Professor Carroll Quigley and the Article that Said Too Little:

Reclaiming History from Omission and Partisan Straw Men

By Kevin Cole

On March 23rd, 1975 an article appeared in the Washington Post Sunday Magazine entitled “The Professor Who Knew Too Much” and subtitled “Borrowing a few crucial pages from his book, the ultra-right made a scholar an unwilling hero.”

The purpose of the article appears to have been to highlight the controversy surrounding the esteemed Professor of History at Georgetown University, Carroll Quigley (1910-1977) following the release, suppression, and pirating of his magnum opus “Tragedy and Hope: A History of the World in Our Time” published in 1966 and exhaustively researched and written in the 20 years between 1945-1965.

Who was Carroll Quigley?

For anyone unfamiliar with the historical significance of this highly influential author and professor, he was brought to the forefront of public consciousness when former student, Rhodes Scholar, and President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton, publically recognized him in his speech to the Democratic National Convention in 1992.

“As a teenager, I heard John Kennedy's summons to citizenship. And then, as a student at Georgetown, I heard that call clarified by a professor named Carroll Quigley, who said to us that America was the greatest nation in history because our people had always believed in two things—that tomorrow can be better than today and that every one of us has a personal moral responsibility to make it so.” – President William Jefferson Clinton

Professor Quigley obtained his A.B., M.A. and Ph.D degrees from Harvard University and taught Government and History at both Princeton and Harvard prior to moving on to Georgetown University. There he would become Professor of History for the School of Foreign Services at the request of Father Edmund Walsh, S.J., who had founded the School (SFS) at Georgetown in 1919. Over the years, Quigley became a consultant to the U.S. Department of Defense, Navy, Department of State, advisor to the Congressional Select Committee that created NASA, and advisor to the Smithsonian Institute.

Quigley initially came to Georgetown to teach “Development of Civilization” which had been based on early versions of his first book “The Evolution of Civilizations.” While his impact on his students, the school and faculty is well documented, it is for his many books that he is now better known. The final edition of “Evolution of Civilizations” was published in 1961, followed by “Tragedy and Hope: A History of the World in Our Time” in 1966, “The World Since 1939: A History” in 1968 (a stripped down excerpted version of the second half of T&H), and two

Missed Opportunities and Omission in the Interview with Quigley

In the aforementioned article “The Professor Who Knew Too Much,” the discussion of Quigley’s works and career are limited to a “Right Wing” vs. “Left Wing” dichotomy which does a great disservice to the historicity and veracity of the claims he made in his most famous and revelatory works “Tragedy and Hope: A History of the World in Our Time” and later “The Anglo-American Establishment: From Rhodes to Cliveden”. Thanks to independent researchers, a 1974 audio recording was recovered from the archives of Georgetown University which contains the actual interview that was conducted for this article. This is a very rare and candid interview of Professor Quigley in a lengthy discussion on the “controversy” surrounding “Tragedy and Hope”. The audio recording appears to have been in the public domain online since at least 1998.  

“The argument that the two parties should represent opposed ideals and policies, one, perhaps, of the Right and the other of the Left, is a foolish idea acceptable only to the doctrinaire and academic thinkers. Instead, the two parties should be almost identical, so that the American people can "throw the rascals out" at any election without leading to any profound or extreme shifts in policy.”  

– “Tragedy and Hope: A History of the World in Our Time” by Carroll Quigley (pg.1247)

While we can be grateful that someone had the foresight to sit down and record Quigley before he would pass away several years later, I can’t help but be disappointed with the missed opportunity to ask tough questions and actually report on them in the article that follows. We now know from listening to the audio tape that the article that followed the interview was selective in its scope and omitted many instances of Carroll Quigley seemingly in fear for his career and/or life if certain facts were disclosed. Throughout the interview, Quigley incessantly signaled for the interviewer to turn off the tape recorder, and to be “discreet” and at one point even stated, “I don’t know if you want to put this on tape”… “You have to protect my future…as well as your own.”

