

*The synthesis of moral vision
and political thought*

The Conservatism of Reinhold Niebuhr: The Burkean Connection

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DURING THE 1950s and 1960s a significant debate arose over whether Reinhold Niebuhr's political thought had turned in a conservative direction. That debate quieted as Niebuhr's writing and active involvement in American public life ceased because of illness and finally his death in 1971. It also quieted because new questions about Niebuhr's politics, especially about his Cold War writings, were raised in the intellectual and political climate created by the Vietnam War. Some writers, such as Paul Merkley and Richard W. Fox,¹ argued that Niebuhr's post-World War II politics sank gradually to the level of an uncritical apotheotic for New Deal liberalism and the Cold War foreign policy of the United States.

This Niebuhr revisionism is itself a subject deserving of discussion.² But on this occasion I would like to turn back the page to the debate about Reinhold Niebuhr's conservatism. There are at least two good reasons why this is worth doing. First, whether or not one reaches the conclusion that Niebuhr's politics evolved into a kind of conservatism—perhaps, as some have argued, sympathetic to the politics of Edmund Burke—the exercise uncovers dimensions of Niebuhr's political thought not usually illumined by his religious or liberal interpreters. In other words, it can

widen and deepen our understanding of Niebuhr's thought itself. Second, a renewal of the discussion over the place of Niebuhr's political thought in the history of Anglo-American politics is especially timely because of the rise and/or ascendancy during recent years of conservative politics in the United States, England, and Canada. The fact that Niebuhr is claimed as a spiritual father by such neoconservatives as Michael Novak, Irving Kristol, and Ernest Lefever only makes such an inquiry that much more intriguing. And with the re-election of Ronald Reagan to the American presidency and the struggle for power among various conservative factions within the Republican party, it is probably a good bet that during the next few years there will be increased public discussion over precisely what definitions, if any, can be given to the terms conservatism and liberalism in the closing decades of the twentieth century. In the United States such a discussion ought not to proceed without some (re)consideration of Reinhold Niebuhr's contribution to political thinking. But I do not pretend to address here the complete agenda suggested by the preceding observations. This article is limited to raising for discussion once again the possible relation of

Reinhold Niebuhr's thought to a historical Anglo-American conservatism rooted in the political philosophy of Edmund Burke.³

In an essay now over two decades old, Wilson Carey McWilliams argued that Reinhold Niebuhr's neo-orthodoxy was not much else but a latter-day defense of the old liberalism.⁴ While not saying so in precisely these words, McWilliams accused Niebuhr of being a "conservative" apologist for a moribund and visionless liberalism. McWilliams's analysis of the content of Niebuhr's politics is flawed, and his conclusions are disputable; but the central thesis of his essay remains worth pondering.

It is appropriate that Niebuhr's theology has been called neo-orthodox since he understood it and his political theory to be continuous with historical Christian values and the best insights of the liberal-democratic tradition. Niebuhr obviously thought that a synthesis of both was an ongoing process within contemporary Western culture. Thus McWilliams was able to identify some key elements of Niebuhr's political theory which are indebted to the liberal tradition of Anglo-American politics.

McWilliams's essay is deceptive because it does not consider the possibility that within a very broad intellectual tradition in which Locke, Burke, Madison, Jefferson, and, if I might add, John Kenneth Galbraith and William F. Buckley can all be located, there are historical and contemporary "progressivisms" and "conservatisms" that need to be distinguished from one another not only by disposition but also by intellectual content and political stratagem. McWilliams would have one conclude that any contemporary conservatism must fall under a condemnation similar to that by which he rejects Niebuhr's neo-orthodoxy. McWilliams calls for a radical return to the "old quest to discover by reason the nature of the good life, of virtue and of Utopia."⁵ To such a plea Niebuhr might have responded that social institutions bear histories that must be considered in their

continuity even, indeed especially, by the earnest reformer. And he would have stressed undoubtedly that values of the good life are themselves historically inherited and best perceived in their dialectical, often conflictual, relationships before being applied to concrete circumstance.

