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Joseph R. Peden, Publisher

Murray N. Rothbard, Editor

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The Presidential Campaign: The Need For Radicalism

(The following is adapted from a speech given by the editor at the convention of the Free Libertarian Party of New York, in Albany, N.Y. on March 29.)

The first and most important task of a Libertarian Presidential campaign is to cleave to, and be proud of, libertarian principle throughout the campaign. Second, we must select the *most important* political issues of the day on which to campaign. Thus, at one point, before I became a Communist monster in their eyes, the conservative Buckley-clique thought of me as a lovable nut who put first and foremost a call for denationalization of lighthouses. Much as I hate to disappoint them, and much as I am devoted to private lighthouses, I must admit that this plank should not be a top priority for us during this presidential campaign.

We cannot discuss the *issues* which should have top priority in 1980, without also discussing the *candidates* whom Ed Clark will be likely to face. Until now, with nearly a dozen major party candidates in the race, we have all been properly giving equal weight to attacking each one. But now things are different. Most of the dozen turkeys have dropped out. It looks certain that Reagan will be the Republican, and probable that Carter will be the Democratic nominee.

I'm therefore going to make a daring statement: the No.1 threat, the big threat, to the liberty of Americans in this campaign is *Ronald Reagan*.

There are two basic reasons for this statement: (1) fundamental principle, and (2) the proper strategy for the LP Presidential campaign. Both principle and strategy, as they should, mesh together.

First, on the question of basic principle. The No.1 priority for libertarians must always be foreign policy, a policy of peace, of militant opposition to war and foreign intervention. Many libertarians are unfortunately uncomfortable with foreign policy as the top priority, or even as any sort of priority at all. For one thing, they often *don't know anything* about foreign policy; and they don't see how libertarian principles apply in that arena. They can understand full well why we should oppose price controls, but they don't understand why we should be against intervention in the Persian Gulf or Afghanistan, or oppose nuclear war.

But the explanation for top priority for non-intervention is really pretty simple. For the incineration of hundreds of millions of people in nuclear war — in a mass murder unparalleled in human history — is a worse violation of human liberty even than price-wage controls or the latest regulations by OSHA. Murder — a

fortiori mass murder — is a greater violation of a person's liberty than theft or dictatorial control.

Secondly, war has always been the occasion for a huge, catastrophic leap into statism, a leap that occurs during the war and lasts as a permanent legacy afterwards. As the great libertarian Randolph Bourne warned, as we entered the disaster of World War I, "war is the health of the state." Time and again, war and foreign intervention destroyed our ancestors — the classical liberal movement in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In England, Germany, France, and the United States, this tragedy repeatedly took place. In the United States, the big leaps into statism came with war: the War of 1812, the Civil War, World Wars I and II, and the Cold War.

So — opposition to war and foreign intervention must be our top priority in this campaign. This is particularly true as the Carter administration has moved sharply away from detente, and as the entire Establishment has expressed its joy in abandoning the troublesome lessons of Vietnam — the lessons of the unforeseen length, the butchery, the counter-productives of war.

With the primary importance of war and peace as our guide, therefore, we must conclude that the No.1 threat to our liberties is Ronald Reagan and the conservative movement from which he springs. Reagan's calm and superficially reassuring personality — a calm and a reassurance that stems partly from slow-wittedness — is beside the point: for Ronald Reagan is a sincere ideologue of the conservative movement. And for the last twenty-five years, conservatism has been above all and if it has not been anything else, a policy of all-out global anti-Soviet crusade, a policy hellbent for a nuclear showdown with the Soviet Union.

That is why a Reagan presidency would likely bring about that showdown, and the consequent virtual incineration of the human race. At every crisis point in the last three decades, the conservatives were there, whooping it up for more and more war: in Korea, at the Berlin Wall, in Cuba, in Vietnam. Only recently Reagan called for a "vast" (*his word*) increase in military spending — this when we already have enough missiles to destroy Russia many times over in a second nuclear strike. Reagan calls for intervention everywhere, in the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan, and demands the blockade of Cuba in alleged retaliation for the incursion into Afghanistan. And what is more, in the service of this policy of global war and militarism, Reagan would totally

(Continued On Page 2)

The Presidential Campaign —

(Continued From Page 1)

"unleash" the FBI and CIA, to do again their foul deeds of harrassing political dissent, or invasion of privacy, or espionage and assassination.

Ronald Reagan and the conservative movement are confident that, in one or in a series of hard-line confrontations, in a continuing game of "chicken" with the Soviets, they could keep forcing Russia to back down. But if they should happen to make just one miscalculation along the way, and we all get destroyed in a nuclear war, the conservatives would not be particularly dismayed. They would take this result as final proof that the Russians are monsters, and they would be all too content that, though the world be destroyed, our immortal souls will have been preserved.

To say that such a foreign policy is dangerous and catastrophic grossly underestimates the point. The property, the lives, the very survival of all of us depend on slamming the door on Reagan and Reaganism, on keeping the itchy fingers of Ronald Reagan and his Dr. Strangelove colleagues far, far away from that nuclear button.

This is not to say, of course, that Carter is a great pro-peace candidate. To the contrary, in a political climate where the *only* voices of opposition are from the pro-war right wing, Carter, whose only principle has been to stay in office, is moving rapidly in a Reaganite direction.

The scrapping of detente, the hysteria over the Russian moves in Afghanistan, — a country that even conservatives had never put in the U.S. defense perimeter, the placing of theater nuclear missiles in Western Europe, the stepping up of military spending, have all been very dangerous moves. But they have occurred not because Carter is a principled warmonger — thank goodness — but because we have been existing in a pro-war vacuum, with no room for contrasting opinion.

