

Chapter 5

1947–1954

“It Sure Is a Hard World”

In the Spring of 1950 William F. Buckley, Jr., was a senior at Yale. Champion debater, chairman of the *Yale Daily News*, member of the elite Skull and Bones fraternity, and general big man on campus he was looking forward to graduation at the end of the semester. Then a “dark mood” descended on the university. The origin of this gloomy cloud was Senator Joseph McCarthy. In a recent appearance before a subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (the Tydings Committee) he called a liberal judge disloyal for belonging to several Communist front organizations which a government agency had declared subversive. Still smarting from the recent conviction of Alger Hiss—whom they had strongly but wrongly defended—the Yale faculty fumed at these accusations. “By intuition and experience alone,” recalled Buckley, they *knew* such charges were bogus, with one comparing them to investigating the Loch Ness monster. If the word had been invented, Buckley declared, the faculty would have proclaimed that “‘McCarthyism’ had arrived.”

That semester, however, Buckley was sitting in a political theory class “conducted by a man whose frustration” surpassed that of his downhearted colleagues. This professor “was shocked” by McCarthy’s charges but also appalled by how “the Liberal Intelligentsia” had responded to them. He noted that McCarthy had begun to focus on “loyalty risks” rather than trying to ferret out actual members of the Communist Party. A wise change, the theorist thought. He then labeled the liberal response as unserious because few spies would openly join the party. Wishing the committee to “stop acting like a chastity belt for the State Department,” Buckley’s teacher hoped it would stop obsessing over “McCarthy’s personality.” The real issue was to find the “possible traitor” at work in government by ending lax enforcement of the loyalty regimen instituted by President Truman. The instructor predicted,

however, that the committee. “with the hearty consent of the nation’s press and intellectuals.” would obscure this key issue—one central to American national security—by focusing on who did or did not belong to the Party. Although Buckley’s recollection—written about 1955—did not specify the professor who held these views, the man, of course, was Willmoore Kendall.¹

To a great extent, Kendall’s name, if noticed at all by historians, is linked to that of his most famous student, who, within a year of graduation, had become a well-known spokesman for American conservatism. Quite a few scholars date the start of the late-twentieth-century American conservative resurgence to publication of Buckley’s *God and Man at Yale* in 1951. Kendall had a profound effect on young man Buckley (and on his early books). The interplay of their ideas helped shape American politics, and, for that reason alone, Kendall’s life and thought merit historical scrutiny. On the other hand, a would-be biographer ought not overstate Kendall’s influence on Buckley. Nor should one subsume Kendall’s teaching under the umbrella of conservatism as later delimited by Buckley and *National Review*. Their relationship was of great consequence for both men, but it was complex, intimate, and messy.

At Yale, Kendall’s anticommunism never wavered. He arrived committed to an “absolute majoritarian” position in political theory. He believed, for example, that parliamentary supremacy in Britain left its people freer than Americans whose rights the courts supposedly protected. He defended his notions about majority rule from all comers, taught these ideas to his students, and propounded them in his writing. His political theory was entwined with Cold War politics, lying “under the shadow,” he said, of the federal government’s loyalty program and reflecting his own experiences in academia and government.² Despite changes in emphasis which reflected his new personal circumstances and changes in the global political situation, Kendall’s postwar ideas demonstrated continuity with his prewar positions. Few would regard Kendall’s academic output from this period as his best work. His later works on democracy were more nuanced and less harsh. Yet his scholarship from these years was meticulously constructed, coherent, and insightful. He also remained a successful, influential, and controversial teacher.

As he returned to academia after the war, Kendall remained focused on democracy and enamored with Rousseau. In 1945, for example, Hyneman declared Willmoore “devoted to the proposition that political power ought to vest finally with the people, and that political institutions and processes ought to effectuate ultimate control by the people.” Kendall, he continued, was certain to continue in pursuit of this “fundamental proposal” in upcoming years. As always, Kendall integrated this scholarly concern about democratic governance into his teaching. He believed, for example, that he could use his “theory lectures” to produce future articles on Thoreau, Locke, and Milton.

He was optimistic about his teaching and scholarship as he transitioned into university life. "I've brought a better point of view than my prewar one away from Washington," he said, "and a mind a little less dulled than I had feared."³

On June 16, 1947, Kendall was appointed a resident fellow of Pierson College at Yale. For three years he lived in close contact with Yale undergraduates, then all male. His first order of business was to prepare himself for the classroom. At Yale, Kendall confided to friends, he "never faced my seminar in theory with less than thirty hours' preparation." New classes meant considerable work in familiarizing himself with key works. His reading assignments provided him "a valuable education," Kendall added, because in his classes he covered "things I greatly wish to know well." He discovered that undergraduates at New Haven were, "because of their abilities, their inherited position, and their prestige as Yale men, . . . a real challenge." Many students, he found, possessed "a proprietary view of the instructor." A teacher can show them that "they don't own you," but that means "you kiss your effectiveness goodbye."⁴

Kendall had requested to teach a course in local government. He wanted to teach political theory too but knew that Yale already had a theorist with Cecil Driver. Robert Dahl, who taught local government, was ready to cede responsibility for it to Kendall. Explaining his interest in this class to P. E. Corbett, Kendall said "his thoughts and interests in politics has carried me more and more in recent years to the local government level as the best remaining bet for the rehabilitation of the democratic process." Willmoore assigned Herman Finer's work on local government in Britain as a key text for this course. Thus, Kendall showed that, even after his conservative turn, he had not become an advocate of free-market economics. Finer was the author of *Road to Reaction* (1945), a major refutation of F. A. Hayek's *Road to Serfdom*, the free-market bible. Kendall had been entranced for years with Finer's scholarship, which expounded upon social democratic ideas—linked to the British Labour Party—by which the people, using democratic processes, controlled the economy. Kendall retained this perspective on economics to the end. He "held," said one later colleague, "that if capitalism worked in a society, O.K., but if it didn't work in a society, he had no objections whatsoever to a planned economy." In future Kendall often had to disguise these economic views from laissez-faire-loving allies.⁵

In the classroom Willmoore challenged and puzzled his students. As early as his Oxford days, Kendall had learned that "good Oklahoma idiom" appeared exotic to those unused to it. He therefore deployed down-home turns of phrase to gain the attention of listeners. Kendall seldom lectured but continued using the Socratic techniques he had pioneered at LSU. He disliked flashy lecturing. Driver's classroom, he said, was a "circus with all the trappings (including the crowd) except the big top and the peanuts."

