

Review Articles

Report on Conservatism

The American Right Wing. By Ralph E. Ellsworth and Sarah M. Harris. (Occasional Papers, number 59) Urbana: University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science, 1960. 50p. \$1.00.

Subtitled "A Report to the Fund for the Republic, Inc.," *The American Right Wing* presents a survey, of greater breadth than depth, of the literature of conservatism during the middle years of the last decade. Owing to the death of Miss Harris in 1959, the study has not been carried beyond 1958. Consequently, it does not discuss the supposed revitalization of conservatism which followed the reelection in that year of Senator Goldwater, and which came to light in the sharpened conflict within the Republican Party, in the widely publicized new wave of conservatism among university undergraduates, and in the fuss over the John Birch Society. Nor do the authors intend to provide a history of Right Wing movements or a full exposition of Right Wing philosophies.

The authors *do* provide a high-spirited dash through a wilderness of rightist organizations, publications, and spokesmen, and enliven some occasionally dreary conservative strictures with wry observations of their own. No semblance of pale neutrality will be found in the body of the report, for their attitudes, ranging from amusement to contempt, are evident throughout, in spite of what seems to be a protestation of impartiality among Mr. Ellsworth's scholarly disclaimers in the Preface.

Rightist groups and publications are treated in turn according to certain clusters of ideas. These ideas are overwhelmingly negative in tone: the Right Wing is anti-Communist, anti-union, anti-integrationist, and sometimes anti-Semitic; it is opposed to progressive education, liberalized immigration, foreign aid, the Supreme Court, and the United Nations; and it is especially cognizant of the many threatening features of a strong and active federal government. The

Right Wing favors decentralized government, individualism, and Chiang Kai-shek.

Among the diverse bodies mentioned in the report may be found such "moderate" groups as the medical and bar associations which defend the status quo insofar as their special interests are affected, together with such extreme examples of the psychotic right as the Christian Nationalists and the Anglo-Israelites. The reader is rightly warned, in both text and notes, to beware imputing the notions of a few groups to all the organizations cited.

The American Right Wing is spotted with many small errors caused by careless typing. It is in large part a bibliographical essay, but its utility is diminished by the lack of a separate bibliography and an index. With an index, the work would be a more useful adjunct to the brief listings in the *First National Directory of "Rightist" Groups, Publications, and Some Individuals*.

From this lively account of American conservatism and Right Wing extremism in 1958, the reader should gain a fuller understanding of the several viewpoints at one end of our political spectrum, and a better acquaintance with the voluminous, but often little known, literature of these movements. The authors perform a further service by placing in perspective such curious items in the rightist canon as the opposition to mental health programs and the campaigns against fluoridation of water.—Richard Zumwinkle, *University of California, Los Angeles*.

Manuscript Inventory

American Literary Manuscripts; a Checklist of Holdings in Academic, Historical and Public Libraries in the United States. Compiled and published under the auspices of the American Literature Group, Modern Language Association of America, by the Committee on Manuscript Holdings. Austin, Tex.: University of Texas, [1960]. xxviii, 421p. \$5.00.

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