Yet, out of an article that coyly claims that Quigley “knew too much”, it falls short of addressing Quigley’s own statements on the tape or any of the “crucial pages” in question that the author claims were taken out of context by the “ultra-right.” Unfortunately, instead of focusing the discussion with Quigley on what he actually did find in his historical investigations, which included original research into the power and influence monopolies of the Royal Institute of International Affairs and the Council on Foreign Relations, (both organized by the Trustees of the Last Will and Testament of British arch-imperialist and DeBeers Diamond Co. founder, Cecil John Rhodes) the article avoids these facts and investigates individuals on the so-called “right”,
who Quigley had claimed, misappropriated, misinterpreted, and plagiarized his works. In doing so, the writer of the article avoids any real investigation into the historical “Secret Society” that Professor Quigley has claimed to thoroughly expose in his works and (if you know what to listen for) also at key junctures during this audio interview itself.

The main targets of the article include Cleon Skousen, then a Professor of Religion at Brigham Young University, who had been a former FBI agent and Police Chief of Salt Lake City and author Gary Allen who Quigley said “didn’t know up from down.” Skousen was the author of “The Naked Capitalist” and Gary Allen wrote a book entitled “None Dare Call it a Conspiracy.” Quigley claimed that Allen had plagiarized whole portions of his own book “Tragedy and Hope”. When Quigley’s publisher Macmillan told him that they would not be defending his copyright, he decided he wasn’t going to go after Skousen or Allen personally, which would have been at great personal expense. Quigley voiced concern at the “absurdity” that a picture of him had been featured on the same page as J.P. Morgan, implying Quigley was at the heart of the “plot” that he was actually exposing. Quigley had vocally admitted his agreement with some of the organization’s aims, but ultimately disagreed with its secrecy.

Complaints of Distortions and Misappropriations

Quigley’s frustration, if you listen to the audio interview, seems to stem from the cartoonish way that his thoroughly researched history was being represented, that certain individuals were simply missing the point, and that his original and historical account of the “Secret Society” upon which he sought to shed light, was being distorted for profit and for political gains. “None Dare Call It a Conspiracy” had claimed that “Tragedy and Hope” had unearthed the existence of a “power-mad clique (that) wants to control and rule the world,” put in a generic fashion. Quigley’s assertion was that this was not precisely the case, and that this portrayal was an oversimplification of the actual nuance contained in his research and books. He also voiced serious concern that people were trying to link every single secret society throughout history to the “Anglo-American establishment” he had spent much of his life researching, even having personal access to its historical archives over a period of several years. He made very clear that the group he was exposing was not the “Bavarian Illuminati” and that those trying to make the connections between the Council on Foreign Relations and the 18th Century Illuminati were guilty of believing that “all secret societies are the same secret society,” continuing that “these people say they are all one.” Quigley also discusses his concern that some individuals and groups were “using” his book to promote monolithic Jewish conspiracy theories, which he likewise found to be absurd. For anyone interested to know more about Carroll Quigley’s own complaints against Skousen and his book “The Naked Capitalist,” I would recommend reading the “Round Table Review” dialogue between Quigley, Skousen, William Fort, Jr. and Louis Midgley published in the early 1970’s in which many of the alleged distortions, discrepancies, misappropriations, and plagiarized portions are discussed.
Quigley details the role of the John Birch Society in the distribution and promotion of "None Dare Call it a Conspiracy." The John Birch Society was founded by Robert W. Welch, and included Fred C. Koch, founder of Koch Industries (who later resigned) and film and stage director Myron Fagan among its nearly 100,000 members. While following up on Quigley’s accusations, I was able to confirm that both Skousen and Allen had been directly affiliated with the John Birch Society. It was not difficult to find some validity in Professor Quigley’s complaints mentioned in the audio file and I found that there were individuals including Myron Fagan, who vocally perpetuated the myth of direct historical continuity between the 18th Century Bavarian Illuminati and the Council on Foreign Relations. Fagan had been a member of the John Birch Society while circulating some of these un-sourced assertions, even releasing an LP entitled “Illuminati” which featured the Council on Foreign Relations in cross hairs, and clearly insinuates a direct historical continuity among these groups. This does not follow that everyone affiliated with the JBS organization held this position, and it is beyond the scope of relevance for anyone who actually reads Professor Quigley’s works first, instead of relying on second hand interpretations. I would also add that this does not negate the possibility of ideational continuity among some secret groups or societies or the adopting of similar organizational frameworks beneficial to secrecy, planning and training of new recruits.

