

Other Scenes

John Wilcock

1969

One of the basic fundamentals of conservatism, presumably, is to conserve what you've got (no matter how much somebody else might need it) and to this extent at least, William Buckley, heir to a \$100 million fortune, is true to conservative principles. Several hundred or thousand subscribers to Buckley's magazine, the *National Review*, received a heart-rending plea in the mail last week: unless somebody gives the slick right-wing magazine \$250,000 "it is quite literally true that the nation's only conservative journal of opinion will have to close down."

Fulfilling his pledge to readers "to say nothing less than the truth," the snobbish Buckley who looks like a tooth-paste ad but sounds like he has the tube stuck in his cheek, adds "We do not have the money to continue in operation...we are, as a publishing enterprise, dead broke."

Admitting to a certain amount of "immodesty," Buckley goes on to suggest: "It would be wrong to deny to Providence a role in ensuring the survival of *National Review* over the years...the American government needs not only Polaris missiles and ICBM's and a CIA but...a journal, which reminds us of the finer things, of the gentler things."

Now all of this is very touching if, indeed, a little extravagant—a 12¢ postage for each letter the mailing must have cost at least \$250 per thousand and NR claims a 134,000 circulation. Even though Conservatives oppose hand-outs so avidly, who can blame them for asking?

What does seem a little surprising is that concurrent with Buckley's tear-stained plea that the money for NR can't be found was the discovery of his ad in a New Orleans newspaper filing for permission to acquire WBOK, a local radio station.

According to *Nola Express*, the New Orleans paper which reprinted the ad, Buckley is offering \$700,000 for the station on behalf of the company, Starr Broadcasting, of which he is two-thirds owner. Buckley is also owner, says the *Nola Express*, of KOWH in Omaha, Nebraska; KISD in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; KUDL in Fairway, Kansas; KCJM in Merriion, Kansas; and KOZN in Omaha.

Despite the fact that he can't find money to keep the *National Review* going Buckley also apparently intends to buy two other stations. He has applications pending to acquire KYOK in Houston, Texas; and WLOK in Memphis, Tennessee.

These last two stations, interestingly enough, are Negro radio stations as is the New Orleans' station, WBOK. But as *Business Week* has commented in the past, listeners to Negro stations (95% of them are white-owned) "usually believe stations are 100% owned by blacks so advertisers get an important asset: the listeners' confidence that the station stands behind its announcements."

Nola Express, a tabloid which specializes in stories uncovering property ownerships in New Orleans, points out that the Buckley family's oil concessions—source of the family wealth—are usually managed by Buckley's brother, John, while William himself concentrates on *National Review*. Hey, do you think John might lend the mag the money?

The payroll savings plan in which workers are "suckered into buying savings bonds" comes under attack in a *Guardian* article which describes the system as a tax levy on the working class and poor families. With inflation rising at almost 5% annually and interest on the bonds only 4-1/2%, writer Lee Webb explains, the profits help the government fight the Vietnam war, "by lowering the costs of the war on the rest of society." The wealthy, he adds,

have no trouble putting up \$1000 or more for government notes which pay almost 5-1/2% interest. "Savings bonds were designed for the unsophisticated investor," says a Treasury Dept. official.

"I consider myself an organizer of a movement to put you and your committee out of power because I think you represent a racist philosophy that has no meaning any more in the twentieth century" (Tom Hayden addressing HUAC, quoted in *Hard Times*).

Britain's Procter & Gamble Co. are running a disgusting advertising campaign whereby you're invited to send them the name and address of a friend with "bad breath. The victim is then sent a 10 cents coupon towards the cost of their wretched mouthwash.

A folder of color reproductions of current work by artists, along with brief statements from the artists themselves is being published monthly by University Galleries Inc. (520 Fifth Avenue, NYC 10036) for \$20 a year. Roy Lichtenstein, one of the artists represented in the first issue with an art nouveau type of metal stand bearing a velvet rope comments: "No matter how modern you are it's going to look antique very quickly."

Title of David Wolper's movie, "If It's Tuesday, This Must be Belgium" sums up the attitude of the fast-moving American traveler in Europe better than anything since the joke about the tourist who rushed into the Louvre one day and asked: "Where's the Mona Lisa; I'm double parked?"

Editorial staff of Washington's Tacoma News Tribune donated to a bail fund collection on behalf of its underground neighbor, Vancouver's *Georgia Straight* as "an indication that establishment newsmen are coming to realize the value of an alternative media." Must be a first and certainly deserves mention.

True mag's April issue carried a story by a reporter Andrew St. George on "How the U.S. Got Che" without bothering to explain that St. George has been widely identified as a CIA operative and may, indeed, even have been partly responsible for Guevara's capture in Bolivia.

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