Kendall soon won a reputation at Yale as a “wow” in the classroom. Even his critics admitted that his classes aroused “thought.” Kendall sometimes let students vote about what “subjects of inquiry” to pursue, and his students could always expect “a heavy budget of reading.” Weekly assignments might include Thoreau, Calhoun, and Ortega y Gasset. Using notions picked up from Collingwood, Kendall and students “interrogated” these authors. They tried to clarify and understand their meaning by putting them “in the witness box.” Kendall’s students, to the discomfort of some, became aware of “his own political theory” as they worked with their instructor to free themselves from “notions currently a la mode.” Kendall loved to entertain “heated and varied” objections from students. His classes were therefore among “the most stimulating” at Yale.⁶

Kendall sometimes pursued “tangents” in his classes. These forays were often “quite stimulating,” revealed his personal views, and inspired some students to think along similar lines. Buckley, for instance, once asked Kendall’s thoughts on a review “in this morning’s *Times*” of Basil Rauch’s *From Munich to Pearl Harbor*. The reviewer claimed the book “once and for all discredited Charles Beard.” Simple, said Kendall: “the greatest American historian of our time has challenged the greatest American politician of our time. There’s no doubt about who’s going to win.” Buckley then wrote a paper reflecting and expanding upon Kendall’s ideas by the device of grading the American professoriate. If the people were to grade professors, they should give them “a resounding flunk.” Academics, argued the paper, had built an “iron curtain” to defend FDR’s foreign policy. By challenging this consensus, Beard had provoked “the concentrated wrath of the Ph.D. apologists for the New Deal.” Naming names—Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Allan Nevins, Lewis Mumford—the paper suggested that the “ruling cadre of historians and publicists in the U.S.—can always be counted on to step in and save Franklin Roosevelt from detached historical scrutiny.” Sensitive documents were available “only to hired hands” supporting “the Court Interpretation of history.” Bowing to “prevailing political historical orthodoxy,” Buckley concluded, the reigning “academicians” have either “lost their perspicacity” or “their appetite for truth and integrity.” Kendall also exercised influence at New Haven outside these stimulating classes. He socialized uproariously with his students (who called him Ken), seeking friends and acolytes and impressing many with his larger-than-life personality.⁷

As always, then, Willmoore excelled as a teacher at Yale. Outside class, in the Spring of 1948, he began to blow through Yale like an F5 tornado, complete with figuratively flying debris. In February Kendall spoke positively about his situation but with some misgivings. “Yale distrusts strong opinions,” he said. He thought his colleagues focused too little on theory and that the curriculum leaned too much “towards heterodoxy.” By working

with colleagues Robert Dahl, Howard Penniman, and Henry Wells, he hoped to make Yale "the standout department of the country." When this "caucus" tried to get the department to hire Eric Voegelin and Herman Finer, all hell broke loose. Cecil Driver and Arnold Wolfers opposed both appointments. Kendall's group responded with a letter of no confidence in the full professors. In the end, the full professors squashed the revolt at a decisive meeting. After "hard words" Corbett said the senior faculty would impose their own choices, whatever the assistant and associate professors might think. Rejecting Voegelin and Finer, they brought in V. O. Key from Johns Hopkins for an endowed chair. Kendall had led the opposition, but Wells and Penniman also considered resignation rather than submit to this power play. Dahl remained silent. "I predict," said Willmoore, "an early rise to a full professorship for him." Quizzed by Corbett, Kendall sarcastically acknowledged some advantages to bringing in Key. Hiring him would help build "a good department" at Johns Hopkins, he said, and give Yale "what it deserved." In an understatement, Kendall admitted that "things were a little tense by the end of the evening." Having suffered a comprehensive defeat in this "fiasco," Kendall later dated his pariah status at Yale to Spring 1948 when the departmental "colonels" crushed the younger faculty's attempt "to carry through a revolution." Exhausted, Kendall told Hyneman: "From now on I teach my classes and don't get close enough to my senior colleagues to see the whites of their eyes." Then he confessed that: "It sure is a hard world."⁸

This academic brawl had occurred outside the public eye, but Kendall soon got into an awkward public confrontation. On April 18, 1948, Kendall stated over radio station WAVZ that supporters of Henry Wallace's campaign for president "had in effect transferred their loyalty to the Soviet Union." After the broadcast and "in the presence of others," he suggested to Nathaniel S. Colley, an African American law student who had provided a pro-Wallace perspective, that the accusation "had specific reference to and included him." Threatened with a lawsuit and lacking funds to defend himself, Kendall apologized to Colley and publicly retracted his statement on May 14. He admitted having no actual knowledge that "a majority of Mr. Wallace's followers" were loyal to the USSR and "no reason to believe that Mr. Colley is other than fully loyal exclusively to the United States of America." Kendall's friends in the department—Wells, Penniman, and Dahl—came to his defense. They suggested that if Kendall's words were libelous, then "the freedom of everyone of us to speak without fear of reprisal on the radio and in the classroom has been placed in jeopardy." Buckley, Kendall's debate partner for the broadcast, defended the Yale professor more strongly. He said no one listening believed Kendall thought all Wallace supporters were communists. Buckley condemned their adversaries in the debate for using "legal chicanery" to force the apology. Unlike Kendall, Buckley had plenty of money

to defend a potential lawsuit. So he double-downed, affirming in print that Kendall's "fundamental assertions" about the Wallace camp were true. As part of that camp, he added, Colley was "furthering the ends of the Soviet Union."⁹

