

read us. Already, this publication is the talk of the movement. It will continue to be.

-M.N.R.,L.H.R., Jr.

## Farewell Speeches to the Alabama LP

The Alabama Libertarian Party held a large-scale convention in Birmingham on February 10, featuring a luncheon address by Lew Rockwell on "What's Wrong with the Libertarian Party," and a talk soon after by myself on "The Libertarian Movement in the '90s," capped by an evening banquet talk by Bob Poole on "Privatizing Airports." Approximately one hundred people attended—a record for the Alabama LP—obviously attracted by the program. The gathering also included many leaders of the neighboring Georgia party. Indeed, the Alabama party also used the occasion to hold a meeting of southeastern state chairs.

Lew Rockwell was invited because of his striking article on "The Case for Paleolibertarianism," *Liberty* (January), by far the most controversial article that *Liberty* has ever published. Also, Rockwell's announced resignation from the LP had been mentioned (albeit in incredibly garbled form) in the December *LP News*.

My own similar stance, I thought, had been made clear, if not by my seconding talk for Matt Monroe at the national conven-

tion at Philadelphia, then at least by my fiery denunciation of the LP in "The Revenge of the *Luftmenschen*: Debacle at Philadelphia," in what unfortunately turned out to be the final issue of *American Libertarian* (September). Furthermore, the Alabama LP leadership made clear their solid agreement with Rockwell's article, their disaffection having been registered long ago in refusing to join any LP region, thereby avoiding representation on the National Committee.

Worried about what we were going to say, Ron Crickenberger, newly elected NatCom representative from the South (Region 4), requested that he be allowed to make a brief comment after our talks. All in all, this was big stuff, far more significant than a run-of-the-mill state convention.

Although allegedly sympathetic to the Rockwell-Rothbard message, the assembled Alabama and Georgia party stalwarts apparently got a lot more than they had bargained for. For Rockwell decided to get down to cases, to cut beneath the paleo-nihilo generalities, and to tell the assemblage, in concrete detail, what precisely was wrong with the national Libertarian Party.

Even though he went out of his way to exempt the assembled Alabama and Georgia party people from his strictures, the gathering reacted in shock and horror anyway. For Rockwell had named names, pricking the inflated balloons of the dearly beloved leaders who infest the Libertarian Party like the leeches and barnacles that they are. In the question period, Lew was accused at one and the same time of being "too general," and also "too specific", i.e., "name-calling." One woman, in tears, accused Lew of destroying her life and her values.

In my own talk, I exhorted the assemblage not to react to Lew by "shooting the messenger"—a time-honored practice of rulers to whom the messenger brings bad news. Not only did the gathering not heed my advice, but I am afraid that very few, if any, of them understood the allusion. When asked by one of the audience why Lew had to disclose his hard-hitting message in this particular forum, I replied that there is virtually nowhere else to make these disclosures: certainly not in *LP News* or *Liberty*, and alas no longer in *American Libertarian*. (Now, of course, there is the *RRR*.)

We are dealing here, not only in the Libertarian Party as a whole, but, sad to relate, even in the dissident state parties, not with a group of rational people but with virtually a religious cult. It was particularly disheartening to those of us associated with *American Libertarian* that the only people who seemed to be affected by our detailed revelation of chicanery in the LP were the guilty parties themselves, who squeaked to the high heavens, and tried their best to have our critical articles suppressed.

The other folks, the ones being fleeced, the ones that we were trying to reach with our message, either expressed no interest whatever, or denounced us as "negative," "divisive," etc. The woman who accused Lew of destroying her life and values was only an extreme version of the general reaction: why is Rockwell imposing such a "downer" on us when we came here to be inspired?

The downer, unfortunately, is the messenger conveying the truth. Indeed, the reaction of LPers to the news and messages deliv-

ered time and again by Rockwell, Mike Holmes, Alan Lindsay, myself, and others is very much like the responses of the deluded cult-followers of Jim and Tammy Bakker, or of Jimmy Swaggart. Not quite as hopped up, perhaps, but all in all disturbingly much the same.

Those members who don't mind being fleeced, those who join the Libertarian Party for some kind of psychic therapy, those who embrace the Party as a cult of losers, those who constitute what an old friend of mine once called "the nation's biggest outpatient clinic," this overwhelming majority of members are welcome to the LP. They can have it. As for Lew Rockwell and myself, we're cutting out.

My own talk, by the way, and oddly enough, was received with warmth and enthusiasm. Even though I tried to make clear my agreement with Lew, I suppose it was the old story of the bad cop-good cop. After Lew's figurative thwacking of the assembled gathering with a two-by-four, anything else would have been received as a port in the storm.

I set the current scene in historical perspective, and pointed out the urgent need for profound

rethinking of strategies, stances and tactics, by conservatives and libertarians. With the Cold War over, there is great opportunity for alliances with the paleo-conservatives. First, on a non-interventionist foreign policy on which both groups agree; and second, on "social issues" on which Leftists have already assumed the high moral ground, and which will be the key interventionist issues of the 90s: environmentalism and holding animals, insects, plants, rocks, and blue water higher than man; egalitarianism and special privileges forever for Accredited Victims; and

paternalistic efforts to outlaw everything not certifiably good for you: drugs, alcohol, smoking, and what have you.

