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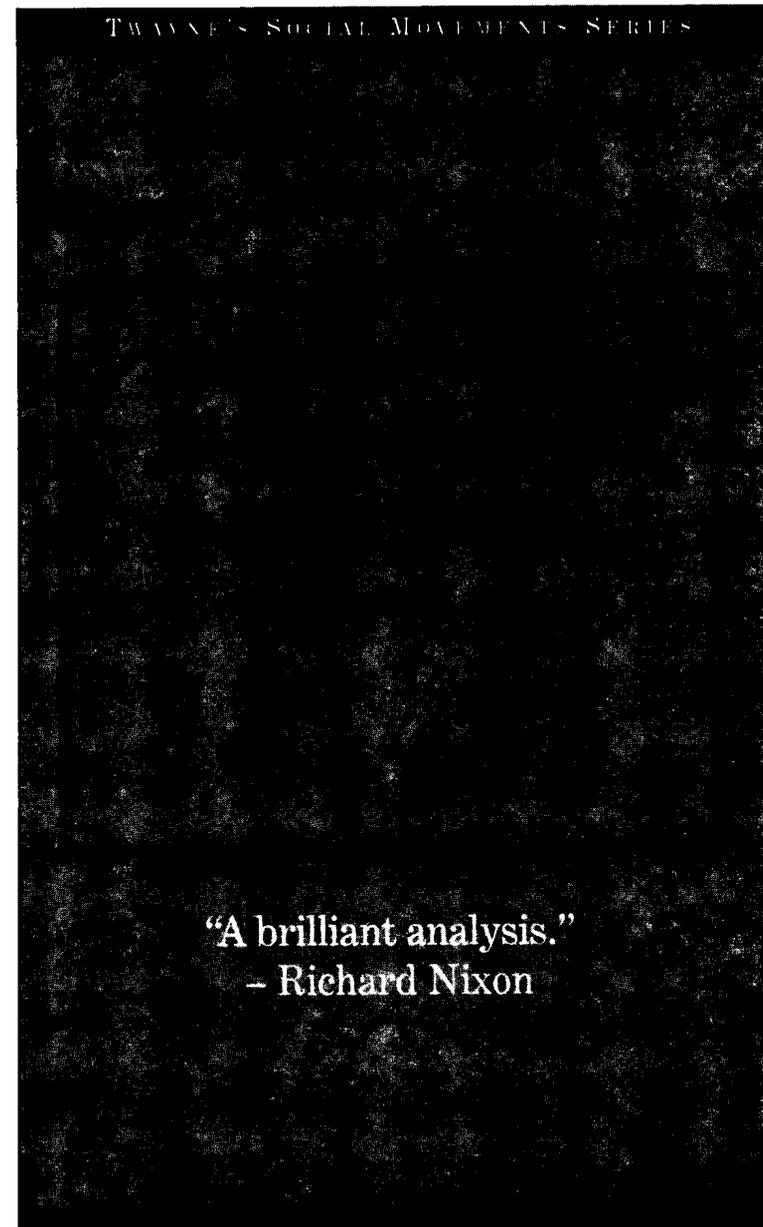
Let's break through the blackout! ■

Self-Therapy and the Clintonian State

by M.N.R.

Professor Paul Gottfried has perceptively labeled the current welfare state as the "therapeutic state", and indeed "therapists" and sensitivity trainers are everywhere, using money looted from taxpayers and the bludgeon of government power to push people around, for "their own (therapeutic) good," of course. But a vital aspect of this therapeutic state has been overlooked: more and more, government policies are frankly designed, not to achieve their ostensible goals, but to make their proponents, in the current rebarbative phrase, "feel good about themselves." The point of more and more policies is to make their advocates feel better.

This has become starkly clear in the debates (such as they are)



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about American intervention in Bosnia. Patiently and rationally, the opponents, ranging from ideologists to experienced observers to military men, point out that American military intervention there simply cannot work: cannot accomplish the goals sought, whether these (incompatible) goals be enforcing Peace in the region, "guaranteeing the territorial integrity" of the (non-existent) nation of

Bosnia, or rolling back and punishing Serbian "aggression." The proponents have now come to concede the point: intervention simply won't work. But their conclusion is not to abandon the futile and costly project; no, they invariably respond: "the situation is so bad that 'we' have to do something."

Take the palpably idiotic Clintonian policy of dropping heavy mounds of food to reach

beleaguered Muslims in eastern Bosnia. The only way to make sure that the food got to the targets would be to fly at low, 100-foot levels and in the daylight. But that, the Clintonians realized, might well lead to the shooting down of American planes and the death of American fighting men. So, instead, the Clinton Administration dropped the mounds of food flying at 10,000 feet and at night. Well, bully: no American deaths, but who got the food? (Another ludicrous aspect of the policy was preceding the food by dropping millions of leaflets to warn the inhabitants that the food was going to be dropped, so they could stay out of the way and not get bopped on the head by tons of food-mounds.)

It was like a Ritz Brothers routine. What happened was predictable; the food, where it was not totally lost, mostly went to the enterprising Serbs (who also were showered by their own mounds of food so that the U.S. could claim an "evenhanded" policy in the region. This at the same time that the U.S. is trying to enforce an embargo in and out of Serbia!) So what was the reaction of the Clinton Administration to this incredible floperoo? No, you see, the policy was a *success*, because we *did something*,

even though it didn't accomplish its goal.

