

ly, irritatedly, snidely, paternally and tiredly.

And they run, according to this script, America.

I confess that I haven't much time for the conspiratorial view of national and international affairs that seems to lurk behind the book. Writing a thriller breeds such a view of course, but probably the genre wouldn't have been chosen if the view hadn't been there first. I remember being similarly worried by a thriller written by Pierre Salinger after his days with JFK, and wondering, My God, does James Bond run the White House? But I will say for Mr. Agnew's book that in his creating of the character of Canfield he has gone beyond the genre, and gone beyond the conspiratorial view. And in his handling of the Press he has been, though obsessed, much more than a James Bond. He has been an ex-Vice President writing out of a very bad experience, and writing convincingly of it.

Reed Whitemore

Saving the Queen by William F. Buckley, Jr.

(Doubleday; \$7.95)

In his first foray into spy fiction, William F. Buckley, Jr. has written what at first glance appears to be a unique book: the first espionage story ever posed in the terms of a drawing-room comedy. At second glance it appears to be a good bit more. The result is that mixture of cynicism and idealism that often marks the good conservative, whether it be Edmund Burke, Russell Kirk or Buckley himself. A Kennedy conservative like myself finds it all a bit ambivalent.

The plot is straightforward enough. So are the autobiographical elements, upon which most reviewers no doubt will comment. The hero—for such he shinningly is—is one Blackford Oakes, Yale '51, resident of Davenport College; Oakes is clearly much admired by Buckley, Yale '50, resident of Davenport College, for Oakes has dashing good looks, has graduated *magna cum laude* and read admiringly both *God and Man at Yale* and Buckley and Bozell on Sen. McCarthy, and thinks that the free world's last best hope rests with

America. Oakes is recruited into the CIA through a message passed by a registrar's assistant in the college, and after modest training, he finds himself in London, operating under a foundation cover, there to attempt to discover how Britain's nuclear secrets (and thus America's) are being leaked to the Russians. As Garry Wills has demonstrated, in a cunningly conceived article in the *New York Review of Books*, Buckley too was recruited directly into the CIA, and he too went under cover (although in Latin America, not London). Still Wills' piece goes on to show interesting conceptual and emotional linkages between OSS, MI-6, and even the British Colonial Office, and the CIA, and these links suggest congruencies between Oakes and Buckley too obvious to ignore. So much, however, for autobiography, for while it is interesting to read *Saving the Queen* as Buckley's *apologia* (or as another chapter in one of his continuing feuds), it is surely fairer to the author to read it for what it also most obviously is, a first attempt at fiction, a better than average spy yarn, and a bid for the next Robert Redford vehicle.

Oakes soon traces the leakage to the

Palace, and eventually directly to the Queen of England, Caroline, a sprightly and entirely engaging figure who is at least the match for the boyish Oakes. Here two paths converge, the sub-plot of a caning unfairly administered on the young Oakes as a pupil at England's Greyburn College providing further justification for bedding the Queen. In the course of making his way into the Royal Personage, Oakes discovers the source of the leak, reflects upon English education, its upper class, and its waning empire, tricks his mother and stepfather, fights an aerial duel (for naturally this Yale graduate is a top flight pilot), and twice visits a most improbable French whorehouse. During the course of laying out this plot, which is not really meant to be convincing, Buckley has several opportunities to show his skill as a debater, to take jesuitical (in the best sense of the word) positions on numerous world issues, and to display his knowledge of court protocol or the layout of Windsor Great Park. (Reviewers have remarked on the last, which is in fact the least interesting, for anyone who has passed a week in embassy circles will know the protocol, and the archives at Windsor, as well as the

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