

Good News! Election Roundup

by M.N.R.

It was, all in all, a deeply satisfying national election. Some of the high spots, some of which were not exactly featured in the media:

Exit Two Nasty Neo-Cons

Election Day, or thereabouts, saw the exit of two leading neo-cons, one of my least favorite ideological aggregations. Both are matchless bullies and macho thugs, each being what the English call "a nasty piece of work." Both, too, enjoy pretensions to intellectual eminence (Yuckk!), and are indeed arrogant egomaniacs, each sporting his Ph.D. union card to the House of Learning. Both are statisticians to the core.

I refer, of course, to Dr. Bill Bennett and Dr. John Silber. Bennett is a cop-type ruffian and blowhard, leaping from one government spot to a higher one, interested only in using these "bully pulpits" to advance his own prospects and to get media attention. Predictably, after milking the bully pulpit of Drug Czar for all it was worth, after talking as tough as they come, and after his act began to fade and actual administrative work stared him in the face, Dr. Bill got out, in a hasty and unseemly fashion. Predictably again, Bennett, faced with a bogged-down and expensive Drug War that is going nowhere fast, adopted the immortal advice

of Senator Aiken in the Vietnam War: he declared victory and got the Hell out. He announced that his objectives had been accomplished, contradictorily worried about threats to his family, and then added his own characteristic twist to the Aiken formula: blaming everyone else in sight for his failures, including Congress, Mayor Barry of Washington, D.C., and the media.

The country, alas, is still not rid of Dr. Bennett, who has moved to the chairmanship of the Republican National Committee, from whence he will try to neoconize the GOP and make our lives miserable.

As for Dr. Silber, his loss is one of the true glories of the 1990 election, because if he had won, he would have been a real threat for becoming a neo-con President of the United States. Like all typical neo-cons, Silber is at heart a right-wing Social Democrat, a Hubert Humphrey Democrat (same thing) who takes an ultra-statist line in behalf of Big Government and the Welfare-Warfare State, but objects to the cultural leftism that hit the United States in the post-Humphrey era, an era symbolized by George McGovern and McGovern's constituency.

But am I not charmed by the famous "Silber shockers," in which Silber took potshots at

pampered and petted Accredited Victim groups? The answer is No. For one thing, Silber attacked these groups, not out of any sort of libertarian or anti-statist principle or instincts, not out of any sort of opposition to centralized government, but solely out of irritation and dislike. It is clear from any observation of Silber in action that here is a sour, crabbed, irritable little pickle of a man. There is no *joie de vivre* there, no joy in combat, no laughter at the shocked reaction of his enemies. In fact, like all neo-cons, Silber is totally devoid of wit or humor, a solemn *serioso* to the hilt. Not once, at least from what I saw in forays on television, did Silber so much as crack a smile.

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Apparently, Silber may have lost the election by snapping irritably at a popular television interviewer who asked him a standard question: "What are your strengths and weaknesses?" Instead of saying a pleasantry or cracking a joke, Silber flared up, apparently indignant that anyone could think he had any weaknesses. Characteristically, he blamed his defeat, not on

any possible missteps of his own, but on the voters and on the media, who apparently proved themselves unworthy of his greatness.

Other issues that helped lose Silber the Massachusetts governorship: his definition of middle-class working wives as "child abusers" for the very fact of working outside the home. I would also like to think that Silber's call for incarcerating every kid above the age of three into the public school system worked against him. But make no mistake: Silber was not against all working mothers, only the middle-class and wealthy. For low-income mothers, Silber called for a vast increase in state-subsidized child care. In addition, of course, he opposed the superb Massachusetts tax rollback initiative (which unfortunately lost), along with any term limitations on legislators.

Silber's complaints about the media were typical neo-con whining. A substantial segment of neocon-controlled media helped protect Silber against Victimology backlash, and tried to portray Silber's crabbed demeanor and his lashing of various groups as a righteous indignation by the Last Angry Man. Any genuine conservative would have been pilloried unmercifully for similar remarks.

At any rate, Massachusetts and the rest of us are well rid of Bad Dr. John, who can now return to vent his fury on the hapless

academic community of Boston University, which probably deserves its fate.

In all the attention devoted to Silber, the victor, William Weld, has been lost in the shuffle. Weld got a bad rap from conservatives because, as a high official in the Justice Department, he, like many of the rest of us, couldn't take Ed Meese. An amiable and low-key Boston Brahmin, Weld has many libertarian leanings: thus, he actively supported the massive tax-roll-back initiative. If he can restore fiscal sanity to Taxachusetts, Weld could be an interesting national candidate for the future.

