



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on May 5, 2011

JBS President Finds Support in Upstate New York

On Monday, May 2, John Birch Society President Jack McManus spoke at the Marriott Hotel in Colonie, New York to an audience of 400 people. His speech focused on the “Betrayal of the Constitution” and targeted what McManus has dubbed “the neoconservative agenda.” Prior to the start of his speech, McManus told a group of supporters, “Conservative vs. liberal is meaningless. You’re either for the Constitution or not. At The John Birch Society, we don’t call ourselves conservatives. We call ourselves constitutionalists.”



McManus’ speech provided the background for conservatism in the United States and outlined the divide among neoconservatives and constitutionalists. He also traced the transition from traditional conservatism to [neoconservatism](#). According to McManus, Russell Kirk, author of the 1942 book [The Conservative Mind](#), is the “father of modern conservatism.” McManus also observed that Irving Kristol was the father of the neoconservative movement, asserting that Kristol’s support for the socialist New Deal under Franklin D. Roosevelt was a betrayal of the Constitution.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNSNq81-z5c>

In his address, McManus targeted a number of neo-conservatives whom he believes pose a threat to the Constitution and to the Republic, including former President George W. Bush and former President George Bush, Sr. — both of whom supported the formation of a North American Union. McManus also [pointed out](#) that William F. Buckley, Jr. is a neo-conservative, a Trotskyite, and a tool of the establishment, despite Buckley’s reputation as a prominent conservative.

In addition to his focus on the neoconservative agenda and proponents of that agenda, McManus outlined the philosophies of The John Birch Society. He first explained that the Society is a proponent of Americanism, which is comprised of the following principles:

- Rights come from the Creator
- Government’s purpose is merely to safeguard those rights
- The United States Constitution limits the role of the federal government
- America may have commerce with all nations, but should have entanglements with none

Advocating the “non-interventionist” policies of the JBS, McManus declared, “We don’t have global responsibilities. We have responsibilities to the American people.”

He also emphasized the importance of action and encouraged the audience to focus on the campaigns of House members, because the House is where the spending debate is focused, as it is where all spending bills originate. “We take our country back through the House of Representatives. Do not expect to steal it back through the presidency.”



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Throughout the speech, members of the audience boisterously shouted their support of many of the assertions made by McManus. Following the speech, attendee Mitch Goldstein of Glenmont explained his support of the ideologies of McManus and The John Birch Society:

“I am an enthusiastic supporter of the Constitution. I’d like to see the country follow the ideas of the founders. Our federal government was created to defend a citizen’s life, liberty and property from outside incursion, including being set upon by the government,” said Goldstein, virtually summarizing the philosophy of The John Birch Society.

In the reporting of the event, the *Albany Times Union* could not help but note the growing support for The John Birch Society and its philosophies: “For many years, the John Birch Society existed on the fringes of the Republican Party...[but] [w]ith the advent of the tea party movement, the group is finding kindred spirits.”



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