



Written by [John F. McManus](#) on December 21, 2018

## The Weekly Standard Folds; Good Riddance

After 23 years, *The Weekly Standard* closed its doors just prior to Christmas. The magazine was always labeled “conservative” by both its allies and many of its competitors in the arena of political commentary. It won that designation only because the political force known as William F. Buckley, Jr had altered conservatism. It should have been known, as it was by only a few, as a neoconservative organ, a purveyor of socialism and an advocate of world government.



*Weekly Standard* co-founder William Kristol followed in the left-leaning footsteps of his father Irving. In 1995, the senior Kristol had proudly written, “I regard myself as lucky to have been a young Trotskyite and I have not one single bitter memory.” Leon Trotsky, of course, helped Lenin conquer Russia in 1917 and then aided in the establishment of the murderous USSR a few years later. Unsurprisingly, Irving Kristol would later boast of his acceptance of Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal and his rejection of go-it-alone American isolationism, two of socialism’s favorite issues. What daddy Irving stood for was precisely what son William promoted. Revealingly, the now-failed magazine begun by young Kristol garnered gobs of financial help from Rupert Murdoch for more than a decade.

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Where conservatism once stood for unquestionable American standards: small government, traditional cultural mores, and a mind-one’s-own-business foreign policy, Buckley’s *National Review* slowly but surely abandoned each of those bedrocks. He became the fair-haired favorite of scores of unabashed liberals as he took advantage of the fact that the term “conservative” had no definitive and unchangeable meaning. For several decades, his decrees for more government, U.S. meddling in foreign squabbles, and even acceptance of abortion helped to replace the old standards. Young Kristol did likewise with *The Weekly Standard* and other journalistic endeavors while he, too, deceptively accepted the “conservative” label.

Tradition-minded Americans never should have allowed themselves to be lured away from the U.S. Constitution as their standard. But many were persuaded to adopt “conservatism” as a newer standard by Buckley, Kristol, and others. They should have insisted on being labeled “constitutionalists.” A written document, the Constitution limits the federal government to its few and defined powers. If the Constitution were the standard for many more Americans today, federal power would return to 20 percent of its impact and its cost would shrink to 20 percent the current drain on the economic life of our nation. But thanks to Buckley, Kristol, and especially a deficient educational system, awareness of the Constitution’s wisdom is rare. In its place can be found neoconservatism cleverly disguised as a kind of praiseworthy conservatism.

We certainly aren’t sorry to learn of the demise of *The Weekly Standard*. Perhaps more good news will come soon and Buckley’s *National Review* will have to close its doors as well. Happily, Americans seriously seeking sound information and reliable constitutional perspective do have a choice. It’s called



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