While they certainly played a role in boosting the publicity of "Tragedy and Hope", it remains that neither of these two books by Skousen or Allen, or the John Birch Society needs to be discussed if the goal is to objectively investigate the claims that Professor Quigley himself put into print. Whether or not others misappropriated his text, misinterpreted, or misconstrued any portion or all of "Tragedy and Hope: A History of the World in Our Time", it is irrelevant to the historical legacy of Carroll Quigley and an honest assessment of his research and his works. The claims of insider knowledge into a very intricate secret society made by Quigley itself deserved to be examined in 1966 and 1975 at the time of this article’s publication. Instead, these facts were obscured by the article, and a convenient straw man was allowed to be built upon the idea that “right wingers” and “ultra-conservative” writers had been solely responsible for the negative effects and publicity of Quigley’s highly credible revelations to the general public.

"Skousen has simply taken extended passages from my book, in violation of copyright, and put them together in terms of his own assumptions and preconceptions to make a picture very different from my own. Skousen is apparently a political agitator; I am an historian. My book merely tried to give an account on what happened in the world in the early part of the 20th Century." 12

– Carroll Quigley, “Quigley's Response”

**The Round Table Groups and the Anglo-American Establishment**

In the audio interview, Quigley makes it clear that the society he had been investigating centered around the “Round Table Group” which he denotes as publishing one of the “world’s best
sources on International Relations since 1910” known as *The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*. Quigley had noticed “prominent people in English life…” who were affiliated with All Souls College, and a correlation between those who would later go on to become Ambassador to the United States. “I investigated that group,” he states emphatically.

This Ambassadorship role would become an instrumental centerpiece in the founding of the transatlantic Pilgrims Society in 1902, only months after the death of Cecil Rhodes. The Pilgrims Society was a British creation that spawned ongoing meetings in London and in New York the following year, with the purpose of fostering a “special relationship” amongst the English-Speaking people, specifically catering to the wealthy titans of industry and intellectual elite in the areas of Politics, Press, Education, Philanthropy, Banking and Business. It was out of these power networks that the Rhodes Scholarships and Rhodes Trust were introduced into the United States, with key Pilgrims Society members tasked with staffing the Rhodes Scholarship Boards and State Committees. The Pilgrims Society had been shrouded in ceremony and mystery until its founder Harry Brittain was “persuaded by Lord Lothian and other Pilgrims to publish the story of the club” which he first did in a 1942 book entitled “*Pilgrim Partners: Forty Years of Anglo-American Fellowship*.”

“*But for [King] George III, war would have been unknown throughout the world today. The English-speaking race would have been reorganized as a unit, with its central Parliament meeting alternately in New York and London, and it would have given peace to the world.*”

– *Cecil Rhodes, 1901*

Quigley continues that between the years 1899-1947, All Souls College had been so exclusive that it had only graduated 149 people and while some of its students would remain as Honorary Fellows for 7 years, others had maintained a fellowship with All Souls for 55 years. He discovered that these individuals were able to keep their fellowships for such a long duration because of their membership connections in the “Milner Kindergarten”, a group of initially “young kids” who had been chosen to run South Africa by Lord Alfred Milner, also a “who’s who” of future Trustees of the Rhodes Trust and Chairmen of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Included in Quigley’s disclosures are Lord Dougal Malcolm (1877-1955), Director of the British South Africa Company, Leo Amery (1873-1955), Chief Administrator for Lord Alfred Milner, Lionel Curtis (1872-1955), and Lord Halifax (1881-1959). Lionel Curtis and Lord Halifax, Quigley discovered, had been roommates at All Souls College. Quigley discloses how it was Lionel Curtis, who is responsible for the changing of the name of “British Empire to the Commonwealth of Nations.” He states his amazement at how it took Curtis 15 years to finish his degree, and that he had been a “poor student” who only obtained “the lowest half degree that you could ever get,” and “nobody had ever heard of him.” “Furthermore, he was Lord Halifax’s roommate at All Souls for years!” he continues “and then I discovered that this fella is behind everything that is going on! Lionel Curtis, you see?” Professor Quigley then says
in a measured tone; “Now, I don’t think we should talk too much about this…” Why is there no mention of this fellow who “is behind everything that is going on” in the Washington Post article? Why shouldn’t we talk too much about this? What kind of journalist doesn’t follow up on such a statement?

