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In the twentieth century, more than a few conservative American intellectuals underwent a conversion of sorts, beginning on the left, typically as committed Marxists, before moving sharply and irrevocably to the right. Frank Straus Meyer (1909-1972) was one such figure. A longtime contributor to *National Review*, Meyer is credited with developing the concept of "fusionism," an attempt to bridge the divide between conservatism's libertarian and traditionalist tendencies. For Meyer, the varieties of American conservatism possessed several core strands: a commitment to an objective moral order, an emphasis on the primacy of the individual, a hostility to utopianism, a conviction that state power should be limited, a devotion to the Constitution, and a belief in the superiority of Western civilization.

The Recrudescent American Conservatism

TO DISCUSS conservatism in America today is to plunge at once into a tangle of semantic confusion. There have been over the past few years so many efforts, often contradictory, by scholars and journalists to extract its essence and define its limits that it is with some diffidence I begin with a rather broad and general description of it.

WHAT IS CONSERVATISM?

This essay is concerned with conservatism as a political, social, and intellectual movement—not as a cast of mind or a temperamental inclination. Such a movement arises historically when the unity

and balance of a civilization are riven by revolutionary transformations of previously accepted norms of polity, society, and thought. Conservatism comes into being at such times as a movement of consciousness and action directed to recovering the tradition of the civilization. This is the essence of conservatism in all the forms it has assumed in different civilizations and under differing circumstances. Sometimes such movements are successful, as was the return to the basic Egyptian tradition after Akhnaton's revolutionary changes. Sometimes they succeed for a time and modulate the later and further development of the revolutionary impulse, as did the Stuart restoration after the English Revolution or the European consolidation after the French Revolution and the reign of Napoleon. Sometimes they have little effect on contemporary events but make a tremendous impress on the consciousness of the future, as did the Platonic reaction to the destruction of the balance of civilization brought about by the overweening power drive of the Athenian *demoi* and the arrogance of Sophistical thought. Sometimes they fail utterly and are lost to history.

In any era the problem of conservatism is to find the way to restore the tradition of the civilization and apply it in a new situation. But this means that conservatism is by its nature two-sided. It must at one and the same time be reactionary and presentist. It cannot content itself with appealing to the past. The very circumstances that call conscious conservatism into being create an irrevocable break with the past. The many complex aspects of the past had been held together in tension by the unity of the civilization, but that particular tension, that particular suspension in unity, can never be recreated after a revolutionary break. To attempt to recreate it would be pure unthinking reaction (what Toynbee calls "archaism") and would be bound to fail; nor could reaction truly restore the civilizational tradition to the recovery of which it was putatively directed. But while conservatism is not and cannot be naked reaction, neither can its concern with contemporary circumstances lead it, if it is to be true to itself, to be content with the status quo, with serving as a "moderating wing" within the existing situation. For that situation is the result of a revolutionary break with the tradition of the civilization, and to "conserve" it is to accept the radical break with tradition that conservatism exists to overcome.

Conservatism is neither reactionary yearning for an irremediably lost past, nor is it trimming acquiescence in the consolidation of

revolution, just so long as the revolution does not go too fast. It is a vindication and renewal of the civilizational tradition as the foundation upon which reason must build to solve the problems of the present.

It is absurd, therefore, because one conservative voice in one period showed an underlying hostility to reason, to maintain, as is today so often done, that Edmund Burke's attitude to reason is an essential element of any definition of conservatism. True, no conservatism can accept utopian reliance upon the limited reason of one generation (or one school of thought within that generation), which ignores the tradition and builds upon arrogant confidence in its own experience and its own ratiocination. But conservatism is not antirational. It demands only that reason operate upon the foundation of the tradition of civilization, that is, upon the basis of the accumulated reason, experience, and wisdom of past generations.

