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The Lessons of the Nafta Struggle: What Next?

by Murray N. Rothbard

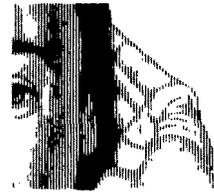
The old motto says: "Don't get mad, get even." I never understood why you can't amend that to: "Get mad *and* get even." The important thing is to get even. That is the major lesson of Nafta: Never forget. Punish the SOB's. Get even. While unions are vowing to punish pro-Nafta Democrats, conservatives and libertarians should take the pledge: Never vote for any pro-Nafta Republican. Ever.

The House vote on Nafta must be taken not as the end of the road, but only as the beginning. That is another major lesson of Nafta. They called it an "odd coalition"; that corrupt outgoing disgrace, House GOP minority leader Bob Michel, called the anti-Nafta coalition the Marx Brothers of American politics. Well, he should be only the first of the Three Stooges (Jack Kemp, Newt Gingrich) to be sent into well-deserved retirement. Forget about "healing" and "Unity" and "putting it all behind us." That sort of guff is strictly for the winners (e.g. Clinton, Gingrich) to suck in the losers. For the losers in the Nafta vote, the only message is: Throw the Rascals Out. Never

forget.

And exactly *who* are the winners and who the losers? Toward the end of the ferocious struggle the profiles of the two opposing sides became crystal-clear. And as the sharp-eyed analysts of the Establishment conceded: it has little to do with "trade." First and foremost, it all came down to a matter of class. On the pro-Nafta side was the serried ranks of the elite, of the cadres and stooges of the Rockefeller-Big Government Demopublican world empire. When it came to the clutch, for a crucial issue like Nafta, the so-called "two party system" was revealed for the egregious fraud that it is. For on the Nafta side was the entire bipartisan elite, making a mockery of America's vaunted "democratic system"—the very same fraudulent plutocratic system

(Cont. page 2, col. 2)



THE EAR

by Sarah Barton

Dopey Argument of the Year: the last-ditch Evers-Left Libertarian argument for Nafta: Nafta may not really be for free trade, but the people *perceive* it as free trade, and therefore a defeat for Nafta will be a defeat for the cause of free trade.

Oh?

Well, in that case, the Clinton health plan may not *really* advance the cause of health, but the people *perceive* it as being pro-health, therefore we have to support it.

Or

Cont. next page, col.1)

INSIDE

<i>The New York Election: The Hidden Catholic Backlash</i> , by M.N.R.	6
<i>Quotes That Need No Comment</i>	6
<i>That Brady Bunch</i> , by M.N.R.	9
<i>The Halperin Case</i> , by M.N.R.	9
<i>Korean War Redux?</i> , by M.N.R.	9
<i>Health Insurance: The Clintons' Phony Populism</i> , by M.N.R.	10
<i>The Wizard of Wichita</i> , by Joe Melton	11
<i>Rating Senate Republicans</i>	12
<i>The Carnage of Liberalism</i> , by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.	16
<i>Federal Insurance Fraud</i> , by L.H.R., Jr.	17
<i>More Quotes That Need No Comment</i>	18
<i>PC Watch</i> , by L.H.R., Jr.	20

(THE EAR cont. from pg. 1)

Price controls do not really combat inflation, but the people *perceive* it as fighting inflation, therefore a defeat for price controls harms the cause of fighting inflation..?

* * * * *

The California voucherites are getting set to introduce another scheme next year, and they're now debating what changes to make to sucker in the public. Joel Rosenberg of the Kempian Empower America is talking about: only poor families could get vouchers; children already in private schools couldn't get them; and religious private schools would not be eligible. In short; purely an anti-religious welfare scheme for the poor! It will be interesting to see if the Left-libertarians, including money-bags David Koch, will swallow this and make another huge leap to the Left.

By the way, David was just named to the coveted honor of Bachelor of the Year. Congratulations, billionaire hunk.

* * * * *

A very good friend of the head of a prominent Left-libertarian thinktank is getting worried about his friend, whose hatred of the two Rs is "reaching a new plateau of frenzy." When the guy was asked what activities of the two Rs are especially driving the thinktankers nuts, but he clammed up.