Over the next couple of years Kendall returned this favor by supporting Buckley in various campus controversies. In the fall of 1949, for example, the FBI visited New Haven in response to charges that Yale professors were living in fear because of FBI spies on campus. The most important case involved Robert S. Cohen whose employment in the philosophy department in 1948 was held up when a campus informant told university authorities that Cohen had strong links to the American Communist Party. Yale had a policy of hiring no communists. When Cohen denied being a communist and gathered testimonials, Yale hired him. To clarify the situation, the *Daily News*, chaired by Buckley, invited the FBI to a campus symposium to discuss its actions at Yale. Law professors Fred Rodell and Fowler Harper were recruited to criticize the FBI with the conservative response to be led by Kendall and Cleanth Brooks. Buckley moderated while two students, one liberal and one conservative, also participated. In the end, Kendall stood as the bureau's lone faculty defender when Brooks failed to show. On Monday, October 24, 1949, an overflow audience filled Sterling Law Auditorium for the debate. The FBI men did most of the talking, denying there were agents on campus and refusing to apologize for anything the bureau had done. Afterward, Cohen asserted that the FBI and Yale had violated his due process rights. Kendall replied that Cohen was incorrectly asserting a criminal trial standard of innocent until proven guilty while the correct standard for hiring an employee was "unacceptable until proved acceptable." American voters had charged the FBI with finding the nation's Soviet-sympathizing "internal enemies," whereas FBI critics were self-appointed busybodies. Cohen left Yale the next year, later making his way to Boston University where he enjoyed a long career as an avowed Marxist.¹⁰

About the same time, on October 17, 1949, a *Yale Daily News* editorial, presumably penned by Buckley, praised a federal court verdict in New York. Twelve American Communist Party leaders had received prison terms for violating the Smith Act (which made advocating the violent overthrow of the United States government felonious). Law School professors Thomas Emerson and Fowler Harper condemned the verdict. Harper suggested that freedom of speech included the right to such advocacy if not a "clear and present" danger to the government. The *News* objected to this view, arguing that Congress could pass any law unless it was clearly unconstitutional. The best comment, opined the *News*, came from Kendall. He said: "Yes, things have come to a hell of a pass when you can't conspire against your own country and get away with it." In March 1950, as appeals continued, Kendall

again took on Harper in the university paper. It was not possible "to resume the good old American way of life," he told Harper. One could no longer assume that "your next door neighbor, or the man in the next desk in your Washington agency, was not engaged in espionage for a potential enemy power." Kendall defended prosecuting Communists "for their beliefs." Certainly, by limiting what they might say, such persons sacrificed some freedom. Indeed, that was the point of the Smith Act. Harper responded that Kendall's principles would "make the Bill of Rights obsolete."¹¹ Here Harper misconstrued his opponent's point. Kendall did not think the Bill of Rights obsolete but that it should never have been adopted in the first place.

For Kendall, the sovereign right of the American people to protect itself from all enemies took precedence over individual liberties. In April 1950 Kendall was one of two members of the Yale political science department to support the "Mundt Bill," which called for deporting communists from the United States. He took this position not because communists were a "clear and present" danger to the country but because, he said, they were "incapable of participating in democratic government." Kendall's views were widely known on campus, both by enemies and allies. That May one critic wrote to the *Daily News* to call Kendall "naïve" for supporting absolute majoritarianism. He said this view disregarded morality and ignored the possibility that majorities might mistreat minorities. Rushing to Kendall's defense was F. Reid Buckley, Bill's younger brother. Kendall was neither too authoritarian nor too democratic, he said. Rather, the political theorist sought to build "Rousseau's homogeneous society." The majority would set limits on toleration and—within these limits—provide "ample room for minority agitation." For society to be "harmonious," he added, its members needed "common principles and ends."¹²

Another Kendall student and ally was L. Brent Bozell, Jr., who was Bill Buckley's debate partner and would soon marry his sister Patricia. An accomplished debater and public speaker, he joined Buckley and Kendall in the struggle against campus Marxists. In January 1948, for instance, Bozell got crossways with Pasquale J. Vecchione, student leader of Yale's Progressive Citizens of America (PCA). At a meeting of this organization, Bozell grew angry when Vecchione refused to let him ask questions. He then proposed to debate whether the PCA was "dominated by communists." After considerable back and forth, the two men held a dramatic public debate on February 25. Vecchione talked only about PCA support for Henry Wallace's presidential platform. Bozell was annoyed that his opponent would not discuss communist influence in the PCA. He charged that the organization consistently followed the Stalinist line and urged liberals to shun Wallace to avoid throwing the election to the Republicans. A couple of months later, thirty Wallace supporters led by Vecchione held a "Save the Peace" rally to denounce the

Truman Doctrine. Several hundred Yale students pelted them with eggs and drove them off campus.¹³ The Kendall-Colley radio face-off happened the next day.

