Those of us who have studied its shallow philosophical base would be easy to convince that Kendall has made a contribution in his method above and beyond a method which tends to exclude the Christian and the medieval in the study of political theory. Or, let us say, he advanced beyond a method which jumps from the classical to the Machiavellian "modern" of Hobbes and his contemporaries. There is, however, a controversial aspect in Kendall's method. Though he had a wide European experience, and though he spoke French and Spanish fluently, he generally excluded European analysis from his political science. He concentrated on American experience. His discussion of conservatism was, in effect, a discussion of American con-

servatism, and his attack on the liberals was, in effect, an attack on American liberals. He was well aware, of course, that European and continental liberalism is historically free market in its economics, and one must say more secularist in philosophy than American liberalism. But it was the American liberal intellectuals that Kendall attacked, and it was the American materials for the study of political theory that he analyzed and presented with fresh vigor.

In limited contrast, when he mounted his attack on the so-called "open society" he had to turn to the classics of the open society, and those nearby. Thus he wrote on Socrates at the bar of Athenian justice, and analyzed with some savagery Milton's *Areopagitica* for its restrictions on intellectual freedoms. In general, he seemed not much interested in Locke's theories of religious liberty, and he omitted Tacitus' sentences on the freedom of the mind. It was, it would seem, only the use by American advocates of the open society that led him into the alleged European sources of this doctrine. In sheer volume it is probably John Stuart Mill who commanded his greatest interest in open society doctrines.

There seem to be few modern political theory intellectuals who have had a significant influence on Kendall. In most respects he was fiercely independent and savagely critical of many of his contemporary fellows in the field of theory. The three who should be mentioned, I think, are Richard Weaver, Leo Strauss, and Eric Voegelin, and each influenced Kendall in particular ways. In Kendall's and Carey's posthumously published *The Basic Symbols of the American Political Tradition* a number of taxonomic concepts were used in the analysis of our tradition, but after all this was a very limited use of the Voegelinian *Weltanschauung*. We have already discussed the possible contributions of Leo Strauss to Kendall's manner of probing the meaning of a document. But the highest compliment of all was paid to Richard Weaver. Bearing in mind that Kendall regarded *The Federalist* as our greatest and most

permanent contribution to political theory, the fulsomeness of his praise of Weaver's *Visions of Order* is remarkable. When most of the "false teachers" of conservatism have been shunted aside, Weaver's *Visions of Order* will remain.

It and it alone among American conservative books, is the one that they must place on their shelves beside *The Federalist*, and confer on it, as on *The Federalist*, the political equivalent of biblical status.<sup>5</sup>

No doubt there is criticism of Kendall's methodology, not only by those who look to historical study for perception in breadth and depth, but the social scientist concerned with what we refer to as "social forces" would have much to criticize. Kendall paid little attention to economics, and he regarded the issue between capitalism and socialism as concluded and irrelevant for the United States. Apparently, along with Weaver, he did not regard economic freedom as necessary to a healthy, need-satisfying culture.<sup>6</sup> Collectivism versus *laissez-faire* was, thus, not one of the subjects that was worth talking about. On this he clearly separated himself from the majority of conservatives in the United States who have been committed with some passion to economic liberty and the protection of private property. Many conservatives would take the stand that political liberty is wounded if there is serious restraint in the recognition of the rights of private property. Kendall noted that to this point at least a socialistic economy and political liberty had coexisted in Great Britain, and in a few socialistic, monarchic, and democratic societies, such as the Scandinavian democratic monarchies.

