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The Big Government Libertarians: The Anti-Left-Libertarian Manifesto

by Murray N. Rothbard

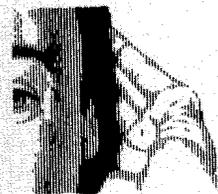
Approximately four years ago, Lew Rockwell and I broke with the Libertarian Movement to found the "paleolibertarian movement," a break which roughly coincided with our fusion with the "paleoconservatives" in the John Randolph Club and our Establishment of RRR. (The Libertarian Movement, which we can roughly call the "Official Libertarians," is a loosely organized network that includes the Libertarian Party, *Liberty* magazine, *Reason* magazine, and various free-market thinktanks and institutions.) Our own "rightward turn" was the consequence of the dramatic end of the Soviet Union and Cold War, and the reappearance of America First and "isolationism" as a viable foreign policy for a rejuvenated and reconstituted American Right. But our dramatic break also resulted from what we saw as a festering and escalating Left-egalitarianism within the Official Libertarian movement. Shortly before our break with the Official Libertarians, I told some of the leadership that I believed that egalitarianism was

endemic to this movement allegedly devoted to individualism and to the inviolable rights of private property. In particular, I mentioned a fondness for the socialist, compulsory integrationist "Dr." Martin Luther King. These leaders assured me that there was no egalitarianism or King-loving in the libertarian movement; six months later, and after our break had occurred, these same leaders were singing the praises of "Dr." King as a model "libertarian."

In the past four years, the Official Libertarians have catapulted Leftward at an accelerating rate. At every hand, while still mouthing general "libertarian" slogans, this Official Movement is increasingly abandoning libertarian principles and embracing leftist egalitarian statism.

My old friend Harry Elmer Barnes used to write bitterly about "pro-war pacifists," a

(Cont. page 2, col. 3)



THE EAR

by Sarah Barton

It's a crying shame: Doug Ireland, columnist for the leftist *Village Voice*, has been fired by the *Voice* for "irreconcilable differences" and replaced by dull James Ledbetter. Ireland is a veteran political analyst, a tough and implacable anti-Clintonian, who was a great source of political gossip. We'll miss him.

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John Vernon, long-time leader in the Libertarian Party, who moved from owning a gay bar in Oklahoma to becoming the "omelet king" of Los An-

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 geles as a caterer, died recently at the age of 53, of AIDS.

* * * * *

George Bush used to be criticized as "so WASP he would get out of the ocean to pee." Well, give me that over Hill Billy Clinton, who—as noted in "Inside the Beltway"—makes a practice of urinating on golf courses.

* * * * *

Spy magazine notes that "William F. Buckley, Jr., made [recent] Yale history when he ran up a bill [not his] in excess of \$500 at a New Haven restaurant, at one point bellowing, 'Waiter, bring me a bottle of wine before I pass out.'"

* * * * *

Congrats to the second R for helping kill the school voucher initiative in California. As *Wall Street Journal* reporter Tim Ferguson notes, it was Lew who aired the arguments that defeated 174: it would have meant government control of private schools, and by erasing school district lines, it would have also have sunk home prices and led to massive busing.

* * * * *

The national Libertarian Party, since its convention on the Labor Day weekend at Salt Lake City under total control of long-time California leader Bill "Mr. Stanford" Evers, has joined all the other Official Libertarians in endorsing NAFTA. How does Evers, who has built a long-term reputation as an LP "purist," justify this sellout to statism? By noting libertarian concerns

about NAFTA, but pledging the LP to "oppose" these unwelcome consequences. Big Deal! Thus, the Evers' drafted resolution proclaims the glories of free trade, and then says that the mighty forces of the LP will "oppose all efforts to turn North America into an exclusionary voting bloc," and will "oppose any efforts to turn NAFTA into a vehicle for political and bureaucratic interference with the property rights" through the side agreements. Well, a fig for your "opposition," Bill, since NAFTA includes these consequences within it; he who supports NAFTA, supports these results you claim to "oppose."

In addition, Bill Evers's "purism" fails to note the fact that the points of origin protectionism against Japan and others starts right away, while the free trade with Mexico is phased in over fifteen years; and fails to point out the built-in "protection" against "import surges"; as well as the multi-billion dollars that NAFTA commits the U.S. government in foreign aid to the Mexican ruling elite.