Even the pseudo-opposition candidates, Kennedy and Anderson, have confined their few and scattered remarks on foreign policy to attacking Carter's weakness and vacillation: On Afghanistan, on Cuba, on the grain embargo. Having said these few words, they are relieved to return to their favorite themes: Kennedy in calling for a wage-price freeze, and Anderson in trumpeting his own courage in calling for a grain embargo and a high gasoline tax.

No — there is only *one* peace candidate in 1980, and thank God he is in the campaign — and that is Ed Clark!

Clark has a golden opportunity to make war and the threat of war the major issue in this campaign. In the process, he can demonstrate to conservative-minded people that we can't have cuts in government spending — and we can't have effective cuts in taxes — while military spending goes through the roof. And that we can't avoid controls and regulations in a war economy — if indeed there is any economy for people at all left to worry about if war comes.

So those are the principled reasons for stressing war and peace as the No. 1 issue of this presidential campaign. The other basic reason is *strategic*. For as it stands now, Ronald Reagan is going to take away a lot of Clark votes. A lot of people I have met around the country simply regard Libertarians and the LP as "extreme Reaganites", as "purist conservatives." And so they say: "I agree with you Libertarians, but you're impractical. I know that Reagan isn't as pure as Clark, but Reagan can get elected and Clark can't, so why don't you abandon all this starry-eyed naivete and get behind Ronnie?"

We've got to let these people and all libertarian-inclined folk know, and make it clear to everyone else for that matter: that *if* they were right, that if we were really just extreme conservatives or ultra-Reaganites, they would *then* have a darned good point. But the vital point is this: we are not repeat *not* extreme conservatives; we are not Reaganites. We regard Ronald Reagan and the conservative movement as our No. 1 enemy — for they carry with

them at all times the stench of nuclear annihilation.

It is the failure, the widespread failure, of all too many libertarians to stress foreign policy that generates this confusion. So if we do stress foreign policy, if we hammer again and again at the war question and at Reaganism, we will demonstrate to all the unbridgeable chasm that lies between us and the conservative movement. And, as we do that, as we show this clear and dramatic cleavage, we will stop losing votes to Reagan, and we will gain votes from the confused who see little distinction and from people who are opposed above all else to foreign intervention and to war.

Both principle and strategy, therefore, dictate making the war question our top priority for the 1980 campaign.

There are, in addition, other crucial issues for 1980. One is *the draft and registration*. I don't have to elaborate on the importance of this battle. For all libertarians, at whatever part of our spectrum, are united in intense opposition to the draft. But I should underline one key point. It is *politically* — though not conceptually — impossible to be opposed to war and yet favor the draft. Opposition to cold and hot war takes the last prop away from the drive to reinstate the draft.

Then there is *taxes* — surely our key domestic issue should be to offer drastic, that means *drastic*, cuts in taxes. Here again, principle and strategy fuse together. Taxes are a uniquely libertarian issue. And the nation has seen a growing tax rebellion in the last few years. This year, California may pass "Son of Jarvis", Proposition 9 cutting the state income tax *in half*. It would be criminal for the LP to fall behind the growing anti-tax sentiment throughout the nation. We must *lead* the sentiment for tax cuts, not tail it.

This brings me to a vital general point, which applies not only to taxes but also to our positions on all the other issues: that on all of them, we must have the principle and the courage to be *radical* — to hold high the banner of libertarian principle, to urge the principles as well as the detailed political applications in our great platform, to call for dramatic and radical advances toward these principles, and, finally, to state our case boldly, clearly, and dramatically.

There are two basic reasons for taking this radical stance: once again, they are both basic *principle* and correct *strategy*. On the question of principle, as the LP gets stronger and more influential, and gets an influx of more money, votes, and media attention, the temptation inevitably arises to waffle, to hide our principles, to get deliberately fuzzy, to seek "respectability" rather than principle. We must shun this temptation to opportunism as the very plague.

For we are, and must always be, what we proudly proclaim ourselves: The party of principle. Our principles are the whole point of what we're doing, and why we're all here today. If we hide, fuzz over, or betray these principles, we have no reason for our existence. And we would then do better to shut up shop altogether. For if we don't hold our own principles aloft, *who will?*

These principles and their applications to political issues are all embodied in our superb national platform. Our platform should be something to *stand on*, to display proudly, not to hide in embarrassment in some dark corner.

And so, on taxes, we should reiterate our goal to get rid of this engine of organized theft and oppression. In the meantime, let us propose tax cuts that are *really* "drastic" (to quote from the platform). In particular, it is vital that we keep our proposals simple, clear, and dramatic. The public is not interested in a four-year Plan, or in a careful and complex structure that loses the real point in a morass of subordinate clauses.

The public is concerned, and rightly so, about *income* taxes. We must propose income tax cuts that are *so* drastic as to make the Reagan-Kemp-Roth 30% cut seem as puny as it really is. Anything that fails to make a dramatic difference between us and Kemp-Roth would be both a betrayal of principle and totally counter-

(Continued On Page 3)

The Presidential Campaign — (Continued From Page 2)

productive. And, as long as we are talking about a drastic tax cut, how about following our platform and proposing, for openers, repeal of the 16th Amendment and therefore of the income tax?

In fact, how's *this* for a tax plan with both principle and punch? I offer it to Ed Clark. Often our Presidential candidates are asked: but how could you get anything accomplished as President without a Libertarian Congress? Here's one way. The President has unlimited power to pardon, as we saw in the notorious Ford-Nixon ploy. That power cannot be overridden by the legislature or the courts. Our candidate should announce that when elected President, his first act would be to issue a declaration pardoning all past, present, and future perpetrators of victimless crimes — and that one such non-crime is non-payment of income taxes. At one stroke, federal taxes would be made voluntary, at least for the duration of the Clark presidency. Why shouldn't Clark make and stress such a pronouncement? The heck with the "Anderson" or "Anacin" difference; then we would have a *Clark difference* that would catch everyone's attention!