Given an appropriate public opinion I see no reason why a free political system and a socialized economic system couldn't coexist on one and the same piece of real estate.<sup>7</sup>

Others might object that along with economic problems in a majority-rule society,

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it is unfortunate that Kendall did not pay more attention to other forces such as social classes, the problems of finance, money, and imperialism. And then it might surely be asked if it is possible to erect a valid theory of conservatism without joining it with the Western Tradition in general. Thus, many might insist that a long-run conservatism must share the perceptions of European conservatism. In other words, he should have been more Burkean in his conservative theory and more receptive to the nuances of European national tradition. Or, again it might be said that Kendall began his theoretical career with brilliant studies of majority rule theory and then gradually shifted to the issue of the philosophical context of majority rule, which of course left the whole argument hanging in the air. When Kendall became a Catholic, the moral order of the universe became more overarching for the whole of his political science.

### III

IT IS APPROPRIATE now that we turn to some of the major issues of political thought which tied Kendall's studies in politics into an emergent system. These points may be grouped as follows:

1. The criticism of liberalism and the open society teaching in relation to the American constitutional tradition.
2. The issue of communism and subversion in the United States, including his defense of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy.
3. The large analysis of conservatism as it is founded in the basic symbols of the American tradition.

Each of these groups of ideas would need a long essay in itself. It will be possible only to summarize the ideas reprinted together in the *Contra Mundum*.

### IV

THE THREAD OF conflict between liberalism and conservatism in America has been a

prominent facet of our politics. Kendall was a son of his times in that he was driven to the conservative position in measure as a result of his observation as a journalist of Spanish politics under the Republic. (He left Spain just before the outbreak of the civil war and returned to graduate study.) Of course, part of his position was a steady opposition to communism, but closer to the center was the grand sweep of liberal thought in America which came to dominate our intellectual life beginning with the world economic crisis. Slowly the liberals in America gained predominance in the bureaucracy, on the faculties of the leading graduate schools, on the press, and in the mass media. As against liberalism, there emerged a self-conscious conservatism which insisted that it represented the American tradition of constitutional government. Yet considerable time was required before the conservatives coalesced into a movement. The definition of his own position was, no doubt, achieved by Kendall in his work as an editor of *National Review*. One of the crucial points is this: some time early in the twentieth century American progressives, left wingers, and certain kinds of populists began to call themselves liberals. Liberalism had been, of course, a European movement which in origin has favored the free market economy, and a secularistic or scientific philosophy of education and politics. While American liberalism retained much of the philosophy of the French enlightenment under the name of pragmatism and various social reform movements, it did become in fact collectivistic and mildly socialistic, being influenced no doubt by Fabianism in Great Britain.

As a problem in political theory Kendall saw much more clearly than others that the central premise of liberalism was an insistence that our tradition stood first and always for equality. That equality was supported, not by a history of the idea of equality from the Greeks on through European ideas of quality, so clearly understood by Alexis de Tocqueville, but on the Declaration of Independence. The primary

document in the American tradition, it was held, was the Declaration, and the meaning of American history from then to now had been the slow but inevitable realization of equality. All else had to bend before this, as Alexis de Tocqueville saw when he said the trend toward equality was a centuries old and providential fact. Kendall saw the liberals were proposing a kind of mythology of the Declaration that could not be sustained by the document itself. In one sense the Declaration stood for the equality of the new nation with others, but in a legal sense it had never been ranked with the Constitution as a part of our fundamental law. Nor could Kendall view Lincoln's use of the Declaration as anything but an incorrect exaggeration of the born equal clause. The liberal interpretation of equality led in the liberal view to the utopian duty of all Americans to act constantly and strongly for the eradication of any inequalities that may be found in America. As against such messianic egalitarianism, Kendall believed that with the Fourteenth Amendment equality must mean that all of us are entitled to laws that give equal protection to each of us. It is on such a base that the conservative will drag his feet in resisting the crusade for more and more equality. But even more impressive than this is the fact that the framers of the Constitution and the authors of *The Federalist* did not talk about equality, but rather in the Preamble to the Constitution they championed the attainment of justice, domestic tranquility, and other political objectives.