Hey, big guy, why don't you take a rest cure: like two years of organizing "market liberals" in Bosnia? ■

(LESSONS cont. from pg.1)

we have been trying to foist on the world with guns and bombs in the name of "democracy." Pro-Nafta: every former President; every Trilat; every pundit; 5,000 Nobel-winning economists; every repellent foreign-policy expert you've seen on CNN or *Nightline*; every Big Business type, including the odious protectionist looter-of-the taxpayer Lee Iaococca; in short, every four-flusher and crook with credentials and blow-dried hair. The entire respectable "left-right" spectrum was forced, in the heat of the battle, to expose itself for the complete phony that it is. On *McLaughlin Group* and on *Capital Gang*, every person, with the honorable exception of the inarticulate Mark Shields, was not only pro-Nafta, but hysterically so. In fact, the thuggish Robert Novak, toward the end, let the cat out of the bag: "all the educated people are pro-Nafta;" "there is no intelligent person against Nafta." And all the half-educated panelists heartily agreed. And, of course, as the star attraction, not for his ability to persuade but for the Establishment imprimatur that his very Buddha-like presence conveys: that old war criminal himself, the not so much beloved as deeply venerated by every Establishmentarian, "Doctor"

Henry Kissinger, trotted out by the Arkansas peckerwood to give himself *cachet* among all the elites and their hangers-on. [The quotes around Doctor are intended to convey, not doubt on the authenticity of Henry

the K's graduate degree, but on the name that always precedes his name when announced in public, almost as if "Doctor" is his first given name.]

So if all the biggies, "liberal" and "conservative," all the elites were pro-Nafta, and this, as we have pointed out before, emphatically included neo-cons and Left Libertarians, who was against it?

The answer is very simple, but highly revealing: the people. The people, what the Marxists call "the broad masses," were bitterly, furiously anti-Nafta. Everyone loved Nafta but the people. Even to include the AFL-CIO in the opponents is a distortion. For the national AFL-CIO leaders admitted that their fierce opposition was totally "driven" by their local, rank-and-file members. English translation: the sophisticated national union leaders would have liked to be pro-Nafta, or at the very least make some deals, but they simply couldn't do it, so frenzied and militant against Nafta were the rank and file union members. And not just unionist,

The entire respectable "left-right" spectrum was exposed for the complete phony that it is.

and not just Rust-belt factory workers concerned about their jobs. Everyone: rednecks, farmers, urban and rural rank and file alike, everyone hated Nafta.

And what drove this fury was not simply ignorant protectionist arguments about "losing jobs." That was the only argument that many of the opponents could latch onto. It was a simple, clear argument. But underlying this often silly argumentation was a deep-seated hunch that the rich, the elite, the Big Government-Big Business-Big Pundit forces, were putting something dastardly, something evil, over on them. And that hunch, that instinct, was right.

The fight was the elites versus the people. The elites knew exactly what they wanted: they had the knowledge, they had the money, and they had the power. And since they had the money and the power, spear-headed by the Monster in the White House, they could make shameless deals until the votes of enough Congressmen were bought and paid for. The process was so open and blatant that even the kept media remarked on it. It had to be open because the elite was desperate. And so they won, and not only by the one or two votes the pundits had predicted. By the end, the vote was a forgone conclusion. But the important thing is to make this rotten victory a strictly short-run, Pyrrhic one. We the People have lost the battle; we must make sure that we win the war. And we win the war by Never Forgetting, by hanging their pro-Nafta stance or vote like an albatross around the neck of every Republican politician,

until they are driven from public life. The *New York Times* reported that one Clintonian official lamented: "The Administration's nightmare is that Nafta passes and for five years, every sparrow that falls from the trees is blamed on Nafta." (Nov. 20). Yes; but this should be the continuing nightmare, not only of the Clinton Administration, but also of its Naftian running dogs in the Republican, or Democratic party.