From the point of view of contemporary "liberalism," it may indeed seem that any respect for tradition is *ipso facto* a repudiation of reason. This, together with the fact that Burke was to a rather strong degree critical of the claims of reason and that nineteenth-century conservatism often tended in this direction, may explain, although it does not excuse, the insistence of author after author in late years (most recently, Morton Auerbach in *The Conservative Illusion*) that no movement has a right to the name of conservatism if it does not fit the mould of an exaggerated representation of Burke's views on reason. Thus, the contemporary American conservative movement has consistently been denied its right to its self-chosen name by critics who refuse to think deeply and seriously about the phenomenon of conservatism, preferring instead facilely to derive their criteria from ephemeral characteristics of the conservatism of a single historical period.

It is easy to show that contemporary American conservatism is not a replica of nineteenth-century European conservatism; while it resembles it in some ways, it also resembles nineteenth-century European liberalism in its commitment to individual liberty and its corollary commitment to an economic system free of state control. But to show that, is to prove nothing of substance. The claim of the contemporary American conservative movement to the title conservative does not have to be based upon a surface resemblance to the conservative

movement of another period. It is based upon its commitment to the recovery of a tradition, the tradition of Western civilization and the American republic, which has been subjected to a revolutionary attack in the years since 1932.

THE CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT

The crystallization in the past dozen years or so of an American conservative movement is a delayed reaction to the revolutionary transformation of America that began with the election of Franklin Roosevelt in 1932. That revolution itself has been a gentler, more humane, bloodless expression in the United States of the revolutionary wave that has swept the globe in the twentieth century. Its grimmest, most total manifestations have been the phenomena of Communism and Nazism. In rather peculiar forms in late years it has expressed itself in the so-called nationalism typified by Nasser, Nkrumah, and Sukarno; in Western Europe it has taken the forms of the socialism of England or that of Scandinavia. Everywhere, however open or masked, it represents an aggrandizement of the power of the state over the lives of individual persons. Always that aggrandizement is cloaked in a rhetoric and a program putatively directed to and putatively concerned for "the masses."

The American form of that revolution differs little in its essentials from Western European democratic socialism. But, by an ironic twist of history, it has become known as "liberalism." (So far is it removed from the classical liberalism of the nineteenth century, with its overriding concern for individual liberty and the limitation of the state, that clear discourse requires some mode of differentiation; and I shall for that reason, through the rest of this essay, refer to this twentieth-century American development as Liberalism, with a capital L, reserving the lower case for classical liberalism.) Ushered in by the election of 1932, so thorough was the victory of Liberalism that for many years afterwards it met with no concerted resistance, in either the intellectual or political spheres. True, islands of resistance remained—in the Congress, in the academy among some economists and humanists, in the business community, in the endemic mass anti-Communist

movement among some strata of the population. These were rear-guard actions; by and large, Liberalism dominated the scene, took over the academy and the organs of mass communication, controlled the Democratic Party, and slowly penetrated the Republican Party. Only in recent years has there emerged a consistent, cohesive conservative movement, based upon a broad consensus of principle, challenging Liberal assumptions and Liberal power all along the line.

In its origins intellectual, centered among a group of writers gathered around the old *Freeman*, *National Review*, and *Modern Age*, it early attracted a following and guided a movement in the universities, and gradually focused and channelized the energies of disparate tendencies opposed to Liberalism through all levels of society. During the past half dozen years its attitude began to be reflected among a group of young Congressmen, and it fully emerged on the national political arena with the nomination of Barry Goldwater at the Republican convention of 1964.

There are many strands in this movement, many trends in its thought. In particular there exists within it a continuing tension between an emphasis on tradition and virtue, on the one hand, and an emphasis on reason and freedom, on the other. I will return to this problem a little farther on; here I want only to say that these differences are but differences of emphasis, creating tensions within a common consensus, not sharply opposed points of view.

