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Liberty Lobby Does Right By Itself

By Paul W. Valentine
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Liberty Lobby, a conservative pressure group, has grown in a decade from a $10,000-a-year, hole-in-the-wall operation to a professionally staffed, $800,000 to $850,000 political machine.

Its 42 employees work in a gleaming white, 30-room converted apartment building at 3d Street and Independence Avenue SE. There, they sort mail, count financial contributions, research political issues, prepare legislative testimony, visit and pressure individual congressmen and urge 250,000 subscribers on their computerized mailing list to support generally conservative legislation in Congress.

They take credit for helping bring about much "pro-American" legislation in the past 10 years.

The effort has run the gamut from defeat of gun-control measures and passage of the anti-ballistic missile defense program to the resignation of Abe Fortas from the Supreme Court.

Liberty Lobby activities range beyond direct lobbying and related supporting action. Through a complex of associations and interlocking directorates, it also helps raise campaign funds for conservative candidates, lends moral and political support to the white-controlled government of Rhodesia and backs a number of ultra-conservative publications, including the American Mercury.

CURTIS B. DALL
. . . titular leader

WILLIS A. CARTO
. . . chief power

In all, the organizations and its leaders maintain a constant cry against "socialist do-gooders," "one-worlders," welfarism and other "liberal" phenomena that they say are dooming America to degeneration and defeat.

Liberty Lobby is less vocal about a skein of racial and historical philosophy that undergirds some of the public positions taken by its top officials.

Direct comments about Jews and Negroes are infrequent. References usually come in legalistic arguments against mandatory school busing, for example, or polemics about a conspiracy of "international money lenders" to emasculate American sovereignty and create a "one-world" dictatorship.

Occasionally, however, Liberty Lobby leaders are more specific.

"Without exception," said Col. Curtis B. Dall, chairman of Liberty Lobby's board of policy, in a Springfield, Ill., speech last July 30, "all of these (American ethnic groups) have pledged their loyalty to America . . . save a small percentage of one segment which consists of some avid pro-Zionists, some financially aggressive Jews and atheists, along with their entourage of satellites."

See LOBBY, D16, Col. 1

LOBBY, From D1

"Negro equality," says Liberty Lobby founder and treasurer Willis A. Carto in an introduction to the recently republished book, "Imperium," is easier to believe in if there are no Negroes around to destroy the concept."

"Imperium," written by Francis Parker Yockey, is a philosophical treatise that praises Western European culture and describes Jews, Negroes, Indians and other minorities as "culture distorters."

A "Save Our Schools" pamphlet published by Liberty Lobby inveighs against "mongrelized" public schools and warns that the "great majority of interracial dating involves black males dating white females."

Carto, the hard-traveling, hard-working treasurer and apparent chief power in Liberty Lobby, was known privately among employees as "Little Hitler," says a former employee, Marie Murphy.

An apartment in the basement of the Liberty Lobby building, used by Carto when he is in town, is called "the bunker," Mrs. Murphy said, a reference to Hitler's shelter in Berlin.

Several former employees said Liberty Lobby personnel are initially drawn to the organization to contribute to the conservative political effort in America but then are "turned off" by what they consider to be the institution's underlying racism and anti-Semitism.

Liberty Lobby officials have consistently denied such "isms" and contend that any references to Jews or Negroes, especially statements on Zionism as anti-American, are simply accurate reflections of historical facts.

It also has denied charges brought by the late columnist Drew Pearson that it is operated by a secret neo-Nazi organization called the Francis Parker Yockey Movement, named after the author of "Imperium."

"How could we be National Socialists (Nazis)?" says Liberty Lobby attorney Warren Richardson. "They're for government ownership of industry, unions, farms and land. We're for private ownership and free enterprise. How this position can be twisted to show a similarity with the Nazis is really infathomable."

"I'm not against anybody if he's a good American, but I'm against anybody who's not a good American," explains Col. Dall, Liberty Lobby board chairman.