Next, on the *strategic* reasons for a radical stance. For apart from principle, good strategy dictates that we take a radical position in this campaign, and nowhere more so than on the income tax.

For we are a brand-new party. We are urging voters to cast off the habits of a lifetime and vote, not Democrat or Republican, but for the Libertarian Party. But to do this, we must shake the people up, we must offer them a sharp, radical alternative to the existing parties. For if we sound like *them*, why in blazes should anyone vote for *us*? To use economic jargon, as a new firm we must differentiate our product. A couple of months ago, a writer in *Chic* magazine counseled us to "take on the responsibilities of growth" by getting rid of these restrictive, constraining principles of ours. But I say that if we do this or anything like it, we will lose both our principles *and* our growth. We will collapse, and we will deserve to collapse.

So, both principle and strategy dictate a radical campaign to go hand in hand with our already radical platform and statement of principles.

Let me give an example of the strategy I propose. At his first official press conference kicking off his campaign in Washington D.C. on January 20, Ed Clark was asked, in the question period, what his ultimate goals might be. Clark did not evade, he did not equivocate. He answered as befits the spokesman of the party of principle. Let me quote from the *New York Times* report:

"Most Presidential candidates this year are talking about reducing the cost of government. Many are talking about reducing government itself. Edward E. Clark is different. He is talking about eliminating government altogether.

The elimination would be accomplished gradually as the public school system was replaced with private facilities, the courts eliminated in favor of private fee-charging arbitration companies, the antitrust laws abolished and all political boundaries between states and localities wiped out . . .

Ultimately, the Libertarian said at a news conference here today, we believe in the complete privatization of society, with a vastly restricted government and a corresponding huge reduction in the taxes that finance that government.

Mr. Clark told a questioner that eventually he advocated returning highway and street systems to private ownership, the way they used to be under Colonial tollroad practices."

This is the kind of campaign we should be running throughout.

Ed Clark did not evade or equivocate or hide his and our principles; he stuck to his guns.

But there are powerful voices in our party who counsel otherwise, who have forgotten that our objective in this campaign is not repeat *not* to get millions of votes, but to get the maximum number of votes *for* libertarian principle. We are not interested in votes *per se*: if we were, we should have stuck to the Democrat or Republican parties. But there are those in our party who counsel evasion and deceit, who would have Ed fuzz over and betray his and our principles.

And there is another point, which may seem trivial by comparison, but is actually very important.

There are powerful voices in our party who counsel that our campaign statements, while sticking to principle, should be *so bland and judicious in tone* that they emerge as almost *boring*. It is quite a feat to take our splendid and exciting principles and make them boring, but it has been done before and it can be done again. But once again: the whole point of our effort is to hold aloft our great principles and spread them far and wide. We have a golden opportunity to do this by means of a mighty campaign, a campaign which can reach millions of people. We must not lose this opportunity; we must not blow it. We must reach the people and fire them up with the exciting message of liberty. For our ideas *are* exciting and dramatic, and to treat them as anything less, to make them bland and have them blend into the political landscape, betrays those principles and *also* loses the votes. Once again, both principle and correct strategy dictate a rousing campaign, not a tepid one.

To sum up: We must avoid any temptation to run anything that so much as smacks of a "Rose Garden" campaign. The "Rose Garden" strategy almost lost the nomination for Ronald Reagan and he, let's not forget, was the frontrunner, a position that at least makes such a strategy plausible. Unfortunately, Ed Clark is *not* the frontrunner. His strategy must be the opposite of the Rose-Garden: it must be to stick to and be proud of libertarian principle: to hold it aloft and then to select the most vital issues of this campaign, and to deliver the message with all the drama and excitement that these issues deserve. This drama will attract to the Clark banner those who are inclined to libertarianism but have not yet heard the message, and also those who are so vitally concerned with one or more of the key issues that they will vote for Clark even if they differ on his other policies. And the Clark campaign must slam with all possible intensity and passion against Reagan and the conservative movement as the great danger that faces all of us, indeed all Americans, today.

If we do all of these things, we should emerge from this campaign as a major force in American politics: not only that, we will never again hear the canard that liberty is just an extreme version of conservatism. Liberty will then be standing on its own feet, proud of its principles and its inherent drama, a vital, independent and growing force in American life. #

Ballad of the IRS

No man who earns a dollar
Is safe from probing eyes
He fills out many forms
And pays until he dies

When a man lies in his grave
The tax men take his home
And plague his family members
Until they weep and moan

No bandits in this country
Have ever stolen more
Than infernal tax collectors
Who thrive on rich and poor

—Agustín De Mello

The Nuclear Issue Once More

In our special July-August 1979 LP Convention issue, we published a letter to *Libertarian Review* by nineteen prominent and long-time libertarians protesting the one-sided opposition to nuclear energy in LR's July-August issue. After failing to publish the letter in its September issue, LR finally carried it the following month, along with hysterical and vituperative replies; more than that, LR affixed to the names of each of the signers distorted designations to try to bolster the idiotic contention of Roy Childs and his cronies that *Inquiry* and *Reason* (two journals not exactly in cozy symbiosis) had engaged in a dire conspiracy against *Libertarian Review*. George Smith, one of the signers of the letter of nineteen, wrote a letter to LR protesting this shabby treatment, and Wendy McElroy (Grosscup), another signer, speared some of LR's distortions.

Childs & Co. claim that they are interested in an open discussion of the entire nuclear issue. How genuine that claim is may be gauged by the fact that LR refused to publish either the Smith or the McElroy letters, which we are bringing to you below.

Before the usual misunderstanding pops up, let it be made clear that Childs has every legal right to publish or not to publish anything he wants in his own publication. True. But so do we, or anyone else, have the legal right to call his moral character or his probity into question for suppressing letters which expose his own distortions.