Professor Quigley changes the subject to how these individuals had also been influenced as students by Alfred Zimmern and his work “The Greek Commonwealth”, and how Zimmern had become a source for “Tragedy and Hope”. Quigley met with Zimmern in 1947, who disclosed to him that he had been a member of the secretive Round Table Group from 1913, recruited because of his involvement in the “Educational Alliance” organization (an outpost of the Settlement Movement of the late 1800’s, of which Lord Milner had been directly involved). Zimmern claimed that he resigned in 1923, because the Round Table was “determined to build up Germany against France” and he began to disagree with that course of action. Quigley confides that he later met Lord Brand (another member of the Round Table Group) and asked about Zimmern’s resignation, to which Brand replied that he “had never seen” it. It is at this point in the interview that Quigley says “now I’d rather stop talking, you see, because this gets into all kinds of things…” Quigley also shares that it was Zimmern who brought Arnold Toynbee (the historian) into this secretive group.

In the audio recording Professor Quigley continues, “I knew the Round Table Group was very influential. I knew that they were the real founders of the Royal Institute of International Affairs; I knew that…all the stuff that is in print… that they were the real founders of the Institute of Pacific Relations. I knew that they were the godfathers of the Council on Foreign Relations here. I knew that for example, you know the big study of history, many volumes of Arnold Toynbee? Alright, I knew the manuscripts of that were stored in the Council on Foreign Relations during the War, so they wouldn’t be destroyed by German bombings, you see?” “I began to put these things together and I discovered that this group was working for the following things. They were a secret group. They were looking to federate the English-speaking world; they were closely linked to International Bankers, they were working to establish a world….what I call a three power world. That three power world was the Atlantic Bloc of England and the Commonwealth, and the United States, Germany….Hitler’s Germany and Soviet Russia…. a three power world. They said Germany would be controlled, because… and all of this is in my book, it’s boxed in between the Atlantic Bloc and the Russians. The Russians will behave because they are boxed in between the Atlantic Bloc, the American Navy in Singapore and the Germans… And this has all been described in my book…. Notice it is a Balance of Power system, it’s essentially what Kissinger, although he doesn’t know what he’s doing……He’s bungling everything, because he’s just a Prima donna, emotionally imbalanced person. He doesn’t know what the hell he’s doing.”

Quigley then states, “what is said in here” (presumably pointing to the Skousen or Allen books earlier mentioned) “is that these people were for world domination and the group I am talking about were not,” disclosing how Lord Milner got involved as the Chief Rhodes Trustee after
returning from Africa until his death in 1925. “It’s an Atlantic Bloc,” he states and continues by introducing Rhodes Scholar Clarence Streit and his book “Union Now”, and that “he represents what this group wanted” at the time. Professor Quigley mentions that he even had Streit’s daughter in his class at Georgetown as a visitor. “He was built up by these people as the only solution” and his book “Union Now” had been anonymously called by Lionel Curtis “the only way” in the Round Table Journal of Commonwealth Affairs, and anonymously in the Christian Science Monitor by Philip Kerr, Lord Lothian (later Ambassador to the United States) “as the solution to our problems.” This is confirmed in “Tragedy and Hope”, wherein Quigley discloses that the “Union Now” project had been directly propagated “on behalf of Lord Lothian and the Rhodes Trust.” 16 Quigley continues that “of course this was Rhodes idea…”

