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## Book Review

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# Wrong in the end: What is the fatal flaw of Pat Buchanan?

by Doug Mallouk

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### **Right from the Beginning**

by Patrick J. Buchanan

Regnery Gateway, Washington, D.C., 1991

440 pages, paperbound, \$12.95

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For years, American conservatives and other self-proclaimed patriots have insisted, correctly enough, that the “main enemy” of our republic is an international banking and raw materials cartel controlled by a blue-blooded elite dedicated to replacing constitutional government with a global financial dictatorship, the infamous “one world order.”

Now that enemy is right out in the open, as Trilateralist President George Bush brazenly proclaims that the goal of his insane Persian Gulf adventure is to establish precisely that “New World Order,” in explicit partnership with a re-emergent Soviet dictatorship.

Surely the stalwarts of American nationalism and traditionalism should be leading the charge against this international oligarchic outrage. Yet, with some notable exceptions, most U.S. conservatives are either expressing their impotence through a deafening silence, or worse, actively cheering on the Bush-Kissinger drive toward a “one-world” hell.

No one better epitomizes this dismal conservative “tradition” of capitulation and self-defeat than syndicated columnist and oft-mooted “right-of-Bush” 1992 presidential challenger Patrick J. Buchanan. Buchanan is an excellent case study, not because he is the worst of the conservative spokesmen, but on the contrary, because until recently he had been among the best of an admittedly poor lot.

As *EIR* readers are aware, Buchanan distinguished himself beginning last August by penning a blistering series of attacks on the Bush-Thatcher military buildup in the Gulf. Saying things that no other major political figure except Lyndon LaRouche would dare to utter, Buchanan charged in various columns that the whole thing was the “last hurrah” of the “Trilateral-Big Business-Wall Street elites” desperate to stop the emergence of a healthy nationalism in especially the former colonial backwaters of the world; that the U.S.

was being dragged into the role of replacing the British as the new overlords of a balance-of-power global arrangement that could only end up as disastrously for America as it did for Her Majesty’s Empire; and, most significantly, that American perception and policy-making in the Middle East was being played like a fiddle by the so-called Zionist Lobby (a British, not Jewish, creation), emphatically including the organized-crime riddled Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith (ADL). It is hardly surprising that in testament to his effectiveness and courage, Buchanan soon found himself subjected to a small sampling of what was meted out to LaRouche, with ADL hitman Abe Foxman publicly demanding that all American newspapers blackball him.

Yet no sooner did the shooting in the Gulf start, then our anti-Trilateral warrior suddenly went AWOL from the political fight he had championed only days earlier. “There was an argument for going to war and an argument for not going to war,” he scribbled. “But there is no argument for going to war and not winning decisively.” With this pathetic rationale, Buchanan managed to dissipate in one stroke the entire moral capital he had previously built up.

Buchanan’s colleagues were stunned at his Paul-to-Saul reverse conversion. As the anti-Gulf war conservative columnist Joseph Sobran put it, “I don’t see where the act of pulling the trigger gives this war one whit more justification than it had before.”

Sobran is of course right. But what is to account for this distinctly clinical tendency of not only Buchanan, but also of U.S. conservatives generally, to morally self-destruct?

A large part of the answer can be found in Buchanan’s 1988 autobiography *Right from the Beginning*. When ABC correspondent Diane Sawyer writes on the book’s back flap that “now we know why Pat Buchanan believes as he does and behaves as he does” she is hitting on a truth that she never intended to express. The stilted title of the book is unfortunately appropriate to its content, even though it explicitly excludes the last 20-odd years of his public life, saving that for a promised sequel. Mostly consisting of homey, Ronald Reagan-esque anecdotes demonstrating how his family and school experiences shaped his commitment to traditional morality, anti-communism, and the work ethic,

Buchanan's essay frequently veers off into political theorizing. There, it is a virtual catalogue of every right-wing ideological flaw that has kept would-be patriots under the heel of the liberal establishment for decades.

### **'By their heroes, you shall know them'**

Buchanan's heroes, his candidates for membership in a "Conservative Hall of Fame," constitute a rogues' gallery of moral degenerates. Included are the late FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, whose relentless vendetta against Martin Luther King was an expression of homosexual rage against a black man daring to demonstrate political potency—certainly echoed in Bush's similar atrocities against Manuel Noriega and Saddam Hussein; the phony "anti-communist" asset of the notorious Father Walsh, Sen. Joseph McCarthy; and Project Democracy pretty boy, the drug-and-gun pusher Oliver North.