All this points up the danger of having the libertarian movement monopolized by one magazine. *Libertarian Review* is becoming dangerously bloated and swollen, its editors puffed by *hubris* into thinking that they are the libertarian movement. We have been highly critical of *Reason* in the past, but we must all be thankful that *Reason* and frontlines are there, offering an independent voice and diverse "lines" in the libertarian spectrum. The same is to be said for the resurgent *New Libertarian*.

The suppressed Smith and Elroys letters follow.

From George H. Smith

THE EDITOR
Libertarian Review
1620 Montgomery Street
San Francisco, CA 94111

To The Editor:

Readers of *Libertarian Review* who labor under the misapprehension that its Editor is conducting the nuclear power debate with editorial integrity and responsibility should be made aware of a few points concerning the October, 1979 issue.

First, the nineteen signers of the letter protesting the previous "anti-nuclear" issue of LR were not submitted in the same order as they appear in the letters column, nor were they submitted with affiliations to *Inquiry* and *Reason* attached. Roy Childs, in an effort to concoct a "Reason-Inquiry clique" (which must have the staffs of both magazines in switches), decided to score editorial points by altering the original letter.

As it was my idea to write the letter, my name appeared first, followed by Bill Evers, who had a major hand in its drafting. The other seventeen names were listed in alphabetical order. For Milton Mueller to refer to the "Rothbard-Evers letter," when Rothbard had no knowledge of the letter until after it was written and signed by others, is irresponsible and dishonest.

Secondly, the credits assigned to the first nine signers are deceptive. Murray Rothbard is listed as a Contributing Editor of *Inquiry*, but he is also a Contributing Editor of LR. Why was this omitted, if credits are deemed so essential by Mr. Childs? Another signer, Leonard Liggio, is listed without affiliation, but he is an

Associate Editor of LR. Such credits would have made the nuclear controversy appear to be a split within the ranks of LR itself, rather than a conspiracy of *Inquiry* and *Reason* against LR.

So anxious was Roy Childs to manufacture an *Inquiry* clique, that he falsely lists David Gordon as an Associate Editor of *Inquiry*. At the time the letter was written, and until well after it was received by LR, David Gordon had no affiliation whatever with *Inquiry*. Roy knows this. To make matters worse, although David Gordon presently works on the staff on *Inquiry*, he is not an Associate Editor even now. The title was manufactured to buttress a specious conspiracy theory.

If Roy Childs has a theory about a *Reason-Inquiry* axis, then he has a perfect right to launch his trial balloon in the pages of LR, however harebrained his theory may appear to others. But to manipulate a letter without the permission of its drafters — indeed, in the face of their strong objections — is another matter. Bill Evers and I objected in advance to the manipulation of signatures, but our protest fell on deaf ears. The best we could get was an assurance that a note would follow the letter explaining the editorial change. No such explanation appeared.

Why was Roy Childs so willing to throw editorial fairplay to the wind? In a conversation he made it clear to me, in no uncertain terms, that he considered the letter to be an "Evers plot," and that he was determined to communicate this to the readers of LR. When I pointed out that it was my idea to write the letter in the first place — and even Roy didn't have the nerve to suggest that I was part of an *Inquiry* clique — I was told by the omniscient Editor that I was being "used" by Bill Evers in a nefarious scheme to discredit LR.

No outside help is needed to discredit Roy Childs; he does an admirable job all by himself. The letter signed by nineteen prominent libertarians and the letters by Eric Mack and Walter Block were calm and to the point. They should have been answered in a similar vein, instead of by immature hysterics — e.g., references to "silly claims," "the gang of nineteen" (Childs), "unthinking nuclear reactionaries," and the insulting quip that Bill Evers is a "clone" of Murray Rothbard (Mueller). Then there is the childish ad in the classified section that typifies the intellectual level at which Roy Childs chooses to conduct this debate.

Some of the issues raised in LR concerning nuclear power are significant and need to be considered by libertarians. I disagree with LR's cause, but it is an important one. I only hope that it will find individuals with integrity to lead it.

From Wendy McElroy (Grosscup)

Dear Sir:

In response to a straightforward letter criticizing LR's apparent nuclear energy position, Mr. Childs' unmasks the letter as an "attack" by the "Reason-Inquiry clique" (a fact hitherto unknown to its signatories) and shows up some of the most prominent and scholarly of libertarians for what they really are — "a gang of nineteen". A similar letter from Eric Mack is similarly refuted by pointing to Eric's alleged lack of humor and to his griping attitude. I congratulate Mr. Childs on meeting the nuclear power question head-on with such dignity and such desire for honest debate.

He appeals to the readers of LR to "consider who is at fault: LR for raising such issues so strongly, or the major leaders of the libertarian movement, for not having done so before." Putting aside this strange concept of fault/innocence as a matter of timing, Mr. Childs must know that it is the content and not the strength of his presentation which is in question. The content, then and now, appears to be that nuclear power is so dangerous it should be banned rather than privatized. I say this despite Mr.

(Continued On Page 5)

Nuclear Issue — (Continued From Page 4)

Childs' protest to the contrary, for the protest also seems contrary to facts of the matter.

An unpaid ad on the inside cover of LR July/Aug. pictures a tombstone inscribed "Nuclear power is a terrible way to go", but Mr. Childs protests that this free ad does not argue anything. The same issue contains cartoons highlighting the danger of nuclear power through captions such as "Hurry dear, your soup is getting contaminated." But, he protests, the cartoons are not anti-nuclear per se; moreover, anyone who questions their implications is dismissed as a humorless griper. When you add to this particular issue of LR an article by Milton Mueller, who calls not for denationalizing but for "stopping" nuclear power, an interview with Wilson Clark, a strong anti-nuclear industry politico who advocates an excess profit tax on oil companies to finance solar energy and an article by Patrick Lilly who by implication, suggests banning nuclear energy because of its high risks, it is difficult to accept Mr. Childs' *ad hominem* protest of being misunderstood by the world. It is difficult to accept his statement: "nowhere did we (LR) oppose nuclear power per se."