In October 1948 Bozell, who had previously described himself as a liberal, joined the Conservative Party of the Yale Political Union. Later he served as president of the Union. In Bozell's debates and speeches, one could often see Kendallian themes. In January 1950, for example, he delivered a speech against bipartisanship in foreign policy about a month before Kendall's own article against bipartisan foreign policy appeared in print. In May 1949 Bozell and Buckley, taking the affirmative, lost a debate to Princeton, with Bozell arguing, a la Kendall, that the Communist Party of the USA "takes its orders from the Kremlin." In Yale law school, which he entered in 1950, Bozell continued to give Kendall-tinged speeches favoring censorship and suggesting the perils of federal civil rights legislation getting ahead of public opinion in the South.¹⁴

These public disputes cemented the Buckley-Bozell-Kendall bond but weakened Willmoore with the faculty. Various colleagues at Yale, led by Driver, came to hate Kendall as a "Fascist" and "War-monger." In 1950 department members informed Kendall that he was not welcome in their midst. V. O. Key told him in July that he would never receive promotion and that he could either resign or serve permanently as an associate professor. This determination, said Key, stemmed from a desire for "peace" in the department. Kendall also feared that his popularity at Yale as a teacher was waning. Enrollment in his classes was dropping perhaps because of his notoriety. Students did not think him dull, he claimed, but they "just don't like what I have to say." For the coming year, he therefore planned to teach intensively for three days a week, "claim the other four days for me & let Key and Driver go to hell at sunset." By mid-1950 Willmoore regarded his situation as increasingly unpleasant. He began to look for other opportunities, eventually deciding to reenter intelligence work.¹⁵

During these years Kendall—before Senator Joseph McCarthy came into national prominence—forcefully articulated devotion to majority rule in his scholarship. This vision included the people's right to exclude communists and to restrict free speech. In 1949 he set up a panel at the American Political Science Association to reexamine commonly held notions of free speech. He recognized that most Americans thought free speech meant the right "to think and say and write what they bloody well please." They also believed "no standard of orthodoxy" existed to judge which ideas were "beyond the pale" and that only when "a clear and present danger" arose should society repress expression. Kendall told Eric Voegelin that he was "no great admirer of the kind of thinking that has gone into all of that." He wanted to examine the theoretical underpinnings of these commonly accepted ideas. One proposed

speaker was Lawrence Dennis, who had spoken in Kendall's classes at Yale. In 1944 Dennis, denounced as a fascist, had been charged under the Smith Act with sedition based on his writings. When he, together with thirty-two codefendants, was released after a mistrial, liberals reacted with dismay. Himself ready to prosecute fascists under the Smith Act, Kendall saw liberals as inconsistent for unwillingness to apply the same law to left-wing radicals.¹⁶

Then in 1950 Kendall published an article in the *Journal of Politics*. Here he used the scalpel of close reading to vivisect an antimajoritarian work by Minnesota political scientist Herbert McClosky. McClosky, said Kendall, favored "limits" on majorities but did not specify whether such limits were voluntary or embodied in "constitutional checks" on majority will. In suggesting that majoritarians had to agree to any vote in favor of dictatorship, McClosky was playing a cheap parlor trick. Sure, a democracy could "commit suicide." Once it reinvented itself as dictatorship, it was no longer a democracy and could not serve as an example of majority rule. Kendall argued that McClosky confused the question of what was good for society with the distinct question of who should specify and maintain that good. Perhaps individual rights were a positive thing, but the question remained of who would decide their nature, extent, and application. For a democrat the answer could only be the majority, which, Kendall argued, ought to judge all political questions. McClosky's prescriptions meant that the community must always accept the "traditional interpretation" of "political rights." This position left the nation "impotent vis-à-vis its internal enemies," forcing it to tolerate those "openly waging war" against it. For Kendall, the community itself, through majority rule, should decide the limits of its "claim to obedience," what liberties to permit and which to restrict.¹⁷

Kendall's absolute majoritarianism hampered his academic career. It also hurt him with the CIA. Kendall's article "The Function of Intelligence" appeared in the journal *World Politics* in 1949. It contained majoritarian elements which offended powerful people in the intelligence community. In it he reviewed *Strategic Intelligence*, a book by Sherman Kent, a Yale historian who was an important player in the CIA. The article contained an admixture of Kendall's ideas on intelligence work, political theory, and teaching. In intelligence circles, this article has remained a landmark. Kendall thought intelligence officers—contra Kent—should not merely gather information but ought to interpret complex political realities to shape and clarify the views of decision-makers. The article tapped into Kendall's larger, theoretical concerns about politics. He disparaged covert operations as less effective and more expensive than open-source intelligence and also as undemocratic. The "big job" for operatives was to integrate world events into a coherent pattern for "elected officials." They should not serve as "research assistants" to bureaucratic "policy planners." Fulfilling this function, he thought, would

let the United States shape its global “destiny.” Sadly, said Kendall, Kent’s book took the “crassly empirical” approach of historians. Theoretically naïve, this method was detrimental to intelligence work. Any improvement in intelligence enterprise achieved by following Kent’s suggestions, Kendall concluded, would “be very small.”¹⁸

The review outraged Kent. Circa 1947, Kent had considered Willmoore a model intelligence officer. He was, Kendall admitted, “in large part responsible for my appointment at Yale.” By 1951 Kent, as he was growing more powerful in the CIA, had become Kendall’s inveterate foe. His views about the role of intelligence officers would prevail, Kendall’s ideas surviving as an intriguing example of a road not taken. Moreover, Yale political scientist Arnold Wolfers, perhaps Kent’s closest friend, was Kendall’s enemy, both because of departmental struggles and because of Willmoore’s public views “on loyalty programs.” Years earlier Kendall noted that he had caught “the intelligence bug,” and by 1950 he longed to lead the newly established Office of National Estimates—charged with medium-term and long-term planning at the CIA. Its initial head, William Langer, was a friend, but Kent stood second in command. Replacing Langer as its chief in January 1952, Kent provided a powerful roadblock to any plans Kendall had for a position of influence in the CIA.¹⁹