Anti-Tax

Despite frightened pundits attempting to obfuscate the issue, the anti-tax message of the electorate in November came through loud and clear. No less than ten governors, or their would-be successors, of both parties, were overthrown because the incumbents had raised taxes (in Florida, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Rhode Island.) In Rhode Island, high-tax Governor Ed DiPrete (Rep.) saw his approval go down to about the point, as one wag

put it, where Marie Antoinette was just before she walked to the guillotine. DiPrete was crushed by Democrat business man Bruce Sundlun, getting only 26 percent of the vote. In Oklahoma, high-tax Republican Governor Henry Bellmon was driven from office, and his attempted successor was crushed by a Democrat by 64 to 36 percent. One TV analyst noted that the joke going around Oklahoma and D.C. political circles went as follows: Every day Saddam Hussein goes to his room, faces the mirror, and asks: "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the most hated of them all?" Every day, he receives the same satisfactory answer. But then one day, Saddam emerges from his room, frowning, and asks his aide: "Who the Hell is Henry Bellmon?"

In New Jersey, as everyone knows, the revered Bill Bradley, who spent from \$10 to \$12 million in a lackluster campaign, featuring old shots of him playing basketball, was, unbelievably, almost trounced by unknown Christine Whitman, who had only \$600,000 to spend. Whitman, given no chance, bravely pounded away on the hated Democrat Governor Jim Florio's whopping, draconian tax rise that ignited the New Jersey masses against him soon after he had swept into office. She also effectively chided Bradley, the alleged tax expert who helped bring us the odious Tax Reform Act of 1986, for refusing to mention Florio or taxes in his campaign, as well as being quiet as a mouse throughout the fall Congressional budget-tax extravaganza. Bradley has, happily, been effectively knocked out of the box for 1992.

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Mario Cuomo, however, though almost as effectively repudiated, winning against an incredible turkey and buffoon with only 53 percent of the vote, is having his political hide saved by his adoring fans in the left-liberal media. The pundits simply dismiss this repudiation as irrelevant to Mario's standing for the 1992 race. But clearly the vote was a blast by the New York electorate against the high-tax, high-spending, and soft-on-crime policies of this epitome of Northern left-liberalism.

The media are also studiously ignoring the fact that, despite the loss of Massachusetts, a large number of tax-and-spend initiatives lost this November. No less than 22 propositions in California that would have meant higher taxes or more government spending went down to defeat. This included the infamous Big Green, in addition to other environmentalist defeats in California and other states. This should give heart to us anti-environmentalists; it also shows that if business works up the guts to finance its own interests and drops its craven fear of the environmentalist lobby, it can win the battle for less government, more economic freedom, and for the rights and prosperity of human beings as against the rest of Earth's entities—animal, vegetable, and mineral. If Big Green can lose in flaky, nature-worshipping California, it and its nefarious cousins can lose anywhere.

Haynes Johnson and other odious left-liberal pundits have tried to put the spin on the results that the election was "mixed" on taxes, because of (a) the

Massachusetts loss, and (b) because in Illinois Jim Edgar, defending the record of outgoing high-tax "Rockefeller Republican" Big Jim Thompson, defeated Attorney General Neil Hartigan, who made a strong issue of the Republican high tax. But this is the *only* state where one could say that high taxes won a gubernatorial race. And when we realize that Edgar squeaked by with only 52 percent of the vote, the defeat scarcely seems crucial.

Term Limitation

Severe term-limitations on state legislators won in Colorado and, more importantly, in California. Here is a mighty populist movement whose time has come. Not only that: the California masses were smart enough to vote *down* sellout Prop 131 (which imposed very mild limitations, plus providing public financing for candidates) by a whopping 62 to 38 percent, and approving by 52 to 48 percent, the magnificent Prop 140, which imposed severe term limitations, in addition to stripping state legislators of many of their perks, support staff, and pensions (Whoopie!). The fact that the bitter California legislature, headed by slick Democrat politico, Speaker Willie Brown, may find a legal way around this proposition is not as important as the fact of the victory and the mass movement it portends.

Here is an important litmus test of whether someone prefers democracy, or limitation on government. Democrats (with a small d) complain that term-limitation prevents the public from exercising their democratic "right" to choose a representative for

more than X terms. That's right, buddy, and tough patootie. Democracy is only a process, a means of selecting rulers; it is only instrumental, and not a good in itself. What *is* such a good is setting severe limitations, the more the better, on the scope and powers of government over the people. Term limitation is an excellent method of throwing-the-rascals-out, and of preventing incumbents from building up an extensive and powerful machine to keep them and their buddies and allies in office indefinitely.