But the worst manifestation of Buchanan's fatal flaw is his adulatory defense of the indefensible army commander responsible for more U.S. soldiers' deaths than any single foreign military leader: "In the hierarchy of values, the claims of one's country must take precedence over the claims of 'international law.'" When America has committed herself to a military course of action, even if ill-considered or unwise, she deserves the service and support of her people. Was that not the lesson of the life of Robert E. Lee? Offered the command of the Union armies, Lee declined the honor, surrendered his commission, rode across the Long Bridge and volunteered to fight against his oldest friends in the U.S. Army, on behalf of his people and state, Virginia, that he believed were in the wrong, both on secession and slavery. Confronted with one of the great moral dilemmas of American history, Robert E. Lee chose to go down to defeat alongside his own misguided countrymen. That is patriotism; that is nobility; and that is why even military foes respected and admired Robert E. Lee."

No, Pat, "that" is monstrous drive! As Anton Chaitkin has amply demonstrated in *Treason in America*, the Confederacy was absolutely not the outcome of some indigenous Southern rebellion, but rather a top-down synthetic creation of the Scottish Rite Freemasonry and other British agencies to divide and re-conquer Britain's ex-colonies. Moreover, Virginia itself voted against secession, only to have the state apparatus usurped by the pro-Confederacy faction, while the Unionists managed to hold onto the 64 counties that became West Virginia. So the "patriot" Lee sided with the slave owners and Mother England, not only against the national government, but also against the majority in his own state!

The parallels to today are immediately obvious. Once again, Americans are being asked to support a fight for maintaining chattel slavery, in the present-day form of the disgusting el-Sabah royal family, deposed masters of the oil plantation known as Kuwait. Once again, America's oldest enemy, the British oligarchy, designs the banners, with the "New World Order" replacing the Stars and Bars of the Con-

federacy. And once again, potential leaders of resistance to this evil, hiding behind a misplaced sectional loyalty they falsely call patriotism, knowingly betray both their consciences and the real interests of their country.

Buchanan and others may sing the praises of Lee's indisputable military acumen and battlefield valor. But he ended up on the wrong side of a war that should never have been fought, because he conspicuously lacked a more important virtue, as described by Lyndon LaRouche in his last public address before being hauled off to prison: "There's another kind of courage. The military people say we have to get people back, willing to fight for their country. I say, why should they fight for their country? You mean you're against fighting? I'm not against fighting for the country, but I'm giving you a Socratic question. Prove to us that patriotism is a valid emotion. Maybe when you're fighting for your country, you really should be fighting for something much more profound than your country. Maybe you should be fighting for the idea of your country as an instrument to serve the purposes of natural law in providing truth and freedom to the individual. Maybe that's what is worth fighting for.

"In order to deal with the crisis that confronts us, we must look within ourselves and find a value within us so precious, that if we spent our lives to defend that value, we would have thereby gained our lives, because we had gained the purpose of our mortal existence. And that's what a soldier ought to carry into battle as courage. Not patriotism, but that. Not patriotism as the abstraction of a flag, not patriotism as a racist concept, not patriotism in any other of these symbolic senses, but patriotism in the sense which we ought to have in these United States but are pretty much estranged from." ("Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread," reprinted in *New Federalist* Oct. 27, 1989.)

That the composer of these lines has been stuck in a federal jail cell for two-plus years is the critical-experimental proof of just how estranged indeed America has become from that higher conception of love of country.

To put "Right from the Beginning" in proper perspective, it is not necessary to disparage everything Buchanan has written therein. If the outbreak of war has caused him to lose his head, he had a head to lose in the first place. His book provides a spirited, if limited, defense of the Catholic, family-centered belief system he absorbed before the polluted tide of the counterculture washed up on America's shores. Moreover, Buchanan may have been "gently persuaded" to get back in line by the kind of charming blackmail tactics that the Anglo-American establishment and its ADL "Amen Corner" have refined. What can be ascertained from the autobiography, though, are the internal weaknesses that would tend to make him susceptible to such external pressure.

American conservatives, take note: Eschewing a thought-out concept of patriotism for simple flag-waving makes it all too easy to become, like the author of *Right from the Beginning*, tragically wrong in the end.