Much has been made of this phrase "nuclear power per se". The whole of LR seems bewildered as to what it could possibly mean even though its meaning — particularly in the context of the "gang of nineteen" a/k/a "Rothbard-Evers" a/k/a "Reason-Inquiry clique" letter — is quite clear. It means: nuclear energy at the

present level of technology but without government involvement. Of course, to Milton Mueller who clairvoyantly sees no distinction between denationalizing the industry and simply eliminating it, there is no nuclear energy per se and thus no area of discussion. Those of us who cannot predict the course of the free market, to whom it seems at least conceivable that nuclear energy could be privately used and so wish to investigate that possibility, are "unthinking nuclear reactionaries" and need to be considered no further.

I sympathize with Mr. Childs' stated desire for open, honest debate on this subject, although I am struck by the incongruity of this appeal coming, as it does, at the end of an *ad hominem* editorial response. If Mr. Childs sincerely wants an intelligent exchange (similar to that which Patrick Lilly offered), I would suggest: that he deal with the issues as stated and not with personalities or his analysis of motives; that he acknowledge LR's obvious slant on nuclear power; that he abandon the guise of not understanding objections raised; that he clearly answer the question "If the nuclear industry as it technologically exists today were privatized, would you advocate banning it?"; and that he remain consistent?

Some people are so mentally constructed that they cannot refrain from impugning the motives of others in order to compensate for weakness in their own arguments. I prefer not to believe this of LR and I wait for this letter to be answered with the thoughtfulness of which the staff is capable. #

Quebec: Province or Nation?

by Leonard P. Liggio

For the first half of Canadian history, Quebec was Canada. Quebec was founded in the early 1600's at the same time that the English settled at Jamestown and the Dutch at Manhattan. In 1759-60 Quebec was conquered by England, which granted recognition of the customs of the Quebecois. In their satisfaction, the Quebecois declined to join the American Revolution, and were rewarded for their loyalty by having imposed upon them tens of thousands of the Tories who opposed the American Revolution. Since the more reactionary elements in America tended to be Tories, the potential for an enlightened English-Quebecois relationship was not very great.

During the early nineteenth century, the Quebec leaders were increasingly influenced by nationalism and modernism. From 1815, when he became speaker of the Quebec assembly, Louis Joseph Papineau was the leader of the Patriot party. In 1837 Papineau and his party sought to gain Quebec independence by armed action and were defeated. The Patriot party lacked popular rural support in this endeavor due to the dominant role of the Catholic clergy in the villages. The Catholic clergy stood with the English government and was rewarded by that government with a free hand in the running of local affairs. Meanwhile, Quebec and Ontario were united under a single parliament with the aim of the Anglicization of Quebec. This goal was not achieved because, while the rural people were in the hands of the ordinary clergy, the French-educated class was formed by a strongly international higher education system conducted by the Jesuits. Thus, while the Quebecois masses were the most provincial in Canada, the Quebec leadership was the most sophisticated.

In 1867 Canada became a confederation of provinces, and two national political parties emerged. The conservatives, protectionist, anti-American/oriented to England, were rooted in the English Protestant provinces. The Liberals, free traders, not anti-American or oriented to England, had their strongest base in Catholic Quebec. For 32 years the national Liberal leader was Wilfrid Laurier. Laurier's fifteen years as prime minister occurred in the midst of an important conflict over the rights of French parents to have their children instructed in French in provinces other than

Quebec. Teaching in French had been outlawed in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. In 1890 Manitoba outlawed Catholic schools and the teaching of French, in conflict with its own provincial constitution. Laurier insisted on supporting the provincial autonomy of Manitoba, and set the stage for restrictions in what became Alberta and Saskatchewan (reaffirmed in 1905), in Ontario in 1915 and culminating in a Saskatchewan law in prohibiting the teaching of French outside school hours.

An additional area of English-Quebec conflict concerned the rise of English imperialism. The Quebecois have no interest in England's wars, while the English supported very actively England's conquest of the Boer Republics in South Africa. The Canadian government was pressured by England and the English in Canada to develop a national military establishment. Henri Bourassa, grandson of Papineau, and editor of *Le Devoir*, began a strong anti-imperialist and anti-militarist campaign in Quebec. During World War I, he led a major campaign against conscription which, along with the prohibition of French in the schools, led the Quebec assembly to consider withdrawal from the confederation.

In this context it is easy to understand why the Liberals dominated Quebec politics and why the Conservatives represented an almost nonexistent opposition. However, the Liberals' leading role in national politics undermined their support in Quebec and there emerged in the mid-1930's the *Union nationale*. The *Union nationale*, which dominated the Quebec assembly until 1960, represented the rural population and the village clergy. Although encouraging investment and economic development of Quebec's rich resources, the *Union nationale* pursued a highly regressive policy on cultural matters. While articulating the strong Quebecois opposition to conscription and involvement in World War II, it prohibited and repressed new cultural and intellectual directions. As Pierre Lemieux has noted, it was in the context of this anti-cultural regime that modern Quebec intellectuals have developed, and the only alternative many recognized was the association of intellectual freedom and socialist politics.

Leon Dion, in *Nationalismes et Politiques au Quebec* (1975),
(Continued On Page 6)

Province or Nation —

(Continued From Page 5)

emphasizes that Quebec has never experienced the intellectual contributions of laissez-faire individualism. Whenever liberalism is mentioned, it has been in the context of apologies for the status quo. Thus, the intellectuals around *Cite libre*—Trudeau, Pelletier, etc.—looked to the “*dirigiste*” philosophy of French bureaucracy, to be accompanied by cultural freedom. This spirit infused the Liberal party at the point that it reemerged in 1960 to assume leadership in Quebec.

