



The Conservative Revolution: The Movement that Remade America

Lee Edwards

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The triumph of the conservative movement in reshaping American politics is one of the great untold stories of the past fifty years. At the end of World War II, hardly anyone in public life would admit to being a conservative, but as Lee Edwards shows in this magisterial work, in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, a small group of committed men and women began to chip away at the liberal colossus, and their descendants would scale the ramparts of power in the 1980s and 1990s. Not even the fall of Newt Gingrich has changed the indisputable fact that the movement has truly rewritten the rules of American political life, and the republic will never be the same.

Edwards tells the stories of how conservatives built a movement from the ground up by starting magazines, by building grass-roots organizations, and by seizing control of the Republican party from those who espoused collaboration with the liberals and promised only to manage the welfare state more efficiently and not to dismantle it. But most of all he tells the story of four men, four leaders who put their personal stamp on this movement and helped to turn it into the most important political force in our country today:

* **Robert Taft, "Mr. Republican,"** the beacon of conservative principle during the lean Roosevelt and Truman years

* **Barry Goldwater, "Mr. Conservative,"** the flinty Westerner who inspired a new generation

* **Ronald Reagan, "Mr. President,"** the optimist whose core beliefs were sturdy enough to subdue an evil empire

* **Newt Gingrich, "Mr. Speaker,"** the fiery visionary who won a Congress but lost control of it

By their example and vision, these men brought intellectual and ideological stability to an often fractious conservative movement and held the high ground against the pragmatists who would compromise conservative principles for transitory political advantage. And through their efforts and those of their supporters, they transformed the American political landscape so thoroughly that a Democratic president would one day proclaim, "The era of big government is over."

Political history in the grand style, *The Conservative Revolution* is the definitive book on a conservative movement that not only has left its mark on our century but is poised to shape the century about to dawn.

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