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AMERICAN CONSERVATISM AND LIBERAL MYTHOLOGY

THE LIBERAL PUBLIC MIND of North America seems to find it impossible to think sensibly about American conservatism. This sad fact was put beyond doubt by the presidential campaign of 1964, and especially by the reporting and comment on it. Indeed, the massive denigration of Goldwater and the whole American conservative movement was such as to cry out for serious analysis, but since the professional analysts were the most vociferous denigrators, someone else will have to point out that these intellectual emperors are at least half-naked.

That Goldwater left himself open for such treatment may excuse the rather low tactics of his opponents in the election: politics is a rough game. But it cannot excuse those who were supposed to report and reflect on politics. Their very function implies an attempt at impartiality, yet they behaved like participants, not observers or interpreters. To make a long story short, the intellectual and journalistic community applied two distinct standards to the campaigns. Johnson's was taken at face value, with the half-affectionate tolerance that one bestows on the neighbour's children and glad-handing politicians. Goldwater's, where it was taken seriously at all, was gone over with a fine-toothed comb, and dissected according to the most academic norms, with all the devastating results which any campaign so treated would yield. Had the politician's norm been applied to both, no one could complain; even the scholar's norm so applied would have distributed the injustice equally. But the fundamentally different standards amounted to a betrayal of public trust.

When the people responsible for making and transmitting public opinion so abuse their power, the question of moral turpitude inevitably arises. But ill-will was not really at the bottom of the continent-wide liberal smear of the Goldwater campaign. The deplorable episode was far less the result of dishonesty than of certain structural flaws in the liberal mind. False frames of reference, ingrained habits of thought, can defeat the best intentions. Even

when the liberals knew what they were talking about, they did not know *how* to talk about what they knew. It is time to find out why. What is attempted here is an examination, not of this or that assertion or author, but of a series of related conceptual errors. They obtain throughout the liberal mind, especially in Canada. They must be brought to the surface, for they are incompatible with intelligent political discussion.

Before tackling the larger North American problem, it will be best to sort out the factors that apply only in Canada, which is a somewhat artificial creation of government. Our whole history witnesses to the facts of state sponsorship, ownership, and control, and without such persistent interference in the "natural" order of things there would be no Canada. One does not have to follow Burke to know that politics are based on the past experience of the area in which they evolve. Our politics are inherently more to the left than those of the United States. On matters of government control and welfare, it is only a matter of degree and speed which separates Canadians. So we act like liberals (or progressives)[1], are made so by our past (even though we may not at all accept the intellectual presuppositions that go with most kinds of liberalism). On this type of issue, then, Canada has few conservatives. The people usually called by that name are really satisfied liberals. They like things as they are, or the direction things are taking, as long as they do not move too fast for their somewhat sluggish powers of adjustment.[2]

Very different is the American experience—and its results. A vast natural entity—geographically, economically and, in a broad sense, culturally one —the United States has had far less need for direct government intervention, at least for its existence. Government activity has been an "extra" rather than a basic necessity. Americans have developed relatively less reliance on government, and their traditions reflect this tendency. Their whole range of political choices is to the right of us. This means that Americans often misunderstand our politics (on the rare occasions when they notice), and admire, or deplore, our comparative radicalism, mistaking it for what it would amount to in their circumstances. We rightly resent this, but in truth we are no better. We often fall into a similar trap, and fail to understand that their experience entails that different range of political choices. Thus we fail to judge American politicians in American terms. Those American terms require a great deal of understanding—which they seldom enough get from Americans themselves. The

peculiar nature of the American republic is the real reason for much Canadian misunderstanding of American conservatism.

The American republic grew, not by organic processes, but out of a revolution which was at least partly justified on certain abstract principles. The citizens are bound together by a resolve to live by those principles. As Professor Morton has noted (following Clinton Rossiter), the Americans are a people of the covenant.[3] When a nation is based on a covenant, one can be truly a citizen, a faithful citizen, only if one keeps to the covenant. But what is the covenant? The liberal thinks it is free expression of the individual, all individuals being equal and having equal rights—*tout court*. The conservative thinks it is the preservation of a certain type of common life, of "liberty under law", of limited government and devotion to more or less fixed ideals. Their disagreement is more than an argument; it is a death-battle, for one of them is a traitor—he has perverted the covenant.