Perhaps, at root, McWilliams's objection to Niebuhr's politics is its pragmatism. Some years back, in an article entitled "Niebuhr's Pragmatic Conservatism," Eduard Heimann argued that conservatism is "the logical destination of a pragmatist. For if we change what no longer works as is necessary to make it work again, then this is preservation by means of change, for the sake of preservation." Heimann was careful to add that he did not mean "that pragmatism is conservatism." He was persuaded, however, that in Niebuhr's case one could see a "development of . . . [his] social and political philosophy from radical beginnings to a pragmatism which finds its proper application in an authentic conservatism, however unique it is because of its context."⁶

J.G.A. Pocock has identified also a relation of pragmatism to conservatism. "Pragmatism," writes Pocock, "is the establishment of a continuous style of behavior which cannot any longer be presumed; this is the sense in which it is conservatism without tradition."⁷ Niebuhr's pragmatism is not much typified by appeals to prescriptive or inherited institutions, as is the conservatism of Edmund Burke. But it is less clear among Niebuhr interpreters that his pragmatism was ever conservative, even in Pocock's sense. In his political study of Niebuhr, *Reinhold Niebuhr: Prophet to Politicians*, Ronald H. Stone proposes that Niebuhr's full embrace of pragmatism in his post-World War II writing marks also a "return to political liberalism." Stone continues: "He [Niebuhr] does not return to the idealistic Wilsonian liberalism of his youth but to the more pragmatic liberalism of Franklin D. Roosevelt." In that same study Stone dismisses the arguments of such writers as Will Herberg, Hans Morgenthau, and Gor-

don Harland that Niebuhr's politics is comparable to the political conservatism of Edmund Burke. Stone maintains that Niebuhr's "use of Edmund Burke . . . [is] casual and unsystematic. . . . The references to Burke in Niebuhr," argues Stone, "all come from selected passages in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* and emphasize what Niebuhr elsewhere describe[s] as political realism."⁸

Certainly, this is one way of dealing with the attraction that Burke's political thought had for Niebuhr in his later years. But Stone's dismissal of Niebuhr's use of Burke "as casual and unsystematic" is hasty. Niebuhr's references to Burke are not incidental. They are placed strategically by Niebuhr to lend sharpness and veracity to cardinal elements of his own political thought. Political realism is not all that is at stake, either, in the references Niebuhr makes to Burke. Indeed, the question of the frequency of citations from Burke and the deliberateness of Niebuhr's uses of Burke is not at the heart of the issue. The kinship of Niebuhr's political thought to that of Burke—if indeed there is one—is not subject to proof by a count of Niebuhr's references to Burke. Neither will it do to speak of Burke as a formative influence on Niebuhr. He was not. Niebuhr discovered Burke rather late in his life. Nevertheless, there is a confluence of important themes, concepts, and normative recommendations about the nature and practice of politics in Niebuhr's and Burke's writings.

Will Herberg's arguments regarding the relation of Niebuhr's political thought to Burke's are more persuasive than Stone's. Herberg maintains that in his later writings Niebuhr positioned himself among those political and social thinkers since Burke and in sympathy with him who had identified in the French Revolution two forces of modern politics, political rationalism and revolutionary radicalism, which together threaten and contradict the politics of a free and pluralistic society. "Burke," Herberg argues, "developed a philosophy that might well be called *political historicism*" to combat both these

outgrowths of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Burke's political historicism was typified by the insistence that the statesman maintain "a sense of the 'grain of history' which defines both the possibilities and limits of his statecraft, for while history may be beguiled it cannot be coerced," either by rational blueprints for the future or revolutionary violence against the present order of things.⁹ Burke espoused a genuine conservatism that would answer to that which became liberalism, with its rationalism and idealism in politics, and revolutionary radicalism, with its utopian ideology and totalitarian impetus. Niebuhr's political thought, Herberg argues, pivoted on a critique of just these two movements of modern politics. As Niebuhr developed this critique into a positive political philosophy through such works as *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, *The Irony of American History*, *Christian Realism and Political Problems*, *The Structure of Nations and Empires*, and many articles, his politics increasingly resembled Burke's. Herberg concludes that Niebuhr's "earlier 'prophetic' radicalism implied a radical relativization of all political programs, institutions, and movements, and therefore a thoroughgoing rejection of every form of political rationalism. Add to this a renewed emphasis on the historic continuities of social life, and Niebuhr's brand of 'conservatism' emerge[d]." Herberg points out that this conservatism was not that of "those who called themselves conservatives in American public life."¹⁰ He undoubtedly had in mind Niebuhr's depiction of such popular American conservatism as not a true conservatism, but "a decadent [right-wing] laissez-faire liberalism in domestic politics . . . compounded with nationalism."¹¹ Thus, Herberg insists that on the basis of this evolution in Niebuhr's thought one could safely "establish a kinship" of Niebuhr's politics with that of Burke.¹²

Herberg's analysis is substantially correct, but not without several important qualifications. As suggested already, Niebuhr's "conservatism," in contrast to

