

Buckley's wit honed at home

by Peter Brown
Special to the DTH

Editor's note: William F. Buckley, Jr. will speak Wednesday at 8 p.m. in Memorial Hall. Peter Brown is the president of the Carolina Forum, which is sponsoring Buckley's visit. The following article is the first of a two-part series analyzing and commenting on Buckley's career.

Sharon, Conn. is a beautiful town. As the Kennedy family had their gatherings at a sea compound in Hyannisport, Mass., so do the Buckleys reunite themselves periodically on the grounds in Sharon, Conn.

Their compound is stately, quiet, and sheltered cozily in the northwestern corner of Connecticut, above New York City. Away from the hubbub. Called Great Elm, the estate resembles an old Southern mansion, down to the white

front columns. It was here at Great Elm, a short time ago, that the national leaders of Young Americans For Freedom met to release their little publicized "Sharon Statement."

They announced a firm stance for the principles that America was founded on and say so unanimously: that all Americans are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

In this undeniably beautiful town, nestled in the rolling hills of the Berkshire mountains, attractive in its settled New England serenity, with its elms and greens, it is no wonder that William F. Buckley, Sr. settled there with his bride from New Orleans.

One reads of the dinners in the Buckley household where Buckley Sr. would engage the family in lively conservative conversation—the spirited talk of a successful oil millionaire. With the family spaced around the table, including the now newly-elected Conservative Senator from New York, James Buckley, and sister Priscilla, the

managing editor of National Review, William F. Buckley Sr. would instruct and relate.

It is said that occasionally a younger voice from the end of that table would also attempt to instruct and relate (William F. Buckley Jr.). While the older brothers and sisters would vehemently retaliate, it was father Buckley who protected William Jr., as he piped up from the end of the table with occasional moments of wit and impertinence.

Whether or not the story is true, the style of William F. Buckley has carried over, for he has remained, in a quarter century, the asp-tongued aegis for the Conservative cause in America.

He produces a steady outpour of Conservative opinion as editor of National Review, a magazine pledged to "stand athwart history yelling stop." He has been a best-selling author with books such as God and Man At Yale, The Governor Listeth and The Jewlers Eye, which has sold over 45,000 copies. His newspaper column, "On the Right," is carried by over 300 newspapers, Buckley's frequent television appearances, both on his own show, "Firing Line," and his numerous television debates such as the infamous exchange with Gore Vidal at the 1968 Democratic Convention where Buckley said "Don't call me a crypto-Nazi you pinky-queer, or I'll sock you in the goddam chop and you'll stay plastered."

However one only mentions this because it is so uncharacteristic of the eloquent and logical arguments ad hominem, and those other arguments Mr. Buckley demolishes with the artful dodging of reductio ad absurdum. It is only with glee that even the aficionados of Buckley watch him lose his elegant composure and sally forth with a volley of expletives.

His style is rather to engage himself as the picador to the bull. His is the art of provocation and perhaps that is why his place is acknowledged as significant, even by the "limosine liberals" he frequently obliterates with scatological tirades to the head, and eudaemonic jabs to the body. Though he has been attacked as being the "perfect cocktail party intellectual," one knows him to be unworthy of the title.

Once he lost a debate with James Baldwin, voted down 548 to 160 by an audience at the Cambridge Union. But always, like an Eveready flashlight battery, he bounces back with great spirit and occasional wisdom.

One writer mused, "Buckley's message is more appealing if one has had a drink; for example, his notion that the United States should stop treating low level nuclear explosives as if they were something special."

When William F. Buckley, Jr. was at Yale he performed well as editor (chairman) of the Yale Daily News, and under his leadership and outpour of vitriolic editorials the faculty began to call the paper "The Yale Daily Nuisance." He graduated with honors and was invested into the Fence Club and was the Class Day Orator.

Finding campus life unsatisfactory in several respects he wrote, shortly after graduation, God And Man At Yale. Here he illustrates a faculty penchant for advancing the spread of atheism and socialism. An extraordinarily well documented text, it is now considered a small classic and was a best seller upon publication.

Recognizing Buckley's brilliance, his classmates forgave him the attack and were said to recognize the amicable side of his nature when he allowed them to play the one-armed bandit he kept in his college room.

As he believes today, his insistence was then that Yale College should not underestimate the approaching armageddon between the two most powerful forces in the world: the duel between Christianity and atheism. He maintains that the struggle between individuality and collectivism is the same struggle on a different scale. One finds it staggering that while others were down at the Yale Bowl waving handkerchiefs, Buckley would be supporting such monumental conceptions.

Though Buckley has run for public office he remains more of a political writer and advisor than a statesman. He once considered opposing Senator Jacob Javits' seat in New York. However, it is said that he regarded the experience as valuable material for his book The Unmaking Of A Mayor.

Tomorrow Peter Brown writes of Buckley's similarity to John F. Kennedy and about Buckley's last trip to UNC in 1963.



