



*William F. Buckley Jr.*

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Dear Mr. Weisberg:

What, exactly, do you want from a magazine?

That is a question I often ask myself. I am told by people much more experienced in the matter than I am, that there are just two major reasons why one tries, or rejects trying, "another" magazine (note that I assume you already get several): time, and money, in that order. Therefore, if I want you to try my own National Review (which I do), I must answer those objections.

As to money, I am sure that the current state of affairs has got a lot of people pinching pennies (or at least quarters) they hadn't pinched before; yet I tend to waive the financial argument, because it seems to me most people remain able and willing to afford what they want or value, so that what they don't buy are the things they don't want badly enough, or aren't worth the price. Lack of time is more convincing: I say "love to, but just don't have the time" a dozen times a day now, and am the first to admit that I read only a fraction of the "WFB: you should read!" material that is sent me. Yet lack of time -- or, alternatively, making the best use of one's time -- is the very best reason I can advance to you for trying National Review.

As you well know, ours is the age of specialization. I meet professional people who read (and feel that they must read) literally dozens of publications, all more or less related to their occupations. Add to this newspapers, newsmagazines, "leisure" and hobby things, and trying to keep up becomes plainly impossible; the result is, people simply get dull. I know a great many intelligent people who are functionally illiterate about what's actually going on in the world at large. They miss the broadly-reasoned view that is nowadays as necessary as it has always been enjoyable -- the pause that illuminates.

Which is exactly what National Review gives you: a thoughtful, well-argued analysis not only of what is going on, but also (and more importantly) what it all means. So I never miss an opportunity, as I travel around, to recommend NR to the people I meet, as I recommend it to you now -- at my own risk. Here is what I ask you to do: use the enclosed card to try NR at the "special introductory rate" indicated. Look at a few issues, and see for yourself if it does not provide you with a whole new perspective on the current scene -- the kind of thing you can't find elsewhere. In due course we'll send you a bill; if at that time you think I have misled you, then write "don't like" across the bill, and return it. What could be fairer than that?

Naturally I am betting that you will like it and, I think, with good reason: while National Review is often called "the conservative's bible," a truly impressive number of people I meet, who certainly consider themselves as being liberal, also read and enjoy NR, however much they may disagree with it. The reason, I think, is balance: NR covers

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not only the usual thing -- the latest news, editorial opinions, what famous people are up to, articles on the major topics of the day, and so on -- but also the unusual. Among the latter I list some very good humor (I think especially of D. Keith Mano, who is a regular); excellent reviews of books, film, TV and anything about arts and manners that seems worthy of comment; James Burnham, who in my judgment provides the most penetrating strategic insights available anywhere; frequent coverage of food, wine, travel, music, plus Gauerke's cartoons and a mind-twisting Trans-O-Gram word puzzle by Svend Petersen.

And if "name" writers are your thing, NR brings them to you: James Jackson Kilpatrick, Jeffrey Hart, Russell Kirk, Victor Gold, Elspeth Huxley, William Rickenbacker, Charles J. V. Murphy, John Chamberlain, Miles Copeland, Ernest van den Haag, Nika Hazelton, Francis Russell, Richard Whelan ... as you see, I could go on and on -- speaking of names, you'll love our correspondent-at-large Taki Theodoracopulos, who is based in Athens but roams the world -- without even mentioning the three or four columns by me, in each copy you'll receive (admittedly, I use one of them to answer publicly the more flamboyant of the letters I receive, and for other personal asides).

Give it a try, won't you? You risk nothing at all by using the enclosed card, and how will you know what you may be missing unless you try it? So, as they say, use the "handy" postage-free envelope provided, etc. and etc. You can't lose, and if my own enthusiasm is justified, you will gain a new enthusiasm of your own.

Faithfully,

Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

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P. S.: If all this magazine talk is too much for you, you'll appreciate the choice (listed on the card) to merely subscribe outright. I wouldn't blame you. Many thanks.