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The American Establishment

Serious articles are often lampooned, but only rarely are spoofs taken seriously. Richard Rovere's "The American Establishment" is a distinguished example of the latter. First published in the *American Scholar*, fleshed out in *Esquire* soon after, and finally brought out in book form, the essay purported to be the last word on who *really* ran things in America. Written with enough fact to be misleading and enough deadpan authority to be believed, the essay prompted widespread critical reaction and added the word "establishment" to the American political and journalistic vocabulary. Here we reprint Rovere's May 1962 *Esquire* article, shorn of most of its footnotes and slightly condensed. In a 1978 postscript, Rovere suggests that while, of course, the Establishment does not and never did exist, it has changed remarkably since 1962.

by Richard Rovere

To understand the United States today, it is necessary to know something about the Establishment.

Most citizens don't realize it exists. Yet the Establishment makes its influence felt from the President's Cabinet to the professional life of a young college teacher who wants a foundation grant. It affects the nation's policies in almost every area.

—The News & Courier, Charleston, S.C., October 18, 1961

It is now, of course, conceded by most fair-minded and objective authorities that there is an Establishment in America—a more or less closed and self-sustaining institution that holds a preponderance of power in our more or less open society.

Naturally, Establishment leaders pooh-pooh the whole idea; they deny the Existence of the Establishment, disclaim any connection of their own with it, and insist that they are merely citizens exercising citizens' rights and responsibilities. They

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often maintain that the real power is held by some other real or imagined force—the voters, the Congress, Madison Avenue, Comsymps, the rich, the poor, and so forth. This is an ancient strategy; men of power have always known how to use it. “Wouldst thou enjoy first rank?” St. John Chrysostom wrote. “Then cede it to another.” The *News & Courier* is absolutely right.

Conceptions of the Establishment, to be sure, differ widely, just as do conceptions of the Church, the State, and other important institutions. Hilary Masters, a leading member of the Dutchess County school of soci-

ologists, defined it in a recent lecture as “the legitimate Mafia.” To William F. Buckley, Jr. and his collaborators on the *National Review*, it is almost interchangeable with the “Liberal Machine,” which turns out the “Liberal Line.” Their Establishment includes just about everyone in the country except themselves* and the great hidden, enlightened majority of voters who would, if only they were given the chance, put a non-Establishment man in the White

*It is characteristic of most thinkers and writers on the subject to define the Establishment in such a way as to keep themselves outside it and even victimized by it.



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House and have John Kenneth Galbraith recalled from India or left there and relieved of his passport.

Galbraith, himself a pioneer in the field of Establishment studies, sees the Establishment as a rather small group of highly placed and influential men who embody the best of the Conventional Wisdom and can be trusted with substantial grants of power by any responsible group in the country. The perfect Establishment type, in his view, would be the Republican called to service in a Democratic administration (e.g., the present Secretary of the Treasury, Douglas Dillon) or the vice versa. "They are the *pivotal* people," he observed in one of his earlier studies. (Italics his.) That was before his appointment as the Establishment's man in New Delhi. (He is not a member of his own Establishment, however, for he could not hope to be held over in a Republican administration.)

True Blue

The fact that experts disagree on exactly what the Establishment is and how it works does not mean that they are talking about different things or about something that does not exist. Experts disagree about the Kingdom of God. This is not an argument against its existence; plainly the Kingdom of God is many things. Differences of opinion over the meaning of "justice" have given rise to one of the most honored professions in

the world. One dogmatic Marxist may quarrel with another over the proper "role of the proletariat" and even about who should and who should not be counted as belonging to the "bourgeoisie." This does not make a fiction or a meaningless abstraction of either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie.

The Establishment can be thought of in many different ways, all of them empirically valid in one or another frame of reference. Masters, Buckley, Galbraith, and Corradini* look upon the Establishment from quite different points of view—which grow in the main out of their differing disciplines—but they would have no difficulty in agreeing that Douglas Dillon is true blue or that, say, Senator Thomas J. Dodd, of Connecticut, is on the outside looking in—disapprovingly, in his case. Despite their differences of emphasis and approach, none of them would have many reservations about the *News & Courier's* definition:

The Establishment is a general term for those people in finance, business, and the professions, largely from the Northeast, who hold the principal measure of power and influence in this country irrespective of what administration occupies the White House. . . . [It is] a working alliance

*H. E. Corradini, author of *Patterns of Authority in American Society* (Gainesville Press, 1958). Corradini, an anthropologist, draws a striking parallel between the American Establishment and the Ydeneks, an intertribal council that still functions in Canada.

