

Thoughts on the Duffey-Buckley Debate

by E.T. Sweeney

As with the famous Kennedy-Nixon "debates" of 1960, this was no debate at all. There was not even a common universe of discourse which, to be sure, is the norm with Mr. Buckley who lives in his own very special universe, reserved for the very special few.

Mr. Duffey opened the proceedings with a direct response to the topic under consideration: "Issues of the '70's." In essence, he argued that poverty, racism, unliveable cities, pollution of the environment, the quality of medical care, etc., were unacceptable in an affluent society such as ours IF we have any pretensions to decency. And he related the muddle-minded involvement in Viet Nam—and consequent misapplication of resources—to the continuing tragedy of American life.

Mr. Buckley, with his undeniable talents for superior male bitchiness—the only masculine counterpart of Clare Booth Luce with which I am acquainted—registered higher on the laugh meter, but scarcely responded to the issues. As anyone who has followed Mr. Buckley's career as a leading spokesman for what has been euphemistically described as neo-conservatism knows, he is so infatuated with William F. Buckley and his dazzling rhetoric that he cannot be bothered about matters of substance. Hence, true to the style he has been displaying since GOD AND MAN AT YALE almost 20 years ago, he chooses his own facts within a frame of reference that, to say the least, is rather esoteric. It might be summed up in a phrase, "I've got my inherited pile and I will fight to the death any attempt to redistribute income in this country." This, of course, represents a kind of post industrial Social Darwinism that, to put it mildly, comports ill with the Thomistic philosophy of the faith to which Buckley so pretentiously adheres. My father warned me against those who "tell their beads" in public; Mr. Buckley lends substance to his admonitions.

In short, the Reverend Mr. Duffey is my friend, not merely because he is a good human being, but because he is a man who is attuned to the times. He lead us through the McCrathy campaign last year with unflagging vigor, good sense, and commitment; who could ask for anything more? I hope John Bailey gets the message.

As for Mr. Buckley, much as I mistrust the argument AD HOMINEM he deserves it; the style is the man, even though in his case it is evidently vice versa. I am reminded of a distinguished review article of an "authorized" biography of Clare Booth Luce, written by Marya Mannes in REPORTER some ten years ago in which she suggested that Mrs. Luce had intelligence, beauty, wealth, talent, charm—and no

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they have in the North End? They have all the hard cement their little hearts could possibly desire, all the glass in the world to bruse themselves upon, all they see is broken, crowded buildings, oppression and suffering. What kind of philosophy can possibly be formed from living in this sort of a world day after day? What happens when these children begin to grow up and realize that not everybody lives this way? Slowly a pressure begins to build up inside them and it grows and grows with the oppression of living in a ghetto. It grows and grows, and one day, it explodes. It's happened in Watts, Chicago, Newark, and on a small scale in Hartford. But Hartford has not yet had its day. If you whiteys in the government, and you whiteys in West Hartford and you whiteys on campus (and that includes you too, Black folk) don't start doing something constructive in league with the survivors of the North End, you'll be in very sad shape when the explosion comes ... and it's just around the corner ... friends.

FIRESIDE SMOKER

YOUNG ADULTS PRESENT A FIRESIDE SMOKER, NOV. 2, 8:00 P.M. DRESS CASUAL. HARTFORD JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER, 335 BLOOMFIELD AVE. W. HARTFORD.

the ideas in this rag don't represent the university; thank god

E.T. Sweeney