The liberal knows that the conservative is a potential enemy of free expression. He may become McCarthy, attempting to impose on those he can reach the common tradition on which he feels the country is built. The sinister possibilities are clear. But the conservative is right too. The covenant *is* the basis—break it and the nation is destroyed, since the nation is the expression of the covenant. The liberals really think the same thing, only their version of the covenant is different, and their methods of enforcing it less crude. They can afford to wait, since the spirit of the age is on their side, and the national opinion-making media largely in their hands. One side has to be right, and the other side is not just wrong, but in fact is not American at all. Since the origins of the country allow of both interpretations (depending on where one looks), each side confidently appeals to history to ostracize the other, and in the most sweeping, not to say vicious, manner.

Unfortunately for the American conservative, he thinks in national, parochial terms, rather than in the universals of liberalism. Conservatives always alienate foreigners. So the Canadian Liberal finds a double affinity with his American counterpart. Thus he does not realize that when he criticizes American conservative enormities, he is really criticizing habits of mind common to *all* Americans. The Right hunts witches (radicals)—but the Left hunts extremists (reactionaries). In fact all Americans have to hunt the enemies of the covenant; it is their national vocation, and must remain so. What annoys Canadians about American conservatives is a function of their Americanism, more than of their conservatism.

Though the Canadian peculiarities are important, the main intellectual flaws lie in the American liberal mentality, of which the Canadian is but a poor relation, living on such scraps of food for thought as are dropped from the great table to the south of us. That mentality, never in very good health, has become quite twisted lately, and the direction of the twist, the fault in the rock, as it were, is not unrelated to one of the sillier fads of our time, the cult of "nonconformity".

Back in the 1950s, we heard much lugubrious complaining about the complacency of the Eisenhower era. It was the age of conformity. In Adlai Stevenson's phrase, the United States was "stalled on dead center", and this political analysis was applied in a wider sense to an age fat, comfortable, and unventuresome. Even the young were infected with the virus. Where was the social protest, the generous indignation, the articulate dissent of the New Deal era? We can all remember these moans. Everywhere, it seemed, the rage was "nonconformity". Crusading journalists, fashionable clerics, headline-hunting professors, administrators at a loss for something to say—all joined the pack in full cry.

Then came the 'sixties, and the New Frontier. But was this the new radicalism? Not exactly, because it took power, and power means responsibility, and responsibility means compromise. The real challenge to the "dead center" came from—of all places—the Right! The social critics had called spirits from the vasty deep, but they were the wrong spirits. These wights denounced centralized government, the welfare state, the "detente" with Communism, the ever-increasing power of the social engineers, in short all the things that sensible people agreed on.

This was hardly what the priests of nonconformity had expected. And so a strange thing happened. Subtly, but very quickly, "dead center" became the middle of the road, and began to look rather more attractive. It was discovered, in fact, that the progressives had been there all the time! Complacency now doffed her disguise and appeared as Moderation, and this new nonconformity was soon identified as Extremism. Now the hunt was up. Books, articles, editorials, speeches poured from the pens and lips of the liberals, and "nonconformity" was no longer the watchword. It was "Moderation". Iconoclasm was all very well, but some images were to be adored ever more piously. And so the mask was torn from the nonconformists.

Of course (*pace* Emerson) no sane person has ever really believed that nonconformity is good *in itself*, since its value, indeed its very meaning, depends entirely on what conformity involves, and this obviously varies. What

such demands always really mean is a *certain kind* of nonconformity, against *certain* things—in fact, a positive conformity to certain progressive ideals. But this its devotees have been too hypocritical to admit, and hence their fury when their little game was ended by the appearance of a kind of nonconformity which they hated. This helps to explain much of the incredibly vicious campaign against conservatives such as Goldwater. The appearance of a nonconformist Right forced the abandonment of the pretence that progressive positions were the unconventional and daring ones. They were shown to be in fact a vigilant and imperious orthodoxy. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned—unless it is a parcel of would-be revolutionaries exposed as a comfortably entrenched establishment.