Kendall’s scholarship was calculated to annoy powerful figures in the foreign policy establishment. In 1949, for example, Yale University Press published *A Communist Party in Action*, written by former communist Angelo Tasca—as edited, abridged, and translated by Kendall. Kendall called its introduction “an attack” on George Kennan, whose policy of containment was becoming the cornerstone of American Cold War policy. He argued that people became communists because their own nations failed “to infuse *meaning* into their members’ lives.” He thought creating powerful counter-narratives more important than using money to prop up Western Europe (as with the Marshall Plan). Tasca’s tale bore witness to communism’s ideological appeal and ruthlessness. To counter it Americans must not be squeamish about political “surgery” to remove this social “cancer” from their own body politic. In 1950 Kendall followed up with an article attacking “bipartisan” foreign policy. This increasingly popular idea, including Walter Lippmann’s 1948 statement that partisanship should “stop at the water’s edge,” said Kendall, reinforced “the most undemocratic features of our political system.” To illustrate, he cited Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, a powerful Republican voice for bipartisanship who suggested questioning Truman on the Berlin Crisis was “treason.” Kendall claimed this elitist vision championed by experts was alien to American tradition. Instead, there should be democratic debates on “real issues.” Such dialogue would channel “into American foreign policy the native good sense of the American electorate.”²⁰

Kendall had kept his hand in intelligence when he went to Yale. In the Fall Semester of 1947, for instance, he worked a day and a half each week for the CIA. In those early days, he told Hyneman, it would have been "pleasanter" to have "settle[d] down for the long pull at the CIA." By 1950, however, Kendall had made powerful enemies both at CIA and in the State Department. When searching for a way out of Yale, he therefore looked toward military intelligence. In the summer of 1950 he applied to work for the U.S. Army-led Operations Research Office (ORO) doing "research in psychological warfare." In August 1950 George Pettee—in charge of hiring at ORO—wrote Cleanth Brooks and Charles Hyneman, whom Willmoore had supplied as references. Pettee said he was looking for someone versed in psychology, ideology, and communications, "a man of high competence on at least one side of the problem and with real ability as generalist." The position required someone with "mental energy and imagination" possessing the analytical ability to "solve a problem that does not fit any regular compartment." The capacity "to conduct executive business," Pettee added, was "also important."²¹

Brooks and Hyneman responded with gushing letters of praise. Kendall, said Brooks, "would fit better than anyone I know the qualifications you outline in your letter" to head up a project in psychological warfare. Kendall loved to argue, Brooks told Pettee, but he was "one of the most brilliant minds I have ever known, admirably trained, and filled with a real passion for ideas." Kendall was "tremendously skilled in dialectic" and his "convictions are real and deep." Kendall was "one of the shrewdest masters of a text that I know of, alive to every gradation of connotation and implication." Hyneman focused on Willmoore's "devotion to ideals of democratic government." Hyneman could imagine few people "better equipped than Kendall" for the proposed position. If "running" the USA, Hyneman added, he would place "Kendall in Moscow right now . . . watching what Soviet leaders are doing and countering their influences."²²

Kendall got the job, received a leave of absence from Yale, and took up a new post as chairman of Project POWOW. Its mission was to discover how best to wage psychological warfare (psywar). At ORO—based in Washington, DC, before relocating to Baltimore—Kendall soon had squabbles with his new boss "about what Project POWOW ought to do, and how it ought to do it." Kendall's relationship with Pettee grew strained but never quite hostile, as the men had similar views about the proper role of analysts. The project's mission was global. It centered on the USSR, including studies of Soviet radio broadcasts and historical analysis of Nazi propaganda in Eastern Europe. In the fall of 1950, however, not long after Kendall arrived at ORO, Pettee sent him to Korea (where war had broken out in June). Kendall initially served a three-month stint. With his staff, he put the principles of psywar into practice and analyzed their effectiveness. By November he was

working near the front lines with American forces at Pusan and Seoul. He was present during the brief occupation of Pyongyang. After spending three days in the enemy capital, he evacuated to Tokyo, experiencing his "first air raid," but coming out "*sain et sauf*."²³

For the rest of the war Kendall shuttled back and forth between East Asia and the United States. As POWOW chair he saw Korea as "a laboratory of operational experience in which every opportunity should be seized for operations research in psywar." With associates, many of whom he worked to recruit from American universities, he crafted sophisticated propaganda. Much of it was contained in leaflets dropped by air behind enemy lines. These pamphlets, produced by the billion to distribute to enemy citizens and soldiers, appealed to communal themes of solidarity and to individual desires for safety and prosperity. To be effective, the flyers had to be believable, had to address real concerns of enemy soldiers, and had to suggest a safe way to switch sides. One leaflet, for example, suggested that Kim Il Sung was an imposter put in place by the Soviets after the real Kim died in Siberia. This story was plausible enough to be believed by Koreans decades later. Propaganda which worked for Koreans, however, differed from what was effective with Chinese soldiers, so two sets of leaflets were necessary. These leaflet bombs had considerable success, convincing a hundred thousand enemy soldiers to surrender. Propaganda broadcasts via loudspeaker proved less effective. Meanwhile, Kendall helped pioneer new interrogation methods in Korea. Most important was the use of polygraph tests. Kendall prepared questions for captured enemy soldiers and helped analyze the effectiveness of the tests. Project POWOW also studied "fear reactions" evoked by certain weapons. One study noted that napalm inflicted psychological damage far beyond its physical destructiveness. Kendall had high regard for General Douglas MacArthur. Intelligence chief General Charles A. Willoughby, whose daily briefings he attended in Tokyo, was another matter. Willoughby had utterly failed to predict Chinese intervention. Poorly versed in political theory, said Kendall, he never learned to apply military intelligence to political problems.²⁴

