

The "conservative" New Jersey Young Americans for Freedom held its 1970 state convention on April 26 and 27 before a sparse gathering of 42 people in Princeton. The group who was composed of mostly high school students and people rapidly approaching Yaf's age limit of forty went through the ritual of selecting outgoing chairman Joe Leo's handpicked choice of Bill Kanninen as the new state boss over the weak challenge of Rutgers-New Brunswick chairman Jack Molnar (34-8). This race was devoid of the ideological conflict between libertarians and traditionalists which split this organization wide open nine months ago in St. Louis, due to the fact, that there was only one libertarian delegate. Last summer, NJYAF under the leadership of William Chaisson and Ralph Fucetola was a hotbed of libertarian thought but since the 1969 national convention both men along with their executive board were ousted in a coup d'état masterminded by Czar Leo.

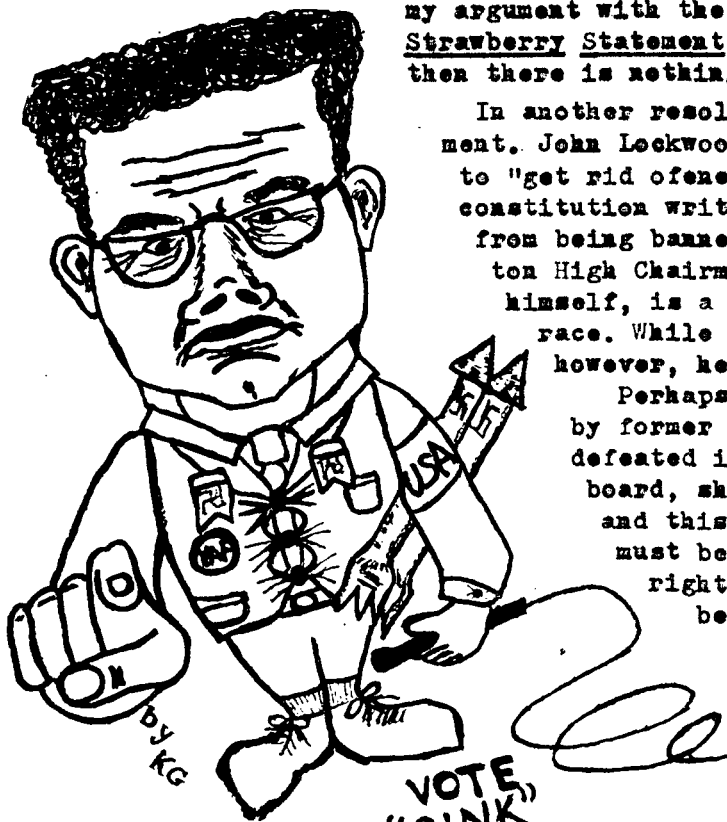
There were some libertarian observers present with their black flags and they were allowed to speak on resolutions and two were nominated for office. This writer spoke in a lost cause against a proposal to impeach the radical civil libertarian, William O. Douglas from the supreme court. I pointed to the fact that Yaf was running contrary to freedom when it endorses the effort of ousting a man whose life has been devoted to protecting the rights of the minority against the arbitrary power of the police. Colin Claxon who was nominated and overwhelmingly defeated for a seat on the state board defended the Black Panthers pointing to the constant police oppression blacks must live under. In a short speech to the gathering, Claxon called upon Yaf to support the black and Puerto Rican communities in their struggle for self determination.

But the real surprise of this event was the rejection of a resolution calling for a volunteer military. The supporters of the draft cited the threat of a professional army to the nation, the anti-military attitude present among the youth and the monolithic communist movement to disavow the thirteenth amendment to their holy constitution. Joe Leo concluded the case for slavery by implying the young opponents of the draft were cowards. The speakers in favor of the volunteer military were many including myself who stated that the threat of a professional army is already present due to West Point's production of lifetime generals and the soldier's lack of individual freedom. The former Chairman of Rutgers-Newark YAF continued by saying, men should not be forced to fight wars they do not believe in and maybe, a volunteer military might prevent the prosecution of questionable, imperialist wars, I concluded my argument with the quote by James Simon Kunen, the author of the Strawberry Statement, "If a country has to draft men to defend it, then there is nothing left to defend!"