Burke's, was not characterized by frequent appeals to prescription or inherited institutions. His time and station in history—America in mid-twentieth century—probably precluded this. But this is not to say that his political theory is mere pragmatism without reference to a presumed living normative body of traditional law, institutions, and values; just as Burke's political theory is not pure traditionalism void of regard for the necessity of reforms beyond the limits set by a politics of precedent. Niebuhr, however, was an operationalist, whereas Burke was an institutionalist. Niebuhr was concerned with the ways a transcendent moral law operates in and among persons on the various levels of class and community. Furthermore, he saw moral principles in paradoxical and sometimes conflictual relation. Burke was interested in the history and nature of institutions and the laws of their proper functioning. Niebuhr's operationalism, combined with a moderate theological dualism, provided the moral ground for his distinctive prophetic style of discourse. This capacity to expose and challenge the moral shortcomings of his society and its values and institutions was not Burke's strength. Burke was a theoretician of the fundamental role of historical institutions as transmitters of moral values; and he endeavored to demonstrate the ways the historical institutions of England and Europe fulfilled this purpose. Burke's strength, which Niebuhr lacked, was an ability to analyze the political functioning of institutions and to recommend concrete reforms or changes when necessary. Yet these differences in Niebuhr's and Burke's political thought, however important, do not seriously diminish or refute Herberg's fundamental insight about the similarity of their thought.

The centerpiece of Reinhold Niebuhr's political ethic and statecraft is a Christian anthropology that emphasizes the social and historical substance of human nature. Niebuhr's theological anthropology is not hospitable to the individualism, voluntarism, and anti-institutionalism historical-

ly associated with religious and secular liberalism. In obverse but parallel fashion, Burke's conservatism was not stuck in an all-embracing corporatism and inflexible traditionalism. Open to some of the trends of the emerging liberalism of his day, Burke defended the transcendence of the human person above all historical institutions. Burke asserted the inviolability of the human person, even as he spoke of man as a social being and of the "organic" relation of the individual to the community. Moreover, while he opposed the advanced liberalism of his age with its radical critique of England's and Europe's historical institutions, Burke always defended timely reform both in the name of a higher moral law and on pragmatic grounds as necessary to the health and preservation of civil society.

Resisting modernity's penchant for either completely divorcing morality and politics or devising utopian and totalitarian solutions for the historically irresolvable problems of political existence, Burke and Niebuhr both valued politics as that activity through which human beings seek to build community and establish tolerable harmonies of life in a strife-ridden world. Burke challenged and rejected the scientific rationalism of his age, which had been translated into a moral and political idiom by Descartes, Locke, Condorcet, and many others, and was publicized by a whole generation of British deists and French *philosophes*. In Burke's view these "geometers" and "metaphysicians" all shared in a common unyielding faith in individual speculative reason to the complete disregard of the collective wisdom of tradition, habit, and custom. They overestimated the power and purity of reason. This, he argued, blinded them to humankind's perennial proclivities to the abuse of power and the use of moral principles as pretexts for self-interest and political intrigue. Burke warned that the new rationalism in politics was leading his age toward an insensitive and potentially destructive disregard of the historically veiled and even mysterious social forces of human

sentiment, prejudice, and religious feeling. These, he insisted, more than reason or positive law, bind human communities together. In his later years Burke confronted Jacobinism and the French Revolution as the totalitarian offspring of the new Enlightenment critique of morals and politics.

For Niebuhr the list of ideologies and "isms" was lengthier. This list was complemented by a rich history of political movements and revolutions. Niebuhr engaged the naturalism and positivism of his age with a critical eye. He accused liberalism of a sanguine rationalism that underestimated the less than rational historical and organic forces of community and of a utopian moralism that did not take seriously human sin and the "moral weight" of history. Niebuhr described Marxism as a bitter fruit of modernity's moral crisis. In Marxism Niebuhr found the archetype of all radical ideologies. Likewise, the Russian Revolution and the totalitarian societies which Marxism inspired were for Niebuhr archetypal examples of the disastrous effects wrought when radical ideology is translated into political action.

