



Arne Christianson, a high official of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, as one of his inner circle of advisors. Last month I noted that Gingrich is as servile toward the Zionist lobby as any New York pol; now the Republicans are also promising (speaking of unconstitutional entitlements) not to touch foreign aid to the Middle East.

It's a telling fact about the Republicans that their chief strategist is Bill Kristol, son of Irving Kristol, the "godfather of neoconservatism." Bill is a brilliant young man, and a nice one too; he has always been cordial to me, and he maintains friendly relations even with Pat Buchanan, *bête noire* of most Zionists. He rarely mentions Israel publicly. But I don't think it's cynical to posit that it's there in his mind, shaping his strategic and tactical thinking. The Kristols are cool customers, unlike the more vitriolic elements of the tribe. I remember Irving approaching me at a party a few years ago and saying, almost genially: "Joe, do me a favor: stop writing about the Jews." After all the backstabbing I'd taken, I was almost grateful for the direct approach.

The Kristols want to maintain friendly ties with Christians, partly because they really agree with Christians on most "social issues"; they don't think school prayer will lead to pogroms in Peoria, and I gather they think it's a reasonable tradeoff for Christian support for Israel. In fact, Irving wrote acidly a few years back that many Jews would rather see Israel and Jewry perish quietly than hear a U.S. president say a good word about Jesus Christ. That was the closest thing I've read to an acknowledgment of the prevalent anti-Christian animus among Jews, an animus so strong it defeats self-interest.

Nevertheless, Jewish self-interest is a factor in Republican politics, even though the Republicans got barely a fifth of the Jewish vote in November. So you can assume that the Republicans won't invoke the Tenth Amendment in any way adverse to Israel.

It's encouraging that the Tenth Amendment is being mentioned at all, outside my own reactionary essays. Even George Will is writing about it now. Yes, the same George Will who for most of his adult life has been chiding conservatives for resisting the welfare state, lamenting their "careless antigovernment rhetoric," complaining that the nation is "undertaxed," and writing off the whole principle of enumerated powers as "dead as a doornail." I still hope the Republicans will be the Gorbachevs of real reaction, setting off an avalanche they can't control.

But at the moment, the Party of Ideas is basically the party of the Kristols' ideas — conservative, *ma non troppo*.

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## Murray

Murray Rothbard was one of a kind. He didn't remind you of anyone else, and nobody else will ever remind you of Murray. I hardly know where to start. He was an extraordinarily deep thinker who didn't act like it. His many books include *Man, Economy, and State*, hailed by Henry Hazlitt, among others, as among the greatest works of its kind, ever, but in person he was earthy, unpretentious, and wonderfully funny. He was so much fun to be around that you could easily forget what an imposing thinker he was; it never occurred to him to try to impress people. He had more opinions on more subjects than anyone in the room, but he always listened. The minute he took a liking to you, you had a loyal friend for good. But his best friend was Joey, his one and only wife; they went everywhere together, and she was with him when he collapsed with a heart attack at the optometrist's office.



Murray Rothbard

Murray was born in New York in 1926 and spent most of his life there. His family were Communists, and as a boy he managed to shock them all by asking precociously, at a family gathering, just what was so bad about Franco. That was the beginning of a lifetime of arguing and laughing and refusing to let anyone else make up his mind for him. Pretty soon he was a libertarian, at a time when there was almost no such thing; for a time he belonged to Ayn Rand's circle, but even the Randians were too orthodox for him, and he struck out on his own, rethinking politics and economics from scratch. He argued with conservatives, liberals, socialists, Communists, Cold Warriors, and most libertarians; eventually he concluded that there is no justification for the state and called himself an anarchist — an "anarcho-capitalist," to be precise. Always willing to stand alone, he found his deepest affinity with the Old (and all but forgotten) Right, including Garet Garrett and John Flynn — "isolationists" who opposed both the welfare and warfare state. Above all he revered his mentor Ludwig von Mises, whose work he extended to new heights and applications in 25 books and about 10,000 articles. (The latter figure is neither hyperbole nor misprint.)

I could praise him all day and still feel I'd hardly told you a thing about him. He was hilarious, he was sweet, he was endlessly energetic and stimulating and startling. His mind was strong and decisive but always open. His latter years didn't seem like latter years, because he never slowed down. May the world catch up with him.

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