



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on October 9, 2017

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## No Conscience?

***Conscience of a Conservative: A Rejection of Destructive Politics and a Return to Principle***, by Jeff Flake, New York: Random House, 2017, 160 pages, hardcover.

If you were considering buying Senator Jeff Flake's book *Conscience of a Conservative* about the evils of President Donald Trump and the glory of Flake's alleged "conservative principles," don't waste your money. The disjointed, highly repetitive screed reads like a stale list of establishment talking points mixed in with a massive dose of self-glorification, sprinkled liberally with dishonesty and attacks against all who disagree with him — especially Trump. In short, it is worse than a waste of time and money, and it has virtually no redeeming qualities.



So, you may ask, why is The New American reviewing the book? Back in the '60s William F. Buckley used *National Review* to "purge" the conservative movement of the allegedly bad John Birch Society, which publishes this magazine. Now, Senator Flake and his allies in the establishment media are hoping this book will serve a similar role, supposedly rescuing conservatism from the terrible Trump, who, Flake warns, "has brought the values of [JBS founder] Robert Welch into the West Wing." Flake even borrowed the title of Barry Goldwater's famous 1964 book to lend credibility to his efforts.

The books' contents, though, are vastly different. Goldwater used his book to describe principled conservatism. Flake, on the other hand, wrote his book not only to promote neoconservatism and globalism, but also to expel Trump and his supporters from the conservative movement, along the lines of what Buckley tried to do with the JBS. Indeed, as suggested by the subtitle ("A Rejection of Destructive Politics and a Return to Principle"), the main purpose of Flake's book is to attack Trump and the "populism" he represents. Instead of Trump's "America First" vision, Flake's poorly defined "conservatism" is primarily a call for more globalism, more war, further surrender of national sovereignty via pseudo-"free trade" regimes, and other establishment demands.

Like other globalists and neocons masquerading as conservatives, Flake tries hard throughout the book to make you believe he's genuinely conservative. But he fails miserably. He even calls himself a "constitutionalist" before going on to explain that, despite Barry Goldwater's principled stand in favor of the Constitution, Flake in some cases supports violating the Constitution. He did not say whether he supported the Supreme Court's invention of a "right" to a "homosexual marriage" or a "right" to murder unborn babies, but he does regret not voting to squander (unconstitutionally!) \$700 billion in U.S. tax money to bail out the mega-banks. In other words, Flake is not a constitutionalist in any



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legitimate sense of the term.

Despite all the talk of “principle,” Flake’s “principles,” assuming he actually possesses some, are hard to identify. Perhaps the most consistent “principle” throughout the book, separating what Flake rejects from what he supports, is the “free trade” agenda — an agenda that, as this magazine has repeatedly documented, has little to do with real free trade and a lot to do with undermining America’s independence. To push his narrative, though, Flake is forced to construct an elaborate strawman that bears little resemblance to reality. Throughout the book, Flake never acknowledges the concerns of conservative opponents of globalist “free trade” regimes — the transnational tribunals, the international bureaucracies, and the overriding of the American people’s elected officials. In Flake’s narrative, opposition to pseudo-free-trade such as NAFTA is really opposition to trade. Of course, that is ludicrous, and countless free-market economists have pointed out that thousands of pages of international regulations do not amount to free trade, but to government-managed trade. But if Flake were to acknowledge that, his entire argument would collapse.

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More immigration, and amnesty for illegal immigrants already in America, is another key plank in Flake’s “conservatism.” His argument: Every four years the electorate gets two percentage points “less white,” so the GOP is “skidding with each passing election toward irrelevance.” To remedy this, Republicans must be more like the Democrat Party elite, which wants open borders and amnesty. In short, Flake subscribes to the racist and collectivist views spread by the media that non-whites by definition support “progressive” ideology, open borders, multiculturalism, and the rest of the establishment’s false narrative — and that to win them over, the GOP must join in. Incredibly, his pseudo-solution to the alleged problem for the GOP is to pass amnesty and turn millions of left-leaning illegal immigrants into voters — a scheme he boasts of promoting via the “Gang of Eight” bill, and a scheme that would all but ensure a permanent majority for the Democratic Party unless the GOP turns further left.