In another resolution, Yaf endorsed overwhelmingly capital punishment. John Lockwood, Bergen County Chairman said this was necessary to "get rid of enemies of the state!" Earlier in the convention, a constitution written by Lockwood calling on racists and anarchists from being banned from Yaf was passed. Immediately, former Princeton High Chairman Mark Luccarelli pointed out that Mr. Lockwood, himself, is a racist who advocated the suppression of the black race. While the libertarian continued to present his case, however, he was shouted down by an audience verging on hysteria.

Perhaps the best summation of the convention was offered by former NJYAF Secretary Kathy Greene who was nominated and defeated in a landslide for a seat on the state executive board, she said, "I always hated the theater of the absurd and this is worse!" Miss Greene continued by saying, "Yaf must be destroyed for it has completely sold out individual rights to the state steamroller and for this, it must be added to the troops of our enemy, the silent majority!"

----- John Brotschol



← Big Bill, YAF's
new Czar in N.J.

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Letter to the Staff:

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Not meaning to seem like a traditionalist, I must nevertheless express interest in seeing the full text of the letter you quoted from Michael Bakunin to Lenin.

(THE ABOLITIONIST, Vol. I, No. 1) My interest stems from the knowledge that Lenin was born in 1870 and Bakunin died in 1876. Do you, perchance, have a copy of Lenin's reply?

More likely the letter was from Bakunin to Marx ("you know how all these commies look alike."--Nixon). Marx, one recalls, was shown up by Bakunin to be the philosopher-pig authoritarian he was at the Hague Congress in 1872; fearful of Bakunin's great popularity among the young, alive, and intelligent, Marx used lies, deceits, delegate credential riggings, and almost every kind of power politics imaginable to discredit Bakunin's dynamic anarchists. In the end he won a Phyrrie victory, for in saving a few shreds of glory for himself Marx destroyed the First International.

Bakunin was the spokesman for the peasantry as distinct from the proletariat, and it was Bakunin who fortold the Russian Revolution--not Marx. More important, the anarchist Bakunin stood up for the individual as distinct from Marx's ideal of the "mass man." Even those who viewed the Russian giant with disfavor admire his magnificent love of the individual's liberty; one, historian E.H. Carr, wrote in 1937, "Bakunin is one of the completest embodiments in history of the spirit of liberty--the liberty which excludes neither license nor caprice, which tolerates no human institution, which remains an unrealized and unrealizable ideal, but which is almost universally felt to be an indispensable part of the highest manifestations and aspirations of humanity."

Carr's 508 page study of Bakunin, quoted above, is available in Vintage paperback; it provides an excellent background of 19th Century radicalism, and a recognition that the libertarian movement, in various forms, has been active even within the barbed-wire walls of early Marxism. We who believe in individualism can gain much by studying courageous--and often misunderstood--anarchists like Bakunin.

Power to persons,
Lowell Ponte
U.S.C.

(The staff received several letters noting our error. Perhaps Kropotkin was the one who told Lenin where it was at--someone certainly should have!)

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ON VIOLENT REVOLUTION

Ralph Fucetola III

Various libertarians responded to the Bank of Amerika's call for non-violent dissent by deploring that institution and its state's violence, reminding them that recent bombings and burnings are merely the natural and inevitable results of their violence. Now we must face the tactical issue: will such actions succeed, will they demolish the state. I am afraid they will not--they are justified, they will happen, but, such violence will probably not remove the state. Remember, the goal of our actions is a certain type of society (to most libertarians: a free market, private property, individualistic, peaceful non-state society) not just the destruction of the state apparatus.

We must distinguish between making Revolution and making war against this state. Revolution consists of changing people's heads, building alternative institutions, creating a new culture, developing liberated areas, and defending the revolution from the state's violence. Making war against this state is just another coup d'etate: either this state will win (indeed, our rulers may be waiting for such an excuse to impose total fascism) or a new state will be created by the power freaks in the movement. In either case, the revolution is betrayed again.

Why will war against the state fail? Because the leadership of the war will be or become power-mongers (power DOES corrupt), because the state is much more skilled at war than we are, because concentrating on war will cause us to ignore

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