Richard Rovere, 63, has been a staff writer for the New Yorker since 1944. Born in Jersey City, he graduated from Columbia University in 1937, then worked briefly as an editor for New Masses and The Nation. His many books include The General and the President (1951, with Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.); Affairs of State: The Eisenhower Years (1956); and Arrivals and Departures: A Journalist's Memoirs (1976).

of the near-socialist professor and the internationalist Eastern banker calling for a bland bi-partisan approach to national politics.

For my own part, I think the definition is a pretty good one. I would cavil a bit at the notion that "the Establishment is a general term" etc. It is a good deal more than a collective noun, as I shall make clear. Moreover, there is a slight ambiguity in the phrase "principal measure of power." Too many journalists, awed by their observations of the Establishment at work, leap to the conclusion that its power is not only great but invariably decisive. This is by no means the case. There are powerful anti-Establishment forces at work, and frequently they prevail.

It seems to me perfectly clear, for example, that the Establishment has never found a way of controlling Congress. Indeed, there are times when Congress appears to be nothing more or less than a conspiracy to louse up the plans of the Establishment. Whatever the Establishment wants, it often seems, Congress mulishly opposes.

Nor has the Establishment ever made much headway in such fields as advertising, television, or motion pictures. The basic orientation of the leaders in all these fields is anti-Establishment, and what Establishment strength exists is concentrated mainly on the lower levels—in advertising, the copy writers; in television, certain of the news departments (most notably at Columbia Broadcasting); and in the motion pictures, a few writers and actors. Still, Establishment strength in these areas is generally unimpressive.

The Establishment does not control everything, but its influence is pervasive, and it succeeds far more

often than its antagonists in fixing the major goals of American society. Though it does not, as I have noted, come anywhere close to controlling Congress, Congress is everlastingly reacting to it.

Within the next couple of years, for example, Congress will spend a good part of its time fighting the Establishment program for a great revision of American trade practices and for eventual American association with the European Common Market. This whole scheme was cooked up at a three-day meeting of the Executive Committee at the Sheraton-Park in Washington immediately after President Kennedy's inauguration on January 20, 1961. The odds are heavily against the Establishment winning this battle in 1962 or even in 1963.

The important thing, though, is that the Establishment has taken the initiative and put its great antagonist on the defensive. Practically everyone is agreed that in time the victory, even in this difficult matter, will go to the Establishment.

The Presidium

The Establishment is not, of course, at any level a membership organization in the sense that it collects dues, issues cards, or holds meetings openly under its own auspices. It is a coalition of forces, the leaders of which form the top directorate, or Executive Committee—referred to sometimes as "Central." At the lower levels, organization is quite loose, almost primitive in some cases, and this is one of the facts that explains the differences in definition among experts.

In the upper reaches, though, certain divisions have achieved a high degree of organization. For instance, the directors of the Council on For-

ign Relations make up a sort of Presidium for that part of the Establishment that guides our destiny as a nation. The presidents and senior professors of the great Eastern universities frequently constitute themselves as *ad hoc* Establishment committees.

Now and then, the Executive Committee regroups as an Establishment front for some particular end. In the summer of 1961, as a case in point, when anti-Establishment forces in Congress and elsewhere threatened the President's foreign aid program, the Establishment, at the request of the White House, hastily formed the Citizens' Committee for International Development and managed to bull through a good deal of what the President wanted. The Establishment has always favored foreign aid. It is, in fact, a matter on which Establishment discipline may be invoked.

