

were imprisoned by the Nazis at war's end. "By May, 1943 in the German Reich, 8,000 Catholic clergy were imprisoned in Dachau and 1,400 monasteries had been closed," states Martin Doohry, who, as professor of history at DePaul University, specialized in Nazi atrocities.

Wills' tireless efforts to politicize history are defeated by the facts. Nevertheless, his book will be of use to anti-Catholic radicals, who can point to it as the work of a Catholic intellectual who confirms what they have always thought about the Church. Church historian James Hitchcock shakes his head dolefully:

[Wills'] main objections to Church teaching turn out to be exactly those things which bother present-day secularists. If the Church were faithful to its heritage in the ways Wills prescribes, its teachings would largely echo the editorial page of *The New York Times*.

Predictably, Wills is pro-abortion. In his syndicated newspaper column, he has presented Augustine and Aquinas as supporters of *Roe v. Wade*. Ignoring opposition to abortion as far back as the first-century *Didache* ("you shall not procure abortion nor destroy an unborn child"), and avoiding mention of the condemnations by St. Basil in A.D. 374, Wills makes it appear that Augustine's and Aquinas's discussions of "ensoulment" invalidate Catholic theology. Hindered by ancient biology, Augustine and Aquinas were uncertain as to when human life begins. But they never endorsed abortion—*never*. Wills does not admit this. He has cited favorably the belief that, up to the seventh month after conception, an unborn child "is just a pile of wires and switches . . . not an electrical circuit." Nor does he recognize recent medical research, summarized by Dr. Bradley Patten in *Human Embryology*: "The cell results from fertilization of an oocyte by a sperm and is the beginning of a human being. Each of us started life as a cell called a zygote." It is inconvenient information, so Wills ignores it.

Wills' solution to the scandals involving priestly pedophilia is to allow priests to marry. But if one's sexual orientation is fixed and non-sinful—as Wills and the gay community insist—why should pedophiles be satisfied with wives? Indeed, many of them, including non-Catholic

clergymen, are married men. How does Wills answer this? He does not, nor will he ever face the question so long as he continues carefully to select his media venues. I asked him to be a guest on my radio talk show and never heard back: Garry Wills only assents to interviews where he will not face tough questioning.

For Wills, who has denied philosophical and theological absolutes in his own life, the only certainties remaining can be provided by the regulatory state. In recognition of Wills' service to the deconstructionist culture, and for his defense of the grossest personal immorality ever perpetrated by an American president, Bill Clinton conferred on Wills the National Humanities Medal. How fitting: From the hands of the Abortion President to the outstretched grasp of the Great Dissembler from whose word processor flow countless deceitful books, the honor passes.

Many years ago, Bishop Fulton Sheen was accosted by a young priest who announced that he was leaving the Church because he had trouble with several complex doctrines. Sheen looked at him for a

long moment and then said, softly: "Who is she?" When another priest came to him, tendering his resignation for the reason that the Church purportedly builds cathedrals while the poor starve, his words were: "How much have you stolen?" Both men were shamefaced with guilt. What bothers Wills about the Church may not be papal sin but his own inner discontent with strictures that impose a burden—but of course, we cannot know.

With *Papal Sin*, Wills moves not just to the left but to the province of such utopian radicals as Wilhelm Reich, Allen Ginsberg, Norman Mailer, Susan Sontag, Timothy Leary, Abbie Hoffman, Tom Hayden, the Black Panthers, and Charles Reich. His desire to be Pope Garry lurks behind his anger. Yet, having (in his mind) demolished papal infallibility, he should not want to be pope: His Church, shorn of the Eucharist, absent its distinguishing marks, would be Unitarian at best. And what good is a pope of the Unitarians? As useless as a Kim Philby living in the Soviet Union.

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An October Almanac

by *Brendan Galvin*

That nameless tint hovering above sunset
a few evenings, just shy
of the conflagration, has bequeathed
itself to the sickle asters now. Rich
with it, they foam up everywhere,
largess in the glower of a hunter's moon
that aims to change everything. Poison
ivy's taken off up trees and down ditches,
in robbery or elopement carrying away
those last western lights that bleed out into
darkness. Now deer have traded their
coats to cinnamon ferns, in exchange for
the marshes' weathered brindle.
This morning, where their track angles
down out of the high woods
to the drinking place at the river,
signs of a scuffle that churned the path
to dirt. The dog noses there, eyes doleful
with last night's story: late, the world
gone black and white, a face, briefly
between trees, then faces wild to cancel barter.

