

Three Sources of National Strength

Andrew R. Cecil

THREE SOURCES OF NATIONAL STRENGTH

Also by Andrew R. Cecil:

The Third Way: Enlightened Capitalism and the
Search for a new Social Order

The Foundations of a Free Society

Three Sources of National Strength

By

Andrew R. Cecil

*Supplement to
The Andrew R. Cecil Lectures on Moral
in a Free Society*

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**To the memory of my brothers,
Adam and Mark**

FOREWORD

by

Robert H. Rutford

On the occasion of the appointment of Andrew R. Cecil as the Distinguished Scholar in Residence of The University of Texas at Dallas in 1977, the *Dallas Times Herald* carried a column on that event by Felix McKnight, the former President of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. That column began:

“Men come in all sizes, but the good ones don’t vary too much.

“It is always a blending of integrity and then the basics of soundness, reason, tolerance, faith, compassion and a goodly degree of self abasement. . . . Andy Cecil carries all the mentioned credentials.

“Cecil, the man who sought, found, and fights for freedom and the opportunities of education, is truly the distinguished scholar, and quite a man.”

The column recounted the history of Dr. Cecil’s career, culminating in his service as President and then Chancellor of The Southwestern Legal Foundation. At the Foundation, Dr. Cecil established its five Centers for continuing education that led that organization to national preeminence. In 1974, the Foundation made The University of Texas at Dallas its home and established a tradition of fruitful cooperation between the two institutions.

Upon Dr. Cecil's retirement as Chancellor of the Foundation, the University established the Andrew R. Cecil Lectures on Moral Values in a Free Society. The guiding idea behind this distinguished lecture series is that a university has a responsibility that goes beyond those other essential missions of providing excellent professional preparation for its students and of establishing an environment where vital research may be carried out. An institution of higher learning must also provide a forum for the discussion and debate of important issues that confront its society. It must provide an opportunity for the consideration of questions of values and moral obligations. It was in order to fulfill this responsibility that the Lectures on Moral Values in a Free Society were made an important part of the life of our campus.

The Lectures were named for Dr. Cecil because he has consistently addressed, throughout his career, these fundamental moral issues. In his work as a writer, educator, and administrator in the fields of law and economics, he has always stressed his deep faith in the importance of eternal moral values in the dignity and worth of the human individual.

Since the inception of the Lectures, Dr. Cecil has taken an active interest in the series and has been a primary force in assuring its success. At the request of the University, he delivered the inaugural series of the Lectures in November 1979. The proceedings of that series were made permanently available as Volume I of the Andrew R. Cecil Lectures on Moral Values in a Free Society, *The Third Way: Enlightened Capitalism and the Search for a New Social Order*. This book offers Dr. Cecil's analysis of the moral un-

derpinnings of our economic and social order. The seven lectures therein address such varied topics as dogmas and moral values, economics and Christian ethics, and the striving for self-determination and basic human rights throughout the world.

Dr. Cecil has lectured in each of the subsequent series—which by the autumn of 1986 numbered eight in all. In 1983 the University gathered four of his addresses which, taken as a whole, provided an important extension of the ideas in *The Third Way* and published them as a supplement to the series of the proceedings. That book was entitled *The Foundations of a Free Society* because it explored the bedrock on which our liberties are founded: morality and religion, justice and natural rights, knowledge and education. Just as *The Third Way* stressed that there must be a path to social organizations far removed from totalitarian control as well as from heedless individualism, *The Foundations of a Free Society* stressed that restraint and responsibility are essential prerequisites to true liberty.

Dr. Cecil's lectures in the three most recent years of the series have pursued the question of what makes a country strong. They stress the point that military strength alone cannot insure a country's greatness. Each of the lectures in this new volume, *Three Sources of National Strength*, emphasizes a particular component: the spirit of freedom, patriotism, and economic stability. This new collection represents an important extension of the thought of Dr. Cecil contained in the two previous books by him in this series.

The University can look with pride on the record that The Andrew R. Cecil Lectures on Moral Values in

a Free Society have established in the eight years of their existence. Nearly three dozen outstanding scholars and statesmen of national and international reputation have presented lectures on a high plane of distinction. These lectures have offered wisdom and insight for all those who have heard them or read them in their printed form. The published proceedings offer a rare repository of the ponderings of persons of substantial achievement on a subject that is too often taken for granted: the moral foundations of our culture.

The University owes a debt of gratitude to Andrew R. Cecil for the interest he has taken in the series named for him. Expressions of gratitude must also be offered to the donors who have made the Cecil Lectures possible. Their generosity and farsightedness have enabled the University to establish and maintain a valued tradition and to fulfill its goal of shedding light on the moral heritage of our country.

