

# John Birch Society

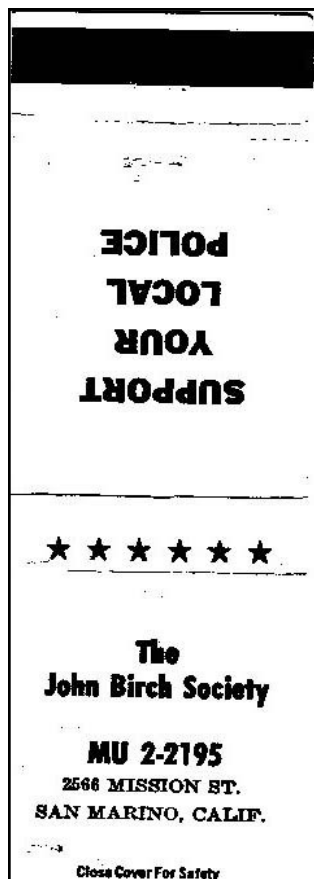
*I haven't heard anything about the John Birch Society in years, but it's apparently still going...*

The John Birch Society (JBS) is a conservative advocacy group supporting anti-communism and limited government. It has been described as radical right.

Businessman and founder Robert W. Welch, Jr. (1899–1985) developed an organizational infrastructure in 1958 of chapters nationwide. Its main activity in the 1960s, said Rick Perlstein, "comprised monthly meetings to watch a film by Welch, followed by writing postcards or letters to government officials linking specific policies to the Communist menace". After an early rise in membership and influence, efforts by those such as conservative William F. Buckley, Jr. and National Review led the JBS to be identified as a fringe element of the conservative movement, mostly in fear of the radicalization of the American right.

Originally based in Belmont, Massachusetts, it is now headquartered in Appleton, Wisconsin, with local chapters throughout the United States. The organization owns American Opinion Publishing, which publishes *The New American*.

The organization supports limited government and opposes wealth redistribution and economic interventionism. It opposes collectivism, totalitarianism, and communism. It opposes socialism as well, which it asserts is infiltrating U.S. governmental administration. In a 1983 edition of "Crossfire", Congressman Larry McDonald (D-Georgia), then its newly appointed president, characterized the society as belonging to the Old Right rather than the New Right.



The society opposed the 1960s civil rights movement and claimed the movement had Communists in important positions. In the latter half of 1965, the JBS produced a flyer titled "What's Wrong With Civil Rights?", which was used as a newspaper advertisement. In the piece, one of the answers was: "For the civil rights movement in the United States, with all of its growing agitation and riots and bitterness, and insidious steps towards the appearance of a civil war, has not been infiltrated by the Communists, as you now frequently hear. It has been deliberately and almost wholly created by the Communists patiently building up to this present stage for more than forty years."

The society opposed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, claiming it violated the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and overstepped individual states' rights to enact laws regarding civil rights. The society opposes "one world government", and it has an immigration reduction view on immigration reform. It opposes the United Nations, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), and other free trade agreements. They argue the U.S. Constitution has been devalued in favor of political and economic globalization, and that this alleged trend is not accidental. It cited the existence of the former Security and Prosperity Partnership as evidence of a push towards a North American Union. The JBS was a co-sponsor of the 2010 Conservative Political Action Conference, ending its decades-long exile from the mainstream conservative movement. [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Birch\\_Society](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Birch_Society)]