"We have a large ethnic group here whose Americanism is questionable . . . emotionally, a lot of Jewish people have dual citizenship," he said, referring to the Zionist movement. "If that makes me anti-Semitic, then let 'em come at me with sticks and stones."

Dall stressed that he feels there is a crucial difference between being opposed to American Zionists (who, in his view, are required to split their loyalty between the United States and Israel) and simply being prejudiced against Jews in general.

"A lot of Jews are my good friends," he said.

Dall, 74, is a former son-in-law of President Franklin Delano Rossevelt and a retired Wall Street investment banker. A tall, energetic, hospitable man, he attended Mercersburg Academy and Princeton University, then married Anna Roosevelt, President Rossevelt's only daughter, in the 1930s. They were later divorced. For several years, he worked for the Fenner & Beane brokerage house, a predecessor of Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith.

In 1968, Dall wrote "FDR, My Exploited Father-in-Law," a book outlining what he contends were the schemes of international banking interests to undermine the American monetary system, impose socialistic legislation and drag an unwilling America into World War II during the Roosevelt administration.

Willis Carto, though reputed to be the real guiding force at Libby Lobby, is less well known than Dall. An enigmatic and generally inaccessible man, he is said to work 17 and 18 hours a day, seven days a week.

A California resident in his mid-40s, he is seldom mentioned in the regularly published "Liberty Letter" and other Liberty Lobby literature. He has consistently declined press interviews since he founded Liberty Lobby more than 10 years ago.

Dall is heralded as the functioning chief of Liberty Lobby, but former employees and executives of the organization say his position is largely titular.

Leo Don Phillips, acting executive director of Liberty Lobby until he quit in March, 1969, said Dall, for example, could not sign checks for the organization, while Carto and others could.

Harold Shifflet, the lobby's business manager from 1967 to October, 1969, says, "I had the title of business manager—but that's all. Carto ran the place."

Phillips, Shifflet and several other persons quit Liberty Lobby during 1969 and formed their own conservative group called American Lobby.

"A lot of people have left Liberty Lobby because they couldn't take the political philosophy," says Charles Hall, another ex-employee now with American Lobby.

Husband, Wife Team

Two who have not left are the husband-and-wife team, Gerald and Carol Dunn, both former organizers in the Patriotic Party, political arm of Robert DePugh's paramilitary Minutemen organization. Dunn is chief researcher for Liberty Lobby. His wife is corresponding secretary.

Mrs. Dunn, who was acting national secretary of the Patriotic Party in 1966, said she quit because the "third party approach" to political action failed to work, largely because of "smears and connections made with the Minutemen."

Meanwhile, Liberty Lobby continues to thrive.

A large computer whirs in the basement night and day, grinding out addresses for a wide assortment of mailings, newsletters and pleas for money to about 250,000 supporters across the country.

Upstairs, clerks open mail, file news clippings, count incoming money, update massive financial pledge lists and prepare testimony for presentation to congressional committees. The building buzzes with industry weekdays, and all male

employees are additionally required to work four hours on Saturdays.

The lobby's two most common pressure tactics are to make personal visits to offices of individual congressmen (a skilled three-man team is active in the congressional office buildings three or four days a week) and to organize its quarter-million subscribers to flood congressmen with mail on specific issues.

A central organizational element of Liberty Lobby is its "board of policy," a group now numbering more than 22,000 persons throughout the nation who are periodically polled by Liberty Lobby for their views on current political issues or legislation. Their responses form Liberty Lobby's official position on issues.

Persons can become policy board members by pledging a minimum of $12 a year to Liberty Lobby, rather than the $2 that regular mailing list subscribers pay.

Liberty Lobby says it has no big angels to help underwrite its annual budget of more than $800,000.

Records filed by the organization with the clerk of the House under the federal lobby registration statute show that a total of 14 persons each donated $500 or more in the first quarter of 1969, for example. Most of these gifts were $1,000 or less. The largest was $5,500. In the first quarter this year, by contrast, only two persons were listed as giving $500 or more; one for $1,000 and one for $500.