However, this local reemergence followed the huge Liberal losses in the 1958 federal elections. In that year, the conservatives outpolled the Liberals and won 50 of the 75 Quebec seats. In the next federal election, 1962, for the first time a third party made important gains in Quebec. The Social Credit party, which dominated some western provinces, emerged in Quebec as the *Ralliement des Creditistes* under Real Caouette. The Creditistes gained over a quarter of the vote and 25 seats in the federal parliament. Except for its ‘funny money’ plank, Social Credit has been a major conservative force in Canada, combining balanced budgets with cultural repression. Viewing private property and private management as crucial, it opposes centralization, bureaucratization and public ownership. Using television, Caouette was able to mobilize former non-voters and introduce this new element into Quebec politics. Maurice Pinard, *The Rise of a Third Party, A Study in Crisis Politics* (1975).

Meanwhile, the Liberals in Quebec, after 1960, embarked on a “Quiet Revolution” in an attempt to modernize and develop the economy. Marcel Rioux, in *Quebec in Question* (1978) calls this a mental liberation.

“What was this quiet revolution? Who but Quebecers could dream up such an idea, or carry on such a thing as a quiet revolution? The concept unites the hot with the cold and makes them work together. Our people, in fact, have a “hot” culture, i.e., a Dionysian culture that has been repressed, historically, by the domination of rigid influences (the French metropolis, the British, the Americans, Jansenism and religious rigidity). How strange, then, after centuries of subjection, that enough “hot” elements have survived to make us refer to a simple reform movement and a climate of change as “revolutionary.” . . . The alternation between hot and cool plays an important part in the collective psychology of Quebecers, not only because of the climate but because of two cultures of which one is renowned for its cool, understated character.

Marshall McLuhan believes that Quebec has jumped from the seventeenth to the twentieth century while the English are still living in the nineteenth century.

The leading figure in the Liberals’ Quebec cabinet was the former TV personality, Rene Levesque. When the Liberals regained power on the federal level, Trudeau and others joined the federal cabinet, while the Liberals in Quebec lost control to the *Union nationale*. Under its auspices, President Charles de Gaulle visited Quebec and called for an independent Quebec. Rene Levesque was ousted by the Liberals from party membership to satisfy Trudeau and the Liberal cabinet. Levesque in 1968 formed a new party, The *parti quebecois*. The *parti quebecois* was fundamentally an ideological party. Its advantage was a nationalism that had deep roots in Quebec and had now come to the fore, and an economic program based on the tradition of the two major parties, planning and state investment. In the 1970 Quebec elections, the PQ received 23% of the vote and seven seats in the assembly to the Liberals 42% and seventy-two seats; *Union nationale* 20% and seventeen seats, and the Creditistes 11% and twelve seats.

The crisis of October, 1970, when a secret nationalist group

kidnapped a cabinet member and businessman, led to the federal government’s imposing martial law. The general reaction of the Quebec population was that such an extreme overreaction and denial of civil liberties would be directed at Quebecois only — because of their being viewed as second class citizens of Canada. The *parti quebecois* was able to gain strong Quebec-wide support for its vigorous condemnation of the government’s repression while emphasizing the electoral road to sovereignty-association: Quebec sovereignty in economic association with the other parts of Canada with common currency and trade policies. (Andre Bernard, *What Does Quebec Want?* (1978)

In answer to the left’s charge that the PQ was only a more modern version of the Liberals, the PQ leaders adopted a traditional political position in Quebec — attack both socialism and capitalism: “It is obvious that doctrinaire socialism and suffocating state hegemony have not managed, any more than grandfather’s capitalism in its various modes, primitive or refurbished as practised up to now, to bring into being a paradise on earth or even decently to eliminate the most unjust abuses and inequalities.” As John Saywell, *The Rise of the Parti Quebecois, 1967-1976* (1977), shows, the 1973 provincial elections confirmed the PQ as the alternative party in Quebec. While the Liberals swept to almost ninety percent dominance in Assembly seats, the PQ gained more than 30% of the popular vote, while the Creditistes received less than ten and the *Union nationale* less than 5%.

In 1974 the PQ leadership established a daily newspaper in Montreal, *Le Jour*. It gained a circulation of thirty thousand, the same as the influential *Le Devoir*, at the cost of losing about \$45,000 per month.

By 1976, the value of the daily paper became evident, as the Liberal government faced a major crisis over language education in the schools. In 1968, the school board of the heavily Italian suburb of St. Leonard-de-Port-Maurice decided that all classes in first grade be taught in French. The *Union nationale* and the liberal governments attempted to foster French instruction without violating the rights of parents to determine the education of their children. Fuller understanding of the national differences in Canada is possible only by recognizing that the English and the French populations constitute merely two-thirds of the population and that the other one-third is roughly divided between East European descendants in the English provinces (Polish, Ukrainian and Hungarian) similar to their cousins along the U. S. Great Lakes, and the mainly Italian (but including Portuguese and Greek) settlers in Montreal (similar to Atlantic Seaboard cities in the U. S.) The Italian Canadians of Montreal recognize the English language standards imposed by the large corporations and banks in the city and necessarily opt to educate their children in the language of the mobile sector of the economy. Thus, a perceptive cartoon showed a Colonel Blimp and a Union Jack leading the Italian Canadian-based constituency for English against the French who are told that if the French had given them good reason to be with them they would have won the issue.

