



# ATTACK:

**E**YE has long felt that much of today's journalism is la-dee-dah when it comes to interviewing celebrities. The questions are too polite; the answers are too pat. And nothing happens . . . not like in a bull session where one guy tears into another, and the ideas come alive. Sizzle. Like on a grill. So EYE presents *Attack*, a new, occasional feature, in which three of our readers take on a well-known name to grill him. If they can get to him, *really* get to him, so much the better for all of us. And if he can hold off all three of them, so much the better for him.

This month's celeb is that Cary Grant of the Right People, the Rock Hudson of the Establishment, William Buckley. Applying the heat are three from the left side of the tracks: Lennie Chazen, assistant professor of law at Rutgers University; Jeff Greenfield, former legislative assistant to the late Robert F. Kennedy and presently, assistant to Mayor John V. Lindsay of New York City; and Sherman Chicker-ing, editor of *Moderator* magazine. Although we have condensed a one-hundred-ten-page tape transcription into a sixteen-page article, all

in social affairs. Would you agree with this premise? BUCKLEY: Well, there's a certain amount of wordsmanship involved, because it may be that the exercise of a significant voice, for instance, in academic affairs, would add up to significantly deciding not to have anything to say, which, however, could nevertheless, as a matter of nomenclature, constitute having a significant voice.

CHAZEN: Should students have a voice in granting tenure to a professor?

BUCKLEY: No, because I think the factors that go into a decision on whether or not someone should be granted tenure are, some of them, factors concerning which a student has nothing interesting to say.

GREENFIELD: Do you think there should be a formal process by which students' voices can be heard?

BUCKLEY: I usually prefer informal processes because I think they're less phony. Quite

though I had committed an inconsistency. CHICKERING: Well, do alumni rights include having a say about the subject matter being taught at the university?

BUCKLEY: Sure. GREENFIELD: But alumni are not at the university.

BUCKLEY: I'm not saying that the alumnus knows what's being taught. I'm saying that what an alumnus desires should be taught is something on which an alumnus is uniquely in a position to express himself on.

GREENFIELD: I'm curious. What other than the alumnus' knowledge of himself gives him that authority that you would deny to students?

BUCKLEY: Well, what is special about him is that the college which he attended and continued to patronize, is part of something for which he has, in my judgment, a considerable moral responsibility. . . .

CHAZEN: But, Mr. Buckley, alumni are ex-students. . . . BUCKLEY: I gather that you want

GREENFIELD: OK. Then what is that factor which enables you now to distinguish between that group which in fact has perspective, and that which does not? That you're older?

BUCKLEY: Well now—no, no. . . . CHICKERING: Mr. Buckley, in *Man and God at Yale*,

weren't you suggesting that alumni withhold funds? Aren't student strikes an analogous exercise of power?

BUCKLEY: No. They're not. One ought not to have the right to interfere with other people's freedom to learn.

GREENFIELD: Surely you recognize that if alumni refuse to give money, the school's functioning is equally jeopardized.

BUCKLEY: Yes. GREENFIELD: Then what's wrong with student strikes?

BUCKLEY: I don't say students should have parity, point one. And No. 2, there are other, less extreme things students can do which nevertheless

tion into a sixteen-page article, all the topics asked Mr. Buckley have been included, and his answers are as recorded.



WHEREIN YALEMAN BUCKLEY TELLS WHY HE BELIEVES STUDENTS SHOULD BE HERDED AND NOT SEEN AS A MOBILIZED POWER BLOC.

CHICKERING: Mr. Buckley, the National Student Association has defined "student power" as students obtaining a significant voice in all university affairs, and a predominant voice

processes because I think they're less phony. Quite often I think that an administration succeeds in foraging and identifying discontent, which is then provided for without it being necessary to face the idea of a mobilized student body. I know this was true of Yale for years. I don't see why it should have changed.

CHAZEN: But at Yale, weren't you urging the alumni to mobilize in exactly this way in order to force the university to take certain actions?

BUCKLEY: Yes. I think that alumni have certain rights that are distinctively alumni rights . . . and I don't think it follows that because I deny students right A, that it automatically shouldn't devolve to alumni.