One of the most interesting results of the Great Leap Centreward, and one of the most pervasive faults in the liberal mind, is what might be called the Strange Case of the Vanished Left, or the Fallacy of the Lop-sided Spectrum. For it is a fact that no one seems to be able to find the Left wing of the Republican Party. The conceptual fallacy which makes this possible is one of the most important tricks played by the liberal mind upon itself, and was glaringly evident in the 1964 campaign.

The political spectrum of "Left-Right-Center", the linear division of politics, is the one in which we all think.[4] This is used in two categories, the general or world-wide spectrum, and the local or parochial sub-spectrum. In the former, the Communist states are on the extreme Left, the Socialist parties are moderate Left, parties which call themselves Liberal or Democratic usually in the Centre, those like the American Republicans moderate Right, and the Franco and Salazar regimes on the extreme Right. This, or something like it, is generally accepted in the liberal view of politics, and in others as well. In the parochial situation, the sub-spectrum is employed. Here we may distinguish Left, Centre, and Right *within* any of the above groups. Thus Trotsky was on the Left, and Stalin on the Right, of the C.P.S.U. The British Labour Party, like other Socialist parties, has its Left-to-Right subdivisions. So do the Italian Christian Democrats, and the American Democrats. Even in such a regime as Franco's, this sub-spectrum can be applied (the Falange on the Left, the Army in the Centre, the Carlists on the Right). One could go on endlessly, but the point is well enough understood.

So commonplace have such sub-spectra become that the mind always makes the necessary adjustments. It is well understood that the British Right,

the Conservatives, are, in the general spectrum, to the Left of the American Democratic Party, because the whole British sub-spectrum is to the Left of the American. It is also clear that Stalin, on the Communist Right, was well to the Left of the Left wing of the British Conservative party, and had nothing in common with a southerner on the Right wing of the Democratic Party. These further divisions and sub-divisions, sub-spectra and (I suppose) sub-sub-spectra are well illustrated by a reporter's description in May, 1965, of the anti-steel-nationalization Labourites as "extreme right-wing socialists". It is perfectly accepted that these terms can apply to a sub-spectrum without in any way connecting the faction so described with the faction so designated in the general spectrum. Indeed they are absolutely necessary when studying any particular sub-spectrum.

But there is one place where this suddenly ceases to be the case, where the sub-spectrum behaves quite uniquely: there is no Left Wing in the Republican Party. A moment's reflection will confirm this. In 1964, Barry Goldwater was most willingly granted the epithet of Right Winger, but were Rockefeller and Scranton Leftists? We all know the answer. They were Moderates. There were no Leftists. I have heard this nomenclature defended with a straight face: after all, how ludicrous to call such men as Rockefeller Leftists! And on the general scale it is—as it is to speak of Right-wing Communists or Socialists, or Left-wing Conservatives or Peronists. Yet these terms are used every day, because they provide a means of more minute analysis of parts of the general spectrum.

The Republican sub-spectrum in 1964 read (from left to right), Liberal, Moderate (in fact the two terms were used interchangeably), Extreme Right! The Left, whose existence is posited by the admission that a Right exists, was nowhere to be found. The absurdity is evident. Where there is enough "opinion spread" to make *either* of the terms necessary, *both* must be used. There can no more be a political sub-spectrum with only a Centre and a Right than a balance with a pivot at one end. This Orwellian feat of imagination had its comic moments, as absurdity does, and its uses for the liberals, as will be seen below. They do not excuse a trick, a piece of political humbug. Such refusals to think clearly are pretty extreme in themselves: as was pointed out at the time, extremism in the defence of moderation was obviously no vice. The engineer or architect who applies this discovery of a viable balance with the centre at one end will make, and deserve, a large fortune.

Keeping logical company with this fallacy, and partly explaining it, was a descriptive device of the same kind. How often did one hear of "respect-

able" politicians and viewpoints, from people who had formerly classed that term with "Victorian", "puritanical", and the other hate-words of the so-called liberated mind. This went so far that Rockefeller's and Scranton's forces even became the real conservatives, the "respectable", "responsible" conservatives, while Goldwater's were the "extreme" conservatives, or simply "extremists". This verbal chicanery was what made the Lop-sided Spectrum so essential. To have termed Rockefeller & Co. "Leftist", in any sense however relative, would have made almost impossible the obfuscation by which he became a genuine conservative.