Summing up the situation at the present moment, it can, I think, be said that the Establishment maintains effective control over the executive and judicial branches of government; that it dominates most of American education and intellectual life; that it has very nearly unchallenged power in deciding what is and what is not respectable opinion in this country. Its authority is enormous in organized religion (Roman Catholics and fundamentalist Protestants to one side), in science, and, indeed, in all the learned professions except medicine. It is absolutely unrivaled in the great new world created by the philanthropic foundations—a fact which goes most of the way toward explaining why so little is known about the Establishment and its workings. Not one thin dime of Rockefeller, Carnegie, or Ford money has been spent to further Es-

tablishment studies.*

If it were not for the occasional formation of public committees such as the Citizens' Committee for International Development, Establishment scholars would have a difficult time learning who the key figures are. Committee rosters serve Establishmentologists in the same way that May Day photographs of the reviewing stand above Lenin's tomb serve the Kremlinologists. By close analysis of them, by checking one list of names against another, it is possible to keep tabs quite accurately on the Executive Committee.

A working principle agreed upon by Establishment scholars is this: If in the course of a year a man's name turns up 14 times in paid advertisements in, or collective letters to, the *New York Times*, the official Establishment daily, it is about 14 to 1 that he is a member of the Executive Committee. (I refer, naturally, to advertisements and letters pleading Establishment causes.) There are, to be sure, exceptions. Sometimes a popular athlete or movie actor will, innocently or otherwise, allow himself and his name to be exploited by the Establishment. He might turn up 20 times a year and still have no real status in the institution. But that is an exception. The rule is as stated above.

One important difference between

*Some have even gone so far as to encourage what might be called "red-herring scholarship"—efforts to prove that something other than the Establishment dominates the country. A notorious example is C. Wright Mills' *The Power Elite* (Oxford University Press, 1956). It was subsidized by the Huntington Hartford Foundation, Columbia University's Social Science Research Council, and Brandeis University. Even the parent body, the British Establishment, got into the act through the Oxford University Press, which, Mills admits, went "far beyond the office of publisher in helping me get on with this."

estæ· blifmënt

Establishment [Cf. OF. *établissement* (late AF. *establishement*), Fr. *établissement*.]

II. Something that is established.

8. The ecclesiastical system established by law; more fully *Church Establishment*. Hence *The Establishment* often occurs as a distinctive name for the established church (esp. of England, Scotland, formerly Ireland), in contradistinction to non-established churches or sects.

[1667 J. CORBET, DISC. RELIG. ENG. 28 The Setling of a Nation may be made up of an Establishment, a Limited Toleration, and a Discreet Connivence, etc.] . . .

1824 SYD. SMITH, WKS. (1859) II.51/1 America . . . has no Establishment.

—Oxford English Dictionary

the American Establishment and the party hierarchy in Russia is that the Establishment chairman is definitely *not* the man in the center of the picture or the one whose name is out of alphabetical order in the listings. The secret is astonishingly well kept.

Was JFK a Member?

Some people, to be sure, have argued that when, as happens most of the time, the Establishment has a man of its own in the White House, he automatically becomes chairman—just as he automatically becomes commander in chief of the armed forces. I am quite certain that this is not the case. For one thing, the Establishment rarely puts one of its tried and trusted leaders in the White House. Dwight Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy have both served the Establishment and been served by it, but neither is or ever was a member of the innermost circle. Both, indeed, were admitted with some reluctance on the part of senior members, and Eisenhower's standing has at times been most insecure.

I am not sure who the chairman of the Establishment is today, although I would not be altogether surprised to learn that he is Dean Rusk. By a thrust of sheer intuition, though, I did get the name of the 1958 chairman and was rather proud of myself for doing so. In that year, I discovered that J. K. Galbraith had for some time been surreptitiously at work in Establishment studies, and he told me that he had found out who was running the thing. He tested me by challenging me to guess the man's name. I thought hard for a while and was on the point of naming Arthur Hays Sulzberger, of the *New York Times*, when suddenly the right name sprang to my lips.

"John J. McCloy," I exclaimed. "Chairman of the Board of the Chase Manhattan Bank; once a partner in Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft, and also in Cravath, de Gersdorff, Swaine & Wood, as well as, of course, Milbank, Tweed, Hope, Hadley & McCloy; former United States High Commissioner in Germany; former president of the World Bank; liberal Republican; chairman of the Ford

Foundation and chairman—my God, how could I have hesitated—of the Council on Foreign Relations; Episcopalian.”

“That’s the one,” Galbraith said. He congratulated me for having guessed what it had taken him so much patient research to discover.