“To and for the establishment, promotion and development of a Secret Society, the true aim and object whereof shall be for the extension of British rule throughout the world, the perfecting of a system of emigration from the United Kingdom, and of colonisation by British subjects of all lands where the means of livelihood are attainable by energy, labour and enterprise, and especially the occupation by British settlers of the entire Continent of Africa, the Holy Land, the Valley of the Euphrates, the Islands of Cyprus and Candia, the whole of South America, the Islands of the Pacific not heretofore possessed by Great Britain, the whole of the Malay Archipelago, the seaboard of China and Japan, the ultimate recovery of the United States of America as an integral part of the British Empire, the inauguration of a system of Colonial representation in the Imperial Parliament which may tend to weld together the disjointed members of the Empire and, finally, the foundation of so great a Power as to render wars impossible, and promote the best interests of humanity.” 17

– The Last Will and Testament of Cecil John Rhodes, 1877

Professor Quigley then outlines how the Council on Foreign Relations and the existing “Inquiry” group were dominated by J.P. Morgan interests in the United States and this had been how the Round Table Group had confidence that they would have success taking over the influential think tank. The “Inquiry” had been created by Col. Edward House at the behest of President Woodrow Wilson, who himself had previously served as the Chairman of the New Jersey Rhodes Scholarship Committee. 18 The Council on Foreign Relations and the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA) (Founded by Lionel Curtis and Rhodes’ Trustees) were later solidified at meetings that took place at the Hotel Majestic before the Paris Peace Conferences of 1919. Quigley states that they had “branches in all of the commonwealth countries, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, and eventually in India and even one somewhere else…..Pakistan.”
Controversies Surrounding the Publishing of Quigley’s Magnum Opus

With revelations like these, “Tragedy and Hope: A History of the World in Our Time” almost didn’t make it to a 2nd Edition. In 1966, Quigley had been seeking to fulfill his contract of two books to the Macmillan Company and his publisher Peter Ritner. Quigley had already published “The Evolution of Civilizations” with a contract signed in 1961 and agreed to give Macmillan Company his next book the “The World Since 1914”. It is during this period of the audio interview that Quigley is preparing to talk about some of the controversy behind the publishing and lack of promotion of “Tragedy and Hope”, that he says “I don’t know if you want to put this on tape….you have to protect my future….as well as your own.” Quigley states that Macmillan was purchased for 5 million dollars in the summer of 1966 by Collier Books, which he confirms had been a J.P. Morgan company, and that the Morgan interests had bought up the free press.

Quigley’s publisher, Peter Ritner contacted him and told him there would now be “no advertising on any books that are published in the next six months.” Ritner put up a fight, says Quigley and he got “one ad” for “Tragedy and Hope”, which was a “quarter page in the New York Times Book Review.” By 1968, the book was out of print. Collier then brought back the last half of “Tragedy and Hope” as a paperback entitled, “The World Since 1939: A History” all the while continuing to tell everyone that “Tragedy and Hope” was out of print. The Professor would soon find out that “Tragedy and Hope” had been pirated, and that a “photo replication” that was “exactly the same” (except for gold trim included on the original), had become available on the black market and was being sold via a loose network of book sellers across the country. To Quigley’s dismay, Macmillan “didn’t give a damn that it was pirated” and he stated they “had lied to me so many times.” They “lied and lied and lied and lied to me” and also to his publisher Ritner, who had disclosed previously that he thought “Tragedy and Hope” was “marvelous.”

Professor Quigley’s contract also stipulated that in the event that his book should go out of print, he would have the “right to recover the plates.” He learned in March of 1974, that the plates to his works “had been destroyed.” This was in addition to finding out that the publisher had been turning away customer inquiries on the book. Contrary to what they told Quigley, “Tragedy and Hope” was a very popular and sought after history text.

“You want to shut that off?” says Quigley (referring to the tape recorder).

While the Washington Post article was lacking in scrutiny and omitted many fascinating revelations and strange behavior by one of the 20th century’s most prolific historians, it is fortunate that the public has gained access to the audio interview. It is possible that the interviewer may not have understood the significance of the moment and importance of the content which was reluctantly divulged. Professor Quigley’s detailed “Anglo-American Establishment: From Rhodes to Cliveden” wasn’t published until four years after Professor Quigley’s death, in 1981. This can’t excuse the interview omissions in the “The Professor Who Knew Too Much”, but the “Anglo-American Establishment: From Rhodes to Cliveden” is
certainly a more thorough exposé on the inner workings of the Rhodes-Milner Round Table Group as outlined by Quigley, than an article in the Washington Post Sunday Magazine could achieve.