By now it must be perfectly clear what conservatives are—real, moderate, respectable conservatives, that is. They are the people who huff and puff about progressive demands and then lie down and die in a crisis, meekly accepting them. In between crises, they loyally conserve the liberal victories which their acquiescence made so easy. In the meantime, the liberals get ready for the next sham battle. Thus the conservative is yesterday's liberal, trying to postpone today's revolution until the day after tomorrow, when he will begin to conserve it.[5] This conservative can be tolerated, because he is so ineffectual, so fated to failure. (And he is a good butt for jokes, as Herblock's cartoons eloquently testify.) He is an unattractive, stodgy fellow, the very embodiment of inertia. But here the fiction can most easily be exposed. Inertia is a state of rest *or of uniform motion in a straight line.* The progressive is just as much the embodiment of inertia, since he sees progress as just such a type of political motion. These pseudo-conservative characteristics have nothing to do with conservatism. The real conservative, as distinct from the liberal's imaginary one, realizes that change is ever-present. He only wishes to change the direction of change. But this is against the liberal rules of the game, so he becomes a radical rightist, an extremist! Even the liberals' caricature of a conservative was a long way from a man as progressive as Rockefeller, but he was the man of the hour. The kind of "conservative" the liberals wanted the Republican Party to run was one whose platform was "more of the same". There is a lot to be said for "me too-ism", but it certainly is not conservatism.[6] To call it that, and to call conservatism extremism, is to debase the coinage of political discussion.

Of course real Right-wing extremists do exist, and flourish, and very unpleasant people they are. There are also extreme Leftists, and moderate Rightists, but we hear little of either. It is a habit of the liberal consensus (all the more widespread for being unconscious) that the Left is always described

in terms of its most moderate elements, the Right in terms of its most extreme.

Let us see what this entails. Goldwater's states' rights stand was described as implicitly racist because, however indirectly, it would have left the segregationists on top of the heap. Thus a position which would lead to the same end as an extremist one is taken as valid reason for calling its holder extremist. But a position which would lead to the same end as a Communist one (e.g. unilateral disarmament of the West, allowing a Communist takeover in South Vietnam) is not taken as valid reason for calling its holder a Communist. In the same way, it is a (secular) sin to call a Socialist a Communist, even though their principles overlap, but it is political analysis to call a conservative an extremist (sometimes even a fascist), for a similar or smaller overlapping. This has become so automatic that most people who do it would be amazed at being criticized for it. It has become part of the personality of the liberal intellectual.

It is certainly wrong to smear the whole Left with the activities of its extremists, but why is this not the case with the Right? And why is it not possible at least to discuss rationally the obvious similarities in the Left, always provided that the proper distinctions of motive are respected? But should anyone try to do so, though with twenty times the evidence thought sufficient for such parallels on the Right, he is a McCarthyite!

That name is, in a way, central to the whole problem. Coming as it did on the heels of the Hiss case, the shock administered to the liberals by that clumsy demagogue can hardly be exaggerated. And little wonder—who can forget that insolent monotone, those fatuous yet frightening accusations? But the liberals, who always exaggerated his influence, ought to revere his memory, for he did them far more good than harm, and his name has been invaluable to them. An English student of the matter neatly summed up this most lasting effect of the meteoric career of "the wild man from Wisconsin":

> Those in America called liberals . . . were not merely turned into martyrs by McCarthy's unjust and merciless harrying. They lived on as a group to fight another day, to caricature as McCarthyism any criticism of their ideas, which are often very bad ideas indeed. Paradoxically enough, McCarthy, the would-be killer of Communism in America, has ended by supplying that country's ideological soft centre with its finest defensive bulwark. To be left in peace, they have only to cry "McCarthyism" at any critique, however legitimate, of their activities.[7]

They have done their work well, and the pupils have exceeded the master who was their enemy.