The Party Line

The Establishment is not monolithic in structure or inflexible in doctrine. There is an Establishment “line,” but adherence is compulsory only on certain central issues, such as foreign aid. On economic affairs, for example, several views are tolerated. The accepted range is from about as far left as, say, Walter Reuther to about as far right as, say, Dwight Eisenhower. A man cannot be for *less* welfarism than Eisenhower, and to be farther left than Reuther is considered bad taste.

Racial equality is another matter on which the Establishment forbids dissent. Opposition to integration is a cause for expulsion, or at least suspension for not less than a year, unless it is mere “token” opposition. The only *white* Southern members of the Establishment in anything like good standing are reconstructed Southerners or Southerners the Establishment has reason to believe would be reconstructed if political circumstances would allow it.

Take Senator J. William Fulbright, of Arkansas. He is a pillar of the Establishment even though he votes with the unenlightened on racial matters. The Council on Foreign Relations gave him an “A-1” rating when he was up for chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.* The Executive Committee accepts him because it assumes his heart is in the right place. He is, after all, a former Rhodes scholar and a

university president. Moreover, the Fulbright scholarships have provided an enormous subsidy for Establishment intellectuals.

In nonpolitical affairs, great doctrinal latitude is not only tolerated but encouraged. In religion, the Establishment is rigorously disestablishmentarian. Separatism is another matter on which discipline may be invoked. Like a city-wide ticket in New York, the Executive Committee is carefully balanced religiously as well as racially. (The only important difference is that several places are kept for nonbelievers.) The only proscribed views are the noisier ones. Though he now and then gets an audience in the White House, Billy Graham is *persona non grata* in Establishment circles. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen is regarded as a Catholic Billy Graham and is similarly a pariah.

Reinhold Niebuhr is the official Establishment theologian, and Bishop Angus Dun is the chaplain.

McCloy Abroad

In matters of public policy, it may be said that those principles and policies that have the editorial support of the *New York Times* are at the core of Establishment doctrine. And those irregularities and eccentricities that receive sympathetic *consideration* in the *Times* (not only on the editorial page but in the *Sunday Magazine* and the *Book Review*) are within the range of Establishment doctrinal tolerance.

It is essential to an understanding of the Establishment to recognize its essentially *national* characteristics.

*It exercised the veto power, though, when he was proposed as Secretary of State. It wanted Dean Rusk to get the job, and used Fulbright’s record on racial questions as an argument against Fulbright’s candidacy.

The whole of its power is greater than the sum of its parts. Its leading figures have national and international reputations but very often are persons of only slight influence or standing in the cities and states from which they come. Former Chairman McCloy, for example, cuts a lot of ice in Washington, Geneva, Paris, London, Rio de Janeiro, Bonn, Moscow, and Tokyo, but practically none in Manhattan. In Albany, he is almost unknown.

Hostile States

The relative weakness of the Establishment in the states undoubtedly helps to explain the shellackings it repeatedly gets in Congress. State-wide—or one might say, statewide—it is often torn by a kind of factionalism that seldom afflicts its national and international operations. In New York, for example, Averell Harriman and Nelson Rockefeller have often found themselves locked in combat like Grant and Lee; in Washington, they are Alphonse and Gaston. And so it goes.

A state-by-state canvass of Establishment strengths and weaknesses was conducted by Perry Associates, a St. Louis firm, in 1959. Some of the highlights follow:

In three states—Texas, Oklahoma, and North Dakota—the Establishment is virtually outlawed. There are no restrictive or repressive measures on the statute books, but there is persistent harassment by police and other officials. The American Civil Liberties Union had expressed some interest in arranging a test case, but no suitable one was found. Despite constant police surveillance, there is considerable underground Establishment activity in the Dallas area and in San Antonio.

The Indiana authorities are openly

hostile to the Establishment, and there has been continuing agitation for a law requiring Establishment agents to register with the Attorney General and be fingerprinted. It is hard to see what would be accomplished by this, for the Perry people could find no trace of Establishment activity anywhere in Indiana, except at Indiana University, in Bloomington. The faculty people there are state employees anyway and can quite easily be dealt with. In neither Nebraska nor Idaho could *any* Establishment influence be found. There were only the faintest traces in Wyoming, New Hampshire, Utah, and Florida.