Middle American Mellow?

by Samuel Francis

America's Forgotten Majority: Why the White Working Class Still Matters

by Ruy Teixeira and Joel Rogers
New York: Basic Books; 232 pp., \$25.00



Since the 1960's, American politics at the national level has primarily consisted of an endless search for a new majority. The Democratic Party's embrace of the civil-rights movement kicked off the quest by undermining the New Deal coalition that combined white Southerners with white, ethnic, Northern union members, allowing the Republican Party to invade the South and even swipe many of their rivals' voters in the North. The Democrats, in return, got the black vote and kept (usually) most of the union vote, but as the victories of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan attest, the GOP got the better deal. Ever since, the Democrats have been seeking to rebuild the coalition they lost without having to abandon the eccentric positions to which both their ideological preferences and new electoral base wed them. The best tactic they have devised is to nominate white Southern candidates, such as Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and Al Gore, who never jeopardize the structural basis of the left's hegemony in state, economy, and culture but can plausibly masquerade as less leftist than the party and its true bosses really are. This strategy has indeed fooled some of the people some of the time, but it cannot work in the long run because the party's radicalism cannot be concealed forever, and when it comes out, white middle-class voters will defect.

The perennial quest of the Democrats, therefore, is to steal back the voters who, over the years, have been known as "Wallace voters," the "Silent Majority," "Reagan Democrats," or "Perot voters," all of whom are more or less synonymous with the white (and largely male) working- and middle-class base the Democrats lost in the 60's. The Republicans, however,

managed to win enough of these voters, at least through 1988, to keep the White House, although in 1992 and 1996 the combination of Clinton and Perot on the ballot, coupled with the Stupid Party's own lack of understanding of why white men vote for it, endangered continued GOP control of this key sector of the electorate. In recent years, political analysts on both sides of the fence have claimed that alternative voting blocs—"soccer moms" in the suburbs, Hispanic immigrants in the West and Southwest—have begun to play the strategic role white males played for the last 30 years. Hence, both parties have neglected white males and their interests and concerns, which is why they have become the "Forgotten Majority" (about 55 percent of the total electorate) in the title of this slim new study.

America's Forgotten Majority is a convincing restatement of the continuing significance of white male working- and middle-class voters in national elections. Both Ruy Teixeira and Joel Rogers are political scientists of leftist orientation, however, and it is their thesis as well as their hope that the "Forgotten Majority" is no longer the right-wing power base it has been since the 1960's, that it has now mellowed enough to be able to serve as the new base of a resurgent liberalism which "can revive active, strong government and build a 21st-century prosperity that is truly inclusive of all Americans."

Aside from the thinly disguised agenda of their book, in many respects Teixeira's and Rogers' analysis is almost identical to the one advanced in 1976 by the late Donald Warren, whose study of the Wallace voters in the late 1960's and early 1970's led to his coining the term "Middle American Radical" (MAR)—a concept that both Kevin Phillips and I have used to describe the Wallace-Nixon (and later Buchanan) voting base. MARs, in Warren's analysis, were not only characterized by their middle-income status but by their association with a distinctive worldview: that "the rich" (or the powerful) give in to the demands of "the poor" at the expense of the middle class. It was this belief that accounted for their "radicalism" (their distrust of government, the rich, and establishment authorities in virtually every field) and made them recep-

tive to alternative leadership from the anti-establishment, populist right. MARs saw themselves as exploited by an alliance between the ruling class and the underclass, and they rejected both the pro-underclass policies favored by the conventional left as well as the pro-ruling class policies championed by the mainstream right. As Wallace showed in his campaigns, MARs were entirely open to a "third way" that sought to synthesize the cultural beliefs of the right (patriotism, moral and religious traditionalism, racial and class identity) with some of the economic ideas of the left (middle-class safety nets, health, employment, and retirement benefits).

Teixeira and Rogers never refer to Warren and his work; they mention George Wallace on only one page and Pat Buchanan not at all, but their description of the Forgotten Majority resembles, with some differences, Warren's description of MARs. Economically, Forgotten Majority types tend to be "low-level white collar and service workers" rather than the blue-collar factory workers of the 60's and 70's. Only about 17 percent hold factory jobs today. Their median family income is about \$42,000, as opposed to MARs' \$3,000 to \$13,000 family income in the early 1970's. They live in the suburbs and are better educated than the older working class: Four-fifths hold high school diplomas and around two-fifths have some education beyond high school. As Teixeira and Rogers argue, "the typical blue-collar or low-level white-collar worker was on a rapid escalator to the middle class until 1973, but after that had to work hard simply to maintain his or her hold on the income necessary to maintain a middle-class lifestyle."

The result has been a "disjuncture" between the core values of the Forgotten Majority, its belief in what the authors describe as "freedom, equality before the law, equality of opportunity, fairness . . . achievement and hard work . . . patriotism, democracy, American exceptionalism . . . caring beyond the self, religion, and luck," and, on the other hand, its economic experience as its values have ceased to bring the expected material rewards. "The failure of activist government to restart that escalator, combined