"Our average contribution is $4 and change," says attorney Richardson. "It takes a lot of little old ladies in tennis shoes to support this operation."

The operation has been in almost unfailingly good financial health. Liberty Lobby leases the big white building at 3d Street and Independence Avenue from a corporation called Government Educational Foundation (GEF). Carto is listed as GEF chairman and treasurer in incorporation papers.

Liberty Building, purchased by GEF in 1965 from Arlington real estate dealer C. D. Kelley for $115,000 with two deeds of trust totaling $100,000, is now completely paid for. Phillips, Shifflet and other ex-employees say Liberty Lobby was paying GEF $3,500-a-month rent for the building in 1969.

In March, 1969, Liberty Lobby sent out an urgent letter to subscribers signed by Dall announcing that one of the loans (for $55,000) was being called and the building would be lost unless supporters helped pay it off immediately. Money poured in, and the loan was paid within a few weeks. The other loan (for $45,000) was paid in full about the same time, according to records at the D.C. recorder of deeds.

Rep. Dowdy of Texas, indicted last spring on federal bribery charges, has also benefited from Liberty Lobby largesse. Through a maasive letter campaign to its supporters, the lobby raised $26,000 for Dowdy's legal defense fund and presented it to him in May.

Liberty Lobby, as a registered lobby, cannot by law raise funds for the election campaigns of political candidates. Thus, like many other lobby and pressure groups in the country, both conservative and liberal, it participates in a specially designed association of nonpartisan organization called a "political committee" that, when registered under the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, can legally solicit and distribute campaign funds.

Liberty Lobby's political committee is called the United Congressional Appeal (UCA), headed by former conservative Texas congressman Bruce Alger.

Liberty Lobby and the eight other constituent members of UCA raised $90,000 in the 1968 congressional campaign, for example, spreading it thinly among 66 candidates.

This year, UCA fell below its goal of $250,000 and distributed only about $65,000 among 20 candidates, ranging from Reps. John R. Rarick (D-La.) and Thomas G. Abernethy (D-Miss.) in the Deep South to Republicans Howard W. Pollock of Alaska and Louis C. Wyman of New Hampshire. Fourteen of the 20 UCA-backed candidates lost.

Not all UCA contributions have been met with eager hands. In 1968, Rep. Lawrence Hogan (R-Md.) received $1,000 and promptly returned it. "We found out UCA was a front for Liberty Lobby," explained Hogan's press aide, Ilona Modly. "Liberty Lobby is pretty much a racist and anti-Semitic group, so we returned the money."

Though UCA is technically an association of groups, it is controlled almost entirely by Liberty Lobby, say Phillips and Shifflet. Liberty Lobby offficials deny this, saying the functions of the two, especially their finances, are maintained separately.

Lobby personnel perform most UCA duties, say Phillips and Shifflet, and the lobby's enormous mailing list is used to make UCA solicitations. Clara Sandahl, who is listed as UCA treasurer in records at the clerk of the House, is also a Liberty Lobby employee. Her late husband, Clifford, was the lobby's public relations director.

UCA's Board of Awards includes Dall, novelist Taylor Caldwell (president of the Friends of Rhodesian Independence), Stanley M. Andrews (chairman of Americans for National Security) and Gen. Richard B. Moran (chairman of the Congress of Freedom).

Andrews, Moran and Miss Caldwell have also been listed as members of Liberty Lobby's board of policy. Another UCA board member, La Vonne D. Furr, is managing editor of American Mercury, a magazine pushed energetically by Liberty Lobby, containing articles on Zionism and "scientific racism" as well as other more conventional conservative subjects.

Liberty Lobby also maintains ties with the newly created National Youth Alliance (NYA), the reconstituted leftovers of the 1968

Youth for (George) Wallace movement.