That common consensus of the contemporary American conservative movement is reflected, with different degrees of understanding and depth, at every level of the conservative movement. It underlies the principled positions of the consciously intellectual as it does the empirical positions and the instinctive attitudes of the political activists and the broad constituency of that movement. The clearest way, I think, to summarize this consensus is to contrast it with the beliefs and attitudes of the Liberal world outlook, which sets the prevailing tone of contemporary American society. I do not assert that every conservative accepts every one of the articles of belief I am positing or that every Liberal accepts each of the contrasted articles. But I would maintain that the attitudes adumbrated do reflect the overall opposition between the conservative and Liberal consensuses in America today.

A. Conservatism assumes the existence of an objective moral order based upon ontological foundations. Whether or not individual conservatives hold theistic views—and a large majority of them do—this outlook is derived from a theistic tradition. The essential point, however, is that the conservative looks at political and social questions with the assumption that there are objective standards for human conduct and criteria for the judgment of theories and institutions, which it is the duty of human beings to understand as thoroughly as they are able and to which it is their duty to approximate their actions.

The Liberal position, in contrast, is essentially operational and instrumental. As the conservative's world is, in Richard Weaver's phrase, a world of essences to be approximated, the Liberal's world is a world of problems to be solved. Hence, the conservative's concern with such questions of essence as individual liberty and civilizational tradition. Hence, the Liberal's concern with modes and operations, such as democracy (a mode or means of government which implies that what is morally right is what fifty per cent plus one think is right), or progress (a concept that derives norms from the operation of historical events, establishing as the good the direction in which events have been moving and seem presently to be moving).

B. Within the limits of an objective moral order, the primary reference of conservative political and social thought and action is to the individual person. There may be among some conservatives a greater emphasis upon freedom and rights, as among others a greater emphasis upon duties and responsibilities; but whichever the emphasis, conservative thought is shot through and through with concern for the person. It is deeply suspicious of theories and policies based upon the collectivities that are the political reference points of Liberalism—"minorities," "labor," "the people." There may be tension between those conservatives who stress individual freedom and those who stress community as a fabric of individual rights and responsibilities, but both reject the ideological hypostasization of associations of human beings into entities and the collectivist politics based upon it.

C. The cast of American conservative thought is profoundly antiutopian. While it recognizes the continuing historical certainty of change and the necessity of basic principle being expressed under different circumstances in different ways, and while it strives always

for the improvement of human institutions and the human condition, it rejects absolutely the idea that society or men generally are perfectible. In particular, it is perennially suspicious of the utopian approach that attempts to *design* society and the lives of human beings, whether in the light of abstract rationalist ideas or operational engineering concepts. It therefore rejects the entire Liberal *mystique* of "planning," which, no matter how humanitarian the motives of the planners, perforce treats human beings as faceless units to be arranged and disposed according to a design conceived by the planner. Rather, the conservative puts his confidence in the free functioning of the energies of free persons, individually and in voluntary cooperation.

D. It is on the basis of these last two points—concern for the individual person and rejection of utopian design—that the contemporary American conservative attitude to the state arises. For the state, which has the ultimate power of enforcement of its dictates, is the necessary implement for successful Liberal planning and for effective control of the lives of individual human beings. Conservatives may vary on the degree to which the power of the state should be limited, but they are agreed upon the principle of limitation and upon the firmest opposition to the Liberal concept of the state as the engine for the fixing of ideological blueprints upon the citizenry. There is much difference among them on the manner and mode in which the state should be limited, but in opposition to the prevailing Liberal tendency to call upon it to act in every area of human life, from automation to social relations, they are firmly united upon the principle of limitation.

E. Similarly, American conservatives are opposed to state control of the economy, in all its Liberal manifestations, whether direct or indirect. They stand for a free economic system, for two reasons. In the first place, they believe that the modern state is politically so strong, even without controls over the economy, that it concentrates power to a degree that is incompatible with the freedom of its citizens. When to that power is added control over the economy, such massive power is created that the last defenses against the state becoming a monstrous Leviathan begin to crack. Second—though this is subsidiary in the conservative outlook to the danger to freedom—conservatives in general believe, on the basis of classical and neoclassical economic theory, that a free economy is much more productive of material wealth than an economy controlled directly or indirectly by the state.

