

that his fellow neighborhood-owners wanted him ejected. They would then have to buy him out—probably on terms set contractually in advance in accordance with some “obnoxious” clause. Libertarians have always believed that, given full scope, the free market could handle all problems, and sure enough here is another area that can be satisfactorily tackled by full freedom—which means full scope for the rights of private property.

The exhilarating saga of the Dallas meeting demonstrates that the alliance of paleolibertarians and paleocons is more than a flash in the pan, more even than a strategic alliance against the Welfare-Warfare State that oppresses us. The alliance is not only here to stay: it is converging into a New Fusionism shorn of the global warmongering that damaged and ultimately brought an end to the Old Fusionism of Frank Meyer. It is a fusionism passionately dedicated to liberty and to opposition to the Leviathan State; to devolving State power from large central agglomerations into smaller and smaller units, and eventually down to proprietary neighborhoods; to unyielding opposition to all forms of social democracy; and it is a fusionism dedicated to bourgeois morality and individual achievements, and opposed to the nihilism and egalitarianism of contemporary culture.

For libertarians, entering into the glorious era of the new fusionism requires only that we rise above the different rhetorics and languages that have

separated us from the paleo-conservatives, that we grasp the vital common ground beneath them. And above all, that we enter into this dialogue and fusion in a spirit of good will and a willingness to learn from each other, rather than reach quickly for the axe at the slightest difference of opinion. And we can do all this without the slightest surrender of libertarian principle. But such an advance is possible only for those libertarians not hopelessly poisoned by our egalitarian culture, or trapped by moral nihilism. •

On Being Negative by M.N.R.

We at *RRR* have often been accused, *mirabile dictu*, by friend and foe alike, of being “negative.” Being negative has a bad press in our contemporary culture, largely because there is so much to be negative about, and our ruling elite would much prefer if everyone were oh so positive about nearly everything they are handing down to us. But several things need to be said, once and for all, about negative and positive.

First, all those positive thinkers out there don’t seem to realize that they are trapped in self-contradiction and self-refutation. Because by attacking us as being negative they *too* are being negative...about *us*! It seems that it is impossible to escape being negative in this world. You have a choice of two alternatives. Our critics have chosen to be negative about us, but positive about everyone else in the world. Or, you can, like us,

be positive about the good and very negative about the evil and the meretricious. Take your pick: there is no middle ground.

Second, we believe in being negative about the bad precisely because we are devoted to the good, the honest, and the true. If, on the other hand, you choose to be positive about *everything*, you devalue the applause due only to the good and the heroic, reducing them to the level of the rotten. The good can only be truly honored by apportioning praise and blame as they are due. And by the way, notice how the present culture denounces anyone who is “judgmental,” assuming apparently that value-judgments are always negative. On the contrary, human beings are particularly distinguished by making value-judgments, both positive and negative; it is impossible to avoid being “judgmental” unless one is reduced to the status of a robot or machine.

And finally, being “negative” is such *fun*! •

The Case for “Hypocrisy” by M.N.R.

Paleos and other moral traditionalists have long been effectively skewered on the charge of “hypocrisy.” Viz., Mr. X, stumping the country denouncing the perils of drunkenness, is exposed by pro-drunk forces as a secret tippler. The Reverend Jimmy Swaggart, denouncing the sins of what is now euphemistically called “sexual diversity,” is brought low

by the revelation that he himself has fallen for the temptations of the sexually diverse. The nihilos dominant in our culture inevitably draw two important conclusions from this exposure of the miscreant's "hypocrisy": (1) that his warnings are not to be taken seriously in the future, and that (2) the activity in question is really morally good.

The anti-hypocrite forces, however, have been allowed to get away with murder, for their conclusions do not follow at all. On the

contrary, the travails of Mr. X and the Rev. Swaggart more plausibly can lead to the opposite conclusion: that they were correct in calling attention to these perils, for even they have fallen for these intense temptations. Who better qualified than a drunkard to point out the perils of drink? So rather than dismiss Mr. X or Jimmy Swaggart, they should have been hailed as at least quasi-heroes for using their personal troubles as a groundwork to deliver warnings to the rest of us. And rather than betraying the moral principles they champion, these flawed knights should be seen as paying high tribute to the principles from which they sometimes stray in practice. Despite common assumptions, the moral principles themselves are certainly in no way discredited by their actions.

Let me put it in terms even the most simple-minded nihilos can understand. Suppose that

The anti-hypocrite forces, however, have been allowed to get away with murder.

Mr. Y has launched an impassioned crusade against wife-beating (all right, call it *spouse-beating*, if you insist). His crusade has been effective in alerting the country to these dangers. Then, an opponent of Y exposes him as a long-term wife-beater. Does that discredit the crusade? Does it make wife-beating any more morally correct? Certainly not; indeed, it only at-tests to the concern which Mr. Y has about wife-

beating as a moral evil, especially since he himself has been tainted by this sin. *Capice?* •

Election Oddities by M.N.R.

There were several oddities in the November election that deserve to be noted:

Claytie's Defeat

It's too bad about Claytie (Clayton Williams, conservative Republican candidate for governor of Texas). He was in many ways an attractive candidate: a conservative self-made millionaire from cowboy country in West Texas, pouring a lot of his own money into the campaign, and running against wise-cracking left-liberal Ann Richards, a candidate with "high negatives" in Texas. That he was

gaffe-prone was in many ways endearing, since most of the gaffes simply reflected the traditional cowboy culture that Claytie was proud to exemplify. His devotion to the much-despised redneck "Aggies" (his alma mater Texas A&M) reinforced that image.

But in the last two weeks of the race Claytie blew it, plummeting from far ahead in the polls to a narrow 2.5 percent defeat. Two self-inflicted wounds did it. First: the one time his handlers allowed Claytie to be interviewed, he volunteered—*without being asked*—that he had paid no federal income tax in 1986. Now there was nothing wrong with this, and it was easy for intelligent people to figure out the reason: business losses during a crippling oil-and-real-estate recession for the Southwest. But this was the issue needed for last-minute left-populist demagoguery by Richards, who milked the issue for all it was worth in the last days of the campaign, thundering that "1986 was a tough year for teachers and pipe fitters too...but they paid their taxes." (Not if they suffered heavy business losses, Ann.)

Second, was the infamous incident spread far and wide on TV, where in the course of a joint appearance, Richards stuck out her hand for Claytie to shake, and he refused, saying "You're a liar." Richards's lady-like (and devastating) response: "Oh, I'm sorry, Clayton." To make matters worse, it was clear on TV that this was not just a gaffe of the moment, that Claytie had carefully staged this rebuff, all the while grinning his unpleasantly wolfish grin.