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## Book Review

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# Pro-Harriman book charts disastrous course of Eastern Establishment

by Mark Burdman

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### **The Wise Men**

by Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas  
Simon & Schuster, New York, 1986  
853 pages, clothbound, \$22.95

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I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.—*Romans 16:19*

The meaning of the word “wisdom” would have to be radically revised, if we were to regard that word as an attribute of the policies, beliefs, and actions of the six individuals revered in the book, *The Wise Men*, by Evan Thomas and Walter Isaacson.

Thomas and Isaacson are writing about six men whom they label “The Architects of the American Century,” or, more simply, “The Establishment,” the group for whom, the book claims, the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations are mere fronts. The six men are Averell Harriman, George Kennan, Robert Lovett, John J. McCloy, Dean Acheson, and Charles “Chip” Bohlen. Of the six, only McCloy and Kennan are still alive, while Harriman and Lovett died during the period the book was being completed.

The two authors are house-servants of “The Establishment.” They are both graduates of Harvard, and, as of the writing of the book, held key positions at *Time* magazine.

As Thomas and Isaacson come close to celebrating the matter, the “wise” quality ascribed to the six is emphatically not a wisdom based on nurture of the good, the true, and the beautiful, but on a clever pragmatism and expediency, grafted onto a use of American power and influence. It is not the “American Century” modeled on the ideas of the Founding Fathers of the American Republic; it is an American Century designed as an ersatz recreation of the *Pax Britannica*, with some curious Austro-Hungarian Empire features, based on a negative principle of “containing” Communist imperialism.

To any figure who indeed represents the values of the Founding Fathers in a contemporary historical context, such

as Gen. Douglas MacArthur, the protagonists of the Thomas-Isaacson book are fanatically hostile. In a Feb. 28, 1987 article entitled, “Appeasing Moscow: A Recurring Form of Mass Hysteria,” which discusses *The Wise Men* in passing, Lyndon LaRouche commented that “Harriman et al. hated MacArthur, because he had morality and principle where they had none. He was the justly proud epitome of the professional military servant of a democratic republic, in the American tradition of the Society of the Cincinnati. He was very successful in his profession, for which reason the Harrimans et al. considered him a serious potential threat, and hated him with a passion which contrasts with Harriman’s almost son-father relationship with our enemy Stalin.”

To a reader who celebrates the values associated with the American Revolution, *The Wise Men* can at times be a most infuriating book. But for precisely the reason it is infuriating, it is also very useful, in the extremity of the reverence it pays to such individuals. The reader gets a rare insight, for better than 800 pages, into the way the world is seen from the standpoint of the liberal Establishment’s sycophancy.

### **‘Golden Age,’ or trap-door into Inferno?**

*The Wise Men* is an exercise in nostalgia, based on a neat, and potentially seductive trick. From the vantage point of today’s combined crises of Soviet strategic superiority, economic collapse, moral decay, and uncontrollable disease pandemics, the 1945-68 period might seem like the Good Old Days, or, as *Times of London* correspondent Michael Binyon said in a recent admiring review of *The Wise Men*, an invocation of the “Golden Age of American Diplomacy.”

This trick works, all the more, because of the horrifying deficiency of knowledge of history that characterizes many Americans. At a time when it is hard enough to bring somebody to think back two days, or a week, in time, 1945 might seem to be ancient history. So, the book is itself a fallacy of composition, counterposing a limited series of moments of a limited period in history, as seen selectively through the eyes of a very few, to come up with what presumes to be an historical overview.

In fact, there is a cause-and-effect link between the beliefs and policies of Kennan, Acheson, Harriman, et al., and today's woeful state of both Establishment policies, and of the United States itself. Their pragmatism, expediency, and abhorrence of rigorous moral and scientific truth, bred a vast cynicism in the American polity. Their offspring, more often than not, are the degenerate fellow-travelers of the drugs-and-AIDS-besotted jet-set. Their "second generation," people like Paul Nitze (who immersed himself during the late 1930s, the book reveals, in the gnostic-pessimistic writings of Oswald Spengler), the brothers Bundy (McGeorge and William, the latter married to Acheson's daughter Mary), et al., cannot (or don't want to) rally the Establishment behind a program to defend the American "host-population" from the most deadly disease in history. They have presented no positive vision for the United States, and have expressed a contempt for the fundamental values on which the United States has been based.