F. American conservatism derives from these positions its firm support of the Constitution of the United States as originally conceived—to achieve the protection of individual liberty in an ordered society by limiting the power of government. Recognizing the many different partial outlooks that went into its inception, adoption, and execution, the conservative holds that the result was a constitutional structure concerned simultaneously with limiting the power of the individual states and of the federal government, and of the tripartite elements in both—through the careful construction of a tension of separate powers, in which ultimate sovereignty rested in no single part, but in the tension itself. Conservatives believe that this conception was the closest that human beings have come to establishing a polity which gives the possibility of maintaining at one and the same time individual liberty, underlying norms of law, and necessary public order. Against the Liberal endeavor to establish sovereignty, nominally in the democratic majority, actually in the executive branch of a national government, they strive to re-establish a federal system of strictly divided powers, so far as government itself is concerned, and to repulse the encroachment of government, federal or state, over the economy and the individual lives of citizens.

G. In their devotion to Western civilization and their unashamed and unself-conscious American patriotism, conservatives see Communism as an armed and messianic threat to the very existence of Western civilization and the United States. They believe that our entire foreign and military policy must be based upon recognition of this reality. As opposed to the vague internationalism and the wishful thinking about Communist "mellowing" or the value of the United Nations that characterize Liberal thought and action, they see the defense of the West and the United States as the overriding imperative of public policy.

It is difficult to summarize in a short space the consensus of a varied and living movement, especially when it is by its very nature opposed to ideology. I have attempted, however, to give here the best description of the contemporary American conservative movement that I have been able to derive from observation and experience. In confirmation of my summary, I would present from the actual political life of the conservative movement a statement which I think bears

me out. It is the Statement of Principles of the American Conservative Union, founded in December, 1964, with the aim of coordinating and guiding American conservatism. I believe it states in brief compass the position I have been endeavoring to analyze, and as a practical political document shows the essential congruity of conservative thought with that analysis.

The American Conservative Union holds firm the truth that all men are endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights. To a world floundering in philosophical anarchy, we therefore commend a transcendent moral order against which all human institutions, in every commonwealth, may confidently be judged.

We believe that government is meant to serve men: by securing their rights under a rule of law that dispenses justice equally to all; and in times of danger by marshalling the might of the commonwealth against its enemies.

We remark the inherent tendency of government to tyranny. The prudent commonwealth will therefore labor tirelessly, by means agreeable to its peculiar genius and traditions, to limit and disperse the power of government. No task should be confided to a higher authority that can be performed at a subsidiary level; and whatever the people can do for themselves should not be confided to government at all.

We believe that the Constitution of the United States is the ideal charter for governing the American commonwealth. The checks and balances that distribute the power of our national authority, and the principle of federalism that reserves to the states or to the people all power not confided to the national authority, are the cornerstones of every freedom enjoyed in this commonwealth. To their integrity we pledge a jealous defense.

We have learned that man's liberty, no less than his material interests, is promoted by an economic system based on private property and directed by a free, competitive market. Such a system not only enlarges the scope of individual choice but by dispersing economic decisions provides a further bulwark against the concentration of political power. And no other system can assure comparable living standards and growth. As against the encroachments of the welfare state, we propose a state of welfare achieved by free, collaborative endeavor.

Today the American commonwealth, as well as the civilization that illuminated it, are mortally threatened by the global Communist

revolution. We hold that permanent co-existence with Communism is neither honorable nor desirable nor possible. Communism would enslave the world by any means expedient to that end. We deem no sacrifice too great to avoid that fate. We would parry the enemy's thrusts—but more: by maintaining American military superiority and exerting relentless pressure against the Communist empire, we would advance the frontiers of freedom.