So what about the anti-Nafta coalition that came so close to victory? Was it really so odd as it seemed to the Beltway elites, happily insulated from the folks in the hinterlands? What indeed do Ross Perot, Jerry Brown, Ralph Nader, and Pat Buchanan have in common? The answer is that they are all *populists*, whether of the right or left. The new coalition that was forged in the Nafta struggle can and should be strengthened to keep battling on many other fronts as well. And what is "populism," whether of right or left? It is a common hostility to the rule of the centrist elites, of the contemporary corporate State, of the Trilat-neocon-President-ex President-Big Government-Big Business-Big Media coalition that has run this country for decades. The positive proposals or the long-run ideologies within this New Populist Coalition are less important than the fact that they all have a common foe: the existing American ruling class. And all these wings of populism have in common a desire to overthrow that ruling elite. Not only that: the broad masses instinctively have the same view, and can be mobilized to this end

by the Populist Coalition.

One of the most egregious tacks taken by the Ruling Elite toward the desperate end of the Nafta fight was to accuse their opponents of engaging in the "politics of fear." *They*—the statist rulers—were pushing the politics of "hope," whereas the opponents were playing on inchoate "fears." They even trotted out the phrase of the pioneer and past master of the rotten American socialist elite: Franklin Doublecross Roosevelt, with his "we have nothing to fe-ah but fe-ah itself."

Politics of fear? What were the elites saying the last couple of weeks before the House vote? That America, nay the world, would fall apart if Nafta should lose. America would hang its head in shame, scorned by the entire world. It is particularly fascinating that the final and unfortunately successful card played by Clinton and the ruling elite was Foreign Policy. It's not *really* about trade, the pundits said, but about our entire wonderful internationalist foreign policy, to which America has been committed for so many glorious decades. And of course they were right, for the elite, evil though it may be, knows exactly what it is about. What was at stake and will continue to be at stake is not a few measly tariffs but what America's place should be in the world: Should we follow the long-run schemes of the Ruling Class to build an ever-more interventionist world government, ruled of course by these self-same elites? Or should we repudiate all globaloney and forge a New American Nationalism? Shall it be back to the old

American Republic, the American Nation, or shall it be onward to transnational World Government? Shall it be We the People, or "Doctor" Kissinger and all of his ilk? Shall it be, in other words, a foreign policy that cleaves strictly to American national interests, or shall it be world rule by the blue helmets of the "UN police force" and their transnational bosses? Shall it, in other words, be America First or America Last? That is, has been, and shall be the overriding issue of our time, and of both the 20th and 21st centuries.

One of those repugnant TV pundits, I think it was the "value-free" political analyst William Schneider, put it most starkly in analyzing the Nafta vote. Would America, for the first time since the defeat of the U.S. entry into the League of Nations in 1919, repudiate the interventionist foreign policy project? Schneider's "value-freedom" was wearing very thin that day, as he clearly exulted that the United States was still on its old internationalist course.

President Clinton, too, hailed the vote as a "defining moment" for America—again in the same knowing apocalyptic tradition, the same understanding of what was at stake. The other theme played in those final weeks was that Nafta had to pass to "save the Clinton presidency," although why allegedly conservative Republicans should be so concerned about saving the Clinton presidency is something that deserves a lot more analysis. Why should conservative Republicans save the Monster in the White House? Don't they realize that to the

extent that that Monster fails, America is saved? Clearly not—which leads one to ask, how "conservative" and how "Republican" are the Gingriches and the Kemps and the 132 House Republicans who voted for Nafta? (It would be fun take a leaf from Revolutionary American practice, and to hold bonfires burning the "infamous 132" in effigy, while hailing the courageous "43" House Republicans who stood fast against their own party rulers to vote American First and to turn down Nafta.)

Pat Buchanan, the nation's pre-eminent right-wing populist, and of course its leader in the anti-Nafta struggle, wrote an outstanding column after the vote, which correctly analyzed the new constellation of forces and set the course for the days ahead. (*Washington Times*, Nov. 19). Pat noted that we "looked into the eyes of the national establishment and saw there something rarely seen, fear and panic, a ruling class in the sudden realization that millions of Americans [I would add: the majority] detest it." In analyzing "Whose side are you on?", Pat perceptively called the roll of the Nafta elites: in addition to the rulers of both parties, "The Fortune 500 and the Big banks, the Trilateral Commission and the Council on Foreign Relations... the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal, the entire Punditocracy, Heritage Foundation and Cato, Brookings and American Enterprise Institute, the New Republic and Empower America," all the ex-presidents and secretaries of state, in short "All the King's

Horses and All the King's Men."