Well, the LP resolution will scarcely make a political impact, but it is another important bit of evidence on the massive move left-ward and State-ward, of Official Libertarians. Evers added to the resolution his own political spin: that a defeat for NAFTA would "set back the cause of free trade for decades." No Bill, it would set back the cause of international statism, super-government bureaucracy, and subsidized American exports. Since when does a "libertarian purist" call that system "free trade"? ■

(BIG GOV. cont. from page 1)
 group that has recently redoubled in force since the Gulf War. Similarly, we can trace the rise of another malignant group: "Big Government libertarians." The fact that both of these concepts are oxymorons does not slow these people down one whit; on the contrary, it allows them to keep the cloak, the outward form, of their original creed (whether pacifism or libertarianism) in order to camouflage the diametrically opposed content underneath. "Wolves in sheep's clothing" sums up their strategy. In that way, the libertarian public is fooled into changing their own creed without realizing the trick that has been played upon them. The great Old Right analyst Garet Garrett aptly called this sort of wily tactic "Revolution within the form."

Thus: the essence of the libertarian creed is that the only "rights" are the rights of private property, including the right of property in one's own person. And yet, the Official Libertarians have increasingly embraced a panoply of new, left-wing rights, each of which necessarily adds extra aggression against the rights of property. "Civil rights," sanctified by "Dr." King, are a clear-cut example. No one ever has the "right not to be discriminated" against; for such "rights" invade the inviolable right of the property-owner—whether householder or employer—to discriminate as much as he darn well pleases, and for whatever reason. And yet, the Official Libertarians have now adopted "civil rights" as their own, and the leading "lib-

ertarian" legal group, the Washington-based Institute for Justice, attempts to use the courts to enforce civil rights concepts. Essentially, libertarians now favor civil rights, but, like the neoconservatives, they balk at their logical extension in affirmative action and enforced quotas for accredited "victim groups."

If Official Libertarians offer any sort of argument for their embrace of the statist concept of "civil rights," it is usually that such rights, even if not strictly following from principle, are needed to "offset" or "compensate" blacks for several hundred years of slavery. But of course another essential aspect of libertarian "rights" is that

they pertain strictly to each individual, and do not accrue over time to some "group" or "class." The idea that "we owe blacks" for slavery overlooks several critical points (in addition to the fact that the process of initial enslavement was never white-on-black, but always black-on-black among warring African tribes): (a) that "we" existing folk never enslaved anyone; (b) that existing blacks were never enslaved; and (c) that there is never any suggested time or quantitative limit to this "compensation." How long and how much O Lord?

The idea that "we owe blacks" for slavery overlooks several critical points.

But since the impulse for this drive is egalitarian, i.e., that all groups, races, classes, etc.—if not all individuals—are "really" equal, this means that this compensation will never stop until average black and white incomes, wealth, status, etc. are all equal. And since equality of individuals and groups does

not and cannot exist, this means that the proposed "compensation" is forever.

Since libertarians are individualists who believe that each individual is a person of different merits who should go as far as his merit can carry him, libertarians are not *supposed* to be egalitarian, and indeed none of the libertarian masters, including Ayn Rand who was the guru

for the bulk of current libertarians, was in any sense egalitarian. And yet there it is: egalitarianism has become the unspoken but very real driving force in the current Official movement.

Once group egalitarianism becomes the norm, other groups than blacks will clamor for the privileges of "victim status." Sure enough, that jostling for victim privilege is now the major hallmark of American politics. The Official libertarians have so far not displayed enormous affinity for Latino or disabled "rights," but they are highly

enthusiastic about the "rights" of women and feminism generally. And in particular, libertarians have displayed great fervor for gay "rights" and stress the evils of "discrimination" against gays. So ardently are libertarians devoted to gay rights that the word "libertarian" in the public press has now become almost a code word for champion of gay rights. Only his pro-gay agenda accounts for the ardor of Republican libertarians toward Massachusetts Governor Weld, whom they embrace as, in the current slogan, "fiscally conservative but socially tolerant." (The "fiscally conservative" refers to a one-time budget cut followed, the next time around, by a compensatory budget *increase*.) "Socially tolerant," in the current atmosphere, means a devotion to the entire Left cultural agenda, from gay rights to compulsory multicultural propaganda and condomization in the public schools.