By 1976, the Liberals attempted to impose French on the Italian Canadians. In protest, the principals of the English language schools in St. Leonard admitted thousands of students that the government had decided must attend French schools. Parents in other areas refused to accept government decisions and thousands of Italian Canadian parents demonstrated against the Liberal Quebec prime minister. Meanwhile, Trudeau’s federal government attempts to impose bilingualism on the rest of Canada received new rebuffs. Non-Quebec liberals revolted and Quebec liberals resigned from the cabinet protesting the temporizing. But these notables’ participation in the November 1976 Liberal reelection only contributed to the disaster. The Liberals lost the support of the Italian-Canadians only receiving 34% and 26 seats. The *Union nationale*, gaining the former Liberal voters, received 18% and eleven seats. The Creditistes lost half their vote, receiving less than

(Continued On Page 8)

Canadian Separatism: the Second Front

by Samuel E. Konkin II

Even the most anti-political libertarian has to admit elections do change things, even if only because they are believed and acted upon. The most striking example in the democratic enclave of Western society may well be the two Canadian federal elections within the past year. And the most recent results could well portend strong gains for objective libertarianism, grist for the activist's mill.

After 16 long years of Liberal (pro-U.S. centrist party, like unto U.S. Democrats with right and left wings) Party rule, eleven of them under the Gallic Kennedy-type, Pierre Eliot Trudeau, the West, Maritimes, and English-speaking East-Central of Canada voted for Alberta's Joe Clark and his Progressive Conservative (mildly anti-U.S., centre-right Party, like unto mix of British Tories and French Gaullists with a smattering of American Liberal Republicanism) Party. Since Quebec stubbornly supported Trudeau's Liberals and the Social Credit (pro-U.S., radical right party, similar to a mixture of Birchers and populists), Clark could only muster a minority government, though only four seats short of a majority. The Creditistes had five seats, well, six originally until one was bought out by the Tories (as the P.C.'s are known, the Liberals are called "Grits"), and the assumption by most pundits in the Canadian press was that fiery Fabien Roy and his Creditistes would prop up their ideological near-kinsmen.

Such was not to be. Although Trudeau was berated for his arrogance, it was nothing compared to that displayed by Clark & Co. to the Social Credit Party.* After dragging out the calling of Parliament after the election to a record four months, Clark presented a budget calling for higher taxes and more controls and assumed the free-enterprise Creditistes had nowhere else to go and support him. In the greatest act of political moral suicide since Gilles Gregoire blocked the House of Commons single-handedly to begin Social-Credit Separatism and paralyse the federal government, the Creditistes refused to vote for the budget. The Liberals, smelling blood, swam back from their scattered constituencies, parties (cocktail variety), and homes to join the social-democrat New Democrat Party (NDP) into narrowly defeating the budget. In any heir of British Parliamentary tradition, that constitutes the strongest possible vote of non-confidence, and Clark promptly resigned, calling for an election.

The winter election, coming just eight months after the last one, was manifestly unpopular, and Clark's 18-cent gas tax even less so. The Liberals regained seats in the Maritimes and Ontario, and wiped out the Creditistes in Quebec (so much for the rewards of morality in the political arena); the NDP further cut into the Tories in the West. Worst of all, from a libertarian political viewpoint, Trudeau won an absolute majority of seats and remains safe from non-confidence motions (and elections) for the full five-year maximum term. Ironically, Trudeau was about to step down in disgrace when the election suddenly happened, and the Liberals had been gearing up for the bruising leadership convention. *Maclean's* (the *Time-Newsweek* of Canada) called his return on the cover of its election issue: "The Second Coming."

From a Fabian political libertarian viewpoint, the February 1980 ("Valentine's Day") election could be considered a gain for statism, with the loss of the proto-libertarian Creditistes and a majority government. Furthermore, Trudeau is the champion of strong, central government, and will be using his prime ministry to battle Rene Levesque's Parti Quebec (commonly called pequistes) in the coming referendum on "Quebec sovereignty." This concept, by the way, requires some twisted unraveling, thanks to Levesque's continued weaseling and selling out of Separatism, but it basically allows the voters of Quebec to vote for "separatism" without actually getting it; it's taken as a bargaining ploy by most of the media pundits to give Levesque a stronger hand in bargaining with Trudeau for Provincial vs federal rights and powers.

Before dealing with this crucial libertarian issue of separatism, or as the Yanks (especially the Yankees from Mississippi) like to call the concept, secession, there was one direct blow for libertarianism in the election. No, the very conservative Canadian Libertarian Party (overwhelmingly minarchist, anti-communist in foreign policy, and worst of all, anti-separatist because the strongest faction in the PQ is socialist-liberal) got not only zero seats, but failed to get any significant mention in the press. At least the CBC election coverage mentioned only the four parties above and "Others;" *Maclean's* also made no mention of the CLP before, during or after the election. Ah, but the Rhinoceros Party, a Canadian variant of the "Nobody for President" campaign, received mention on the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned and largest TV network) and fully a third-page in *Maclean's*. More importantly, quoting from *Maclean's*, "While all other parties watched their slim Quebec footholds trampled under the Liberal thumping, the Rhinoceroses saw their total vote almost double to 110,000. "But we weren't worried," confides Rhino heavy Charles McKenzie. "We took the precaution of doubling our number of candidates." One bitter Quebec Tory candidate, Clark aide Andre Payette, appearing on the provincially-owned TV network, Radio-Quebec, after its election centre had been invaded by a Rhino band, confessed to having alot in common with Rhino star Sonia (Tickle) Cote — such as roughly the same number of votes. Sonia, perched beside him in her clown outfit and hanging over her accordion, could only look up and blush coyly from under her single forehorn.

"Meanwhile, back at their east-end Montreal rent-a-hall, the Rhino machine — basically a hippy revival, complete with construction boots, giggling kids and barking dogs — danced drunkenly around a giant TV screen, celebrating the 1,000-plus votes won by a horned cousin in Calgary."