GREENFIELD: Well, that's the point we're trying to get at.

BUCKLEY: But you're jumping as

BUCKLEY: I gather that you want me to say something as obvious as that an alumnus acquires certain perspective. . . . Yale goes so far as not even to permit young alumni to participate in the election of trustees. I think that's a great idea.

GREENFIELD: Very interesting, because you achieved your fame, notoriety, whatever—I won't make the judgment—when you wrote *Man and God at Yale* during your student days. Are you willing to concede you had perspective at a rather early age?

BUCKLEY: I wouldn't have written the book unless I thought I had.

GREENFIELD: Doesn't that also mean that the Students for a Democratic Society undoubtedly think *they* have perspective?

BUCKLEY: Yes.

extreme things students can do which nevertheless pay some regard to the democratic process—writing letters. Don't snicker, because most progress is made by things of that sort. Point three, students can always exercise certain sanctions such as withdrawal from the university.

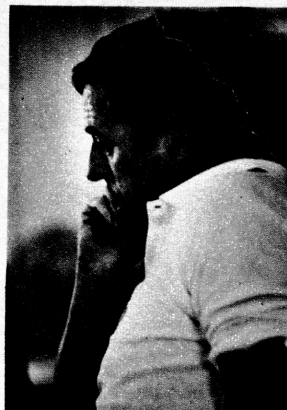
GREENFIELD: I find your position on students versus the university inconsistent with your notion of freedom in the marketplace. Aren't you being statist now?

BUCKLEY: No, that's not . . . [true].  
GREENFIELD: So that logically, if a man feels this country has abandoned itself, he has no recourse but to leave?

BUCKLEY: No. That's not true.  
GREENFIELD: How do you explain what you just said?  
BUCKLEY: Well, if you're dealing with a nation, the majority of whose

# THE TARGET IS WILLIAM

WHEREIN MR. BUCKLEY'S CONSERVATIVE IDEAS ARE CLOSELY INVESTIGATED BY THREE YOUNG, HOSTILE INTERVIEWERS.



# F. BUCKLEY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAY GOOD

members desire that institution to be as it is, then your job is obviously to stay and change that institution toward the better . . .

But I believe that the method by which our institutions are changed ought to have some relevance to the axioms of social life, these axioms being, in a free society, that you abide by the majority's determination.



WHEREIN MR. BUCKLEY FEELS DRAFT REGISTERS SHOULD LEAVE THE COUNTRY.

CHAZEN: You have often implied that the law-making majority has no right to make moral judgments

sovereignty over *his own life!*]

CHAZEN: What do you think of someone going to Canada to escape the draft?

BUCKLEY: Well, I think it's man's responsibility to leave if he really feels he will not be able to reconcile himself to serving, but I think that so often people choose Canada without any thought at all to the doctrine of erring conscience. . . .

The tendency in American youth is to a solipsism that simply says, "I have a divine moral insight, am utterly uninterested in hearing other people analyze it or in reading differences of opinion."



then that a man is drafted at eighteen?

BUCKLEY: Probably. But I don't think it follows that you grow in competence in all fields at exactly the same time. I have a fifteen-year-old son who will soon qualify for a driver's license, and that doesn't mean that he's qualified to cast a vote on driving laws, even though he'll have to obey them.

CHAZEN: But your son is not going to be forced to drive!

BUCKLEY: That is the exact equivalent of my saying to you that you don't have to live. Of course you have to live.

GREENFIELD: And of course you need not drive, and of course in a situation in which one is called upon to risk his life, he is deprived of any sovereignty.

What, in your view, legitimates an obligation owed by the individual to the state?

BUCKLEY: In the realm of private



WHEREIN MR. BUCKLEY SAYS IT IS NOT OBLIGATING TO OBEY A LAW JUST BECAUSE IT'S ON THE BOOKS.

GREENFIELD: Do its beliefs change?

BUCKLEY: Right. Two hundred years ago it was widely felt, and we promoted it in law, that people who didn't believe in God weren't fit to govern. And it's only very recent translations by the Supreme Court which have extended the Bill of Rights . . . with the result that you can now successfully remove that particular prohibition from the Maryland Constitution—which you couldn't have a hundred years ago.