The radical shift leftward of the libertarian movement is reflected in their concrete political positions. In addition to civil rights and gay rights, the most fervent Official Libertarian enthusiasm is now directed toward school vouchers. Note that the major focus of the libertarian argument for school vouchers is that the range of "choice" by poor parents will be expanded; with vouchers in their pockets, poor parents will be able to choose to send their kids to private as well as public schools. But of course any thief finds his range of choice happily expanded; but expansions of welfare thievery is not supposed to

be the point of libertarian politics. For while the poor parent who receives vouchers will indeed find his choices expanded, the taxpayer forced to pay for the voucher will find *his* range of choice restricted by having to support the private as well as the public school system. And the parents who now send their kids to private schools, as well as the owners of those schools, will find *their* choices restricted because their schools will now come under the heel of Leviathan: as federal, state, and local regulations come thumping down on the previously self-regulating private schools. For one thing, private schools will no longer be able to keep out the poor, inner-city kids who are to be the main recipients of taxpayer largess.

Indeed, an egalitarian assault on suburbia on behalf of the inner-city poor is one of the major points of the school voucher program. For one of the monstrous aspects of the school "choice" scheme is that it serves as a substitute for the old failed forced busing program: Part of the Left libertarian agenda is an attempt to centralize, to destroy pockets of local self-government. Many suburbans having fled the crime, welfare, and rotting housing of the inner cities, have managed to carve out for themselves decent schools, even though they are public. For these schools have been more or less under local parental control and local taxing authority. Welfare egalitarians have been trying for many years to destroy suburban "segregation" and to force them to coalesce with the inner cities and suffer their prob-

lems; school "choice," which will tear down separate suburban districts, is a sinister method of accomplishing this very goal. Thus, voucher plans generally require states to equalize spending among public school districts, and the California school voucher plan, highly touted among libertarians, would explicitly force suburban district schools to accept children from inner cities if they have any room available. Indeed, if California's Prop 174 for school vouchers is defeated, the indignant suburbanites, at last

realizing this fact, will have provided the margin of defeat.

Make no mistake, furthermore: school vouchers will bring control of the private schools in their wake. Government subsidy inevitably brings government control. The voucher scheme imposed in Milwaukee by the widely lauded legislator Polly Williams, forbids religious schools from participating, and the state of Wisconsin insists that private schools accepting vouchers will scarcely be able to discipline or expel their students, who will be accorded "constitutional guarantees" of due process. A fortunately failed Florida proposal would have prohibited single-sex schools from the program and prevented religious schools from "discrim-

inating" in admissions in favor of students of their own religion. Even the California proposal, which tries to avoid increased controls over the voucher-

redeeming private schools, prohibits all "discrimination" based on race, ethnicity, color, and national origin.

In her excellent article on school vouchers in the *American Spectator* (November), Charlotte Allen quotes one of the voucher advocates in the *Wall St. Journal*, who declares that "the best choice plans are accompanied by effort to equalize funding among

districts...help parents make thoughtful decisions; prohibit school admissions tests."

Even more chilling is Miss Allen's report from Dirk Roggeveen, chief litigator for the aforesaid Institute for Justice. The Institute is suing in the courts in Chicago and Los Angeles to try to accomplish the voucher scheme within the judiciary. The argument: that vouchers and the abolition of local school districts are necessary to insure the "inner-city students' constitutional right to a 'quality' education"! And so *this* horror is what so-called "libertarians" are now reduced to: trying to use the courts to enforce a "right" to a "quality education"! The "right," of course, to be supplied by the

An egalitarian assault on suburbia is one of the major points of the school voucher program.

hapless taxpayers.

The assault against local control is part and parcel of the new tidal left-wave of Official Libertarians. More and more, they thirst to use ever larger bodies of government to enforce "rights" (whether legitimate or not) that are not being sufficiently guarded or provided by local instruments of government. The Forgotten *Tenth* Amendment has not only been ignored; it is being reversed. Thus, Clint Bolick, the major "libertarian" theoretician for the Institute for Justice, recently published a book denouncing *Grassroots Tyranny* as the glaring major evil of our time—this in an era when we are groaning more and more desperately under the despotism of Big Brother in Washington!