And yet, Pat Buchanan added, "despite massive bias and a near blackout of its arguments by the Big Media, the anti-Nafta coalition won the support of half the nation." [I would say a lot more than that.] What then should be done? Clearly, the coalition should stick together, to forge a new American nationalism and overthrow the transnational elite. The common struggle against that elite, the growing consciousness of the malignancy of those elites, is more important than the loss of the actual vote. As Pat writes, this struggle

awakened a nation, revealed the hierarchy of values of our leaders, broke the old molds, forged new alliances, and gave a new clarity, bordering on luminosity, to our politics.

Particularly fascinating is the fact that Pat Buchanan, a lifelong loyal Republican, is now willing to reconsider that deep-seated allegiance:

As for the GOP Establishment, which worked in happy harness with the White House war room, it will never be seen in the same light again.

And then, this magnificent sentence: "This time, we all know where they spent the night."

Specifically, Pat warns:

"If this [anti-Nafta] coalition is not provided leadership by the GOP, it will seek leadership outside the GOP. Put bluntly: If both major parties go into the election of 1996 as parties of Nafta and the New World Order, a third party will emerge." Yes!

All of us should begin to think

about how such a New Populist Coalition, or New Nationalist Coalition, could proceed. Could any common program be forged among such seemingly disparate groups? The answer is emphatically Yes. Thus, here could be some of the elements of a New Nationalist program:

1. Repeal Nafta.

2. Defeat, or withdraw from, all super-governmental agencies or commissions whatsoever. Repudiate all UN police forces. (And for us "extremists" within the coalition, revive the grand old slogan: US OUT of UN, UN OUT of US. Pull out of ILO, UNESCO, and all the rest. The

UN must be desanctified, pending U.S. withdrawal. This gang of the international ruling class is *not* the "world community."

3. Abolish all foreign aid. Let us devote our resources to tackling problems at home. America First. Let each country solve its own problems, for only they can solve them. In Gaelic, Sinn Fein (Ourselves alone.)

4. Outlaw all lobbying by foreign governments. Making them register is scarcely enough (and honored largely in the breach.) Foreign lobbying is polluting and corrupting American politics. Foreigners can't vote in American elections; they should have no power over American governmental actions.

5. Set up a permanent Congressional Committee devoted to ongoing investigation of foreign lobbyists and their influence over the legislative and executive (and judicial) branches of the U.S. government. Hell—you could even call it "The Un-American Activities Committee." There's ample precedent for that.

6. Recognize that "illegal immigrants" are *illegal*. To say that they should not enjoy welfare payments, medical care, public schooling, etc. should, but unfortunately doesn't, go without saying. Being illegal, they should be rounded up and shipped out.

7. English only.

English should be the only official language. No one advocates the outlawing of any foreign language; but English should be the sole language of public discourse: citizenship tests, court proceedings, street signs, the ballot, etc. Those immigrants who don't like it are free to leave.

8. Immigration policy needs to be rethought, in this era of rampant

multiculturalism and the welfare state. For one thing, status as a refugee needs to be proved, not simply stated by the applying immigrant. The "family reuniting" clause should be repealed; it has been an open sesame for immigration, encouraging phony marriages and

fake relatives.

9. A foreign policy devoted solely to the national interest, and not to combating all "aggressors" everywhere or enforcing global "democracy." End all U.S. "sanctions" against other countries for whatever reason, except for direct assaults on Americans.

Here is the sort of New Nationalist Program that could gain the assent of all the seemingly disparate populist factions: Buchananites, Perotvians, Brownians, etc. To some, this may seem a minimal program; it doesn't commit the coalition for or against the welfare state, for example, or even for or against tariffs or import quotas. But believe me, this program would be "maximalist" enough to shiver the timbers of every member of our malevolent ruling class.