At the time of this article’s publication the publisher of the Washington Post was Katherine Graham, also CEO of the Washington Post Company. Katherine Graham was until her death in 2001, a prominent member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a membership status she shared with her late father Eugene Meyer, who had been owner of the Washington Post Company, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank from 1930-1933, and the First Head of the World Bank in 1946. To illustrate this connection and conflict of interest, it was Philip Kerr, Lord Lothian, soon to be Ambassador to the United States (and a longstanding member of the Rhodes-Milner Secret Society “Inner Circle” and “Society of the Elect”, according to Quigley) that leaked to his good friend Eugene Meyer, that Edward VIII of England had been having an affair with an American woman named Wallis Simpson. This “scoop” given to the Washington Post by Lord Lothian led to the abdication crisis of 1936 and the installation of George VI as King of the United Kingdom and the Dominions of the British Commonwealth.

The purpose of this article has been to start to reclaim the historicity of Carroll Quigley’s work from the grasp of omission and fallacious reasoning and shine the light on the “right wing” straw-man that has been cleverly crafted over the years, which detracts from the esoteric and important historical revelations made public by one of the most influential Professors of History in 20th Century.

Missing Pages and Multiple Printings

There have been lingering questions surrounding the possible differences in the editions of “Tragedy and Hope” over the years. After undertaking the task of a page by page analysis of the most recent copy that was published by GSG & Associates next to a 1st Edition, 1st Printing published by Macmillan in 1966, I have found that the GSG & Associates copy appears as an exact photo replication from the original 1st Printing from Macmillan. The only notable difference between these Editions is the gold or yellow trim on the top portion of the book block as discussed in the 1974 interview with Professor Quigley himself.

“There does exist, and has existed for a generation, an international Anglophile network which operates, to some extent, in the way the radical Right believes the Communists act. In fact, this network, which we may identify as the Round Table Groups, has no aversion to cooperating with the Communists, or any other groups, and frequently does so. I know of the operations of this network because I have studied it for twenty years and was permitted for two years, in the early 1960’s, to examine its papers and secret records. I have no aversion to it or to most of its aims and have, for much of my life, been close to it and to many of its instruments. I have objected, both in the past and recently, to a few of its policies (notably to its belief that England was an Atlantic rather than a European
Power and must be allied, or even federated, with the United States and must remain isolated from Europe), but in general my chief difference of opinion is that it wishes to remain unknown, and I believe its role in history is significant enough to be known.” 19

– “Tragedy and Hope: A History of the World in Our Time” by Carroll Quigley (pg.950)

2 Democratic National Convention, 1992 (Speech by William Jefferson Clinton)
3 Founding of the Georgetown School of Foreign Services
4 Carroll Quigley Endowed Chair Brochure, Georgetown School of Foreign Services
5 Rare Carroll Quigley Interview, 1974 (YouTube) (Audio)
7 “The Naked Capitalist” by W. Cleon Skousen
8 “None Dare Call It A Conspiracy” by Gary Allen
9 “Round Table Review” (William E. Fort, Jr., Louis C. Midgley, Carroll Quigley, Cleon Skousen)
10 “The Illuminati and the Council on Foreign Relations” by Myron Fagan
12 “Quigley’s Response” by Carroll Quigley (“Round Table Review”)
13 The Cornell Daily Sun, Volume XXV, Number 48, 22 November 1904
   (Nicholas Murray Butler, President of the Pilgrim Society, Columbia University, Co-Founder of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace with Elihu Root, who later co-founded the Council on Foreign Relations)
14 “Pilgrims and Pioneers” by Sir Harry Brittain (pg.147)
16 “Tragedy and Hope: A History of the World in Our Time” by Carroll Quigley (1966) (pg.582)
18 “Daily Princetonian” (Volume 34, Number 93, 9 October 1909)

About the author:

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