The fervor for the misnamed North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) by Official Libertarians is part of the same syndrome. At the very least, an unwarrantedly large amount of resources—money, energy, propaganda—have been devoted by the slew of "free-market think tanks" to agitating for Nafta. But a particularly sinister aspect of this agitation has been an eagerness to pooh-pooh any problems in, or even to look benignly upon, the network of supra-governmental commissions, panels, and advisory boards, that would be entailed by Nafta. These higher structures of government would be unaccountable even to national publics; they would be super-governments, levitating above the action.

Decentralization is vital because the smaller the govern-

ment, and the closer it is to its subjects or constituency, the more they will be accountable to and removable by that public. But just as national government is far less accountable than local, the absolute worst would be world government: supra-governmental bodies accountable to no one. And while "grassroots tyranny" by one town or village can easily be avoided by moving to the next town; how will we be able to escape world government tyranny?

It is high time we put it to the Official Left-Libertarians: do you favor world government as a way of getting around "national" tyranny? And while Left libertarians have as yet shown no strong signs of embracing foreign intervention—even though they have taken pains to assure respectable opinion that their non-intervention is moderate and prudential and not really principled—they don't seem to realize that, say, for a world governmental body to guarantee the "rights" of Somalians against warlords, will lead ineluctably to US/UN shooting of Somalians in the name of supposedly protecting their rights. To call upon ever larger jurisdictions of government to make up for deficiencies of the smaller, implies both world government and eternal American intervention in foreign affairs for the sake of the "freedom" of countries on the receiving end of the intervention.

It is not even clear that the Official Libertarians still oppose the welfare state. They might not yet embrace the welfare state with quite the same enthusiasm as their friends the

neocons, but there is a definite Kempian streak to much of the new Left-Libertarian program: maintaining or not dwindling the welfare state while piddling away at the margins with some privatization and some "empowerment"—the latter actually expanding the welfare state. And of course the school voucher program, as we have seen, is tantamount to aggrandizing the welfare state as well as control over the private schools. And Clint Bolick doesn't want to bring down the welfare state until the "rules of the game" are no longer "rigged" against the disadvantaged, which will mean, in the last analysis, until "equality" is achieved. In the meanwhile, Dr. Nancy Lord, attorney and physician, who was the Vice-Presidential candidate of the Libertarian Party in 1992, explicitly advocates both the welfare state and anti-discrimination laws.

And then there is Dr. Mary Ruwart, a Michigan biologist who has been a star attraction at Libertarian Party conventions since 1983, when her New Age-like call for Love and Unity almost swept her to either the Presidential or Vice-Presidential nomination. Mary Ruwart's new book, with the revealingly sappy title, *Healing Our World*, has received the acclaim of "Modal," or Left-libertarians, across the country. The book is explicitly geared to converting left-liberals to libertarianism. Here are three of her featured arguments: that liberty "promotes an even [i.e. equal] distribution of wealth"; that it "achieves zero population

growth" (Huh?); and that it has already "increased the endangered elephant population in Zimbabwe by 33% in a single decade!" In short, for Mary Ruwart, liberty is good because it is allegedly egalitarian, because it is anti-human (eliminates growth in the human population), and because it is pro-elephant (encourages growth in the elephant population)! Mary Ruwart's arguments for liberty may be bubble-headed, but they permit us to look deeply into the very soul of the libertarian movement—and that soul is in parlous shape indeed. If *this* is libertarianism, who needs it?

Another revealing glimpse into the mind of the Official Libertarian is the venture of the Cato Institute crowd into high moral theory: Jonathan Rauch's new book, *Kindly Inquisitors: The New Attacks on Free Thought*. Ostensibly devoted to the noble cause of defending freedom of speech, the book is actually occupied with bashing free speech! You might think that, in this day and age, the legions of the Politically Correct would be the main focus of the Rauch-Cato blast, but you would be wrong. For underlying the PC Brigade, Rauch sees the *true enemy*: People Who Think They Know the Truth. It is those who are certain of the truth that are the enemy of freedom. In short: "dogmatists" who believe in truth and virtue, in particular, Christians, are the enemy. Thus, Rauch reserves his most acidulous barbs for "fundamentalists [who] want to protect the truth," and he vilely attacks Pope John Paul II for claiming to know the

truth. Says Rauch: "This kind of claim—a power grab really—is illicit and repugnant."