So this shows that the *real* goal of the policy was to make the Clintonians, and the host of other interventionists, feel good; they *did* something (at *our* expense, of course). And that's the real object, isn't it? Intervention for the sake of intervention, of keeping intervention going. In this way, the serpent's philosophy of Pragmatism, which, in the early twentieth century replaced devotion to truth and principle by the slogan: "truth is whatever works," has now reached its dead end. What "works," that is, what attains your goals,

now turns out to be wallowing in your own empty rhetoric, to act for the sake of action. Pragmatism degenerates into narcissism.

It's the same for all the other Clintonian interventions: Somalia is still torn with fighting, and is worse after our food and our military intervention? So what? We did something; we feel good about it.

Clinton's alleged program to cure the deficit is a sham and a fraud, and will actually increase it? So what: *at least we tried*.

The Clintonomic plan, too, is schizoid and senseless. Taxes are to be increased by a huge amount, "in order to cure the

deficit"; it is assumed that the tax increases will have no bad effects on the economy, on production, on savings, on prosperity. On the other hand, government spending is to increase a great deal, in order (a) to "stimulate" the economy; and (b) to constitute "investment" for the future; these increases in spending are assumed to have no effect on raising the deficit. This is looney-tunes economics, Alice-in-Wonderland economics, Orwellian double-think economics. The Clinton plan only makes sense if we realize that the goal is rhetoric, hype, Dr. Feelgood: "We" did something to stimulate the economy, we helped cure the deficit; we provided "investment," and so on.

Rush Limbaugh truly calls Clintonian policy "the triumph of symbolism over substance." On one level, what we are confronting here is the philosophy and the policies of the looney-bin; the inmates have indeed taken over the asylum.

But if this be madness, methinks there is method in it. Because the red thread that makes sense out of all the craziness, that shines through every policy, domestic and foreign, is that at every single step of the way: increased spending, increased taxes, increased intervention, multicultural sensitivity training, at every step the power of the State apparatus increases significantly at the expense of private citizens. What we are seeing here is a repetition of the Roosevelt New Deal on a more advanced level: another Great Leap Forward of State power, a Great Leap Forward in the

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direction of the ultimate goal: Socialism. A London paper recently reported that Boris Yeltsin came away from last year's June summit with George Bush disliking Clinton: the reason, he told his aides, is that Clinton is a "socialist." Well, if anyone is able to spot a socialist, it should be Yeltsin. It takes a former one to know one.

Ludwig von Mises spent his life demonstrating that statist policies do not work, that they are counterproductive, that they cannot reach their goals. Our modern-day socialists have, almost openly, conceded this point. But they press on: Why? Because, when you strip away all the phony rhetoric and the symbolism, and all the rest, as the Chief Torturer O'Brien informed Winston Smith in Orwell's *1984*, the goal is Power. Power for the elite, power for the rulers and their clientele, power for the "therapists," power for its own sake and for the perks it brings. The "philosophy," the rationale, has more and more been revealed to be a sham, but the power drive of these Social Democrat, Marxist-Mensheviks, carries on.

Perhaps the most disheartening aspect of the Age of Clinton is the feebleness of the Republican and "conservative" opposition. A few nitpicks here and there, but in grim contrast to the militant Old Right reaction against the Franklin Roosevelt Great Leap Forward, there is almost no determined, consistent, let alone properly bitter and militant, opposition. Even those mildly critical of Billary praise his "boldness," his "political savvy," his "qualities of

leadership." They could have said the exact same thing about Stalin. The sellout of the Chamber of Commerce and various big business groups to Clintonian statism is lamentable but predictable; after all, when moral principles fade away, businessmen tend to see little or no difference between making profits by serving the consumer, or by leeching the government for contracts, subsidies, or monopoly privileges. But ideologues are supposed to be made of sterner stuff, men of principle. Instead, the response of all too many conservative leaders and think tanks is to crawl on their knees to Power: "Please Mr. Clinton, follow your own wise instincts, reject the pleas of special interests, and adopt my plan to . . ."

It is an odious and repellent spectacle. The one note of cheer in the current miasma is that the *Verdamte* neocons, having assured everyone that Clinton is really a "moderate" and a "centrist," and having worked hard for his election, now find that they are out in the cold, without the patronage goodies they had been promised. Ben Wattenberg and Bill Safire are even expressing regrets for their support for Slick Willie. Well tough, guys, no group of charlatans deserved their treatment more. It's not of course that the neocons will learn from this experience and become better and more principled people; they are too far gone for that. It's just that it's one of the few political pleasures we have left to see these bozos get kicked in the teeth.

What makes Rush Limbaugh such a fascinating phenomenon is that, almost alone, in his re-

markably successful radio program and now TV show (ably produced by the famed Roger Ailes), and in his bestselling book and newsletter, *Limbaugh*, day in and day out, with bitter mockery and humor, lashes out at Clinton and all his works. A major reason for his success is that he never lets up in attack, attack, attack at Clinton and Clintonia. Not "please Mr. Clinton, adopt my plan," but "Day 62 of America Held Hostage," of the "Raw Deal." Limbaugh is scarcely a deep thinker, and in his actual views, he never rises above the level of Official Conservative. But at least he has the proper attitude of bitterness and hatred toward Clinton and his Administration. Why is he virtually the only one? One would think that, if only for reasons of opportunism, that other conservatives seeing his success, would leap in to adopt the same hard-hitting, irreverent stance. With a thousand Limbaughs, we could Take Back America.

There is only one hope for blocking, if not reversing, Clinton's Great Leap Forward into socialism: unremitting, consistent, bitter attack, on the details, on the personnel, on the philosophy. Scorn and obloquy must be heaped upon every aspect of this Administration. Nothing less will save us. ■

Paleolib Victory In Michigan!

by M.N.R.

The leading paleolibertarian politician in the country is young Gregory Kaza, freshman