On one issue, at least, Flake would appear superficially to be a conservative: lowering taxes. But Flake goes on to admit what principle animates his support for tax cuts — and it isn’t limited government, the Constitution, or letting Americans keep more of the fruits of their labor. Instead, Flake says he pushed for “every tax cut we could manage ... because I believe that lowering taxes usually begets more economic growth, which leads to higher tax revenue.” So there you have it straight from the senator: Flake wants to cut taxes so the government can extract more taxes. He then adds: “I am not averse to revenue increases.”

Flake goes on to cite a string of absurdities as his “conservative principles” — for instance, opening America’s borders to the world’s 1.5 billion potential Muslim immigrants. Indeed, opposition of Americans to Obama’s plans to import massive numbers of Muslims appears to truly upset Flake. He even says “we are provoking civilizational struggle between Islam and the West” by even “appearing” to ban Muslims from America. Supposedly this gives the “jihadis precisely the struggle they want.” In other words, Flake’s “principle” here is that if America does not dismantle its immigration laws and welcome the world’s Muslims, jihadists will be unhappy — like they can’t find other things to be unhappy about, such as the interventionist foreign policy Flake supports.

He even promotes the discredited man-made global-warming theory rejected by most Americans,



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suggesting that those who disagree are opposed to “science” and give conservatism a bad name.

Flake praises *National Review* and its attacks on the “ardent anticommunists” of The John Birch Society, “probably best known for their elaborate conspiracy theories of communist infiltration.” Flake never gets anywhere close to honesty on this topic. As an example of JBS founder Robert Welch’s supposed sins against true conservatism, Flake says that Welch believed Eisenhower was an agent of the communist movement. He never points out that the only official to serve two terms in Eisenhower’s Cabinet, Ezra Taft Benson, agreed with Welch and said The John Birch Society was “the most effective non-church organization in our fight against creeping socialism and Godless Communism.” Flake also never points out that while Welch warned that Castro was a communist, the Eisenhower administration was busy helping to put the “freedom fighter” in power, as documented by U.S. Ambassador to Cuba Earl Smith. He never mentions Operation Keelhaul, either, where Eisenhower used U.S. troops to round up millions of Soviet refugees to be sent back to Stalin to be murdered and tortured. Nor does he mention the voluminous evidence compiled by Welch in *The Politician*.

In his attacks on the JBS, Flake also points to Goldwater, who developed the *Conscience of a Conservative* mantra that Flake improperly hijacks, and Goldwater’s disagreements with The John Birch Society. Flake’s evidence: Goldwater once wrote a letter to the editor in which he expressed disagreement with Welch. And yet, Goldwater is quoted as saying in Flake’s book that “every other person in Phoenix is a member of the John Birch Society.... I’m not talking about Commie-haunted apple pickers or cactus drunks, I’m talking about the highest caste of men of affairs.” Flake never mentions it, but Goldwater also praised Birchers as the “type of people we need in politics,” and he said JBS members were some of the “finest people” in his community. Ironically, even Goldwater’s campaign manager, Denison Kitchel, was a JBS member. After being ordered by establishment forces to condemn the “extremist” Birchers, Goldwater famously declared that “extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice.” Flake also never mentions that by 1979, in his memoir *With No Apologies*, Goldwater had come around to expressing the same “conspiracy theories” as JBS, warning of the globalist establishment’s “pursuit of a new world order” and “one-world rule.”

The main target of Flake’s rage, however, is Trump and Trump’s supporters. As part of his proof that Trump is an erratic “madman,” Flake cites Trump’s decision to publicly accept a phone call from the president of the free Chinese on Taiwan. Flake claims it was “risking our relationship with Beijing,” seat of the most murderous dictatorship in history.

Flake’s stunning ignorance, naiveté, or dishonesty is on full display in his book. For instance, he parrots the debunked narrative that communist agent Lech Wałęsa was the “David” who “slew the Goliath of the USSR’s puppet regime in Warsaw.” In reality, Wałęsa was an agent of that very regime, code-named “Bolek” in official documents. Interestingly, Flake recounts how Wałęsa told him that the U.S. government should normalize relations with the mass-murdering Castro regime in Cuba, something Flake strongly supports. Right now, Flake is under fire for condemning Trump’s pardon of Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio while praising Obama’s release of convicted communist Cuban spy Gerardo Hernández, an accessory to the slaughter of innocent U.S. citizens.

While Flake claims to be animated by the vision of the founders, who warned against entangling alliances, it is clear that is not the case. Instead, Flake’s book reads like a half-baked, narcissistic, self-righteous piece of self-glorification. It is likely to have exactly zero influence on the conservative movement. And it may end up destroying what is left of his career.



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