NYA is headed by ex-John Birch Society functionary Louis T. Byers, a close friend of Carto. With offices in the Dupont Circle Building here, NYA has aimed at oraganizing young persons to fight drugs, hippies, racial integration and leftist radicalism in general. It counsels the use of force gives instruction in karate and other "martial arts."

Its bible is Yockey's "Imperium." Its newspaper, Attack!, is openly anti-Zionist, anti-Nixon and generally anti-Establishment. Its language sometimes is oddly similar to that found in radical left underground newspapers: "Smash the system! Death to the Establishment!" urges the current issue.

The current issue, more strident and overt in its anti-Zionism than previous issues, was financed by Carto according to NYA chief Byers.

"He personally read and approved all the articles," Byers said. "He went a little hard on the Zionist issue this time, but that's the way he wanted it . . . And I think it was good judgment."

Charles Hall, former office personnel manager at Liberty Lobby, says lobby employees assisted NYA during its formative months and NYA used the lobby's mailing list.

Most of Liberty Lobby's "professional staff" were given copies of "Imperium" to read, according to Phillips, former acting executive director. "Imperium" has been advertised at least once in the widely circulated Liberty Lobby newsletter. Dozens of copies of the 619-page book are stored in the basement of the Liberty Building.

(Yockeyist literature is difficult to find outside the offices of Liberty Lobby and NYA. However, "Imperium," Attack!, and a wide assortment of "Western culture" books and pamphlets are on sale in the Arlington bookstore of the National Socialist White Peoples Party, formerly the American Nazi Party. Several of the books are published by Noontide Press, a Los Angeles publishing house in which Carto has a financial interest.)

Liberty Lobby attorney Richardson, who described NYA as "far over to the right from us," says NYA has been "very independent" of Liberty Lobby for the past six months.

NYA is "hard-core right," he said. "We have none of their trappings. They have a different political orientation. Our function, which is to lobby, is different, too."

NYA's advisory board is filled with Liberty Lobby friends whose efforts in conservative causes are frequently cited and praised by the lobby.

Board members include retired Adm. John G. Crommelin, sharp critic of what he calls the "Jewish-Communist conspiracy"; Austin J. App, specialist in Nazi Germany apologetics, who contends the estimate of 6 million Jews exterminated by Nazis in World War II is vastly exaggerated; retired Marine Lt. Gen. Pedro del Valle, who praised Mussolini's "sagacious leadership" in the invasion of Ethiopia in the 1930s, and Revilo P. Oliver, University of Illinois classics professor who says America's once-noble "Indo-European or Aryan" civilization is now "covered with alien slime."

Many NYA and UCA board members are also contributing editors to American Mercury.

In its public position on crucial issues, Liberty Lobby displays contrasting views, with standard conservative declarations standing side-by-side with a number of traditionally liberal or populist utterances.

Its official handbook, "The How," states, for example, that Liberty Lobby is opposed to minimum wage laws, urban renewal programs, foreign aid and recognition of Communist China.

On the other hand, it also favors tax reform against big corporations, the right of privacy for citizens, realignment of political parties along conservative - liberal lines, independence for Puerto Rico and an end to foreign military entanglements.

Lobby attorney Richardson says that Liberty Lobby —which he describes as "dead center constitutionalist, not right wing"—is opposed to a variety of government actions from wire tapping to school busing because "they violate the Constitution and minimize individual freedom."

He noted, for example, that civil liberties groups have called for repeal of Title II of the 1950 McCarran Act, the so-called "concentration camp" statute empowering the government to intern suspects without specific charges in emergency detention centers in the event of war or internal insurrection.

"We favor retention of the act," he said, "because it specifies and guarantees the civil rights of the detained people, including the right to have a hearing, a lawyer, habeas corpus and appeal . . . If you repealed it, those rights would be gone and the President would have broader sweeping powers to do almost anything."

"In a way," Richardson concluded, "we're the true libertarians."