

Victor Lasky

A Valid View On Elite Control Of the Media

Washington

ACCORDING to one of his top speech-writers, President Nixon is hoping to leave his imprint on the nation long after he is gone from office.

The President is seeking "the expansion of existing institutions and the creation of new institutions to articulate and defend the values and political beliefs that motivate the Republican party," as well as "the building of new cadres of leadership to implement his own social and political philosophy, not just for the next four years, but over the next two decades."



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This inside look into the President's thinking has been provided by Patrick J. Buchanan, a former St. Louis newspaperman who now holds the title of special consultant to the president.

In a new book entitled "The New Majority," Buchanan makes the point that the overwhelming number of Americans who contributed to Mr. Nixon's landslide victory last fall are not being well served by the liberals who control so many of the nation's nongovernmental institutions.

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THE LIBERALS, writes Buchanan, "man the heights of Academia; they publish most of the nation's books; they dominate the national media; and, with rare exceptions, they control the big foundations and the public policy institutes dependent upon them."

"If the President's political majority is to be an enduring entity," Buchanan goes on, "it must develop the institutions and train the individuals who will articulate its values and beliefs, and carry on its traditions. Republicans and conservatives . . . have yet to begin the serious building of a competing structure, an alternative establishment . . ."

"Where are the socially active and politically aware foundations whose generosity, wealth and power can match the big foundations of political liberals?"

"Republicans and conservatives would do well in coming years to call public attention to this imbalancing feature in American politics, and to devise, create and support institutions to defend and advance the ideas and values of middle America."

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BUCHANAN, who is probably the Nixon administration's foremost authority on the media, has some sharp things to say about the nation's news broadcasts.

"Simply stated," he says, "it is that an incumbent elite, with an ideological slant unshared by the nation's majority, has acquired absolute control of the most powerful medium of communication known to man.

"And that elite is using that media monopoly to discredit those with whom it disagrees and to advance its own ideological objectives — and it is defending that monopoly by beating its several critics over the head with the stick of the first amendment . . ."

"Critics should not be distracted by cries of 'repression,' and public tears over the 'death of the first amendment.' Nothing in our Constitution, written or inherent, prevents individuals in government or private life from devising and proposing ways and means to crack this unprecedented concentration of political power, to open up the national airwaves, to guarantee that a broader range of information and opinion is brought before the American people."

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TO "close the networks' credibility gap with the American people," Buchanan calls for various reforms:

The first would be network recognition of the special responsibilities inherent in a monopoly situation — namely, to guarantee "balance in commentary."

Then Buchanan calls on the networks to make a "conscious search . . . for newsmen and anchormen and commentators around the nation who feel and share the views and beliefs and the will to investigate and report and comment on the issues that most concern the American people — and not simply those of greatest interest to the liberal establishment."

"The New Majority," although a slim volume, is of major significance because of the author's close proximity to the thinking in the Oval Office. Published by the Girard Bank of Philadelphia, the book is must reading for anyone interested in White House views unfiltered by the usual instant analysis provided on the tube.

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