In addition to the utopianizing of equality, liberalism had in recent years another important foundation: the theory of the "open society" which, they insisted, was implied by the First Amendment as interpreted by the Supreme Court. Some will no doubt believe that Kendall's great contribution to political theory is his analysis of the documents of the open society. He wrote a series of notable papers on the so-called "classics of the open society," which do not stand for the liberal view when given a close analysis. Kendall stated the theory of

the open society as follows: All questions are open questions, and each individual has an equal right to discuss them and to propound his doctrines. Now in sober fact there are few classics of the open society in the history of political literature, and properly understood most of them do have admitted limitations on the right of individuals to propose what doctrines they please. In other words, the liberal use of some of these documents is less than defensible, because there are clear limits of freedom advocated in them.

What are the classics of the open society, the liberal society? In general these are the works that are noted: the trial and death of Socrates, the *Apology* and the *Crito*, Milton's *Areopagitica*, Locke's *Letters Concerning Toleration*, one chapter in Spinoza's *Tractatus*, and Mill's *Essay on Liberty*. There are lines out of Tacitus, and some passages out of Thomas Jefferson, though, as Kendall wrote, Jefferson has a darker side. Indeed, I have thought I would like sometime to edit a volume of quotations from Jefferson which might be called "Jefferson for the Obscurantist." There is, in fact, remarkably little freedom literature for the single individual, though, as Hobbes observed, liberty may be engraved on the turrets of the city. In his exploration of the open society literature, Kendall wrote notable essays on Socrates, Milton, and made extensive studies of John Stuart Mill. What one finds is that the open society liberals take a few aspects of a writer where "pro" freedom thought is expressed and ignore the principle of a total confrontation with the writing that properly is involved. One may start, in truth, with the limitations on freedom that these writers accepted after their praises of freedom. For instance, in Spinoza in the chapter before he advocated the freedom of philosophers in the *Tractatus*, he affirms a completely intolerant, Hobbesian, attitude in his denial of religious freedom. One should believe what the sovereign tells one to believe in his worship of God. Milton would suppress Catholics and gross immorality, and Locke considered

Catholics subversive and hence not worthy of toleration. Kendall's point is finally that, for example, the *Areopagitica* has got on the pro freedom list only because "people have not been reading it carefully."<sup>8</sup>

Or, turning to Socrates, "The People Versus Socrates Revisited," we find that Socrates refused to flee Athens though the prison gate was open because he believed it was his duty to obey the laws of his city. The only right he had, Kendall finds, is the right to try to convince his fellow citizens that he was right and that they should change public policy in his favor. Since the assembly refused there was nothing more for Socrates than death as a good citizen. However, because John Stuart Mill has been the most widely imposed on college undergraduates as the proper doctrine on freedom of thought and speech, Kendall's assault is more developed here than on other so-called open society writers. Of course, Mill begins the essay by saying that minors cannot claim this freedom, and that people who cannot profit by public discussion should be governed despotically anyway. Mill tried to elevate skepticism to the level of community orthodoxy, but in practice if any denied this "religion of skepticism" they could not then be tolerated. And thus of Mill, Kendall observed from Bertrand de Jouvenel:

One of the strangest intellectual illusions of the nineteenth century was the idea that toleration could be ensured by moral relativism . . .

The long process of a society working by Mill's rules for discussion would lead to "ever deepening differences of opinion, into progressive breakdown of those premises upon which alone a society can conduct its affairs by discussion . . ." And, on the other hand, Mill sought by his educational qualifications and plural voting to give an elite of an otherwise soggy population a chance to direct public policy. Kendall's contributions and corrections of the open society discussion of Milton, Socrates, and Mill should be regarded as permanent additions

to our literature in this area of political theory.