Coalitions are just that: "coalitions" based on broad deep common interests and views. We don't have to agree with our coalition partners on every jot and tittle of ideology or program. And none of the factions have to, or should, bury or neglect their own distinctive positions. *Within* the new nationalist coalition, Buchananites can and should argue, in friendly but firm fashion, with their partners over right vs. left, new vs. old culture, welfare state vs. its abolition. And with the Buchananite wing of the coalition, free traders and protectionists can and should try to convince each other of their respective positions. (As they did in the glorious Old Right of the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, when free traders and protectionists, Hamiltonians and Jef-

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fersonian, argued but worked together in happy harmony.)

And let us remember, while building this coalition: that we have nothing to lose but the chains forged for us by the America Last elites; we have America to win! ■

The New York Election: The Hidden Catholic Backlash

by M.N.R.

Upon our obtaining access to the detailed election returns in the New York edition of the *New York Times* (Nov. 4), it turns out that, as usual, my old friend and libertarian colleague Joe Peden was right: that the *Times* analysts distorted and misrepresented the facts of the New York election that should have been obvious from their own data.

Basically, the *Times*, which supported Mayor Dinkins to the hilt, saw no significant change in voting patterns from 1989: a marginal decline in black turnout, a marginal decline in the Dinkins vote among Jewish voters angered about the Crown Heights riot, some increase in white racism. Otherwise, Dinkins was the victim of the national recession. The massive and unprecedented turnout and outpouring of Giuliani voters on little Staten Island, which gave Giuliani a phenomenal 88,000 majority and the election (Giuliani's overall majority was 44,000), was written off by the

Times as solely the result of the concurrent referendum for Staten Island secession from the city. The Islanders voted for secession by a whopping 2 to 1 vote. To the extent that any ethno-religious shift was mentioned as playing an important role, the *Times* had the nerve to highlight a shift of white Protestants for Giuliani over the 1989 race. Well sure, white Pro-

testants raised their vote for Giuliani from 70 to 81 percent over four years ago, but considering that the WASP vote in New York is a pitiful six percent of the total, this change was of minimal importance.

It is true that the Staten Island majority for Giuliani was phenomenal. Thus, in the two middle and southern assembly districts of Staten Island, Giuliani

Quotes That Need No Comment

"Five hundred thousand dollars!" said the Rev. Raiford Wheeler of the Park Avenue Christian Church in East Orange [New Jersey]. "That's crumbs from Caesar's table. For us to sell out for half a million dollars is really a joke."—*New York Times*.

The ministers vehemently denied the assertions, made Tuesday by the Republican political strategist Edward J. Rollins, that the campaign had bought their silence. They said his remarks had done irreparable harm to the black church, a keystone of black community tradition and pride.—*New York Times*.

The political debate over the North American Free Trade Agreement is not about tariffs or . . . even mostly about trade with Mexico . . . It is about whether, in the aftermath of the cold war, the United States will try to expand its economic and political influence around the world or whether it will withdraw within its borders and try to go it alone . . . Coming at a turning point, the outcome could signify a change in direction or the continuation on a course.

In that respect, it is similar to the Civil Rights Act of 1957 . . . The actual provisions of that law . . . did little for the cause of black America. But . . . had Congress rejected this modest measure . . . it would have been crushing to the cause of civil rights.

Similarly, said Robert I. Hormats, a vice chairman of Goldman Sachs International, who has been a Government economic official under Democratic and Republican Presidents, rejection of the trade accord would be . . . "devastating to American foreign policy."—David E. Rosenbaum, *New York Times*.

Mr. [Howard] Stern's is a comedy of the put-down, only instead of picking on the polyester and blue-hair crowd, he socks it to currently protected species. Of Los Angeles looters, whose excuse is that they cannot find jobs: "Who's going to hire you? You've got 37 earrings in your ear, you look as if you stepped off the set of a rap video, your hat is on backwards and you've got your girlfriend's initials carved into your hair."—*New York Times*.

Today's young men are soft and weak. They sit in air-conditioned houses and drive air-conditioned cars. They love luxury too much. They have been ruined for hard, honest work.—Maharaj Hassan Maharaj, pearl fishing captain, Bahrain.