CHICKERING: Well, if change in the

make moral judgments for individuals. Doesn't it follow that a young man can refuse to serve against his conscience in the Army?

BUCKLEY: It seems to me that inherent in the idea of society is the mechanism by which public decisions get made, and that mechanism has always acquired a certain prestige in talk about things like the morality of war, because it is something external to oneself, to which one grants the right to transubstantiate murder into a just war. Now if that authority is vitiated, then, in my judgement, the individual ends up keeping his sense of sovereignty not only about when he shouldn't kill, but whom he shouldn't kill, and about whom he should kill.

GREENFIELD: [But one is also denied

WHEREIN MR. BUCKLEY SEES NO REASON EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLDS SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE.

GREENFIELD: Yet don't you also deny the principal alternative for expression, namely the right of franchise for eighteen-year-olds?

BUCKLEY: I don't think that merely giving eighteen-year-olds the vote is going to make them feel in any sense indentured. There's no reason to suppose that Lyndon Johnson still wouldn't have been elected if they voted.

CHICKERING: Still, isn't it like taxation without . . .

BUCKLEY: No. If I may say so, I think it's a boring point because anytime one sets a particular age level at which you can be senator, president, a voter, you're being arbitrary.

CHAZEN: Would it be arbitrary

BUCKLEY: In the realm of private conscience, the state has absolutely no right.

Under no circumstances, for instance, can it force me to worship at a particular shrine.

In that whole field there is the supremacy of the church.

GREENFIELD: And if the state of Maryland prohibits a man who does not swear belief in God from holding office?

Doesn't man break that law and test it?

BUCKLEY: I don't see that this is the same thing. I never thought about . . . it—it's interesting.

GREENFIELD: So what legitimates obligation?

BUCKLEY: Well, in any given situation, what you have is a measure of attachment of a people to a particular symbol. . . . I do think a society has a right to consider what it is that it itself believes in as the basis of common right and wrong.

CHICKERING: Well, if change in the national mood changes obligation toward the law, we might say that the marijuana laws don't have to be obeyed.

BUCKLEY: I don't think that is a very good example.

Aside from the university, in the national community probably less than one percent are taking marijuana.

GREENFIELD: Let's shift to sex. The vast majority of the national community regards laws against fornication and sodomy as utterly irrelevant, particularly with respect to married couples.

Is an individual obligated to obey those kinds of laws?

BUCKLEY: I think that we might all, simply as a matter of course disobey a particular law every day simply because we come to treat it casually. . . .

*(continued on page 83)*

# ATTACK BUCKLEY

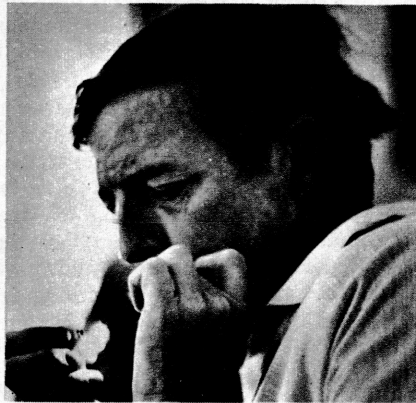
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 49

But I do believe that there are two categories of disobeying: one is privately, and another is where you disobey in a declarative way. For which one must accept the consequences.

In the case of sexual choice, both categories of disobedience are perfectly justified, in the same way I think both categories of disobedience are perfectly justified against laws that prohibit mixed marriages.

GREENFIELD: But just because a law's on the books, you're not obligated . . .

BUCKLEY: Oh. Certainly not.



WHEREIN MR. BUCKLEY SAYS STUDENTS ARE IGNORANT OF HISTORY.

CHICKERING: There is a substantial number of young people who protest and resist to pressure social change today.

Why do you think this is occurring, and what is your response to it

as a man of the political Right?

BUCKLEY: I applaud an effort to do something about the

dents have a short historical memory and do not understand, or that they misinterpret the history they know?

BUCKLEY: I mean they don't know the past in the sense I'm talking about. They could pass an obvious history test, but I regard them as ignorant.