Calgary, brings us to the point of this article. The second largest and second most conservative city in Alberta (and the most Americanized, with its own John Birch Society chapter) after Edmonton, the capital, is probably the most libertarian in the sense most Americans would think of it, with a thriving anti-tax movement winning plebiscites just like Howard Jarvis. All Alberta, like British Columbia and Saskatchewan on either side, voted in zero Liberals, and while BC and Saskatchewan voted in many NDPs, Alberta went solidly PC, showing those Eastern bandits what it thought of those who would steal its precious oil. Calgary also is the home of provincial premier Peter Lougheed, himself a Kennedy-esque type who ousted the Alberta Social Credit Party in 1972 and remained in power since. Lougheed has bloated the Alberta Heritage Fund with oil royalties to the point where he could probably buy the entire Canadian army should it ever be used to invade a seceding Alberta. Would ultra-right, tax-free, regulation-loose, anti-union Alberta secede? Undoubtedly the most bigoted anti-frog (French equivalent of "nigger") area in Canada, would Alberta go separatist? *Maclean's* seems to think so.

Back when this author was the firebrand Social Credit leader at the University of Alberta (1964-1968), he had to look long and hard for another secessionist, even those who liked the idea but not the French Canadians. Then a report about five years ago mentioned that an Alberta separatist party had been started and 500 members had joined. *Maclean's* reported, in the issue after its election special, "For Albertans, it was back to the barricades, back to their traditional sense of grievance and isolation. Having felt themselves a part of the federal government for the first time since John Diefenbaker's days, the shock of being on the outside looking east again have shoved some toward separatism. At the Canada West Foundation, the think tank devoted to forging a new Canada

(Continued On Page 8)

Second Front —

(Continued From Page 7)

within Confederation, the telephone was ringing at 8:15 the morning after. 'I picked it up and someone said, "I feel totally disenfranchised today," ' says administration officer Nancy Sanford. 'Every five minutes since, there has been another call. A quarter of the callers are looking for a separatist party, which we aren't. The rest are saying they feel totally sick and they want to voice their frustration to someone.' "

How serious is this possibility of Alberta separatism taken? Of course, short of shipping oil by pipeline to Montana, land-locked Alberta has the Pacific coastline — and an equally strong separatist pull. Again, from *Maclean's*, "BC IN POLITICAL ISOLATION. And it is Perrault (Liberal senator from BC) who is reminding Trudeau of events such as last week's radio survey that showed six out of every 10 callers in favor of separation from the rest of Canada. "But usually it's just the dissidents who call these shows," he philosophizes."

The quote comes from the lead article in *Maclean's*, along with a cartoon showing Trudeau facing a battery of microphones, with an array of knives, arrows, tomahawks and darts protruding from his backside "... and I am reminded that while we face the threat of separatism in Quebec, we must not turn our backs on the alienation of the West ..." Yes, the threat of Western separatism is taken seriously.

Even though the other two Western Provinces elected only two Liberals total (from urban Manitoba) giving an Alberta - British Columbia "Rocky Mountain Republic" a nice buffer zone, the battle will be fought economically, not on the battlefield. The fact that Alberta is rich and economically free, and the rest of Canada is suffering under austerity budgets and heavy government regulation and taxation is the key. And it's also the problem because there is no firm ideological leadership in the West. Lougheed is simply a conservative who is following the political dynamics of the situation which leads him to the coming confrontation with Ottawa (the federal capital) over oil controls. But he's not fighting for Alberta non-regulation of petroleum vs federal regulation, rather they're arguing how the plunder should be divided. This could kill any principled rally against the central state.

And, finally, the link between Quebec and Western separatists must be established. Again, Lougheed is not the medium, a symbol of a (relatively sophisticated, to be sure) anti-frog mentality, and not likely to win Levesque's support. The old Social Credit Party, strong precisely in Alberta, Quebec (and still the provincial government in British Columbia) would have been the perfect

vehicle — but it's at a new low in strength, most of its old supporters supporting the pequistes in Quebec and the PCs in Alberta.

The potential for libertarian organization is obvious. ‡

*Apologies for name-dropping, but Prime Minister Clark was a PM at the University of Alberta when this writer, in his pre-libertarian days, sat as Social Credit whip in model parliament and remembered his arrogance well toward the SC Party, then the dominant one in Alberta politics.

Province or Nation —

(Continued From Page 6)

5% and gaining one seat only — the Creditiste accusations that all their opponenets were godless communists hardly helped. Some of their vote went to the Popular National Party which opposed "statism, syndicalism and separatism" and advocated freeing the individual of heavy taxes, the state of heavy budgets and the economy of strikes. This preaching of economic liberalism had no traditions in Quebec on which to place a foundation.

The PQ received over 41% of the vote and seventy-one seats in the assembly; Levesque became the Quebec premier. He immediately went to New York to indicate to investors that he would pursue financial orthodoxy. His first two budgets were reductions on a significant scale. The PQ has been stronger in resisting subsidies in order to create an improved investment climate. In addition, Quebec, being blessed with many natural resources, is a major economic growth area. This growth will be fueled by Quebec's massive hydroelectric capacity. Quebec is the Saudi Arabia of electricity. By 1985 Quebec will add another 18 million kilowatts with an additional potential of 25 million. Quebec Hydro sells power to the Power Authority of New York State, and since Quebec's peak demands are in winter, it frees electricity for the summer in New York almost 1400 miles from the James Bay complex.

A major contribution to the PQ victory in 1976 was the editorials in *Le Devoir* of Claude Ryan. Ryan had been consistently critical of the failures of the federal and provincial cabinets to address the fundamental realities of Quebecois demands. He noted that each time the nationalists failed to win an election, the older parties put the crucial issues on the shelf. Ryan held the PQ defeat of the Liberals would force the Liberals to review their leadership and their goals. The PQ defeat of the Liberals did force a review and in 1978 Claude Ryan became the leader of the Liberals. It is likely that he will present a clear alternative to the PQ at the next elections, within the context of their common acceptance of the realities of Quebec nationalism. ‡

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