Florida was the one southern state in which Establishment forces seemed exceedingly weak. Elsewhere, it was learned, nearly all those who described themselves as “moderates” were actually connected with the Establishment.

The big centers are, as one might expect, the states with large cities and large electoral votes: New York, California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Massachusetts. A rather surprising case, though, was Kansas, which ranked ahead of New Jersey and Maryland.

Beginnings

For some reason, Establishment studies have attracted few historians. Most of the work thus far has been undertaken by journalists, economists, sociologists, and psychologists. In consequence, very little has been done to uncover the origins of the Establishment.

One British historian, Keith E. D. Smith-Kyle, maintains, in *America in the Round* (Polter & Polter, Ltd., London, 1956), that “the American pretense to equality was, to speak bluntly, given the lie by the forma-

tion in the early days of the Republic of the sort of 'command' group similar in most respects to what Britons nowadays speak of as 'the Establishment.' By 1847, when the Century Association was founded in New York, power had been consolidated in a handful of hands. From then on, whenever there was a 'laying on of hands,' the blood in those extremities was the very blood that had coursed through those that had molded the clay of life in the so-called Federal period."

The First Committee

It is plain that Smith-Kyle is trying to say, in a roundabout British way, that a hereditary aristocracy runs the show here. He is as wrong-headed in this matter as he is in most others. American students, though they number few trained historians among them and none of a celebrity that compares with Smith-Kyle's, subscribe almost unanimously to the proposition that the Establishment came into being at a far later date—to be exact, as well as neat, at the turn of the century. They see the institution forming during the administration of Theodore Roosevelt, who by common consent was the first Establishment President—and in a way the last.*

The Founding Fathers of today's group zeroed in on T. R. as if they had caught him in a perfect bombsight. Consider them all, a few of them still alive, all of them within living memory: Henry L. Stimson, William Allen White, Nicholas Murray Butler, Robert Frost, Albert Beveridge, Abraham Hummel, Joseph Choate, William Travers Jerome, Jacob Riis, Charles Evans Hughes, Felix Frankfurter, Ida M. Tarbell, Joseph Pulitzer, Martin Provinsen, Lincoln Steffens, Benson Frost,

Learned Hand, W. Adolphe Roberts, Jane Addams, Nelson W. Aldrich, Eleanor Alice Burgess, John Hay, John Ray, John Jay Chapman, Van Wyck Brooks, Carl Schurz, Hamlin Garland, Oscar Straus, Winthrop Chanler, James R. Bourne, Whitelaw Reid, and Gifford Pinchot.

There, plainly, was the first Executive Committee!

Some uninformed publicists confuse the Establishment with the Organization. The two could not be more different. The Establishment Man and the Organization Man could not be more different, or more at odds. The Establishment uses the Organization from time to time, as a ruling group must in an industrial and commercial society. But it devoutly hopes that in time the Organization will wither away. The Organization would like to overthrow the Establishment. It had a near success when it ran its 1960 chairman, Richard M. Nixon, for President of the United States.

Time Out

The *New York Times* has no close rival as an Establishment daily. Technological advance is making it possible for the *Times* to become a national newspaper. This development should add immeasurably to the growth of the institution's powers.

Most Establishment personnel get at least one newspaper besides the *Times*, in order to keep up with Walter Lippmann and Joseph Alsop. Pa-

*This is a rather fine point. Since Roosevelt's time, every President except Harding and Truman has taken office with full Establishment approval. So far as can be determined, though, no one has ever gone directly from the Executive Committee to the office of Chief Executive. Woodrow Wilson is sometimes cited as an exception, but it is dubious in the extreme that he was one. Charles Evans Hughes, his 1916 opponent, was an Executive Committee man.

"THE GENTEEL NIGHTMARE OF RICHARD ROVERE"

Rovere accused columnist William F. Buckley, Jr. and others of defining "Establishment" to include everyone except themselves. In Rumbles Left and Right (1963), Buckley genially took Rovere to task:

So our Establishment is different from the British Establishment, a designation which Macaulay and Carlyle, stretching the original and merely religious meaning of the term, attached to the dominant men and institutions of England—the established order. So what? The English Establishment is more frozen than our own, primarily because theirs is a society based on class. Their Establishment has rites and honorifics and primogenitive continuities, and rests on deeply embedded institutional commitments against which the Socialists, the angry young men, the disestablishmentarians, have railed and howled and wept altogether in vain.