Actually, it is Jonathan Rauch and his ilk who are "illicit and repugnant." For this is the standard left-liberal secularist bilge of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this idea that skepticism and uncertainty about the truth is the only guarantee of liberty. And indeed, Rauch's book reeks with the heroes of what he actually calls "liberal science" [his ideal—but an absurd phrase if there ever was one!]: C.S. Pierce and pragmatism, Bertrand Russell, Karl Popper et al. But Pontius Pilate, the mentor of all these worthies, was scarcely an outstanding example of resistance to tyranny! On the contrary, it takes firmness in truth—in the truth, for example, of the importance of liberty and natural rights—that enables people to have the courage to resist tyranny and to persuade others to resist. Liberty is safe only in the hands of those who *know* that liberty is a vital truth of human nature that needs to be safeguarded. While the Dean of skeptics, Michel de Montaigne, preached obedience to the absolute State in the name of prudence, the "dogmatic" Christian Church has, in the history of mankind, formed the major bulwark of the rights of person and property against State despotism.

The Rauch book abounds in assertion rather than argument. Just two points need be made about the argumentation. First, how can a firm case for liberty be made by someone who abjures all firm truth? And second, on the Popper criterion of

falsifiability—how is the truth of *this criterion* established? Is it falsifiable? How?

In his illicit and repugnant assault upon Christianity and truth, Jonathan Rauch, the alleged free-speech absolutist, does not *explicitly* call for stamping out the free-speech of "dogmatic" Christians, but anti-Christian fire and brimstone is implicit in his treatment. In fact he gives away the show all too explicitly by claiming that religious or "spiritual" matters have to be "marginalized" in society and kept away from any role in public moral and political debate. But how does Rauch propose to do so without eventually relying on force? Rauch's leftist friends indeed succeeded all too well in this century in "marginalizing" Christians and other conservative partisans of truth; and it is precisely the attempt of Christians to take back American culture and American politics that accounts for the hatred of Pat Buchanan and of all of us in the Buchananite movement that animates all left-libertarians.

The totalitarian spirit of left-libertarians and their willingness to crush freedom of speech is revealed in a paean to the April Gay March on Washington by Brian Doherty, one of the editors of the bi-monthly *Liberty*. In his peroration, Doherty concludes that the "preservation of civilization depends far more on suppressing hate, violence, and prejudice than on suppressing those *people* who choose to make love with members of their own sex." The operative phrase here is the need to "suppress" "hate" and

"prejudice." Apparently, the freedom to hate or to be "prejudiced" is one crucial aspect of natural rights, that Big Government libertarians propose to stamp out by club and bayonet.

How did the Official Libertarians make the radical leap into Big Government "libertarian-

ism"? How did they manage to transform themselves from radical individualists and champions of property rights, into pro-civil rights, pro-gay rights, welfare staters who are increasingly willing to use coercion to stamp out "hatred," "prejudice," "discrimination," and

"dogmatism"? How could they move so far so fast? Simply noting their sellout to Power, their accommodation to the mainstream, is not enough to explain this remarkable shift. A more crucial explanation lies deep within the character, the basic attitudes and world outlook of these typical, or "Modal," libertarians. These basic attitudes made it easy for Official libertarians to subvert their original ideology and end up with its seeming opposite.

Let us examine the profile of the Modal left-libertarian: a profile that applies to the comfortable D.C. thinktank analyst as well as to the scruffiest libertarian nomad. The Modal libertarian is a hedonist and a narcissist. What he hates and reviles is not so much the State as all external social pressures that prevent or discourage him from "doing his thing," from his pursuit of hedonic goodies: drugs, all forms of sex, and generally leading a sporadic and dissolute life. The Modal libertarian identifies these external pressures with various social institutions: the State indeed, but more deeply, his bourgeois neighbors, his family, and the Christian Church. Scratch any Modal Libertarian and you will find the exclamation that the "State" and the "Church" are twin co-oppressors of the individual, with family and neighbors not far behind. The Modal libertarian, in short, is an arrested and now aging adolescent, in permanent rebellion against institutions and moral principles that he sees as a check rein on his wayward appetites. Scratch any Modal, therefore,

