

Right's demise, the neo-cons blame it on the unwillingness of Republicans to become social democrats. The danger of this neo-con history is that calling oneself "Old Right" today is to be identified politically in most circles with *National Review*.

One option is to reclaim the "Old Right" through an *intellectual* fight. But this overlooks the *political* question of whether "Old Right" is a meaningful and relevant term. Intellectually, we should confront the neo-cons whenever possible. Politically, the term "Old Right" makes little sense. A majority of Americans oppose higher taxes and greater Empire (especially when Washington drafts their kids), but do not identify these policies with the "Old Right."

Another option is to redefine ourselves *politically* as "paleo-right." The Old Right's re-emergence in 1992 was marked by increased usage of the terms "paleo-libertarian" and "paleo-conservative." The split between "neo" and "paleo" conservatives is an established fact even in liberal circles; redefining ourselves as "paleo-right" sets us apart within the Republican Party as a *political* group distinct from the neos, country club liberals, and religious or "New" Right.

It may be objected that semantics mean little politically. First-hand experience leads me to reject this. During my successful candidacy for the Michigan State House in 1992, my opponents and the news media attempted to define me politically as a "libertarian," "conservative," "right-wing," "far-right," etc. I added a political caveat to

their definitions: "I am the only candidate who supports tax cuts and term limits, and opposes Lansing's policy of spending millions to give maximum security prisoners a college education."

Candidates who fail to define themselves leaves them open to being defined by opponents. Likewise, our failure to define ourselves allows the neo-cons to define us in their own critical terms. We should define ourselves politically as *paleo-right*.

### The White House?

The paleo-right's emergence occurred largely, but not entirely, within the context of Pat Buchanan's candidacy for the Republican nomination for President. Buchanan's failure as a candidate led some observers, primarily neo-cons, to ascribe the paleo-right as an aberration.

The fetish with presidential politics is a recurring phenomenon within the conservative and libertarian movements. Every four years, a new "Savior" emerges on the national scene to guide the movement to the Political Promised Land. Incredible amounts of time, energy, and resources are expended to place "one of our own" in the White House. In 1980, it was Reagan and Clark. In 1988, Kemp and Robertson were the candidates. In 1992, it was Buchanan. Candidates are already jostling for 1996.

It is in the paleo-right's interest to use its limited resources to their full, maximum advantage. Is pursuit of the Presidency the best use of our resources? Or do we have a greater impact by entering races at lower levels?

Robert Taft never lived in the White House, but his influence on the Presidency was tremendous. Taft led the opposition to FDR and Truman, and his advice convinced Eisenhower it would be folly to commit U.S. ground forces to Southeast Asia. Would the Vietnam conflict have occurred if Taft lived? That is an interesting question. The point is that Taft's seat in the U.S. Senate gave him a national platform for his Old Right views.

Today's paleo-right needs similar platforms in Congress and state legislatures across America. The neo-cons will attack us from New York, but our sheer numbers will overwhelm them in the end. There are no elected neo-con legislators, only a handful of "ex"-Trots advising Jack Kemp. The paleo-right should take America back; one state house seat and congressional district at a time. ■

Greg Kaza is a Republican state representative in Michigan.

## Warning! On Bret Schundler by M.N.R.

We should properly rejoice at the smashing victories for conservatives in June—the great triumph of Dick Riordan over the leftist Woo in Los Angeles, and the incredible landslide of Kay Bailey Hutchison over incumbent Senator Bob Krueger in the Texas Senate race. We should be especially jubilant about the abject crumbling of

Clintonian Democracy that these electoral smashes represent. The horrible Clinton regime is falling apart before our very eyes.

But amidst this rejoicing we should be wary about an alleged triumph that Official Conservatives have been holding

up as a model for the future: the May election of young Republican Bret Schundler as mayor of Jersey City, in New Jersey, a Democratic stronghold since 1917 and a city with only 6 percent Republican registered voters. A white stock salesman who worked in Wall

St., running in a city where only 26 percent of the voters are white, Schundler was originally elected mayor last November on an admitted fluke. The previous mayor, Gerald McCann, of the corrupt Democrat ma-

chine, suddenly wound up in federal prison on fraud charges, and Schundler was the only Republican running among 18 Democratic candidates splitting the vote.

The surprise was Schundler's getting re-elected in May against

the Democratic machine candidate, and by a 2-to-1 margin. The Official Conservatives claim that Schundler won because he ran against the deficits and high taxes that had wrecked Jersey City, and that Schundler managed to pass a balanced budget be-

fore his re-election without raising taxes. hence, his being hailed as a conservative Republican *wunderkind*. (Schundler is only 34 years old.)

All this is true, but there's a big problem. For how did Schundler

accomplish this feat? By cutting government spending in Jersey City? Not on your tintype. Schundler balanced the budget by aggressively pursuing businesses that had avoided paying their taxes; by enforcing Jersey City's already outrageously high tax rate, he managed to push collection rates up from 78 percent to 90 percent. Not only that: Schundler came up with a slick accounting gimmick that took all the tax liens that the city government had piled up from people who couldn't pay their taxes, and bundled them together as collateral for a municipal bond issue. In short, Schundler balanced the budget by *raising taxes*, though they were *called* other things, such as "greater enforcement" and "borrowing on tax liens."

Rather than a heroic young free marketer and sound fiscal man, young Schundler looks a lot more like the hated Slick Willie.

Is it any wonder that Schundler admires, above all, Jack Kemp? ■

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P.O. Box 4091, Burlingame, CA 94011