The "Establishment" Mr. Rovere is talking, or not talking, about is precariously perched; and every now and then it gets a terrific shellacking from its opponents. In the English Establishment, membership is to a considerable extent *ex officio*; in ours, far less so (though it is inconceivable, at least to this observer, that the head of the Ford Foundation could be an outsider). The chances are better that you might earn a berth in the American Establishment if you have gone to Groton and Yale; but no one has an automatic right to membership in it, not even the President of the United States (as Rovere, even in his flippant mood, admits). And membership in it is to an extent far greater than in England dependent on a man's opinions (and the way they are expressed); England, by contrast, has no trouble at all in countenancing Socialist earls.

It tends to be true in England that the Establishment prevails. It is less true in the United States, for the Establishment here is not so much of the governing class as of the class that governs the governors. The English Establishment mediates the popular political will through perdurable English institutions. The American Establishment seeks to set the bounds of permissible opinion. And on this, it speaks *ex cathedra*. It would not hesitate to decertify Mr. Rovere. But he gives no indication of waywardness.

©1963 by William F. Buckley, Jr.

pers that carry both these columnists are in good standing with the Establishment and get a lot of advertising that way.

There are some specialized magazines but none of general circulation that can be described as official or semiofficial organs. I have pondered long over the case of *Time* and have

concluded that it has no real place in the Establishment. It goes too far in attacking Establishment positions and it has treated many Establishment members with extreme discourtesy and at times with vulgarity. The Establishment fears *Time*, of course, and it now and then shows cravenness in its attempts to appease

it by putting Henry Luce on some commission or other (on freedom of the press, national goals, and so forth), or by giving his wife some political job. But the Luce publications generally must be considered as outside the Establishment.

Now that control of *Newsweek* has passed to Philip L. Graham, publisher of the *Washington Post*, it may be that the Establishment will adopt it as an official weekly.

U.S. News & World Report is widely read but held in low regard.

Foreign Affairs has, within its field, the authority of *Pravda* and *Izvestia*.

Harper's, the *Atlantic*, and the *New Yorker* all have Establishment clientele but none can be regarded as official. The *Saturday Review* was once heavily patronized but no longer is. The *New Republic* is coming up. The *Nation* has long since gone down. A few of the younger Establishment intellectuals read *Partisan Review*, but the more sophisticated ones regard it as stuffy and prefer *The Noble Savage*, edited by Saul Bellow and issued at irregular intervals by the World Publishing Company.

The Establishment has in its top councils some people who appear to the unsophisticated to be oppositionists. For example, Norman Thomas, the Socialist leader; Norman Mailer, the self-styled "hipster" novelist; and Norman Podhoretz, the firebrand editor of *Commentary*, all enjoy close relations with leading figures on the Executive Committee. The Reverend Martin Luther King has been proposed for membership on the Executive Committee. In 1957, a planning committee met for two days at the Royalton Hotel in New York and reported that "we need informed, constructive criticism fully as much as we need support" and urged the recruitment of

"people who will take a long, cold look at our policies and procedures and candidly advise us of any weaknesses they see. We recommend that in the cases of people playing this indispensable role of 'devil's advocate,' all discipline be suspended."

Picking Presidents

It is interesting to observe the workings of the Establishment in presidential politics. As I have pointed out, it rarely fails to get one of its members, or at least one of its allies, into the White House. In fact, it generally is able to see to it that both nominees are men acceptable to it.

It is never quite powerful enough, though, to control a nominating convention or actually to dictate nominations. National conventions represent regional interests much as Congress does, and there is always a good deal of unarticulated but nonetheless powerful anti-Establishment sentiment at the quadrennial gatherings of both Republicans and Democrats. Nevertheless, the great unwashed who man the delegations understand—almost intuitively, it seems—that they cannot win without the Establishment, and the more responsible among them have the foresight to realize that even if they did win they could not run the country without assistance from the Executive Committee.