CHAZEN: Ignorant of *your interpretation!*

BUCKLEY (laughing): Look. OK. Let's grant that you have brilliantly equipped people disagreeing.

CHICKERING: Would you agree that the war is the single most compelling force driving young people to radical opposition?

BUCKLEY: I don't know that in the absence of Vietnam, another cause wouldn't have been found. This poverty cause has always struck me as largely factitious, but it serves people as a good, operative course to despise America because (a) she produces and (b) she permits so much poverty.



WHEREIN MR. BUCKLEY SAYS IN ORDER TO HELP THE POOR, YOU MUST GIVE THEM A SENSE OF ANXIETY.

CHAZEN: Factitious? Mr. Buckley, haven't you ever seen poverty firsthand?

BUCKLEY: I find I learn primarily

this at the root of the difference you have with them over Vietnam and many other issues?

BUCKLEY: I think it's an artistic problem. . . . Shakespeare by standards of the seventeenth or sixteenth century, was a highly insulated man.

Nevertheless, he pushed back frontiers that we haven't even approached, notwithstanding our relative urbanity. I think the notion that Thomas Merton [contemporary religious poet] for instance, who hasn't left his cloister for twenty-five years, writes less movingly about the poor than Mike Harrington [author of *The Other America*] is sheer, utter nonsense. . . . It has to do with moral imagination,

my friend. . . . I feel, on account of what I read, but I simply and frankly refuse to go in for this firsthand inspection of American reality, to the exclusion of all other means. . . .

GREENFIELD: I wonder if you don't go to look because your premises might be subject to rather shocking refutation.

BUCKLEY: Look, the real problem is how to stimulate a rediscovery of ethos where ethos is missing. It has nothing to do with money. Other people have arrived poor and left affluent. I don't completely subscribe to this thesis, but we

published in the *National Review* an article by a liberal Democrat who said that if you really

for example?

BUCKLEY: OK, OK. Which is why I think we have to go beyond this whole idea of civil rights and give positive advantages to people precisely because of their historical disadvantages. Why not, for a period of, say, twenty-five years, exempt all Negroes who earn less than fifteen thousand dollars from income tax?



WHEREIN MR. BUCKLEY SAYS THE NEGROES HAVE BEEN A DRAG ON THE AMERICAN ECONOMY.

GREENFIELD: Your idea would set the Negro apart, the way the system has historically tended to do. Wouldn't you agree that the very system by which the rest of us have prospered has been at the exclusion and expense of the Negro?

BUCKLEY: Oh no. No. I reject that totally. The net economic contribution of the Negro in the past seventy-five years is minimal. In fact, a very good case could be made for saying that they have—it wasn't their fault—but they've been a drag on the American economy.

CHAZEN: That's totally false!

BUCKLEY: I applaud an effort to do something about the powerlessness . . . that comes as a result of the centralization of social power over the past generation. This I consider to be totally desirable, totally congruent with what I as a man of the Right have been warning about.

CHAZEN: Are there other sources of disquiet?

BUCKLEY: I think there is also a total confusion which comes from a very short historical memory in the student community. . .

The total lack of interest in the student community in the Communist ordeal of the past few years is, I think, very significant and dangerous. . . . What has been done in Vietnam does, in fact, relate to a movement for world power which has been the supreme political drama of our times.

GREENFIELD: Are you saying stu-

poverty firsthand: BUCKLEY: I find I learn primarily from reading but . . . I've seen, I suppose, the world's worst slums.

I've always rejected the notion that human suffering is something that varies according to materialistic scales—even though I recognize that suffering of, say, starvation, is distinctive.

GREENFIELD: But don't you think it is necessary to live in a slum to write about life there?

BUCKLEY: I could write a book about the slums, an absolutely authentic one. I think I know the subject, but I'm temperamentally opposed to what I consider to be a physiological heresy, that you only learn by actually viewing. . . .

GREENFIELD: One of the things the younger generation has discovered through its schooling is the limitation of book learning. Isn't

liberal Democrat who said that if you really want to help poor people, you should make them feel ashamed. Now I'm not . . . buying this.

CHAZEN: But doesn't our own welfare system do that beyond belief?