Working with the ORO Kendall attempted to improve this relatively amateurish work. In April 1952 he apparently helped establish Japan's own Research Office, modeled on the ORO and later regarded as the Japanese version of the CIA. Kendall, then, was an effective theorist and practitioner of psywar. He considered taking up an "attractive" post in Japan, but for the most part he did not like serving in Asia which he saw as a backwater. As an intelligence officer Kendall always had the great global game in mind. In the early 1950s he believed "hot war" with the Soviet Union was imminent and that when it came psywar would play a key role. Kendall thought the United States, because of its rapid demobilization after World War II, might lose that

war. He claimed at times to favor temporary "appeasement" until the country rebuilt its military strength. Less than "fifty people in Washington," he told Hyneman, appreciated the magnitude of the Soviet threat. As part of this big picture, Kendall prioritized the need for effective propaganda in Russian and began to study the language. As Project POWOW chairman, he sought to avoid Kent's "crassly empirical" approach by focusing on the "theory and nature" of psywar. In this effort, he drew on the skills of his academic friends. He recruited Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren from Yale, for example, to produce and evaluate propaganda leaflets. He hired former Hobart and Yale student John Ponturo as a member of his staff. And he recruited Charles Hyneman to work as a consultant on military government.²⁵

In March 1951, now enmeshed in the psywar world, Kendall requested Yale to extend his leave of absence for a year. Provost Edgar S. Furniss granted his approval "quite willingly." Furniss told Willmoore that he had "encountered people who commented most emphatically upon the importance of the services you are now rendering the Government in this national Emergency." A year later Kendall wrote to James W. Fesler, the new chair of the political science department, sounding him out on another extension. Fesler quickly agreed to Kendall's request, granting him a leave absence for the 1952-1953 academic year, which Yale ultimately extended for yet another year.²⁶ Kendall later joked that he was offended that Yale gave him leaves of absence so willingly. But for a time this arrangement satisfied him and the university. It also allowed Willmoore to deploy his considerable talents in service to his country.

During his time at ORO, Kendall and his unit translated, composed, and edited numerous (mostly classified) studies regarding psychological warfare and the Cold War. Project POWOW had lots of ventures going on. They ranged from analysis of Soviet "printed media" to clarifying the psywar needs of American combat divisions. The organization produced some sixty publications in Kendall's years there ranging from ten to hundreds of pages. He worked on many team-written publications, only sometimes receiving credit as author or editor. One such task, he noted, meant taking "1800 pages of completed research, done by a sub-project at Yale," then revising it "down to 550 pp. or such matter, and fancied and sharpened-up in the process." Kendall, said George Pettee, carried out "the central fundamentals" of POWOW with great "intensity and depth," guiding and structuring a "very high quality program."²⁷

Two larger works from these years stand out. First was *China: An Area Manual*, in three volumes, which appeared in 1953. Its lead editor was David Rowe, a Yale political scientist friendly to Kendall, with Willmoore listed as coeditor. Others wrote most of the narrative, consisting of geographical and historical background. But Kendall's fingerprints, including characteristic

turns of phrase, appeared in key parts of the book. Most importantly, the *Area Manual* strongly reflected Kendall's radical anticommunism. The book concluded, in bland bureaucratic language, that communism had triumphed in China because of U.S. policy blunders. In the late 1940s the United States had promoted a coalition government, negotiated with Mao Zedong, and embargoed arms to Chiang Kai-shek at a crucial time. The Communists kept talking while preparing for military victory. Thus, the book inferred that President Truman had stupidly sacrificed the world's most populous country to communism. The other big book was *The Nature of Psychological Warfare* (1954), authored by Wilbur Schramm (with Kendall and two other assistant authors). This book laid out the theory and practice of psywar. Much of it focused on psywar as communication—Schramm's specialty—with Kendall editing Schramm's prose. The introduction, however, reflected Kendall's cherished theme of scientific skepticism. It claimed that psywar was not a science but an art which used scientific findings.²⁸

As he returned from his first assignment in Korea at the end of 1950, Willmoore took steps to complete his divorce from Katherine. Their final breakup occurred partly because both were following high-powered careers in different parts of the world, making it difficult to live together. Another dividing point was political, for Katy remained a staunch leftist. The divorce, finalized in Oklahoma in early 1951, was relatively cordial. The ex-spouses remained on speaking terms, though with some lingering bitterness. Katy and Ken did not reside together after 1947, but they continued to share weekends and holidays until January 1950, when their separation became definitive. Until then Willmoore sometimes traveled to Katherine's apartment in Jamaica, New York, to escape Yale's hothouse. Meanwhile he found a new love interest in graduate student Anne Brunsdale, who had worked for him at the CIA.²⁹

Anne had given Kendall considerable help in translating the Tasca book from French. By early 1951 she was traveling with Willmoore as his companion. She came from a more privileged place than did the earthy Katherine, with tastes running to expensive jewelry and fancy clothes. High spirited and strongly opinionated, her relationship with Willmoore, almost from the beginning, was tempestuous. Kendall confessed to his sister that Anne was not his ideal woman, who would be wealthy, good-looking, "not a career woman and not an intellectual." Anne was both a career woman and an intellectual, but on June 7, 1952 she and Willmoore got married anyway. The wedding took place in Minneapolis. Kendall's groomsman was Revilo Oliver with Bill Buckley serving as an usher. Kendall's mother and sister attended, as did Norman Brunsdale, the Republican governor of North Dakota, who was Anne's uncle. As Anne worked for the CIA, like several other Kendall students, she was authorized to view classified information. She sometimes

helped Ken with his "rockpile," that is, his efforts to recast poorly conceived, turgidly written ORO drafts into "consistently good" prose.³⁰