The consideration of open society liberalism drove Kendall to his more intensive inquiry into the American political tradition. And the issue here has been whether the First Amendment particularly is a prescription for the open society in America. Kendall found that the Supreme Court and its attempt to make the First Amendment rights "absolute" was a reversal of the meaning of the framers of the Constitution and the first Ten Amendments. Kendall found historically that the amendments after the First were essentially traditional and common law rights, while the First Amendment rights were the new departure on which there was controversy. He stands resolutely by the proposition that the First Amendment limits Congress and returns a monopoly to the state governments in religion, press, and assembly. This, combined with the Tenth Amendment, makes the intentions of Congress clear. Without the distortions of Supreme Court interpretation, the First Amendment could not be the foundation of so-called open society rights. Now in upshot, speaking of these rights:

Do they not leave the content of the freedom of speech and press and exercise of religion to be determined as, according to *The Federalist*, they ought and must be determined, namely, by the deliberate sense of the community . . .

In Kendall's study of the American tradition, as in the *Basic Symbols*, the long tradition of the United States was deliberation, attaining the deliberate sense of the community, in representative government acting under God. This is the argument that he poses against the attempt of the liberals to make the First Amendment, along with the Fourteenth, a charter for the open society in which there is a perpetual effort to reach the equality of all citizens beyond the mere equal protection of the law. The Constitution, and especially the objectives in the Preamble, indicate the contract among the American people as to

the kind of society in which they intend to live, and it is a society in which public tranquility, public order, is the context of the rights of all. The concept of the "deliberate sense of the community" seems to be the terminal point in Kendall's Odyssean search for the constitutional tradition of American government which he came to regard as the most profoundly conceived and created in the modern world. The majority of America was a majority in which justice would prevail.

## V

AS AMERICA has moved into what seems to be its Toynebean "time of troubles" in the twentieth century, we have faced a series of bitterly contested, nonnegotiable issues; but the issue which has been most angrily contested has been that of internal, procommunist subversion. Or, as the liberals have said, "McCarthyism," named after the courageous and unfortunate Senator Joseph R. McCarthy from Wisconsin. The attack on the conservative majority by the liberals has been so prolonged and intense that many reputations have been ruined, and only the suspected communists and left liberals seem to have gained much from it, with the exception of those who were pretty well demonstrated to be underground agents. A few, of course, went to prison and some killed themselves at a peak of intellectual and middle class respectability, or, indeed, they died suddenly under what may be noted from the old Scottish verdict: "Died by an act of God under very suspicious circumstances." But the bitter attack on McCarthy was also an attack on academic figures. It might be said that any professor who was known as an articulate conservative suffered from it, and any who defended McCarthy and the exposure of communists in America might well be driven from their academic posts. And this may be said of Kendall, who with his associates on *National Review*, was one of the powerful and philosophical defenders of the junior senator from Wisconsin.

Any intense issue, it would seem, is debated in remoteness from the facts. The attack was on McCarthy's hearings before his Senatorial Subcommittee involving people who, for the most part, were unwilling to say they were loyal to the United States. Many of them refused to answer under the Fifth Amendment, a few were prosecuted by the Department of Justice, but many were able to escape the net on technicalities or with the help of liberal federal judges. Eventually, of course, McCarthy was silenced by a strict party line vote of censure in the Senate. McCarthy was utterly crushed and died soon after. The communists and liberals had joined hands in one of the most sustained attacks on any public figure in American history. Any one who might be interested in the facts may go to the committee records and read a few of the hearings, and in many of them McCarthy was not the most critical of the senators doing the questioning.

For Kendall, the issue is what is the nature of communism? Apparently, liberal and kind-hearted Americans believe all men are good and that all issues can be resolved by a little amiable conversation; hence, the communists could hardly be in any case a menace to the security of the United States. But Kendall (and all the conservative critics of communism) have held that this is not so: communists are just not like this. They are engaged in a worldwide conspiracy to bring about the communist revolution everywhere, and the greatest enemy of communistic progress after World War II has been and is the United States. The doctrines of Lenin's *Imperialism* have been spread throughout the world against the United States; we seem to have lost wars in Korea and Vietnam because we have not believed in the force of the communist inspiration, and in strange irony hardly a public figure in the government has since McCarthy ever been willing or competent to attack the principles of the communist revolution. At the time of Kendall's death in 1967 the discussion of "communism" had virtually been driven from

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forensic talk. Almost everywhere in education teachers seemed sympathetic toward the goals of communism, though admitting that as a system it had room for improvement.