Rating Senate Republicans

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development ["The World Bank"] is a Bretton Woods institution which is still around to plague us. The World Bank is a key instrument of global interventionism by which American taxpayers are forced to prop up foreign client states of the Eastern Establishment and to subsidize Rockefeller-type investments abroad. On September 23, Senator Hank Brown (R, CO) offered an amendment to eliminate the \$28 million U.S. contribution to the World Bank for fiscal 1994. A motion to table (kill) the Brown Amendment was passed by 55-44. While the Republicans voted against killing the Brown Amendment by 12-32, the votes of the 12 renegades could have provided the margin to save the Brown Amendment and begin to get us out of the World Bank. Pluses for the pro-Brown Amendment Senators; minuses for those who hold the World Bank higher than the American taxpayer.

Alaska		Maine		Pennsylvania	
Murkowski	+	Cohen	+	Specter	+
Stevens	+				
Arizona		Minnesota		Rhode Island	
McCain	+	Durenberger	+	Chafee	-
Colorado		Mississippi		South Carolina	
Brown	+	Lott	+	Thurmond	+
		Cochran	-		
Delaware		Missouri		South Dakota	
Roth	+	Bond	+	Pressler	+
		Danforth	-		
Florida		Montana		Texas	
Mack	-	Burns	+	Hutchinson	+
				Gramm	+
Georgia		New Hampshire		Utah	
Coverdell	-	Gregg	+	Bennett	-
		Smith	+	Hatch	+
Idaho		New Mexico		Vermont	
Kempthorne	+	Domenici	+	Jeffords	-
Craig	+				
Indiana		New York		Virginia	
Coats	+	D'Amato	+	Warner	+
Lugar	-				
Iowa		North Carolina		Washington	
Grassley	+	Faircloth	+	Gorton	+
		Helms	+		
Kansas		Oklahoma		Wyoming	
Dole	+	Nickles	+	Wallop	+
Kassebaum	-			Simpson	+
Kentucky		Oregon			
McConnell	-	Packwood	-		
		Hatfield	-		

and you will find that while the State is the most obvious coercer, that his deepest hatred is reserved for the Christian Church, the repository of social moral principles and norms. It is no accident, then, that Ayn Rand, the guru for almost all current libertarians, hated the Church far more than she reviled the State, and, given a choice, she would opt for the State any time. And, at the other end of the libertarian spectrum, individualist-anarchist historian James J. Martin, in his notable history of American anarchism, *Men Against the State*, deliberately excluded the mass of Christian anarchists from Ann Hutchinson down to the Rev. Henry Clarke Wright, because in his view Christians could never be included under the anarchist rubric.

There was no aspect of Randianism that attracted the Modal libertarian more than her paean to "selfishness"; accurately or not, the average libertarian interpreted the call for selfishness as a tribute to his own yen for irresponsible behavior heedless of others. It is no accident that "family" and children play virtually no role in Randian fiction, and that marriage is at best serial and attenuated. The typical Randian hero and heroine flap their adolescent wings, fly the familial coop, break with their family and neighbors, and strike out as lone Promethei for greatness and achievement. And that's about it.

I used to think that libertarians would never have kids; but, as they got older, they spawned children in the same irresponsible and hedonic manner as they behaved in other

aspects of their life: serial kids, each with different adult Significant Others, very much in the mode of the rest of their corrupt generation.

In addition to being narcissists, Modal libertarians were always egalitarian, believing down deep that every person—of course including themselves—is an actual or at least incipient hero. The libertarian commitment to property rights was always superficial, never principled; essentially it was a squawk that society and the State had no right to take away *their* drugs, *their* guns, *their* money. The egalitarian belief that "discrimination" is always immoral and irrational, led the libertarians rather quickly to extol civil rights over property rights, and after that, it was easy for the other barriers to fall. And since gay "rights" followed quickly once "civil rights" was embraced, it was particularly easy for the large number of gay Modals to take the lead in this shift from the Old to the New, Big Government variant of Libertarianism.