### Spheres of influence and many Yaltas

As LaRouche has pointed out in the aforementioned "Appeasing Moscow. . . ." writing, George Kennan is perhaps the most interesting, and revealing, test case, in the book. Kennan, as the famous "Mr. X," wrote the policy-document justifying the American doctrine of "containment." The positive quality of Kennan, was that he did not approach the Soviet Union, from a simplistic notion of "anti-communism." Instead, he ably documented the *continuities* of Russian-imperial and Russian-cultural policies, from the czars through the Bolshevik Revolution, on through the interwar and postwar eras of the 20th century. Kennan's weakness was that he was—and is—a philosophical cynic, an unflinching Calvinist-Presbyterian, who does not believe in the changeability of nations and cultures. At one point, the authors (pp. 354-355) make this fascinating characterization: "George Kennan, the indignant Presbyterian elder, could undoubtedly work himself into a moral frenzy about Soviet totalitarianism, just like Harriman and Bohlen; but George Kennan the Bismarckian realist cared little for Wilsonian idealism and was perfectly prepared to concede Poland and other hapless places to the Soviet sphere (in early 1946)."

Since the Russian-Soviets would never change in fundamentals, surmised Kennan, best to let them do as they wished, within a specific *sphere* of influence. Who cares, after all, about the motley populations of Eastern Europe? Let the Russians have them, and that will keep them out of *our* sphere, in South America, or elsewhere. So, in Kennan, we find the *negative* doctrine of *containment*, and the embryo of "Yalta II" reproduced from Yalta I. On page 239, the authors discuss a 1944 policy draft by Kennan for "conceding the Soviets a sphere of influence." Thomas and Isaacson write: "If the Kremlin continued 'to reserve moral judgments' on American actions in the Western Hemisphere, they would certainly expect to act freely in the Eastern European security

belt they had won so dearly. . . . Kennan called these ideas 'realistic.' In a later incarnation, they would be known as containment."

At times, the reader might find the authors quite candid, at times negative, in appraising Kennan, yet this tone of pretended criticism, should not disguise that the quality described in Kennan is only writ larger and more explicitly in him, but it is all of the American Century Liberal Establishment: absence of moral truth, expediency, pragmatism, even of the "hard-nosed" kind. In fact, one of Kennan's worst flaws, was his "house-servant ideologue" tendency to appease the views of those he wrote for; unlike most of the book's protagonists, he came from the "outside," not through the patrician-Olympian-liberal route, but from a Midwest Presbyterian background. The reader can draw his own conclusions about how certain childhood traumas of Kennan's, described by the authors, might have affected his thinking.

Then there is McCloy, also by origins an "outsider," who developed the most accomplished knack, over the years, for "pragmatic," legal wheeler-dealer motivations for such policy abominations as refusal to authorize bombing of Nazi concentration camp gas chambers (during World War II); and the policies of the postwar occupation of Germany, superpower "arms control," etc. (after World War II). His role models, Elihu Root and Henry Stimson, were admired, again, for qualities *opposite* to those that motivated the founders of the American Republic.

Then, come back to Harriman, the super-wealthy centerpiece of this group. Never mind that the authors sin by omitting easily available documentation about the Harriman clan's support for eugenics, and for selective immigration measures that kept, among others, Jews seeking to escape from Hitler's Germany, away from American shores, in the 1930s. Ave the Pragmatist and Businessman, write Thomas and Isaacson, was up to his knees, willfully and enthusiastically, in efforts to bring pre-Nazi Germany into the Soviet sphere of influence. On pages 100-101, we read that Harriman argued in 1926 that a deal whereby U.S. credit to finance German-Soviet deals "would benefit American business by allowing the Russian market to absorb German exports that might otherwise be dumped in the U.S."

From even the skewed evidence presented in this book, it is clear that the United States, in the last years of, and immediately after, World War II, was the overwhelmingly popular power among the populations of Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Crowds would flock into the streets to welcome and celebrate American emissaries, much to the shock of those emissaries. Nonetheless, selling these populations down the river was no problem for this bunch of "realists."

