Beware Intellectuals

from the Wall Street Journal, Daniel Johnson's review of the book, Public Intellectuals in the Public Arena.

> *On a personal note: In the introduction to this book my father, Paul Johnson, is quoted warning in 1988, "One of the principal lessons of our tragic century, which has seen so many millions of innocent lives sacrificed in schemes to improve the lot of humanity, is—beware intellectuals." Now 88, he has met most of the postwar presidents, and his books have been cited by some of them, but he has never held or sought office. It was thus all the more gratifying when George W. Bush gave him the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2006. For the American republic thus to recognize a public intellectual (and a foreigner, too) is simply magnificent. And it reminds us that self-denial should be a condition of exercising influence. Only intellectuals who have no love of power should be allowed anywhere near it.*