Kendall believed that McCarthy was attacking communism where it hurt most: in the organized espionage and subversion within American society. When Kendall made speeches in defense of McCarthy and the exposure of communist espionage, he was at times savagely attacked by speakers from the floor, and it is probable that toward the end of his life he may have been among the very few who were willing to stand before a university audience and affirm the danger of communism and the necessity of exposing communists. His attitude was in part that it was ultimately impossible to distinguish, in the age of subversion, between the internal and the external menace of international communism. At the end of the volume there is a speech on "World Government," and in it Kendall states that the euphoric idealism of the world-government advocates is based on a premise about communism and that premise is false. Any world federation including Russia and the United States would be in effect dominated by the communists; even if by some chance it were not, it would have to be despotic enough to prevent an atomic war, meaning probably that the world government would have to have a monopoly of such weapons. Mere survival is not the highest of values, argued Kendall. On the other hand, Kendall was no mere adulator of Senator McCarthy:

Senator McCarthy's battle against the bureaucrats for a tough loyalty-security program in the government service was a Conservative battle; but his voting record on, say, agricultural subsidies was one over which the Conservative can only shudder.<sup>9</sup>

The liberals rejoice, he said, when someone caught by the security program is restored to respectability, or

the United States Supreme Court wipes out still another part of the internal security system bequeathed to us by the late Senator McCarthy, or appears to be drawing a bead on the House Un-American Activities Committee; the Conservatives, by contrast, are appalled at the rehabilitation of Dr. Oppenheimer and the well-wishing for Mr. Hiss . . .<sup>10</sup>

For Kendall, the nature of communism had not changed; it is simply not reported by the media as it once was.

## VI

KENDALL was a student of political ideas from the time of his return from Spain in 1936 to his death in 1967. During this period of thirty years he was constantly returning to themes on which he worked intermittently, such as his long study and meditation on Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Some of his studies were never finished, but perhaps some of them would never have been completed. And there are some which fell by the wayside because the passionate interest that drove him simply was of little concern among his fellow academics. But it can be said, I think, that the primary focus that pulls his work together is the nature of American conservatism. The liberal intellectuals in America (who defend liberalism as it has been defined parochially in the United States) were a predominant force that could not be overlooked. Yet at the same time there was no solid phalanx of conservative leaders that stood against the liberals. It was this phenomenon that commanded much of his attention.

It must be kept in mind that his study of classical and European political theory was quite restricted. His work on John Stuart Mill was brought to a splendid conclusion, but the unfinished work on Rousseau was to be a part of his concern for majority rule and the theory and practice of democracy. Kendall's focus on most of the subjects he took up was the American aspect of them, and his concentration on con-



servatism was on American conservatism. It seems that between the lines what he wanted was an organized conservative effort among the political leaders of the United States. He knew how difficult this would be, if ever it was to be achieved. His analysis led him to the conclusion that the great mass of the American tradition was conservative, while the liberals were picking away at it with their piecemeal reforms. As he said:

The Conservative tradition in America is not only Conservative but profoundly Conservative, with a profoundly Conservative content; which, if I may put it so, explains why our politics in this country tend to be about Liberalism. To put it otherwise: The basic inertia of our politics is a forward Conservative inertia. When American society "changes" it changes for the most part—as Conservatives wish it to—in the proper direction; that is, in the direction in which it must change in order to become more and more like itself at its best.<sup>11</sup>

This explains why in American politics we have leaders who have been consistently liberal but not a body of consistently conservative leaders who have gone down the line in a kind of conservative front.