Niebuhr's criticisms of liberalism and Marxism are comparable to Burke's judgments on Enlightenment rationalism and Jacobin radicalism. Indeed, Niebuhr traced the root ideas of modern liberalism to the Enlightenment and pointed out the kinship of Marxism to Jacobinism. Significantly, he credited Burke with a paradigmatic critique of the illusions of liberal rationalism and moral idealism. Niebuhr noted that Burke "resisted the abstract dogmas of the idealists because he had discerned the wisdom in the organic developments of history."¹³ In contrast to "the alleged empiricism of the French Revolution," Burke practiced a genuine historical empiricism, which held "a sense of the dramatic quality of history and the uniqueness of its various occasions."¹⁴ In defiance of the Enlightenment belief that political communities and governments are established and legitimized by explicit consent and rational suasion,

Burke maintained that "the authority of the government to speak for the community is derived both from tradition and from its ability to harmonize and express the multifarious interests and passions of the various groups."¹⁵ Niebuhr described Burke as a political realist who "recognized the perennial sources of recalcitrance to moral norms in human life."¹⁶ He attributed to Burke the understanding that the "powers which are in cooperation and conflict in the human community are compounded of ethnic loyalties, common traditions, ancient sanctities, common fears, common hopes, and endless other combinations of human motives."¹⁷ In Niebuhr's judgment, all these characteristics of Burke's thought—his historical empiricism, developmentalism, and organicism and his political realism—enabled Burke to view "politics as the art of the possible."¹⁸

Reinhold Niebuhr espoused a political philosophy that ran against a stream of politics that, within the context of Anglo-American politics since the eighteenth century, might be called progressivist-liberal. In the autumn 1936 issue of *Radical Religion*, Niebuhr sought to identify the content of this liberalism. There he identified six tenets of the liberal credo:

- a. That injustice is caused by ignorance and will yield to education and greater intelligence.
- b. That civilization is becoming gradually more moral and that it is a sin to challenge either the inevitability or the efficacy of gradualness.
- c. That the character of individuals rather than social systems and arrangements is the guarantee of justice in society.
- d. That appeals to love, justice, good will, and brotherhood are bound to be efficacious in the end. If they have not been so to date, we must have more appeals to love, justice, good will, and brotherhood.
- e. That goodness makes for happiness and that the increasing knowledge of this fact will overcome human

selfishness and greed.

f. That wars are stupid and can therefore only be caused by people who are more stupid than those who recognize the stupidity of wars.¹⁹

Niebuhr adjusted and refined his description of a progressivist liberalism in subsequent years. He sought to answer this liberalism with an analysis of human nature and the human condition which drew from the vast reservoir of Western religious and secular thought. Most notably he reintroduced the historical Christian doctrine of original sin and on the basis of this insisted that, more than ignorance or class divisions, historical and intractable configurations of power rooted in a fallen human nature obstruct the way to peace and justice in human communities. And as his interests turned irrevocably to politics in the forties and fifties, Niebuhr added to his critique of liberalism and revolutionary radicalism a political theory with a distinctive content and a stratagem devised for the nurture, preservation, and defense of what he often termed free and pluralistic societies. I would like to close with a review of several important historical issues in Anglo-American political theory that should help clarify what that content and stratagem were and establish further the central argument of this paper that from a broad historical perspective Niebuhr is in the Burkean camp of Anglo-American politics.

Niebuhr's theory of politics is demonstrably more egalitarian than Burke's. But so was the culture that had come down to Niebuhr. In the context of his own time, Niebuhr's politics was not egalitarian in any advanced way. For example, Niebuhr was in fundamental agreement with the Burkean theory of representation, which rejects all popularist and plebiscitary versions of democracy. He disapproved of the "mandate" theory of representation, which pictures the elected representative as the mere mouthpiece of his constituents. He argued that representatives must exercise an independent judgment

and act according to it even when in contradiction to their constituents' wishes. Consistent with this principle, Niebuhr also believed that the success of a liberal democracy depends upon the existence of various aristocracies or elites: "Ideally, a free society," wrote Niebuhr, "creates various aristocracies or elite groups in various fields of culture and political affairs."²⁰ The principle of constitutionalism, indeed, dictates against direct or pure democracy. The highest social intelligence requisite to the proper functioning of even a free society will never be the possession of all who are called upon to participate in its democratic processes. Even among the electorate one can expect and hope for the existence of an "aristocracy of informed and knowledgeable men . . . who are able to judge the performance of their elected officials."²¹ In other words, Niebuhr included a principle of hierarchy in his theory of a free or open society. This contrasts sharply with the more advanced progressivist and egalitarian spirit of his time.