Over the years, a deal has been worked out that is almost an operating rule of American politics. I am indebted to the novelist Margaret Creal for this concise formulation of it:

When an Establishment man is nominated for the Presidency by either party, the Vice-Presidential candidate must be drawn from outside the Establishment. When, as has occasionally happened, the

Establishment is denied the Presidential nomination, it must be given the Vice-Presidential nomination.

The system has worked almost perfectly for the last 30 years. In that time, the only non-Establishment man in the White House has been Harry Truman, and he had been Franklin Roosevelt's non-Establishment vice president. Putting Henry Wallace aside as a pretty far-out case and not counting Alben Barkley (a vice president's vice president), the vice presidents have all been non-Establishment: John Nance Garner, Harry Truman, Richard Nixon, and Lyndon Johnson.

Rockefeller and Rusk

Now observe what happens when the Establishment has to yield first place, as it had to do at the Republican convention in 1960. Richard Nixon, a non-Establishment vice president, simply could not be denied the presidential nomination. So the Establishment Republicans demanded and of course obtained Henry Cabot Lodge. There was a similar case in 1936, when the Republicans went outside the Establishment to nominate Alf Landon for first place. The vice presidential candidate was Colonel Frank Knox, the publisher of the *Chicago Daily News*, a Lippmann-Alsop paper, and later Roosevelt's Secretary of War.

Four years later, the Establishment nominated Wendell Willkie on the Republican ticket and agreed to Charles McNary, distinctly non-Establishment. In 1944, it was Dewey (Establishment) and Bricker (Non). The Establishment was particularly powerful in 1948 and not only got Dewey again but Earl Warren. In 1952, the usual deal was made in both parties: Eisenhower versus Stevenson (Establishment) and

Nixon and Sparkman (Non). Same thing in 1956, with Estes Kefauver in for Sparkman.

The Russians have caught on to the existence of the Establishment and understand some of its workings quite well. Nikita Khrushchev showed himself to be no slouch when he told Walter Lippmann, last spring, that President Kennedy was controlled by Nelson Rockefeller. Many people regarded this as depressing evidence of the grip of old-school Marxism on Khrushchev's mind. They thought he was mistaking a faded symbol of industrial and mercantile power for the real wielder of authority under People's Capitalism.

He was doing nothing of the sort. He was facing the facts of Establishment life. Not as a Standard Oil heir but as an Establishment agent, Nelson Rockefeller had forced the Republicans to rewrite their platform so that it conformed very closely to Chester Bowles' Democratic platform and provided for a vigorous anti-Communist defense program. Where did the central ideas of both platforms originate? In—where else?—the studies made by the Rockefeller Panel for the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and published as *Prospects for America*.

Who was on the Rockefeller Panel? Here are just a few of the names, left and right:

Dean Rusk	Lucius D. Clay
Chester Bowles	Arthur F. Burns
Jacob Potofsky	Henry R. Luce
Henry Kissinger	Oveta Culp Hobby
Anna Rosenberg	David Sarnoff

And when Kennedy became President, from what foundation did he get his Secretary of State? The Rockefeller Foundation, of course.

POSTSCRIPT

A 1978 COMMENTARY

by Richard Rovere

Summer, 1958. John Kenneth Galbraith and I were on the Isle of Rhodes at one of those getting-to-know-you conferences—Americans, Europeans, Asians, Africans, politicians, academics, journalists—that was paid for by a foundation I am now quite certain was a front for the CIA.

During a welcome break, I asked Galbraith if he had been reading any of the articles in the London weeklies about the British Establishment. He said that, indeed, he had and that, like me, he had been fooling around with the idea of an American Establishment. Did one exist? If so, what the hell was it, who ran it, how did it work?

Our thoughts were in some respects strikingly close together. There was no American Establishment; of course there wasn't, yet in a way there was, and in any case the chairman of the board had to be John J. McCloy.

We congratulated each other for good thinking. I imagine I would have left it at that, but then, a year or so later at a meeting of the *American Scholar* (not quite an Establishment house organ but not far from it) there seemed to be a dearth of material for a forthcoming issue, and Galbraith proposed that I put some of our findings and fantasies on paper. I did and they appeared in the Autumn 1961 issue. I used the title for a book, which was published in 1962 and soon remaindered at \$1.19.