Intelligence work paid Kendall considerably more than he made at Yale, especially as he continued to receive regular raises at ORO. By 1954 his annual pay had increased to \$13,000, roughly twice his salary at Yale. By 1952, however, he was coming to see his professional situation as "hopeless" at ORO. He believed the organization was using his "energies" but not his "abilities." He now "had so many enemies who occupy strategic positions in the activities I am most interested in that I just can't hope to beat the game, no matter how I slice it." Through his unpopular "intellectual and political positions" and from "expressing too freely my opinions about incompetence, dishonesty, and laziness in high places," Kendall knew he had developed a reputation as a "trouble-maker." In 1953, when Kendall was turned down for a post he desired in the State Department, he believed the reason was his "support of Senator McCarthy." Having his position at Yale to fall back on did give Willmoore more "freedom of speech" than his fellow bureaucrats enjoyed. But he knew pushing forward with the unpopular themes of his scholarship would create "more enemies in strategic places, and more friends in unstrategic ones."³¹

In the fall of 1953 Kendall took the "worst licking of my entire career" and was removed as chairman of Project POWOW. He became "what we euphemistically call a senior analyst." He described this move as a "rebellion against me by rank and file members of the project angry, in large part, about things outside my control." When George Pettee "removed" him as POWOW chairman and replaced him with the revolt's "ringleader," Kendall considered the decision unjust. He also understood that he was powerless to change the decision. Kendall admitted that he preferred the more "congenial" role of analyst and that his removal from management was something of a blessing, especially as he received no reduction in salary. When in a leadership position, at ORO and elsewhere, Kendall was a demanding boss. He was not a good listener and often unsympathetic to the viewpoints and needs of subordinates. As an analyst, however, his talents were undeniable. In time, Kendall decided to leave the ORO, even with a major reduction in salary, because staying involved "a psychic cost beyond bearing."³²

He explored many possibilities for post-ORO employment. In 1952 he had declared to Charles Hyneman that he was "not going back to Yale," but in the end he decided to return to New Haven for the Fall Semester of 1954. There had been changes since he left. When Key went to Harvard, James W. Fesler became the new department chair. In late October 1951 Fesler wrote to Kendall to assure him that he valued his contributions to the university and hoped the department could "start off afresh." He went on to suggest that Willmoore had "a quite individual approach verging on a Kendallian

school” and that Yale students needed exposure to many political theory approaches. Kendall replied positively but denied creating his own school of political theory. He admitted that he was not a liberal, that his teaching stressed theory, and that his approach was more “critical” than “historical.” As all good teachers do, he influenced his students. He did not, he informed Fesler, have the “hypnotic and/or chauvinistic” powers over students attributed to him at Yale.³³

Meanwhile, larger events were afoot. On October 15, 1951, Henry Regnery and Company released William F. Buckley, Jr.’s *God and Man at Yale: The Superstitions of “Academic Freedom.”* The university had seen “Bill’s book” coming. Faced with a multipronged indictment of the university’s liberal proclivities, Yale launched a well-coordinated anti-Buckley publicity campaign. The *Yale Daily News*, for example, printed a caustic student editorial and two thoroughly prepared faculty refutations on the very day the book appeared in print. Two more faculty rebuttals and a lengthy attack by a Yale undergraduate appeared in the next day’s edition. Denunciations in *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times Book Review*, and other prestigious publications soon followed. These tactics backfired, with the obviously orchestrated crescendo turning *God and Man at Yale* into a best seller. The book vaulted Buckley into a spot in the national limelight and helped kickstart conservatism to challenge the postwar neo-New Deal consensus. *God and Man at Yale* thus earned its status as an historical landmark: “ALL-TIME 100 Nonfiction Books,” and so forth.³⁴

Focusing on undergraduate instruction, Buckley’s book argued that the Yale faculty had abandoned Christian orthodoxy for agnosticism and free-market economics for collectivism. The faculty thus undermined the values Yale freshman brought to campus and denied the ideals of most Yale alumni. Yale’s administration protected these views by misapplying principles of academic freedom. Though not mentioned by name in the iconic volume, Kendall’s presence looms large in the background. Buckley never disguised getting help from his former politics professor. He later explicitly acknowledged that Kendall carefully “went over” the prepublication manuscript. He also noted that the book’s most “provocative” sentence came verbatim from a suggestion made in Willmoore’s signature green ink. “*I believe,*” read the statement from the original preface, “*that the duel between Christianity and atheism is the most important in the world. I further believe that the struggle between individualism and collectivism is the same struggle reproduced on another level.*”³⁵

By focusing on this statement, a reader will misunderstand Kendall’s influence on *God and Man*. Kendall, if a Christian believer in 1951, was not a devout or orthodox one. He also supported the Keynesian economics which the book condemned. In questioning religious heterodoxy, Buckley’s

critique drew on his own family's vigorous Catholicism, not on Kendall. In defending economic "individualism," Buckley's inspiration came from Frank Chodorov, the old school libertarian, who also read and critiqued the manuscript before publication. Willmoore's influence was subtler but deeper. Four of his ideas not only permeated but actually provided the conceptual framework for *God and Man at Yale*. At the heart of the book, an attentive reader will notice: (1) distrust of experts, (2) belief that freedom must have limits, (3) an argument for institutional orthodoxy, and (4) support for a more democratic style of university governance. Loving Yale and knowing it more intimately than Kendall did, Buckley's popular style remained dominant throughout the narrative. Kendall long paid homage to his student's "remarkable achievement" in authoring *God and Man*. He did not ghostwrite and—given his often convoluted prose—could not have written *God and Man*.³⁶ Rather the point is that, as of 1951, Buckley had so thoroughly absorbed Kendall's ideas that—to a degree neither man fully recognized—these ideas had become his own.

Author and mentor knew that Kendall's name was toxic at Yale and that alluding to him as editing the book might damage its prospects. Kendall had come to understand "the incredible efficacy of the Yale propaganda machine, and the determination with which it has gone to work on me." He told his sister that by supporting majority rule he actually weakened its popularity. Academics rushed to reject ideas championed by "that bastard Kendall."³⁷ So there was no explicit mention of the controversial political theorist's contributions to *God and Man*. But each of the four ideas above was Kendallian. The book's distrust of experts (professors and administrators) echoed Kendall writings from the 1930s and 1940s. To apply majority rule (Kendall's obsession) to a private university had to mean appealing to other stakeholders to rein in the faculty and administration. *God and Man* did that. That Yale should stand for certain principles and unapologetically reject others, that is, ought to adopt an institutional orthodoxy, is also traceable to Kendall's teaching. Buckley later wondered whether Kendall's association with *God and Man* was what made Yale so intransigent in denying him promotion. But the political science department made that determination long before the book came out and never wavered on it.