No better example of "Left-wing McCarthyism", of the really colossal

smear, has occurred than that which immediately followed President Kennedy's assassination. Within an hour of the fatal shots (before the killer was identified), newsmen were wrathfully indicting the Rightists who were obviously the culprits in Right-wing Dallas. Here was proof positive of the evil of the extremists, in the person of one of them who had taken their bitterness to its logical conclusion. But when a Marxist who had lived in Russia was discovered behind the gun, a different tune had to be sung. A few diehards refused to face the unpleasant fact, but most liberals swallowed hard and began looking somewhere—anywhere—for the "real" guilt, which was finally found to lie in the generalized aura of hatred typical of Dallas and, of course, of the whole Right Wing. It is unnecessary to dwell on this fatuous episode. One can only wonder if the guilt would have been so generalized, the assassin's location in politics so unimportant, if he had been a Bircher who had spent some time in Spain.

There are crackpots, and worse, on the Right. There are people like Revilo Oliver (even the name is preposterous) who think that President Kennedy was a Communist. Are they any crazier than the intellectuals who firmly believe that the U.S. Air Force is plotting to seize the government and declare war on the Soviet Union? Are there really more people who think that Kennedy was a Communist than who think that the C.I.A. (or some such *bête noire*) planned his assassination? Both sides have lunatic fringes; only one fringe is noticed by the mandarins of the day.[8]

Much more than fairness or intellectual precision is involved here. Liberals should be especially concerned about one effect of their crude biases. There is a danger that they may help to prove themselves right, by encouraging what they profess to attack. The Right in politics always feels frustrated, and this can induce a bitterness which clouds the judgment. Furious at the repeated onslaughts of the progressives, seeing everything he loves crumbling around him, conscious of being deliberately slandered, the conservative can finally reach the point where, as the Arabs say, "My enemy's enemy is my friend". He can deceive himself into thinking that any enemy of his enemies, however unsavoury, is not such a bad chap after all. It needs little thought to see where this can lead, and has more than once led, unwary conservatives.

What has this to do with the liberals? Everything, for it is their rigid refusal to take seriously, much less to debate, challenges to what they regard as respectable or reasonable positions which often sets this baleful process in motion in their opponents. If one is going to be called an extremist no matter how reasoned and thoughtful one's arguments, why bother to avoid extremism?

Might one not as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb? If the whole weight of public opinion keeps insisting that one is an extremist, how long can one resist the pressure to prove it right? It may be rejoined that any responsible adult can guard his mental processes against this sort of perversion, but how true is this of the general run of humanity? We can become what we are constantly accused of being, as any psychologist knows.

How many McCarthyites and Birchers began as moderates and were driven by years of arrogant rigidity into a rigidity of their own? This doubtless seems far-fetched, but the truth sometimes is far-fetched. There is nothing more fatal to a political dialogue than the closed mind of a liberal intellectual. Armoured by the unanimity of the *cognoscenti* and what he is sure is the judgment of history, his hierarchy of virtues is "liberal, more liberal, most liberal" —and there is little outside it but the void. He may well condescend to talk to those on his left; after all, they mean well, and at least agree that man, through the state, is his brother's keeper. But there is no dialogue with the Right. As a great liberal journalist recently admitted, "it is one characteristic of progressives that they are impatient with anybody to the right of them, and tend to believe his views are, if not beneath contempt, at least beneath discussion".[9] Is this not a betrayal of the intellectual vocation? And could anything be more likely to embitter an opponent, to tempt him to become, in fact, an extremist?

We are forever being told about the danger of driving the Soviet Union into extreme courses by failing to look for any small signs of good intentions in its actions. Has anyone ever considered applying that thoughtful prudence to American conservatives? He who pushes another into a corner bears *some degree* of responsibility for what the cornered person does. Senseless Red-baiting has always encouraged Left-wing extremism. Now the liberals are making the same mistake. It is to the credit of millions of American conservatives that they have resisted the temptation—and the shame of the liberals that they are constantly abetting it.