### Kennan and the 'authoritarian state'

A most revealing, related point about Kennan, is that he was openly contemptuous of the United States as a demo-

cratic republic. Hence, his "containment" policy, implicitly and to some extent explicitly, "contained" nothing in the way of a positive notion of what Western culture should be. "Britain's pre-Reform Parliament was closer to his ideal of enlightened government than the U.S. Congress of the 1950s," write Thomas and Isaacson. "A self-described 'natural-born antiquarian,' Kennan harbored nostalgia for England's eighteenth-century ruling aristocracy. . . ."

And there's worse. In pages 171-178, the authors present an extraordinary insight into Kennan's political worldview. After recounting an anecdote in which he reportedly made columnist Joseph Alsop "nearly sick" with the contention, "The trouble with this country is that we are a democracy and instead should be ruled by aristocrats," Thomas and Isaacson continue:

"The Founding Fathers, Kennan believed, had not meant to establish a true democracy. In a note to a friend as early as 1930, he had posed the question: 'If they disapproved of democracy for a population predominantly white, Protestant and British, faced with relatively simple problems, would they not turn over in their graves at the mere thought of the democratic principle being applied to a population containing over ten million Negroes and many more millions of southern Europeans to whom the democratic principle is completely strange?'"

"While in Austria recuperating from an intestinal illness in 1935, Kennan had been impressed at the way the 'distinctively authoritarian' regime in Vienna handled social problems. 'There was no demagoguery, no public wrangling and debate by laymen, no appeal to the emotions and greed of the public,' he wrote in a private journal he completed in 1939. 'Benevolent despotism,' he concluded, 'had greater possibilities for good' than did democracy. 'During the years to come—the uneasy years from 1936 to 1939, when our country rang with shrill debate about the issue of dictatorship vs. democracy—I was never able to forget these impressions. I could not get excited by this fancied issue. I could not follow the fanatical separating of the authoritarian goats from the democratic sheep.'"

The careful reader of *The Wise Men* will note the astounding biases of Harriman, McCloy, Kennan et al. Without stressing the point more than is due, what we are seeing here is the "White Anglo-Saxon Protestant" patrician mentality in the extreme. In a book of 750 pages, one finds not one reference to the Vatican in the index; it is not a force of any recognized importance in the *Weltanschauung* being described, except perhaps as implied antagonist. Also, most extraordinary for a book on "The Architects of the American Century," there is *not one* mention of countries such as Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, etc. "South America" is a category which comes up, in passing, where a patrician-diplomat goes on vacation, carries out a not-very-important mission that distracts him from the main theater, or worries about in passing moments as the "Western Hemisphere" in the spheres-of-influence globalist deal with the Soviets.

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## Interview: S.C. Birla

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# 'There is need for the American legal

*Subhash Chandra Birla is an advocate at the Supreme Court of India, and Secretary General of the All-India Bar Federation. The following interview was conducted in Washington, D.C. on April 9, 1987, by Dr. K.D. Sharma, director of the Economic Research Institute in New Delhi, currently in residence in Virginia. Both men are members of the Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations in the United States.*

*The Commission was founded after nearly 400 federal and state police agents descended on the business offices of associates of Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. in Leesburg, Virginia, in what one observer described as resembling "a barbarian raid on a Christian village," on Oct. 6-7, 1986. Since then, numbers of LaRouche's political supporters are fighting court battles against trumped-up charges by enemies of LaRouche's policies (cf. the "Year of the Constitution" series in EIR).*

*Mr. Birla spent one week in the United States, on a fact-finding mission for the Commission, to acquaint himself with aspects of the legal assault against LaRouche and associates, and to meet with American political, legal and religious figures.*

**Sharma:** What brings you here to Washington?

**Birla:** I was invited by the host of the Schiller Institute Conference in Lima, Peru, on [the papal encyclical] *Populorum Progressio*. I attended this two-day conference [April 3-4], and during my stay, I met with a number of individuals in several organizations, which are striving for the independence of Ibero-American economies. In the two-day conference, I spoke about the importance of the Ibero-American concept. I spoke about the occasion which is bringing the people and the countries of Asia and Africa together, for the cause of Ibero-American countries.

During my stay, I met a few individuals in the government of Peru. In conversation with those people, I found that [Peruvian President] Alan García is very much striving to bring Peru together with other nations of the Ibero-American continent, on the track of IMF debt, as such borrowings in the past have brought about the destruction of the local econ-