The liberal attack on the American tradition has been three-fold. *First*, they have attempted to construe the First Amendment as a firm mandate for an open society, and this has explained many of the liberal positions, as for instance the defense of communists, academic freedom especially for left wingers and liberals, and on civil liberties. *Second*, the liberals have been attempting to transform the American political system into a *plebiscitary* mass democratic system, rather than retain the system of *The Federalist*, or one which would recognize the power of the states and the right of Congress to express the deliberate sense of the American community. Implicitly this has meant the dominance of liberal presidents like Roosevelt and Kennedy. And *third*, the liberals have persistently attempted to inter-

pret the American system as an egalitarian system,

. . . friendly to the kind of levelling whose predictable result would be worldwide uniformity—of economic status, of subordination to something called the Conscience of Mankind as expressed by something called the United Nations, of religious or rather irreligious belief, and of political philosophy or organization.<sup>12</sup>

The conservative, as against the first point, denies that the First Amendment is the mandate for an open society, because we have like other societies an *orthodoxy*, and the First Amendment in its original meaning did not deny to the states the right to affirm their religious beliefs, even to the maintenance of religious instruction in the public schools. So the conservative would view with horror the thesis in Mill's *Essay on Liberty* which seems to hold that any man may sustain openly any opinion no matter how repugnant to morality it may be. And thus Americans, in their conservative tradition, are determined that there shall not be a communist minority in America constantly trying to overthrow our system.

Furthermore, the conservatives have taken a dim view of the plebiscitary potential in Article V of the Constitution, that is, the seeming desire of liberals to submit all questions to majority-rule democracy. It is such a determination that preserves certain political habits, such as the maintenance of the filibuster in the United States Senate (the last freely debating legislative body in the world), and the seniority system in the Congressional committee system. We have refused to move into a political party system which would be ideological or programmatic in character, and finally there is a tendency of the people to be mobilized only with difficulty for the purpose of amending the Constitution. It suggests that the American people are convinced that unlimited majority rule is not a good instrumentality for making public policy.

Finally, there is an increasing tendency

of liberals to appeal to the principle of equality in its crudest form. In other words, the only basic American document is the Declaration of Independence and it is utopianized into a mandate for a constant stream of reforms to make all men equal in all sorts of ways, both here and in the world at large. Conservatism has resisted this universal levelling, though of course in the race question we have by law given rights and duties on an equal basis, or almost so. I suppose the recent extension of the right to vote to the eighteen-year olds would be considered a further extension of equality, though Article V does not without specification submit amendments to the people, since only the principle of indirect adoption by the legislatures is commonly accepted. So Kendall said the American conservative principle is this:

Rights and privileges are correlative to duties: a man has a right to those rights and privileges that he earns by the performance of his duties.

But people are not equal in their capacity to discharge duties, nor are they equal in their sense of responsibility in their acceptance of rights. Kendall's central view of the meaning of conservatism would be then that the conservative is not a doctrinaire when it comes to an endless or even absurd attempt to extend by law the principle of equality of opportunity throughout society. Though Kendall never said it, it seems to me that he meant something like Aristotle meant by equality: people and things are unequal, but it is distributive justice to treat unequals unequally, and equals equally. And no doubt with Burke he would agree that the great discoveries in morality

are not something that appeared yesterday, but a long and traditional time ago. For America it is the constitutional morality of *The Federalist* that remains as a guide to us in our political fundamentals.

## VII

CONSERVATIVES in the United States have been deeply divided. Kendall is the only one who turned almost exclusively to the American tradition (and primarily *The Federalist*) for his conservative nutriment. Yet *The Federalist* made such an extended and profound use of Greco-Roman history that Kendall is almost driven indirectly toward union with those conservatives who have hoped for some bridging of the gap between American and European conservatism, including more than simply British conservatism. And by a kind of paradox, since he does not follow Eric Voegelin into the principle of revelation, he does something close to Leo Strauss: he leaves out Hebrew history (as does *The Federalist*) and makes little comment on the Christian-medieval tradition of the natural law. Still, his final acceptance of a morality that is not to be devised by contemporary liberals, that there are standards above the ordinary functioning of the majority which the principles of justice (as in the Preamble to the Constitution) provide, ties him into the Great Tradition.