At this point in the discussion, liberals might be pardoned for feeling sorry for themselves, or for harbouring even more violent emotions. Surely it is unjust to impute such skulduggery to them? Surely they are being smeared? By no means, nor need their motives be impugned, for in fact they could hardly act differently, given their background, the background of this generation of progressive intellectuals. Liberal abstractions have a fatal fascination for the

articulate man, the man who lives by words. They fit into words better than do the more cautious convictions of the conservative intuition. It is more tempting to be Paine than to be Burke. So commonplace an observation may seem redundant, but it has its place in the explanation. A more specific reason for liberal behaviour, however, is the history of the times. Those who report news and analyze it, and those who educate the young, are men whose attitudes were formed by the era of the Depression and of the New Deal, when the Left seemed to have all the answers. The Fascist eruption further damned the Right in their eyes (and the Communists were at least allies, if rather unpleasant ones, in that struggle). Permeating everything that has been done and thought in their world is a confidence in government control of economic life, social security, formal education of the young by men like themselves, a closer approach to world government, and a sort of mellowed secularism which absorbs rather than denies traditional religion. In the minds of this vastly influential class, matters like this are settled. The liberal mentality, which shies at dogma, may not know what is right, but it certainly thinks it knows what is wrong. In our context, what is wrong (hideously wrong, in the liberals' eyes) is the American conservative movement. That surprising phenomenon is no longer content to grumble and slow up "progress", after the manner of Senator Taft. It has finally proposed a *different direction of movement*, one which seems to undo so much of the hard-won achievement of the twentieth century, and in foreign policy to threaten the very existence of human society, outside of which, to the genuine liberal, there is no meaning at all in life. Faced with what he feels is this revolt against reason, the liberal ceases to be tolerant.

His attitude is epitomized beautifully in a scene from Allen Drury's *Advise and Consent,* where the reporters are arguing about how far they should let their convictions affect their reporting on an apparent conservative effort to block the confirmation of a prominent liberal as Secretary of State:

> "This is supposed to be an objective profession", the *Times* pointed out. "When the world's going to hell in a hand basket and Leffingwell's one of the greatest hopes for saving it?" the Baltimore *Sun* demanded. "Why shouldn't we throw everything we can at anybody who gets in the way?"[10]

In 1964, Barry Goldwater got in the way.

If Allen Drury is considered a hostile witness, Canadian liberals at least will surely listen to one of themselves on the subject of their biases. Writing from San Francisco, Charles Lynch, avowedly liberal and quite frankly anti-Goldwater, performed the rare feat of analyzing his own attitudes, his own hostility to what he was observing:

> The "small l" liberal thinking that has marked most of the writing and the journalism of our time has no vocabulary of praise for Goldwater and his followers, and the words that come easily are those of criticism, mockery and, when one sees the success he has achieved here, despair.
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> By the traditional political measuring stick of our time—the one that swept President Kennedy and his New Frontier into office four years ago—the words are merited. The question is whether the traditional political measuring stick merits the use made of it by those of us who write about and comment on the politics of our times.
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> My trouble, and that of many of my colleagues, is that I have no other measuring stick to use, my whole life having been lived in a time of progressivism in politics—the era of big government, big taxes and big political ideas . . . . I confess that in trying to be fair to Senator Goldwater I am conscious of trying to lean over backward, which in itself is a confession of bias.[11]

But at least Mr. Lynch tried; how many liberals did? They were, and are, the creatures of the influences he describes, which is explanation enough of what has been pointed out here. His honesty is rare, and even rarer is the introspection which made it possible.

This distinction between honesty and introspection is important, for most of what has here been deplored is unconscious habit of mind, not malicious intent, and nothing at all like a conspiracy. Honesty, like other virtues, is pretty evenly spread around humanity, liberals sharing in it as much as conservatives. Any dominant consensus is apt to ride roughshod over other viewpoints. If conservatives occupied the heights now in liberal hands, and all the editors were William Buckleys and Stanton Evanses, and all the professors Harry Jaffas and Willmoore Kendalls, they would be likely to do much the same to their unfortunate foes.

The problem is not so much moral as intellectual. What is needed is not a change of heart, but a clearing of the head, a change of intellectual habits. Once the spectrum fallacy, the extremist and McCarthy smears, and related tricks are brought to the surface, the liberal may start to think about the world of political opinion as it really is, rather than as he has fallen into the habit of imagining it.[12] In other words, he will gain a balanced picture of the whole range of American conservatism. Some of it may be ugly, a lot more will be vaguely disagreeable, but at least he will not peep about in terror of myths generated by his own intellectual sloppiness. And the effect on conservatives themselves can only be such as the liberals will rejoice in. "Peaceful coexistence" with conservatives cannot fail to exert a moderating and civilizing effect on the very elements which liberals profess to fear so much.