Kendall was not on campus when *God and Man* came out. At ORO he remained mostly cut off from academia but did occasional work in political theory. He coauthored an article on democracy in 1952 with Illinois political scientist Austin Ranney, which a few years later grew into a textbook. In 1954 Kendall's translation of Rousseau's *The Social Contract* appeared in an edition published by Regnery. In his introduction, Kendall contended that it was important to read Rousseau's most famous work carefully. Some saw Jean-Jacques as the father of democracy and others as the founder of

“contemporary dictatorship.” Much of this confusion came from *The Social Contract*. It encompassed democratic, authoritarian, and anarchist elements and never molded them “into a readily intelligible whole.” The book desperately needed careful “textual analysis that patiently weighs every sentence against every other, that wrings from each phrase its last elusive scrap of meaning.” Only through such analysis might readers really understand what “its author was trying but could not quite manage to make it say.” Then Kendall suggested that the book’s “central doctrine,” practical or not, was that “in accepting the permanence of the large state we resign ourselves to perpetual bondage.”³⁸

In 1953 and 1954 Kendall assisted Buckley and Bozell in writing *McCarthy and His Enemies*. He carefully edited the prepublication typescript. As noted by Bozell’s biographer, Kendall’s “ideas on social consensus and its enforcement, furnished the book’s underlying interpretative framework.” In an early draft of one chapter, for example, Buckley castigated the anti-McCarthyites for lacking evidence and merely citing “a line from the *Areopagitica*” or “a line from J.S. Mill.” These were themes and authors which Kendall took up in his classes and on which he later published scholarly articles. Another key point in the book first elucidated by Kendall (in the Cohen case) was that loyalty investigations should not focus on determining the guilt or innocence of their subjects but adopt a standard of “reasonable doubt.” Published by Regnery and condemned by critic Dwight Macdonald before it was written, the book examined McCarthy’s record in matter-of-fact language. It criticized his sloppy use of evidence, recognized that he occasionally lied, and admitted his investigations sometimes smeared the innocent. More fundamentally, the book suggested that communist infiltration was a real and existential threat. Examining McCarthy’s work case by case, it concluded that his efforts in rooting out Marxist moles had been mostly positive. If the Cold War was a war, the authors maintained (taking a “radical” Kendallian line) that individual liberty had to take second place to national security. Such liberals as Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., condemned *McCarthy and His Enemies* as “sick” while the conservative press mostly praised it. The book sold well. It came out in March 1954 when McCarthy’s power was at its height. Shortly afterward came the Army-McCarthy hearings, which discredited the Wisconsin senator. Bill later wrote a funny account of Ken and Brent watching the televised hearings over drinks. Kendall tells Bozell that “his boy” McCarthy was hurting the anticommunist cause by bullying witnesses in front of a huge audience. Appalled and entranced by the spectacle of the hearings, the men agreed to meet the next day to watch another round.³⁹

In 1954 Kendall was building a new house for himself and Anne. Cleanth Brooks and Willmoore had gone in together to become “co-owners” of a piece of rural real estate outside New Haven in the Spring of 1950. Kendall

had taken this step "to remind people I had tenure and would be staying until I decided to go elsewhere." Marriage to Anne energized Ken to build a nice house for himself and his new spouse, on this property in Northford, Connecticut. He devoted lots of attention to the construction process, hired a Yale architect to design a modernist structure, personally hauled building materials to the site, and got himself into considerable financial difficulty. Construction began in 1953, as Kendall knew he would return to Yale the following year. Going into debt related to this Northford domicile, Kendall later confessed, had pushed him into taking on "more Washington consultancies and more non-scholarly but remunerative writing than I'd any business doing."⁴⁰

As he prepared to return to Yale for the Fall Semester of 1954, Kendall was pleasantly surprised that he was not shunted aside into the obscure "periphery" of the department. He learned that he would still be teaching his beloved class in local government. He would also be teaching incoming graduate students the basic class in political theory.⁴¹ Perhaps a new beginning was in the offing. Perhaps he could move his academic career in a more positive and harmonious direction. Instead of going along to get along on this new path, however, Kendall girded his loins to wage a campaign against what he saw as the corruption and wrongheadedness of the American political science profession. In Spring 1954, for example, Charles Hyneman invited Kendall to speak at Northwestern University. Willmoore stayed at the Orrington Hotel where, a quarter century before, he had worked as a busboy. He delivered a speech berating the profession for failing to solve "problems that the community wants solved." Rather than trust experts, it would be better, said Kendall, to trust the people. "For the community is wiser about its needs than men know, and one of the things it cannot do without in the long pull, is a political science that can speak to it with the authority of true learning about the predictable consequences of its political acts." He received enthusiastic feedback from the Evanston crowd, which included future acolyte George W. Carey. This response gave Kendall hope about "getting listened to a little."⁴² Meanwhile, with a taste of popular success from behind-the-scenes work on *God and Man at Yale* and *McCarthy and His Enemies*, Kendall looked forward to helping Buckley launch a new magazine of conservative opinion.

NOTES

1. WB, "McCarthy: A Votary's Account," B5, Series Accession 1997-M-160, BP.
2. WK, Review of *Prophets and Peoples*, by Hans Kohn, *Journal of Politics* 8, no. 3 (August 1946): 425-27; WK to EV, June 17, 1949, "VK," 372.