We forget that what we can loosely call "Jeffersonian democracy" was precisely devoted to finding ways of limiting government. One of these Jeffersonian principles was rotation-in-office, which meant compulsory rotation, so that incumbent machines could not be established. Our earliest state governments, after 1776, had numerous provisions preventing state legislators from being elected in more than, say, four years out of every seven. (Another early classical liberal policy was annual elections, elections frequent enough to provide continuing voters' choices, and repeated opportunities to throw the bums out.) In other words, older democracy as an instrument of limiting State rulers and State rule, in contrast to modern democracy which is a method of maximizing such rule.

How about working on Congress next?

Third Parties

Two new third parties have achieved stunning victories in this election. (No, I don't mean the Libertarian Party which, as usual,

is nowhere.) One is the Connecticut Party, admittedly a personal creature of new governor Lowell Weicker, who edged out Republican John Rowland, while the incumbent Democrats were left in the dust with only 20 percent of the vote.

Former Senator Weicker is, or rather was, a liberal Republican, and I generally despise this breed. So why am I at least moderately happy at Weicker's election? Three reasons: (1) I still have a fondness *per se* for third parties, and their potential to break up the DemoRep monopoly, a monopoly which shamefully coluded this year to agree not to support any candidate who used the bipartisan Congressional pay raise issue against any incumbents; (2) Weicker admittedly is a big gasbag, but I find big gasbags oddly likable; (3) And

most important, the driving of Weicker out of public life has long been the favorite personal crusade of Bill Buckley, the Duke of Sharon, and the would-be absolute ruler of the conservative movement. Buckley and his numerous kinsmen succeeded in replacing Weicker in 1988 by the pro-war left-liberal Joe Lieberman, who is about twenty steps below Weicker in my personal

esteem. But now Weicker is back, bigger than ever, and Buckley's got him, like it or not. In short, in the grand Old American political tradition, I love Weicker for the enemies he has made.

But even more interesting than Weicker is the victory of the independent candidate for governor of Alaska, former Secretary of the Interior Wally Hickel. The Alaska election featured the liberal heir to out-

going Democrat Governor Steve Cowper versus twin liberal Republican Arliss Sturgulewski. In this loaded situation, Hickel, a libertarian-inclined politico who favors free markets, low taxes, and unlocking Alaska's sequestered federal land for private economic development, decided to enter the race on a third line. Taking his message to a sympathetic, en-

trepreneurially-minded Alaskan electorate, Hickel did what the once-mighty and now virtually defunct Alaska Libertarian Party tried to do: he won the race for Governor on a third line. Hickel, garnering 38 percent of the total vote, was eight points ahead of runner-up Sturgulewski.

The most fascinating aspect of the Alaska race, however, has been totally overlooked by the

media, who imply that Hickel ran as an Independent. Strictly speaking, that's not true. There is a third party on the ballot in Alaska, and, once again, it's not the Libertarians: it's the Alaska Independence Party. The AIP has chosen a gubernatorial slate, but when Hickel told them he wanted to run, the AIP nominee was happy to resign and give their line to Wally.

So what we have is an AIP victory, even though Hickel has admittedly not committed himself to its full platform. The platform includes free markets, low taxes, and economic development, but it also adds something else: independence for Alaska, and secession from the swollen American Union! Hooray! Once again, the flag of secession has been raised, and has achieved success, for the first time since the Southern secessionists were crushed and slaughtered on the altar of the sacred Union in the lost War for Southern Independence. Alaska is far from the mainland, which they call "the lower 48," and almost all of their land is locked up and out of human use by the federal government. Let's hear it for the Tundra Rebellion! Will Wally Hickel be the first President of the Alaskan Republic?

Let's put it this way: if the former serfs of the Soviet Union, including the Russian Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova (formerly Moldavia), Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Gagauz, the Dniester Republic, and on and on, can yearn for, declare, and battle for secession, sovereignty, and independence, why not Alaska? Free Alaska, and all political prisoners!

**The
libertarian
Alaska
Independence
Party stands
for
independence
for Alaska,
and secession
from the
swollen
American
Union!
Hooray!**

Ole Jesse

The most dramatic and intriguing race of the election was the latest and most intensive attempt by organized left-liberalism to unseat their most hated foe, Mr. Conservative, Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina. The Helms race provides a clear-cut and convenient litmus test to distinguish and separate the hardy band of paleo-libertarians from the large majority of left-nihilos. I have not taken a scientific poll (if *any* political poll, these days, deserves such a label), but I would bet the farm that at least 95 percent of the nation's libertarians (in and out of the LP) were cheering for leftist Harvey Gantt and sputtered with fury at the Helms triumph.