A fruitful analogy is suggested by the crude charts of early explorers.

They contracted the unknown areas to a small space, a sort of fringe of the known, but more than made up for that by darkly hinting at the terrors that were lurking there. Thus they underestimated the size, and overestimated the perils. When they had completed their work, they saw that the areas were larger but not so fearsome. The lesson is clear, and the kind of reassessment of the liberal mind called for here will result in a reasonably accurate political map of American opinion—instead of imaginative, monster-ridden scrolls with small dark areas ominously labelled, "Here be conservatives".

NOTES

1. The terms are virtually interchangeable, though the latter seems to imply a more deliberate and purposeful line of action.
2. The predicament of Canadian conservatism is well illustrated by the spurious toryism of the Toronto *Globe and Mail*. Its bewildering editorial farrago of fiscal orthodoxy, anti-unionism, nineteenth-century secularism, and eagerness for Communist trade dollars, can hardly be called conservatism. It would be more accurate to call it greedy but frightened liberalism, or more simply, commercialism. Its devotees are flaming progressives in everything that does not touch their pocketbooks.

   An even sadder example is Professor George Grant's idiosyncratic toryism as expressed in *Lament For A Nation*. It turns out to be a sort of unnatural union between John Diefenbaker's atavistic anti-Americanism and the planned economy dear to the socialist's heart. It is, despite the author's Scottish name, an Irish view of politics; conservatism will kill itself to save its life. With friends like Professor Grant, Canadian conservatism needs no enemies.
3. W. L. Morton, *The Canadian Identity* (Madison, Wisconsin, and Toronto, 1962), pp. 84 ff.
4. This mental convenience leaves a great deal to be desired, and many attempts have been (and ought to have been) made to find a better way of classifying political groups. But it is accepted in this analysis because it is still the only one in widespread use.
5. This is no caricature of the liberal view. The author remembers hearing Professor Frank Underhill, as generous and intelligent a man as has ever graced Canadian liberalism, explaining, about 1954, that the task of conservatives was conserving liberal triumphs. He was, as the saying goes, half joking and all serious. His whole exposition of the matter followed much the same path that I have traced here.
6. What can be said for it is that any party must adapt to its circumstances, and any government to what its predecessor did. Thus continuity is preserved, and the oscillation of policy kept within bounds. Tweedledum and Tweedledee may not cut very imposing figures, but they do not shoot each other, either, a merit we too easily forget. But to concede this is not to make such salutary

compromise the *raison d'être* of a conservative party, nor to forbid it to pursue "restorative" aims by a genuinely different course of action.

7. Paul Crane, "Wild Man From Wisconsin" [review of Richard Rovere's *Senator Joe McCarthy*], *The Month*, August, 1960.
8. The conspiracy approach to complex situations is more widespread than some imagine. Progressives have always blamed Big Business for many of the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to, and in fact the political rhetoric of Socialist parties is one big theory of capitalist conspiracy. The current dark mutterings about "warfare states", "military-industrial complexes", the rash of novels and movies on this topic (*Dr. Strangelove*, etc.), are also perfect examples of it. It is ironic that the very people who most devoutly believe in these conspiracies are loudest in their abuse of their counterparts on the Right.
9. Charles Lynch, column in *The Hamilton Spectator*, Sept. 15, 1964.
10. Allen Drury, *Advise And Consent* (London, 1960), p. 316.
11. *Hamilton Spectator*, July 16, 1964. In the same candid spirit, Mr. Lynch had the day before scored "Governor Scranton and his supposedly enlightened supporters of the party's intellectual wing" for indulging in "extremism and smear tactics of a kind seldom seen within a political party, in an effort to undermine the front-running Senator Barry Goldwater". And all this without changing his firm conviction that Goldwater's mere candidacy was a "disaster". Here was a reporter! When comes such another?
12. This will, incidentally, be a practical help to the liberals. It was their persistent refusal to take the conservatives seriously which led them to underestimate the Goldwater groundswell in the Republican Party until it was too late. The resultant shock, which was entirely their own fault, explains much of the hysteria in their subsequent behaviour.