My own conclusion is that, while I disagree with Kendall on many things, he has made a significant, indeed an important, contribution to political science during the first half of our century. Of course, it is too early to prophesy which of Kendall's analyses and positions will survive as inspiration to the next generation.

<sup>1</sup>Willmoore Kendall, *Contra Mundum*, edited by Nellie D. Kendall (New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1971).

<sup>2</sup>*American Political Science Review*, LIV, December 1960.

<sup>3</sup>"John Locke Revisited," in *Contra Mundum*, pp. 422-423.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 423.

<sup>5</sup>*Contra Mundum*, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 402n.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 601.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 563-564.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 572.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 564-565.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 566.

this book was expanded before a gathering of English teachers. When he had concluded an indignant young woman from the audience approached him and exclaimed: "You are advocating censorship; you should not be allowed to publish it!" An eloquent illustration, one may say, of the liberal paradox.

<sup>1</sup>Introduction to the *History of English Literature*, 1865.

<sup>2</sup>"What I have called the 'trousered ape' and the 'urban blockhead' may be precisely the kind of man they really wish to produce." C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1947).

<sup>3</sup>Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, translated from the Italian by Angus Davidson (Oxford University Press, second edition, 1970).

<sup>4</sup>Denis Saurat, *Modern French Literature* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1946).

<sup>5</sup>Joseph Shearing, *The Lady and the Arsenic* (Smith and Durrell, Inc., New York, 1944).

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## *The Christian Republic*

**The Power in the People**, by Felix Morley; a fourth edition containing the introduction to the third edition by Herbert Hoover, *Los Angeles: Nash Publishing Corporation, 1972. xvii + 293 pp. \$10.00.*

EVERY INFORMED AMERICAN must reach conclusions as to the nature and provenance of his tradition. One proposition is that it arose primarily from the English Puritan experience and from English institutions, such as the common law and local government. Such a view would, of course, include various forms of English Protestantism, making our tradition, as with Dr. Morley, primarily Protestant. Another emphasis is to insist that our tradition is a product of all of Western thought. In this approach America constitutes a fresh start

for mankind, grounded in some of the ideas of the Greeks and Romans, the medieval heritage, and the influence of European intellectuals visible from colonial times. Morley mentions in this connection Montesquieu, Pascal, Montaigne, Voltaire, Helvetius, and Rousseau. Or, those who would begin by repudiating the American tradition turn to the revolutionary view of society, which may be studied as far back as the human literary tradition extends. These revolutionaries are utopian and often they are anti-intellectual, in the sense that they reject the reasoning and learning of "the establishment" of the day.

In this age of revolutionary criticism, conservatives should rejoice in the republication of *The Power in the People*. This volume returns to fundamentals. It affirms the unique quality and universal values in which American life is grounded. As a Quaker Mr. Morley seems to minimize the Anglican and Catholic mind in order to stress the influence of his own religious body. However, he does accept the English seventeenth century revolutionary tradition, while assuming the profound originality of the American rejection of the British and European and aristocratic tradition, along with its social system of status. A central theme in his argument is that the principles of individual rights and social responsibility are grounded in his reading of the New Testament. Individualism and personal responsibility are on this basis the ordering elements in our political system. He seems in fact to exclude Catholicism and Anglican-Episcopal systems of values, as well as the strong Deistic tendency in the early years of our Republic. Today there are few books like this one for Americans to read; it has, therefore, a lasting quality for those who are confused or angered by the articulate barbarians and contemporary neolithic characters.

We have here an ambitious book. It seeks to state the larger backgrounds of political theory. Morley is concerned with the discussion of society and state in Greek thought, and likewise the problem of sov-