Why is that, do you think? If you run down the issues, there is *not one* on which *any* libertarian, paleo or nihilo, would agree with statist Harvey Gantt. Go down a checklist of issues, and Ole Jesse is libertarian on the vast majority of issues, and on the few remaining he is no worse than Gantt. During the Cold War I was not a fan of Jesse's, not because he was virtually running his own Foreign Office (*that's* admirable)

but because he was the No. 1 warmonger in Congress. Now that the Cold War is over, however, that issue is gone, and all libertarians should be happy to bask in admiration for Helms' mainly libertarian record, his leading position as opponent of malignant left-liberalism, and his defense of Southern values and culture from invading Northern left-carpetbaggers.

I am *not* saying, of course, that Jesse is a 100 percent libertarian; and why should he be? He of course favors tobacco subsidies, and that's unfortunate, but which North Carolinian does not? And he is far too pro-Israel for my taste, but equally so is Harvey Gantt. But he is magnificently sound on affirmative action, where all libertarians, paleo and nihilo, are *supposed* to agree with him. So why the anti-Helms hysteria among most libertarians? Is it the growing *Kultur-*

kampf, on which left-nihilos side squarely with the Gantts of this world and are implacably hostile to the Helmses?

At any rate, for paleo-libertarians, it was delightful to sit back and admire the tactical brilliance of the Helms campaign. The

polls, once again deluded by the reluctance of numerous white voters to admit—to putatively left-liberal college-educated pollsters—that they are not going to vote for a black candidate put Gantt comfortably ahead. One white store owner in a small town in North Carolina was visited by a reporter because he had a Gantt poster prominently displayed in his store-front.

"Nah, I'm not voting for Gantt. I put the poster up because most of my customers are *them*. I'm votin' for Ole Jesse." The liberal media, fanatically anti-Helms, exulted that, for once, and in contrast to the race in 1984 of

**Litmus
test: left-
liber-
tarians
hate Jesse
Helms;
paleo-
liber-
tarians
love him.**

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Governor Jim Hunt against Jesse, Gantt was winning as a frank and candid left-liberal, and that Jesse was oddly allowing Gantt to put him on the defensive by stressing "economic issues." Translated, that meant that Gantt was taking the usual leftist, Marxoid slant, denouncing Helms for being "opposed" to education, housing, the environment, and all the rest because he was against voting to spend taxpayer funds on these causes. Wasn't Jesse old, played out, on the ropes at last?

And then came the magnificent last-week blitz, with one of the most effective TV commercials I have seen in many years, showing a white worker being denied a job because, although qualified, he had to lose out to a "minority" candidate. The worker's hand crumpled the paper into a fist. Affirmative action! Teddy Kennedy! Ole Jesse had come up with his powerful theme, and, pulling out all the stops, he rode to a fairly comfortable, not neck-and-neck as the pollsters then claimed, victory by 100,000 votes, a margin of 52.5 to 47.5 percent. While Jesse roused the people, the desperate Gantt

forces turned to *their* ally, the left-liberal judiciary, changing the rules of the game at the last minute by getting the courts to keep the polls open till late in the evening in the liberal metropolises of Charlotte and Durham, trying their best to squeeze out every liberal voter for the Great Cause.

But it would not be enough. To the despair of everyone from media pundits to North Carolinian political science professors, Ole Jesse again was home free. During the week, I had seen Helms on TV, rousing his troops against the liberal Enemy, delighting in the joy of combat. When he denounced his ancient liberal foe, when he attacked Accredited Victim groups, he was very different from the mean and acerbic Silber. You could see him joyful, delighting in the fury that his every word would generate in his enemies. And now here he was, Ole Jesse in his moment of triumph, surrounded by cheering fans, grinning from ear to ear as he took the mike: "Ah've just come," Jesse intoned, "from watching the grievin' face of Dan Rather...." Once again, Jesse had said it all.

The Franks Victory

Also heartwarming, and in the long run perhaps as significant, was the defeat of leftist ex-Congressman Toby Moffett in liberal Connecticut by real estate millionaire Gary Franks, the first black Republican Congressman since Reconstruction. Franks, who came from poor, hardworking black parents, all of whose children went to college and became successful businessmen and professionals, rose to success in real estate. Franks is not only a Republican, but a conservative, free-market, low-tax man who opposes affirmative action, and who cheered President Bush's veto of the "civil rights" bill. In an era when the raging and escalating problems of street crime, welfare, and government privileging through set-asides and affirmative action, threaten to lead toward a terrible race war, the emergence into political leadership of black conservatives—of men like Franks, William B. Allen (former head of the Civil Rights Commission), and the late Clarence Pendleton, bring us hope for the future. •

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