BUCKLEY: I know. There are a hundred thousand articles on the subject. . . . But in order to help the poor, you have to give them a sense of anxiety of the kind that translates their present situation from an eternal one into a temporary one.

GREENFIELD: Isn't that the root cause of violence in the cities today? Blacks know that they need not live this way.

BUCKLEY: That's not the whole of it. There's a breakdown of authority, absolutely.

CHICKERING: Isn't it also that blacks have not had some of the more peaceful accesses to prosperity that other groups had—political patronage,

That's totally false!

BUCKLEY: Let's get this straight and in psychologically acceptable language. I'm saying that (a) the American people have not been made efficient at the expense of the American Negro; (b) that it wouldn't surprise me if it were provable that in purely economic terms, the U.S. would be better off today if there hadn't been a Negro population.

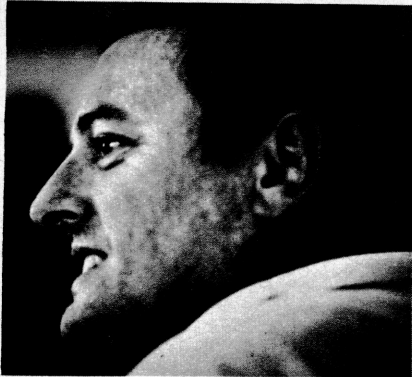
GREENFIELD: Aren't you really saying that in purely sociological terms, the melting pot cannot, without great cost, assimilate Negroes, and that it might, therefore, have been easier for America if Negroes had never been brought here?

BUCKLEY: Well, fine. If you are willing to accept that that is an economic problem, (continued on page 85)

# ATTACK BUCKLEY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 83

I'm willing to rescind my statement . . . [that the Negro's been a drag on the economy.]



WHEREIN MR. BUCKLEY DEFENDS THE POPE AND BIRTH CONTROL.

**CHICKERING:** As a Catholic, what are your feelings on birth control?

**BUCKLEY:** Well, just to glide into it —I find John Courtney Murray completely cogent. He was a progressive Jesuit theologian and worked more successfully than any Catholic in American history in wedding American traditions and the Bill of Rights on over to papal authority. He was very much against any state laws on birth control as totally unenforceable.


**CHICKERING:** Does the Pope's en-

cyclical have an effect on that position?

**BUCKLEY:** The intra-Catholic position in what you now have is a fluid situation.

The very fact that the Pope elected not to speak ex cathedra, authorizes a lot of people to interpret the whole of what happened in the last ten years as the grand authorization of the private conscience to be the predominant voice among Catholics on the decision of birth control.

**CHAZEN:** Then you disagree with Bozell? [L. Brent Bozell, brother-in-law of William Buckley, is currently the editor of *Triumph*, a conservative lay-Catholic magazine. Buckley and he are the co-authors of *The Warren Revolution*.]

**BUCKLEY:** Any Catholic who disagrees with that much that the Church insists upon, should leave the church, but as long as there are Catholics in good conscience who themselves are not excommunicated by the Pope for preaching a particular understanding of this pronouncement—put it this way—I think the Pope, not Bozell, should preside over excommunications. 

# COMMITMENT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

## PRESIDENT NIXON

slum children. In Seattle, Governor Dan Evans has launched an Action for Washington program along similar lines. Mayor Lindsay's New York City Urban Corps is a summer intern program through which the city government and students work together to solve the problems created by poverty. This summer, his Urban Corps put six thousand students directly to work on core city problems. Students at Harvard and Columbia business schools now participate actively in programs to improve businesses owned by ghetto residents. Dozens of similar programs exist around the country.

It is essential that we draw upon the full resources of our younger generation in the solution of our national problems. I have established within the Youth Division of United Citizens for Nixon-Agnew, a Student Coalition to stimulate student action programs in urban America. The leaders of this Student Coalition are drawn from diverse areas and backgrounds, and represent all shades of political opinion. But all have in common the same dedication toward solving the problems of our cities on a person-to-person basis.

On October 2nd, I met with leaders of the Student Coalition in Williamsburg, Virginia. These committed young people reported that a national recruitment effort is well under way. I am delighted to see progress made in an area that de-

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