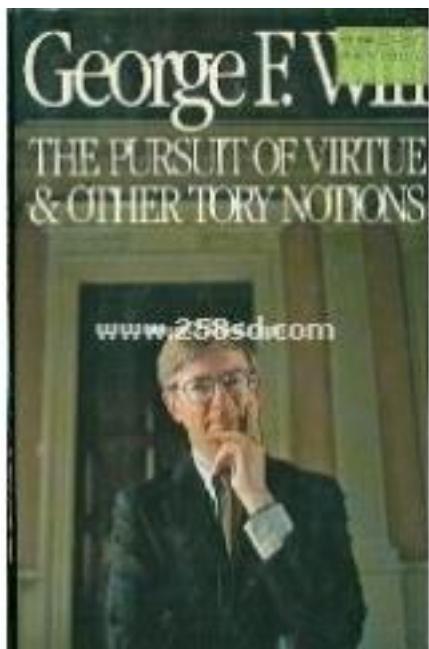


The Pursuit of Virtue and Other Tory Notions



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The Virtues of Boldness
Looking back (Americans do a lot of that these days because it seems pleasanter than contemplating the future) is a fascinating aspect of the public's reaction a decade ago was that so many people considered Apollo 17 the end of something, not the beginning of something. The moon landing helped to frame the 1960s. At the beginning of the decade, John Kennedy said we would do it by the end of the decade. And we did. It was like Babe Ruth's "called shot" in the World Series. America audaciously pointed to the right-field bleachers and then hit the ball to the spot. When the words "The Eagle has landed" crackled back to earth ten years ago, a challenge was met. It began on October 4, 1957, when a 184-pound sphere of Soviet technology orbited the earth. One of President

Eisenhower's advisers suggested that as a show of national strength, Sputnik was less impressive than a U.S. super-space program display in Zagreb. The junior senator from Massachusetts disagreed. John Kennedy's strongest beliefs were about the dynamic. As Eisenhower's term ended, he pruned the space program that was pointing tentatively toward the moon. Daniel Boorstin, the historian, believes Eisenhower was moved in part by his "Cincinnatus complex." He was "haunted by his military background" and determined to keep America "civilian-oriented." In his farewell address he warned against "the military-industrial complex." It is odd that Ike from Abilene supplied perhaps the most-used phrase of the 1960s radicalism. It is odder still that in another passage he anticipated the growth of anxiety about a "scientific technological elite." Q

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