Along with his age, Burke placed considerable credence in property as a legitimate principle of hierarchy. But twentieth-century Burkean conservatism need not, and often has not, raised the principle of property as the primary criterion of hierarchy. The more significant inheritance of the Burkean line of politics is this principle: "There is no qualification for government but virtue and wisdom, actual or presumptive." Burke's meaning is that the right functioning and common good of a free society depends upon its ability to nurture, draw upon, and use the talents of natural aristocracies, which in fact are not determined by race, class, or social standing. "Everything ought to be open,—but not indifferently to every man."²² And let there be no mistake here of attributing to Burke an instrumentalist theory of merit. Virtue is a property of character not subject to an "objective" value-free calculus of social utility. Virtue is recognized by virtue. A society that resorts to other material or arithmetic meritorian measures already

reveals a decadence of its public character and a loss of steerage by natural aristocracies.

Niebuhr's distinction between implicit and explicit consent and the renewed emphasis he gave to the former needs mention. Such a conviction rejects the preoccupation with explicit consent of twentieth-century progressivist-liberal politics and jurisprudence. This contrast is lent added significance by the fact that Niebuhr rejected the positivist prejudice of secular liberalism that the only possible measure of good law and good policy within a democracy is the consent of the people. Niebuhr and Burke insisted that the final criterion of good government is the moral law and the principles of justice which flow from it and that these principles become politically relevant only when filtered through a constitutional system of mediating institutions.

Finally, mention needs to be made regarding Niebuhr's pluralism. Like Burke, Niebuhr identified two good reasons for favoring a plurality of traditional and voluntary associations in society. First, such a decentralized system of subsidiary powers and institutions preserves the integrity of the political authority in society. It does so by directly and indirectly referring the authority of the state back to all the other levels of organization and authority in society. Contrary to the progressivist suspicion of parochial loyalties, Niebuhr and Burke believed that such subsidiary loyalties can be used to strengthen the unity and cohesiveness of a society. "The love to the whole," wrote Burke, "is not extinguished by . . . [a] subordinate partiality."²³ Second, such pluralism is the best guarantee that the freedom of persons and communities will flourish in a society. Contrary to the contemporary progressivism, Niebuhr did not view universal suffrage or the "vote" as the principal virtue of a free society. He stated:

The ultimate virtue of an open society is not merely the political system of self-government, a government "of the

people, by the people and for the people," though that is its immediate virtue. The political virtue of a free society is that it makes power responsible, disperses power into as many centers as possible, thereby creating a system of checks and balances, and refuses immunity from criticism and review to any center of power and prestige.²⁴

Niebuhr, like Burke (and Madison, whose political ideas he grew to admire in later years), took exception to the Rousseauian persuasion that the freedom of persons depends upon their liberation from all parochial loyalties and traditional social constraints, and the Lockean individualism which proposes that the free person is an autonomous rational agent. Niebuhr argued that to be free the person requires the social security which traditional community and voluntary associations provide. No less important to Niebuhr's political thought is the conviction that the person needs such intermediary institutions as protection against the always possible despotism of the state. In *Reflections* Burke articulated a pluralistic theory of countervailing powers in opposition to the totalitarian impetus of Jacobin radicalism. Niebuhr was just as forceful in his argument that such pluralism, augmented by constitutional separation of powers, is the best guarantee for the freedom of persons.

Niebuhr belongs to the Burkean line of Anglo-American conservatism. And here he had company among his generation. For the disposition and content of Burkean conservatism was shared by such other notable Anglo-American religious and political thinkers as Walter Lippmann, John Courtney Murray, and Herbert Butterfield. When speaking of these writers one is reminded of Lippmann's forthright appropriation of Burke's theory of representation and his espousal of the idea of a democracy of the dead as well as of the living; of Murray's concern for the religious foundations of civil order and his restatement of the natural law tradition in a historicized version; and, finally, of But-

terfield's historical-prudential understanding of politics as the art of the practical best understood by the religious imagination that respects God's providential Lordship over history. Niebuhr stands among this company. The whole company transcends the popular progressivisms and conservativisms that have done battle in the twentieth century. But the affinity of these four men's politics with that of Edmund Burke is unmistakable.

Politics is probably more an imaginative activity than a rational one. Reasonable people will differ on political matters because they have differing visions of politics and the moral life. At the risk of sounding overly facile, one might well argue that the relevance which Edmund Burke's political thought yet has for us is proved by the fact that his relevance has been debated so heatedly and for so long. Burke's great stature as a political thinker seems assured because he had a compelling vision of the moral life. That vision, though not compelling for all in any given age, has been so for a substantial number in each age. Perhaps, in this sense also, time is the best judge of wisdom, time of course marked by the free and reasonable assent of human beings. Burke does speak to the human condition in enduring terms. Men are yet able to engage imaginatively his vision in spite of its many antiquated details. Burke has left a significant mark upon our time, as he did upon the nineteenth century. He, indeed, has been different things for different generations: a liberal Whig reformer, conservative and

utilitarian, the founder of the organicist school of politics, and a natural law thinker. That Burke could be so many things to as many generations is as much a proof of the richness and magnitude of his thought as of the narrowness or fallibility of his interpreters.