TRADITIONALIST AND LIBERTARIAN EMPHASES WITHIN THE CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT

There is, then, a consensus that gives the contemporary American conservative movement unity. As I argued at the beginning of this essay, it is a consensus that reflects a legitimate conservative outlook, in the sense that conservatism properly considered is not confined to the limited doctrines of the conservatism of any given historical period, but represents the effort to refresh and renew the tradition of a civilization and a nation in response to a radical challenge to that tradition. Nevertheless, although there is a conservative consensus today, there are stresses and strains within it, reflecting the differing emphases partially derived from variant strands of the tradition. Most of these stresses and strains within the conservative movement center around one fundamental clash of emphasis, that between what can be called the "traditionalist" and the "libertarian" elements within it.

The specifically American form of the Western tradition, which is the source and inspiration of contemporary American conservatism, is the consensus established by the Founding Fathers and incorporated in the constitutional settlement. While it is true that something of the tension between the traditionalist and libertarian emphases exists throughout the Western tradition and therefore exists within that consensual settlement, it had always been and remained at the time of the establishment of the Republic precisely that—a tension *within* a basic civilizational consensus. It is from that integrated foundation that the over-all consensus of the American conservatism of today is built. To some degree therefore the traditionalist-libertarian opposition within it is directly derived from its source. But many of the characteristics of that opposition, characteristics often threatening the maintenance of consensus, are derived from a very different source,

from the naturalization in the United States, during this century and the last part of the nineteenth century, of the nineteenth-century conflict between European conservatism and European liberalism. This is historically ironic because that European conflict was the aftermath of the French Revolution, and neither that revolution nor the system which it overthrew had relevance for the American situation. By the same token, the positions of European liberalism and European conservatism of the nineteenth century are also irrelevant here.

The philosophical position upon which the American constitutional settlement was based had already brought into a common synthesis concepts which were placed in radical opposition by the European conservative-liberal struggle: a respect for the tradition together with a respect for reason, the acceptance of the authority of an organic moral order together with a fierce concern for the freedom of the individual person. That synthesis is neither liberal nor conservative in the nineteenth-century sense. Efforts of writers like Louis Hartz to maintain that it is essentially "liberal" either in the nineteenth-century European sense or the twentieth-century American sense are based on a misunderstanding of the Constitutional consensus—as well as being historically anachronistic; and this is also true of those who would equate that consensus with the point of view of nineteenth-century European conservatism.

Nineteenth-century conservatism defended values based upon a fundamental moral order and the authority of tradition, standing firmly against the corrosive attack of utilitarianism, positivism, and scientism. But it did not recognize as a truth corollary to its defense of moral values that acceptance by individual persons of the moral authority of objective standards of the good must be voluntary; when it is a mere surface acceptance imposed by external power, it is without meaning or content. Nineteenth-century conservatism was all too willing to substitute for the authority of the good the authoritarianism of human rulers, and to support an authoritarian political and social structure.

Nineteenth-century liberalism, on the other hand, stood firmly for the freedom of the individual person and, in defense of that freedom, developed the doctrine and practice of limited state power and the free economy. But as it did so, it corroded by its utilitarianism belief in an

objective moral order as the foundation of respect for the value and integrity of the individual person and therefore the only firm foundation of individual freedom.

The traditionalist and the libertarian within the contemporary American conservative movement are not heirs of European conservatism and European liberalism because they draw from a common source in the American constitutional consensus. Their common effort to achieve a philosophical clarification of the consensus that underlies their actual empirical participation in the single movement is, however, impeded by the importation of the nineteenth-century European categories. As I have written elsewhere:

The misunderstandings between libertarian and traditionalist are to a considerable degree the result of a failure to understand the differing levels on which classical liberal doctrines are valid and invalid. Although the classical liberal forgot—and the contemporary libertarian conservative sometimes tends to forget—that in the *moral* realm freedom is only a means whereby men can pursue their proper end, which is virtue, he did understand that in the *political* realm freedom is the primary end. If, with Acton, we "take the establishment of liberty for the realization of moral duties to be the end of civil society," the traditionalist conservative of today, living in an age when liberty is the last thought of our political mentors, has little cause to reject the contributions to the understanding of liberty of the classical liberals, however corrupted their understanding of the ends of liberty. Their error lay largely in the confusion of the temporal with the transcendent. They could not distinguish between the *authoritarianism* with which men and institutions suppress the freedom of men, and the *authority* of God and truth.¹

The divergent emphases of traditionalist and libertarian are, however, gradually being resolved in the life of the American conservative movement. Several factors contribute to this resolution: common action in the political struggle against Liberalism; a conscious return to a study of the founding tradition of the Republic; and a deepening of contemporary conservative thought itself.

