

CHICAGO, ILL.
SUN-TIMES

m. 538,780
S. 661,622

Front Page Edit Page Other Page

Date: OCT 18 1964

STATINTL

HOKE NORRIS
CPYRGHT



Critic At-Large

—WHERE RIGHT GOES WRONG

There are thousands, perhaps millions, of persons in this country of ours who would if they could (and they're trying) save you from communism, socialism, Democrats, Republicans, liberals, integration, income taxes, labor unions, public works programs, the Supreme Court, the NAACP, the CIA, the Girl Scouts, the YWCA, the YMCA, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Richard M. Nixon, Lyndon B. Johnson, public schools, Community Chests, old-age pensions, the United Nations, the armed forces, police departments, the postal system, the Atomic Energy Commission, immigration and the fluoridation as your drinking water.

As disparate as that list is, all of its elements share in common the enmity of the extremely conservative and radical right that at one time or another has assaulted all of them. These American rightists, then, would if they could (and they're trying) destroy the America that we know and that I assume, all of us cherish. And they're conducting their assaults while shouting pro-American slogans. It makes a curious story.

The story has often been told in various books about the right wing. A new and vigorous study of the subject appeared the other day—"Danger on the Right," by Arnold Forster and Benjamin R. Epstein, with a foreword by Dore Schary, national chairman of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (Random House, \$4.95 hardback, \$2.95 paperback). Epstein is the league's national director and Forster is its general counsel, and the book was written, says the report, "as part of the ADL's total public service program." They look close and long at 11 dwellers in the intellectual slums of the radical right—Robert Welch of the John Birch Society, Dr. Frederick C. Schwarz, the Rev. Billy James Hargis, Dr. George Benson, the Rev. Carl McIntire, Dean Clarence Mannon, Dan Smoot, Edgar Bundy, Kent and Phoebe Courtney and Willis Stone—and at such extreme conservatives as Adm. Ben Morrell and William F. Buckley, with briefer treatment of lesser personages and organizations.

Danger Has Its Funny Side . . .

THE READER who has kept his political and intellectual wits about him may be amused by part of "Danger on the Right."

Certainly, in the air of mingled dedication and doom that the crusaders of the right manage to engender, a reader may chuckle over the vast sums of money they collect and the

luxury with which some of them surround themselves. The Rev. Mr. Hargis, he of the Christian Crusade, is paid \$500 a week, lives in a \$44,000 home bought for him by his organization, uses \$200 of its funds a week for maid service in the "parsonage," rides in a \$7,500 car bought by the Crusaders and travels in a Greyhound bus that they reconditioned for him at a cost of \$50,000 (steel kitchen, refrigerator, radio broadcasting facilities and sleeping accommodations for five). One would only observe that Paul Revere furnished his own horse.

There may also be an element of indulgent humor found in the odd blending of childishness and mental derangement that marks the far right and its fellow travelers. What the "Danger on the Right" authors say about the young students among the extreme conservatives might be said about their elders as well. "In short," the authors write, "these young rightists believe that there is such a thing as absolute good and absolute truth—and being of tender years, they believe that they have the key to these absolutes and the answers that flow therefrom." They would solve all problems with a single simple solution (invade Cuba). They are not prepared for a life that may perforce be lived out in a dim zone between victory and defeat. They yearn to know once more a nation that can simply send the Marines to Nicaragua, and let it go at that.

. . . Until You Stop And Think About It

BUT THE reader's laughter cannot be sustained. He must let the weight of the movement sink in: Read the list of contributors among wealthy individuals and large corporations that obviously agree with the rightists, and consider the possible impact of the movement upon our future.

Most of its members seem pleased by the Republican nomination of Sen. Barry Goldwater for the Presidency. It was a victory for them, whatever the disclaimers entered by non-right Republicans. The rightists have seen their members and supporters elected to Congress and to other high offices. They are raising up a young generation, undergraduate and post-graduate, that is articulate, intelligent, crafty and dedicated, and that will be with us for a long time to come. The rightists will continue to be a problem for moderate Republicans, and for such conservatives as Buckley who must, the authors write, eventually "come to the day when they regard the Birchers, the Crusaders, the McIntires, the Smoots and the Courtneys as millstones of which they must be free."

But, the authors add, the rightists are also the nation's problem: "It cannot afford confusion on the right, and if the confusion persists, the public will in the end reject the Conservative along with the radical. Our democracy needs a conservative faction. Without it, we will be the poorer, but we will survive."

Forster and Epstein believe that the intended victims of the radical right will also survive—our military-foreign policy, the Supreme Court, the income tax, Social Security, TVA; the war on poverty, the cause of civil rights—because American decisions have always been made "at, or near, the vital center—sometimes a little to the left, sometimes a little to the right. For that is where the voices of reason and moderation are heard."