

## The Conscience of a Conservative


*By Barry Goldwater*

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### **The Conscience of a Conservative** By Barry Goldwater

2011 Reprint of 1960 Edition. Full facsimile of the original edition, not reproduced with Optical Recognition Software. "The Conscience of a Conservative" was published by Goldwater when he was an Arizona Senator and a potential 1964 Republican presidential candidate. The book reignited the American conservative movement and made Barry Goldwater a political star. The book has influenced countless conservatives in the United States, helping to lay the foundation for the Reagan Revolution in 1980. The book is considered to be a significant statement of politically and economically American conservative ideas which were to gain influence during the following decades. The book continues to inspire contemporary political commentary.

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## **Editorial Review**

### About the Author

Barry Goldwater (1909–1998) was a five-term United States Senator from Arizona and the Republican Party's nominee for President in the 1964 election. An articulate and charismatic figure during the first half of the 1960s, he was known as "Mr. Conservative". Goldwater is the politician most often credited for sparking the resurgence of the American conservative political movement in the 1960s. He also had a substantial impact on the libertarian movement. Goldwater rejected the legacy of the New Deal and fought through the conservative coalition to defeat the New Deal coalition. He mobilized a large conservative constituency to win the hard-fought Republican primaries. Goldwater's right-wing campaign platform ultimately failed to gain the support of the electorate and he lost the 1964 presidential election to incumbent Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson by one of the largest landslides in history, bringing down many Republican candidates as well. The Johnson campaign and other critics painted him as a reactionary, while supporters praised his crusades against the Soviet Union, labor unions, and the welfare state. His defeat allowed Johnson and the Democrats in Congress to pass the Great Society programs, but the defeat of so many older Republicans in 1964 also cleared the way for a younger generation of American conservatives to mobilize. Goldwater was much less active as a national leader of conservatives after 1964; his supporters mostly rallied behind Ronald Reagan, who became governor of California in 1967 and the 40th President of the United States in 1981. Goldwater returned to the Senate in 1969, and specialized in defense policy, bringing to the table his experience as a senior officer in the Air Force Reserve. His greatest accomplishment was arguably the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, which restructured the higher levels of the Pentagon by increasing the power of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to direct military action. In 1974, as an elder statesman of the party, Goldwater successfully urged President Richard Nixon to resign when evidence of a cover-up in the Watergate scandal became overwhelming and impeachment was imminent. By the 1980s, the increasing influence of the Christian right on the Republican Party so conflicted with Goldwater's libertarian views that he became a vocal opponent of the religious right on issues such as abortion, gay rights and the role of religion in public life.

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