In the question period, I was asked by an Alabama LP stalwart whether I was opposed to an effort by them and others (there were certainly glimmerings of such an attitude in the Georgia Party) to organize and take

back the national LP from its misleaders. I replied that I was all for it and wished such efforts well, but that I personally had been fighting these people in the LP for seventeen years, and that I had had it. Up to here. In the German phrase, *ohne mich* (without me, fellas).

A fitting coda to the afternoon came in the reply by Ron Crickenberger. Supposed to talk for a minute or two, he rambled on for about twenty minutes, and his persona

and his talk constituted an unwitting vindication of the Rockwell thesis.

First, young Crickenberger appeared, much to the displeasure of the organizers, in jeans, and other raffish garb, topped by a gold chain around his neck featuring a gold dollar sign. In addition to the expected pap about how the LP is in great shape and getting better, he noted that NatCom meetings have been harmonious since our dissident faction had left the scene (then inconsistently called upon us to stop being "sore losers" and rejoin the fold).

In his euphoria, Crickenberger, new to the NatCom scene, should have waited a few months to make such a pronouncement. Wait, for example, till the honeymoon of the new regime is over, and the money starts running out. Crickenberger did admit that Lew seemed to be right on one point: he is worried about the lack of activity on the vital ballot access front. Hah! To echo President Ronnie: He ain't seen nothin' yet!

But the startling point—the dramatic vindication of the Rockwellian analysis—came at the beginning of Crickenberger's talk, when he averred, very much in the spirit of a Salvation Army or Pentecostal meeting, that "libertarianism (had) saved my life." It appears that Crickenberger "is" a kleptomaniac, that he used to be a junkie and a cat burglar, and the assembled Alabama bourgeoisie gaped in astonishment as Crickenberger detailed how he used to con people into setting themselves up for stealing their TVs and to her valuables.

Then, announced Crickenberger, he read *Atlas Shrugged*, discovered the non-aggression

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axiom, and came to realize, as a result, that he was hurting others as well as himself by being a junkie-thief. Hence, his rise to his present eminence. Crickenberger may have the distinction of being the only person ever converted to altruism by *Atlas Shrugged!* How come he didn't realize before that this theft was hurting his victims? Who knows? Crickenberger himself doesn't seem to know, claiming that if he understood the precise process by which libertarianism converted him out of his life of crime he could package it and "end the crime problem" in the world. All we needed were cries of "Amen, brother" and other pentecostal demonstration, but fortunately the Alabama Party was not ready for that.

After contemplating this performance by one of our distinguished NatCom members and defenders of the LP faith, is it any wonder that the middle class, the working class, or, indeed any sane people are repelled by the Libertarian Party? Is it any wonder that sensible members are heading for the exit?

-M.N.R.

## The Post-Cold War World

### I. Whither U.S. Foreign Policy

With the collapse of Communist rule in Eastern Europe, and of Soviet domination of its former satellites, whatever Russian threat that may have existed is now over. The Brezhnev Doctrine, under which Russia used force to prop

up Communist rule in the "socialist bloc," has been replaced by the charmingly named "Sinatra Doctrine," where every country can go its own way. The Cold War is therefore finished, and every intelligent person, wherever he stands in the political spectrum, acknowledges this fact.

But if the Cold War died in the Communist collapse of 1989, what can the ruling conservative-liberal Establishment come up with to justify the policy of massive intervention by the U.S. everywhere on the globe? In short, what cloak can the Establishment now find to mask and vindicate the continuance of U.S. imperialism? With their perks and their power at stake, the Court apologists for imperialism have been quick to offer excuses and alternatives, even if they don't always hang together. Perhaps the feeling is that one of them may stick.

The argument for imperialism has always been two-edged, what the great Old Rightist Garet Garrett called (in his classic *The People's Pottage*) "a complex of fear and vaunting." Fear means alleged threats to American interests and the American people. To replace the Soviet-international Communist threat, three candidates have been offered by various Establishment pundits.

One is "international narco-terrorism." As long as the drug hysteria holds up, this menace is useful in justifying any and all invasions of Third World countries, since there

are usually drugs grown and traded somewhere in each of these nations. The phrase is useful, too, since it combines fear of dark,

bearded Terrorists (remember the non-existent "Libyan hit men" of a decade ago, allegedly in the U.S. to get Reagan?), with the drug menace. It is doubtful, however, that narco-terrorism can justify all those super-expensive

missiles and nuclear weaponry, since one hopes, at least, that the U.S. government is not contemplating H-bombing Colombia or Peru out of existence.

Second, a threat that loomed no more than one day after the wonderful demise of the Berlin Wall, is the pending reunification of East and West Germany. Since there is no ethnic or national "East Germany," the disappearance of a Communist East Germany would mean there is little reason for the two parts of Germany not to become one nation. And so, Establishment pundits trotted out the old slogans, as if the last half-century of German history had never existed.

Hitler! was brandished once more, with scarce any realization that Hitler only ruled Germany for twelve years, whereas a full forty-five years have passed since his demise. But not only Hitler. For article after article raised the spectre of Germany's having assaulted the rest of Europe twice in one

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