For years thereafter I regretted the whole affair. I thought I had done a good-natured spoof on political science, sociology, and scholarship—one that (I hoped) made some telling points about our society, but a spoof nevertheless. People began confusing me with C. Wright Mills, the author of *The Power Elite*, one of the people I was trying to parody. Strange, unwelcome things happened.

In Cuba, Fidel Castro was informed that I had unlocked the secrets of American political life; I am told that he distributed reprints throughout the higher and middle echelons of his government. Representative John Rousselot (R.-Calif.), a member of the John Birch Society, reached precisely the same conclusion and circulated it to right-wing groups throughout

America. (The Castro and Rousselot editions must have been pirated; I never got a dime for reprints.) Dozens of book reviewers in serious publications soberly reported that I had done the definitive job on the power structure. "Irony—it never really works," Harold Ross, the editor of the *New Yorker*, once said.

What is there to be said about it all today?

The word "establishment" is all over the place, in the newspapers and trendy magazines and on TV, sounding vague but somehow authoritative and sophisticated. It is used to conjure up the notion of pecking order, entrenched power, centers of authority, of either liberalism or Anglo-American conservatism, even where the notion scarcely applies.

There is, or soon will be, a "social welfare establishment," a "dental care establishment," and a "solid waste management establishment." Every trade, every profession, every social unit down to the family is now said to have an "establishment."

Like crime, corruption, and communism, the American Establishment is a good thing to be against. Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter owed much of their success to having denounced it and pledged to combat it. Sam Brown, an antiwar activist in the 1960s, became a spokesman for what became the anti-Establishment establishment, ran for office in Colorado, and then became co-opted into what might be called the post-anti-Establishment Establishment as a member of the Carter administration.

Broadening the Base

Thus, the Establishment is also a good thing to be a part of. How else did Henry Kissinger and Cyrus Vance get to be Secretaries of State? These two would, of course, scoff at the idea that the Establishment even exists. They would be both right and wrong.

It was perfectly clear what Carter meant when he spoke of himself as an outsider. But if Nelson Rockefeller had said it, he would have been branded an unconscionable liar. Yet there would be some merit even in his claim. You can't buy your way into the Establishment, at least not into its highest councils. Walter Mondale is closer to the top than Rockefeller ever was.

The top of what? I would say it is the top of what Carter was not part of even when he became a member of the Trilateral Commission, which is, of course, a quite transparent front for the Establishment.

I have a few new developments to report:

At a meeting of the Establishment's Executive Committee

held in Key West, Florida, on April 1, 1978, the Reverend Theodore Hesburgh, president of Notre Dame University, was named as chairman, succeeding former Secretary of Everything Elliot Richardson of Boston. There were 11 votes for, 3 against, with 2 abstentions. Father Hesburgh is the first Roman Catholic to hold the office.

Senator Muriel Humphrey (D.-Minn.) was named vice chairman by acclamation. It was proposed that the term "chairperson" be used, but this was voted down, though support for the Equal Rights Amendment was unanimous.

There was an obvious desire to broaden the base, for no Establishment organization could hope to survive without an affirmative action program, or quota system, for the disadvantaged. Five new members of the Executive Committee were appointed: Lora Tredway of Aurora, Nebraska; the Reverend Jesse Jackson of Chicago; Thurman Munson of Cleveland; Alberto Garcia-Gomez of Barranquitas, Puerto Rico; and I. F. Stone of Washington, D.C. A spokesman for the committee, Daniel Bell of Cambridge, Massachusetts, said, "We think it's a niftily balanced ticket."

A motion to replace the quarterly *Foreign Affairs* with the newer *Foreign Policy* as an official Establishment publication was proposed and tabled. A leading proponent of the proposition said that "some of us think that *Foreign Affairs* is tainted by its many Establishment connections," meaning that the magazine is no longer useful as a front. "Wait till next year," another said. It was decided that the 1979 meeting will be held at the Peleskie Center at the Hotel Iroquois in New York City.

At a closing session in the home of Mrs. Helen Thielen, of Key West, the novelist Peter Taylor addressed the group on "The Establishment and the Southern Muse, 1865-1978."
