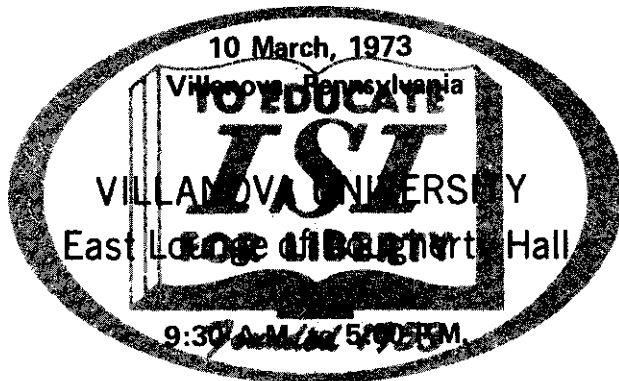


The
Decline of Authority
in
Western Civilization

An Intercollegiate Seminar



Lectures by:

Eric Voegelin
Gerhart Niemeyer
George W. Carey

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The Decline of Authority in Western Civilization

"In our day," Robert Nisbet recently observed in *The Intercollegiate Review*, "authority" is not a popular word. We tend commonly to confuse it with power or coercion, and generally give it low ranking among the civil virtues." He has sketched well the importance of authority in society: "Authority, unlike power or coercion, is not rooted in force, or threat of force. It is built into the very fabric of human association . . . Freedom, in any positive, creative sense, is inseparable from a structure of authority — of rules, norms, roles, and statuses — which can alone give the stamp of character to the free mind. No mistake could be greater than that of counterposing freedom and authority."

Authority has been variously defined depending upon the area of activity to which one has reference. In governmental matters authority concerns "the right to enforce obedience," which presupposes that there is a moral truth independent of the will of any particular temporal power. In the areas of ethics, literature, economics and theology, authority most frequently concerns the question of expertise in a particular field. All authority in a political structure responsible to the will of its citizens maintains its power only with the consent of a majority and their concurrence in the validity of the content of its laws. At bottom, then, authority and its exercise depend in large measure upon a consensus of what is right and fitting and what is not.

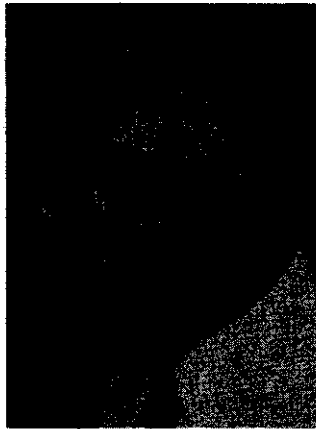
But does such a consensus presently exist in Western society? Every sort of authority, from that of Scripture to that of the local police, appears to be under question and attack. The reason often given for this phenomenon is that our traditional sources of authority have lost their legitimacy for large segments of society. What makes our current predicament disturbing is the fact that we may have lost the belief that authority can exist outside the individual's own perception of what is right or just.

The decline of authority, and the destructive consequences thereof, have ironically underscored the absolute necessity of the presence of authority in society. Thus do "things reveal themselves passing away." But having said that authority is essential and that it is declining, important matters of definition remain. What is the nature of authority? What are the connections between sovereignty, legitimacy, and authority? What has caused the decline of authority? What has been the historical development of authority in the West and how has it influenced the American form of government? Can concerned men restore respect for authority? These are some of the questions to be posed at this seminar.

ERIC VOEGELIN

Dr. Voegelin, currently the Henry Salvatori Distinguished Visiting Scholar at the Hoover Institution, has for many years held the Max Weber Chair in Political Science at the University of Munich. He has also taught at Harvard, Northwestern, Notre Dame and elsewhere, and was Boyd Professor of Government at Louisiana State University.

In 1951 he delivered the Charles Walgreen lectures at the University of Chicago. These lectures were published as *The New Science of Politics (1952)*, the best introduction to his work. In 1956-57 three volumes of his *Order and History* appeared — *Israel and Revelation*, *The World of the Polis, Plato and Aristotle* — which will be concluded with *In Search of Order*. Other books by Voegelin are *Der Autoritaere Staat*; *Wissenschaft*; *Politik und Gnosis*; and *Anamnesis*.



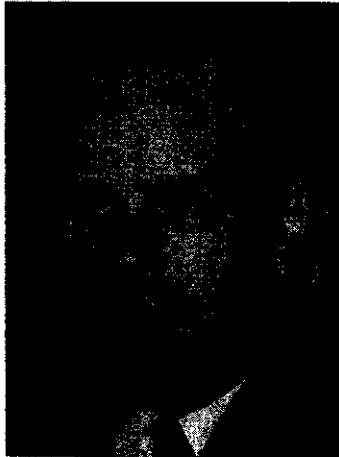
GERHART NIEMEYER

Dr. Niemeyer is Professor of Government at the University of Notre Dame. He received his higher education at Cambridge University, Munich University and Kiel University. He received a J.U.D. degree from Kiel with a dissertation in international law. Before coming to Notre Dame, Professor Niemeyer taught at Princeton, Oglethorpe, Yale, Columbia and Vanderbilt. He was also Fulbright Professor at Munich University in 1962.

Dr. Niemeyer has been a foreign service officer for the United States Department of State.

His books include *Law Without Force*; *An Inquiry into Soviet Mentality*; *The Communist Ideology* (vol. 1 of *Facts on Communism*); *Communists in Coalition Governments*; *Outline of Communism*; *Deceitful Peace* and *Between Nothingness and Paradise*.

He has contributed articles to such publications as *Modern Age*, *Review of Politics*, *Journal of Politics*, *World Politics*, *International Organization*, *Journal of Public Law*, *National Review* and *The Intercollegiate Review*.



GEORGE W. CAREY

Dr. Carey is Professor of Government at Georgetown University, where he has taught since 1961. He has been a visiting lecturer at Indiana University, University of Dallas, Emory University and the University of Illinois, and has served as a seminar leader at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Dr. Carey received advanced degrees from the Universities of Indiana and Illinois.

In addition to articles and reviews in the *American Political Science Review*, *The Journal of Politics*, *The Western Political Review*, *Triumph, Modern Age* and *The Intercollegiate Review*, he has co-edited three books: *Liberalism vs. Conservatism* (with Willmoore Kendall), *A Second Federalist* (with Charles Hyneman), and *The Post Behavioral Era* (with George Graham). Dr. Carey has co-authored (with Willmoore Kendall) *Basic Symbols of the American Political Tradition* and is the Editor of *The Political Science Reviewer*.



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Program

Registration 9:30 A.M.

ERIC VOEGELIN 9:45 A.M.

GERHART NIEMEYER 11:15 A.M.

Lunch Break 12:30 P. M.

GEORGE W. CAREY 2:00 P. M.

Panel Discussion 3:30 P. M.

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