¹ "Freedom, Tradition, Conservatism" in *What Is Conservatism?*, ed. Frank S. Meyer (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1964), pp. 15-16.

PROBLEMS OF THE AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT

The deepening of conservative thought, however, is only at its beginnings. This is understandable, because in the dozen years or so that this conscious conservative movement has been in existence, its first intellectual task has been to fight for recognition as a legitimate position in an intellectual climate of conformity to Liberal norms. A movement striving to gather its forces in a hostile environment will quite naturally tend in the first instance to concentrate upon the simple statement and restatement of its basic principles, and upon elaborating those principles only insofar as it is necessary to sustain a critique of the principles and practices against which the movement is arrayed. When, following such a primary period of constitution, the intellectual sector of such a movement finds itself rather suddenly and somewhat unexpectedly involved in a serious political development like the Goldwater surge of 1960 to 1964, there arises an overwhelming temptation to turn aside from further development of fundamental thought and occupy itself with practical political questions of skills and techniques. It is true that the skills and techniques of political organization are essential to the success of a political movement, and that conservatives have only recently begun to cultivate them; but they are only auxiliaries for a movement which, by its nature, stands for nothing less than a radical transformation of the consciousness of an age.

This is what the contemporary American conservative movement exists to do. It has no other excuse for being. Concentration on method, without greater emphasis on transforming consciousness, could lead only to practical political rivalry with Liberalism on its own grounds. Such a development of conservatism would end by making it a right-wing of the Liberal consensus, not a challenge to its essence. The conservative movement in coming into being has set itself a greater and much more difficult task: to appeal to the civilizational instincts and beliefs that it feels survive half-smothered in the American people. But this cannot be done except upon the basis of a broad and profound development of the conservative world view.

That task is complex. Although, simply stated, the world view of conservatism is the world view of Western civilization, conservatism

in a revolutionary age cannot be content with pious repetition of a series of received opinions. Too much has been shattered for it to be possible ever merely to return to the forms and modes of the past. Conservatism needs to be more than preservative; its function is to restore, and to do so by creating new forms and modes to express, in contemporary circumstances, the essential content of Western civilization. To do this it cannot confine itself to a broad attack upon established Liberalism. It has to meet the pretensions of Liberalism area by area and point by point at the level that *conservative* pretensions to be the heirs of Western civilization demand. This requires nothing less than a critical appraisal of the corpus of the intellectual activity of the twentieth century, with the aim of applying ageless principles to it and thereby deepening those principles.

This is a task of which conservative scholars are becoming more and more aware. Nor would I want to give the impression that a good deal of work in this direction has not already been done. I emphasize the task, however, because upon a serious endeavor to fulfill it depends the growth to maturity of the American conservative movement.

Another problem corollary to this one, or more accurately derivative from it, confronts conservatism on a more immediate practical level. What I am referring to is the translation of conservative principles into specific alternatives to the accepted Liberal public policies. The weakness here is one of execution, a weakness which could be characteristic of any young and fresh movement and is not generically a conservative weakness. There is, however, a difficulty in overcoming it that derives from the underlying political stance of conservatism as compared with the stance of Liberalism, and from the tone of approach to social and political problems that prevails today because of the influence of Liberalism. Liberalism finds in every social situation problems to be collectively solved by planned action, usually action involving the use of the power of government. Conservatism considers some of these situations natural manifestations of the human spirit and not "problems" to be solved at all; others it recognizes as situations that can be improved, but only by time and the working of free human energies individually or in voluntary association; above all, it considers the greatest social and political problem the increasing provenance and power of the state and therefore considers a further increase of

that provenance and power a greater evil than the specific evils against which the state is called into action.