All indications are that the reputation of Reinhold Niebuhr will endure a fate similar to that of Burke. The case has been made already that on balance Niebuhr belongs to a school of modern politics that is considerably indebted to Edmund Burke. This claim is made with all modesty before the profundity, breadth, and depth of Niebuhr's thought. Undoubtedly, future generations will take the debate over Niebuhr's meaning and relevance through transmutations not yet imagined by any of his past or present interpreters—liberal, conservative, realist, or liberationist.

A recent commentator on Burke's legacy concludes that there is "dialectical meaning to the 'afterlife' of Burke, and it is worth exploring."²⁵ This is also a fitting way to project Niebuhr's political legacy. Certainly Niebuhr would have objected to the notion that there might be an ultimate interpretation of his theology or political ideas. I think he would have welcomed the prospect of his thought gaining dialectical meaning for future generations. And he would have done so not because he was a relativist but because he respected the truth too much to allow anyone a final claim upon it.

¹See Paul Merkley, *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Political Account* (Montreal, 1975), and Richard W. Fox, "Reinhold Niebuhr and the Emergence of the Liberal Realist Faith, 1930-45," *The Review of Politics*, 38 (April 1976), 244-65. ²See Vigen Guroian, "On Revolution and Ideology: Convergence in the Political Legacies of Niebuhr and Burke," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 39 (1984), 25-40. ³Wilson Carey McWilliams, "Reinhold Niebuhr: New Orthodoxy for Old Liberalism," *American Political Science Review*, 56 (December 1962), 874-85. ⁴For more on this matter, see Guroian, "The Possibilities and Limits of Politics: A Comparative Study of the

Thought of Reinhold Niebuhr and Edmund Burke," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 36 (Summer 1981), 189-203. ⁵McWilliams, "Reinhold Niebuhr," p. 885. ⁶Eduard Heimann, "Niebuhr's Pragmatic Conservatism," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 11 (May 1956), 7-8. ⁷J.G.A. Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time* (New York, 1973), p. 268. ⁸Ronald Stone, *Reinhold Niebuhr: Prophet to Politicians* (Nashville, Tenn., 1972), pp. 131, 128. ⁹Will Herberg, "Reinhold Niebuhr: A Burkean Conservative," *National Review*, 13 (December 2, 1961), 379. ¹⁰Herberg, "Christian Apologist to the Secular World," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 11 (May 1956), 15.

¹¹Niebuhr, "Liberalism: Illusions and Realities," *The New Republic*, 133 (July 4, 1955), 13. ¹²Herberg, "Christian Apologist," p. 15. ¹³Niebuhr, *The Self and the Dramas of History* (New York, 1955), p. 189. ¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 149. ¹⁵Niebuhr, *The Structure of Nations and Empires* (New York, 1959), p. 57. ¹⁶Niebuhr, *Christian Realism and Political Problems* (New York, 1953), p. 72. ¹⁷Niebuhr, "American Conservatism and the World Crisis: A Study in Vacillation," *The Yale Review*, 40 (March 1951), 391-92. ¹⁸Niebuhr, "Christian Realism," p. 72. ¹⁹Niebuhr, "The Blindness of Liberalism," *Radical Religion*, 1 (Autumn 1936), 4. ²⁰Niebuhr, "The Democratic Elite and American

Foreign Policy," in *Walter Lippmann and His Time*, ed. Marquis William Childs (New York, 1959), pp. 173-74. ²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 174-75. ²²Edmund Burke, "Reflections on the Revolution in France," in *The Works of the Right Honorable Edmund Burke*, vol. 3 (Boston, 1899), p. 297. ²³*Ibid.*, p. 494. ²⁴Niebuhr, "The Unintended Virtues of an Open Society," *Christianity and Crisis*, 21 (July 24, 1961), 132. ²⁵Walter D. Love, "'Meaning' in the History of Conflicting Interpretations of Burke," in *Edmund Burke: The Enlightenment and the Modern Mind*, ed. Peter J. Stanlis (Detroit, 1967), p. 128.