Robert H. Rutford, President
The University of Texas at Dallas
November 1986

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INTRODUCTION

The ideas of the famous Renaissance Italian political philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli still have relevance in our century in totalitarian countries. Machiavellianism—as the system of political principles founded on his work came to be called—carries the implication that the root of political effectiveness and success is force unrestricted by considerations of generally accepted moral values. Machiavelli's idea that in order to achieve political ends one may lie, deceive, intrigue, conspire, and use any kind of crooked means has had great appeal for the dictators of the twentieth century. They have accepted him as a profound teacher who understood the true nature of politics. In committing every sort of atrocity, they found support in the advice Machiavelli gave in *The Prince* that a ruler “must not mind incurring the charge of cruelty for the purpose of keeping his subjects united and faithful.” (New American Library, 1952, p. 89.)

Machiavelli's theory was a forerunner of the policies applied by Soviet Russia toward its satellites. The way to govern states that have been “acquired,” he advises, is to despoil them, “because in truth there is no sure method of holding them except by despoiling them.” (*Ibid.*, p. 46.) In the *Discourses*, Machiavelli manifests his disbelief in any sense of righteousness when he issues the following recommendation: “For when the very safety of the country depends upon the resolution to be taken, no consideration of justice or injustice, humanity or cruelty, nor of glory or of shame, should be allowed to prevail.” (*Discourses on*

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the First Ten Books of Titus Livius, trans. Christian E. Detmold, Modern Library, 1940, p. 528.)

Machiavellianism has been defined as the art of tyrannizing (“l’art de tyranniser”), which gives to despots the right to expand their power by all possible means. The decisive factor is power, not law or justice: “As there cannot be good laws where the state is not well armed, it follows that where they are all armed they have good laws. I shall leave the laws out of the discussion and speak of the arms.” (*Ibid.*, p. 72.) By leaving the question of the moral validity of laws out of consideration, this system encourages the use of violence, cruelty, and crime to attain political ends.

Unfortunately, we at present face an adversary whose political ideology owes much to Machiavellian ideas—the Soviet Union. Even more unfortunately, this adversary has developed a potential first-strike nuclear force. The amounts the Soviets spend on defense are indicators of an ominous military threat. This awesome Soviet buildup reminds us of the warning that came from George Washington nearly 200 years ago: “To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving the peace.” The two world wars taught us the lesson that to allow military preparedness to erode is an invitation to aggression; in order to preserve its independence, a nation must be militarily strong enough that no enemy would dare to attack it.

Is military strength the only sort of strength a nation must have to preserve its independence? History shows us that this is not the case. The wisdom man has garnered over the centuries teaches us there are

other indispensable sources of strength in addition to military might, no matter how vital that is. The Psalmist sings, "For not in my bow do I trust, nor can my sword save me." (Psalm 44:6.) Military power alone cannot build a truly great nation if the spiritual foundations of a people are lacking.

Throughout the centuries, States that have given themselves singlemindedly to military preparedness *alone* were destined to decline and to fall. Empires which were established by war disappeared in the same way. For nations as well as individuals, Jesus' saying, "He who lives by the sword shall die by the sword," has proved prophetic. History amply provides examples of the shortsightedness of relying on military might alone. Assyria, one of the great empires of the ancient East, could not stand the strain of a great war machine. Drained of her manpower and other resources needed to fight her wars, and with her armies finally composed largely of foreigners, Assyria began to decline internally. When the Chaldeans overran Babylonia and the Medes pushed down from the eastern heights, Assyria fell. The whole vast empire collapsed.

The Greek city-state Sparta is another instance of a land founded entirely on military might. The Spartans gave themselves singlemindedly to preparations for war. At birth a boy was inspected for his potential as a soldier. If he seemed unpromising, he was taken to the mountains and abandoned to die. A boy who lived to the age of seven was given rigid military training. At twenty he became a soldier. At thirty he became a citizen, and only at sixty, when he was finally excused from military service, did he become eligible to hold

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political office. Such an organization, trusting wholly in military strength, gave Sparta a temporary triumph over her rival Athens. For a time Sparta dominated Greece, but later she declined without having made any contribution to the outstanding record of Greece as a leader of civilization. The city-state based solely on military tradition gave birth to no philosophy, literature, or sculpture as Athens did, who with its intellectual leadership gave the world philosophers like Socrates and Plato, poets like Sophocles and Euripides, and orators like Demosthenes.

During the modern age, two conquerors have sought to control Europe, and perhaps the world. Napoleon Bonaparte is recognized as a military genius and as one of the greatest conquerors history has known. He became the master of the Continent when his victories made France supreme in Europe. Napoleon rearranged the map of a great part of the world, yet his glory and France's conquests ended on the battleground of Waterloo in June 1815. The very name of Waterloo became a symbol of defeat. It was finally not his military victories but the Napoleonic Code—the great codification of law which he commanded—that proved Napoleon's lasting legacy to history.

Our own century has provided examples of an overreliance on military strength as the fundamental source of national strength and of expansion through aggression. Hitler came close to destroying the soul of his nation as he prepared the war which he considered essential to his plans for a greater Germany and which proved to be its ruin. The intellectual, spiritual, and artistic heritage of Germany was destroyed when Hitler reorganized Germany, with the Elite