Since regnant Liberalism creates an atmosphere in which positive solutions to every conceivable problem are demanded, to be "negative" is the greatest of sins. But if conservatism is to be true to its vision, a large portion of its program will be negative insofar as proposing governmental action to remedy social situations is concerned. It will propose the limitation of government in order to free the energies of citizens to go about remedying these situations in their several ways as they see best. In the Liberal atmosphere this can easily be made to sound callous, hard-hearted, uncaring. But to maintain that hardships, deprivations, social imbalances are not properly or effectively solved by state action is not to deny their existence. Rather it is to call upon the imaginative exercise of voluntary altruistic effort to restore a widespread sense of responsibility for social well-being and to guard against the moral degradation of citizens as direct clients of the state or as indirect petitioners for community largesse.

Some examples of what can be done may be seen in the recent work of the Foundation for Voluntary Welfare, headed by Richard C. Cornuelle. It has already brought to completion one project and begun another, each of which is directed to the remedy of social situations through voluntary effort. The United Student Aid Funds has already been established through the agency of the Foundation for Voluntary Welfare, with the assistance of bankers, businessmen, and administrators, to preempt a large part of the field of loans to students, which would otherwise have become an additional activity of expanding government. Mr. Cornuelle's next project is to take Marion County, Indiana, as a pilot community and there to enlist all available private resources in an all-out attempt to eliminate hard-core unemployment in that county.

This is conservative action of a kind which cannot be incorporated in a neat "positive program" for the political arena (similarly, the enormous constructive thrust of private industry, which we have come to take for granted, does not lend itself to neat political packaging). But such action could and would be multiplied a thousandfold if a conservatively directed citizenry ceased to look to government and if the corollary shrinkage of government left in the hands of the citizens resources now taxed from them to support government programs.

But even when the charge of callousness to human distress is countered, the charge of negativity still remains. The only answer conservatives can make to this charge, unless they wish to descend to unprincipled demagoguery, is to show that a positive program for the preservation of freedom and the expansion of human energies requires a series of negative programs directed towards the dismantling of smothering governmental activities. Such a program can be effectively presented only if it analyzes compellingly and specifically the actuality of government activities area by area; otherwise, no matter how generally correct the criticism, it gives the impression of being merely destructive criticism. It is here that the conservative movement still lacks fully adequate programmatic development. It needs studies, such as those of Martin Anderson on urban renewal, of Arnold W. Green on governmental programs for the young, the old, for recreation, for automation, or of Roger A. Freeman on federal aid to education, in every field where Liberalism invokes state action. And further, it needs to develop means of effectively transmitting the conclusions of such studies to the electorate. Only in a few areas, such as national defense or the handling of crime, where government is the natural organ for positive action, can conservative programs be intrinsically "positive." Here, too, a great deal more development of general conservative positions is needed.

Such specification of a conservative program, negative or positive, is as necessary as the deepening and enriching of conservative thought on a higher level, which I discussed earlier. Until it is done, the statement of sharp conservative principle, which obviously demands deep-going change in the existing situation, can sound like irresponsible radicalism. If it is not backed up by a sober, specific, and conservatively restrained program of gradually phased transformation, the considered conservative position on limited government and resistance to Communism is in danger of being translated into such nightmares as the immediate cutting off of every Social Security check or the instigation of nuclear war against the Soviet Union.

Both in fundamental thought and in practical programmatics, the present need of the American conservative movement is to intensify its development. Its essential principles are clear; they constitute a doctrine that is truly conservative in that it is directed towards the

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recovery of the civilizational tradition. Its future depends upon its ability to deepen its understanding of those principles and achieve full maturity.

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THE FUNDAMENTALS

Tradition, Religion, Morality, and the Individual