Big Government libertarians are, of course, far more odious and more of a living contradiction than Sam Francis's specimens of Big Government Conservatives. At least there is precedent in history for Big Government

conservatism; there is happily no precedent for Big Government libertarianism. In a sense, of course, there is precedent: in the classical liberals of the nineteenth century who, in their hatred for the Church, actually worked for the establishment of public schooling as a less noxious alternative. But these classical liberals, who included French and Italian liberals, von Humboldt in Germany, and many Jacksonians in the United States, at least did not call themselves principled and consistent "libertarians." It remained for our contemporary Modals to forge this new and noxious variant of political thought. It is ironic

that, in their vain quest to become Randian heroes and Promethean innovators, that *this* is what they have come up with. Innovation is, of course, not always a good thing; only narcissists could think that. In this case, innovation has brought us not "Rearden metal," but the degeneration and perversion of a noble creed.

What has been and will be the response of these worthies to our paleolibertarian critique? The answer is simple: they have no arguments, they are creatures of mood, and so their only response is to use the loathsome smear tactics of their comrades on the Left: to call us

The average libertarian interprets the call for selfishness as a tribute to his own yen for irresponsible behavior.

smear names that cut off thought and engender emotive hate response: "racist," "sexist," "homophobic," "anti-Semitic," "mean-spirited," and perhaps the rest of the panoply: "ageist," "lookist," "logist," and what have you. It doesn't matter: in the mouths of this generation of vipers, smear labels become a badge of honor. It all reminds me of two characters in a Dostoevsky novel. One insults the other at length, and the other guy says in effect: "You are *so low* that *nothing* you say could insult me!"

Is there anything left except the name "libertarian" to distinguish these Official Libertarians from regular, honest-to-God leftists? The answer is: not much, and less and less, as time goes on. Probably the average leftist is, by now, less anti-Christian and perhaps less egalitarian than Modal Libertarians. Since the economists among them still have a vestigial affection, on efficiency grounds, for cutting marginal tax rates of upper income groups, we will probably see the better-heeled Officials opting for their bosom buddy, the left-neocon Jack Kemp, although their hearts may be for Bill Weld, while the more nomadic types opt for Nancy Lord on the Libertarian ticket in '96. But it makes little difference: the entire crew is as scurvy a lot, both in person and in print, as one is ever likely to meet.

In the continuing argument over abortion, pro-lifers like to twit pro-choicers about all the wonderful people the world would have lost if their mothers had chosen to abort them. But the argument can cut both ways.

In contemplating the current generation of Big Government libertarian turncoats and renegades, the case for retrospective—or even retroactive—abortion begins to seem overwhelming. ■

The Anti-Clinton Election

by M.N.R.

There have been seven major elections since the black day in November that the monster

Clinton was chosen President; and every single one has been a thumping repudiation of Slick Willie and all of his works. Soon after the presidential election, moderate conservative Paul Coverdell upset the Clintonian incumbent Senator from Georgia, Wyche Fowler. Then the moderate conservative Riordan upended the multicultural leftist Woo to become mayor of

Los Angeles; and moderate conservative Kay Bailey Hutchison captured Lloyd Bentsen's seat as Senator from Texas. It was all very well for the Clintonian media to claim that all these races were local and constituted no referendum on Clinton; but in each case, except L.A., the Clinton Administration urged the voters to support it by back-

ing the Democrat; and even though Democrat incumbent Robert Krueger tried to run to the right of Clinton, the President sent his Number 2 campaign honcho, Paul Begala, to Texas to run the Krueger campaign, and it was a particular joy to see Begala end up with egg on his face as he engineered disastrous TV spots that made Krueger look like an idiot. And in the last race before this November, militant Christian conservative Mike Huckabee—the other man from Hope, Arkansas—pulled the remarkable feat of

beating the odds-on favorite, President Clinton's hand-picked buddy, for Lieutenant-Governor of Clinton's home state of Arkansas. That was four for four against Clinton.

This November there were three major races, each a test of the Clinton Administration. In New York City, the nerdy disaster David Dinkins, the city's first black mayor, though running

on the Democratic ticket in an overwhelmingly Democrat city, was beaten by 2.5 points by Republican nominee Rudy Giuliani. The Giuliani victory came even though President Clinton stumped the city several times for Dinkins, even stooping to condemn whites who failed to vote for people differing from them. This racist remark by

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