Farmer leaves post as HEW official

WASHINGTON—James E. Farmer, one of the Nixon administration's top-ranked black officials, resigned Monday as an Assistant Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

He cited "personal considerations" for his resignation and in return President Nixon praised him for his "many contributions" during his 22 months with the government.

Farmer, 50, former head of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), wrote Nixon: "I greatly appreciate the opportunity I have had during the past year and a half to further this administration's efforts in behalf of the American people, particularly blacks and other minorities," Farmer's letter said.

"I am proud of whatever contributions I have been able to make during this period, and I would like to assure you that I am available for whatever service my future commitments will allow," Farmer said.

With a "Dear Jim," reply Nixon "expressed regret" at Farmer's departure.

Admiral blamed for incident

WASHINGTON—Without consulting Washington, a Boston-based Coast Guard admiral permitted Russian seamen to board a U.S. cutter, seize and beat a Soviet defector, and haul him back aboard their trawler in a net, reports to the White House showed Monday.

Details of the abortive Nov. 23 defection of the Lithuanian fisherman off the Massachusetts coast were disclosed in twin reports by the Departments of State and Transportation. They were ordered by President Nixon last week to explain why the man was not given an opportunity to seek political asylum.

The report by the Transportation Department, which administers the Coast Guard, said the actual order to hand the man back to the Russians was given by Adm. William B. Ellis, commander of the 1st Coast Guard District at Boston. It said he acted from his sick bed without the advice of the State Department.

The reports also complained that the Coast Guard had never been given guidelines on how to deal with defectors and that its communications with the State Department were insufficient to permit it to obtain guidelines once it was confronted with the defection attempt.

Missing lawyer may be dead

LOS ANGELES—A defense attorney in the Tate murder trial said Monday that missing defense lawyer Ronald Hughes may be dead in a wilderness area north of here.

Paul Fitzgerald, who went into the area Sunday, said that Hughes had been missing for eight or nine days and he certainly would have been found by now if he had been seeking help.

"It's no joke," Fitzgerald said, "or any ploy to bring on a mistrial. He may well be dead. That seems probable at this point."

Ford, UAW reach settlement

DETROIT—Ford Motor Co. and the United Auto Workers reached agreement Monday on a new three-year contract to cover 166,000 workers, thereby avoiding a second crippling auto industry strike this year.

After negotiators had been bargaining for more than 27 hours, United Auto Workers President Leonard Woodcock emerged from the bargaining room to say, "I am delighted to announce that we have reached a tentative settlement."

Campus news briefs

Students selected to visit Colombia

Lynett Brooks and Larry McBenett were selected Saturday to attend the University of Antioquia as members of the Colombian Exchange from UNC.

The pair will journey to Colombia in January to study under full scholarship for two semesters.

Miss Brooks, a junior majoring in business administration, is from Durham. Bennett a senior from Fayetteville, is a political science major.

They will attend classes on the Antioquia campus, which opened in 1967. The campus is located in the center of Medellin, Colombia, a city of a million-and-a-half people.

Academically the university is modelled after its American counterparts. Exchange students carry a course load comparable to that of Carolina. Credit will be given by the University for approximately two-thirds of the courses taken in Colombia.

All classes and texts are in Spanish. Two students from Antioquia campus are attending classes here this year. They are Ana Lucia Uribe and Guillermo Alvarez.

Health Union votes money for aid

The Student Union of the School of Public Health voted to donate \$100 to the Pakistan Relief Fund at its Thursday night meeting.

"Because of the immensity of this disaster and the overwhelming health problems it has engendered," said Dan Warren, treasurer of the Union, "we feel that a donation of \$100 is an appropriate use of Union funds."

"We hope that our action serves as a challenge to other schools," he added.

The Union of the School of Public Health is a student organization which works to "promote health in its broadest aspects."

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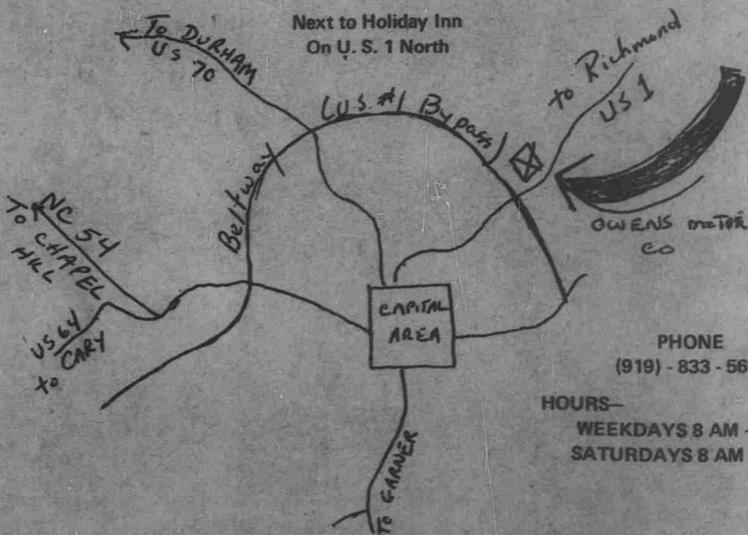
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