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WEDNESDAY Apr 21st

Beck Should Probe the Progressive Libertarians

Written by Cliff Kincaid

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Glenn Beck has produced a documentary on the "cancer" of "progressivism." It would behoove him to take a look at libertarianism. The latter is a disease that Beck himself [featured](#) on April 15, when analysts from the libertarian Cato Institute were on his show to argue for drastic cuts to the U.S. defense [budget](#), acceptance of a nuclear-armed Iran, and an American military [withdrawal](#) from the rest of the world. America's allies, especially Israel, would just have to fend for themselves.

Beck is not the only one attracted to and subsequently infected by libertarianism. So is the one-time "conservative" [Hot Air](#) blog, which has been promoting homosexuality and dope smoking.

[Libertarianism](#) has some appeal, based mainly on its anti-government attitude on economic issues. Years ago I wrote a paper for the Cato Institute on defunding the United Nations. In general, however, libertarianism is known for an isolationist view in foreign policy, which [benefits](#) America's enemies and adversaries. But the worst aspects of libertarianism are evident in social policy. Here, libertarianism is compatible with the "progressivism" that people like Glenn Beck rightly abhor.

The seeds of this strange collaboration of interests were planted decades ago, when the pro-Marxist Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) held a seminar under the title of "Left and Right," featuring Marcus Raskin of IPS and Karl Hess, then an IPS fellow. The speakers at this 1969 event included economist Murray Rothbard and Jeff Liebling, the latter identified as "former Youth for Goldwater" and "SDS member." Hess, a former Barry Goldwater speechwriter who died in 1994, traveled easily between left and right.

A September 1970 IPS seminar on "U.S. Strategy in Asia" was organized by Earl C. Ravenal, then an IPS Associate Fellow, who would later join the Cato Institute as a distinguished senior fellow in foreign policy studies. A [book](#) featuring the proceedings of the event reveals the participation of Morton Halperin, then with the liberal Brookings Institution and now [a top employee](#) of George Soros.

The left-right collaboration is most apparent in the field of "drug policy reform," as they call it. On April 19, on the eve of national Pot Smokers Day, when marijuana activists smoked a joint in public, Hot Air posted [a video](#) from Reason TV calling for legalization of the drug. The video was introduced by Ed Morrissey, who said that "marijuana intake is a personal decision in the same sense as alcohol" and proclaimed that the drug was safer than alcohol.

When the blog was purchased from the well-known and respected author and columnist Michelle Malkin, the new owners at Salem Communications, a Christian firm, [said](#) that the site would be part of "the battle for conservative values."

But it has taken a turn to the left. First, Hot Air attacked Ryan Sorba for speaking on behalf of traditional values at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) and against the inclusion of a homosexual rights group in the event. Then, Morrissey was quoted as saying that Republicans should "get over their issues with homosexuality." Taking note of this and other posts on the site, Bryan Fischer of the American Family Association said that Hot Air had "suddenly become an advocate for all things gay" and asked, "What in the world is up with that?"

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The answer is libertarianism, which was strongly in evidence at CPAC and has been personified by such figures as Andrew Napolitano and John Stossel of the Fox News Channel, who both promote legalization of dangerous drugs. Only "culture warrior" Bill O'Reilly takes the old-fashioned view that illegal drugs are bad for you, but he doesn't talk about the issue as much as he should.

Will Fox News Channel, with its growing stable of libertarian commentators, including Tucker Carlson, also affiliated with Cato, start campaigning for passage of the California ballot initiative that would legalize marijuana statewide? Beck is already on record in favor of legalizing dope. "Look, I'm a libertarian," Beck [declared](#) on his February 25, 2009, show. "You want to legalize marijuana; you want to legalize drugs-that's fine."

For its part, Hot Air is providing fresh evidence that being "libertarian" and "tolerant" provides cover for doing such things as smoking dope and having gay sex and making common cause with the "progressive" left. This presents a dilemma for its new Christian owners.

In order to put some sanity back into the discussion about illegal drugs, however, the [Save Our Society From Drugs](#) organization issued a statement noting that, "Pardon the pun, but it's high time we take back the day [national Pot Smokers Day, April 20th] and put an end to their misguided attempts to glamorize a drug that, contrary to their claims is a harmful addictive substance. Recent studies have linked marijuana use to birth defects, respiratory system damage, cancer, [mental illness](#), violence, [infertility](#), and immune system damage. The latest information from the U.S. Treatment Episode Data Set reports that 16.1% of drug treatment admissions were for marijuana as the primary drug of abuse, compared to 6% in 1992."

The group went on, "Enabled by a few extremely wealthy individuals, the pro-drug lobby continues to misrepresent the interests of the majority of Americans and have persuaded legislators in 28 states to introduce no less than 121 pieces of pro-drug legislation."

These individuals include billionaires George Soros and Peter Lewis. They are not libertarians, however. They are hard-core "progressives."

Reason magazine, associated with the same crowd behind Reason TV, ran an [article](#) in 2003 by Jacob Sullum on why heroin is supposedly less dangerous than alcohol and how people can use the drug without harmful effects. He compared heroin to nicotine. "Even daily opiate use is not necessarily inconsistent with a productive life," he wrote.

So marijuana is apparently just one of many drugs on the agenda for legalization and acceptance.

Sullum wrote the 2004 book, *Saying Yes: In Defense of Drug Use*, featuring a marijuana joint on the cover.

Bringing the subject up to date, Reason magazine on April 20 ran an [on-the-scene report](#) from the 2010 International Cannabis and Hemp Expo. Writer Greg Beato was excited about the on-site pot-smoking at the event and the Proposition 215 Tent, "where attendees equipped with medical marijuana cards could light up, vaporize, consume edibles, or otherwise treat themselves..."

So-called "medibles" are foods loaded with pot. Proposition 215 was the initiative that legalized the scam known as "medical marijuana" in California.

John Patrick Bedell used "medical marijuana" cards to get legal dope in California, before he drove to Washington, D.C. to murder people at the Pentagon. Bedell, who injured two [security](#) guards before getting killed in the crossfire, was a libertarian who thought the government was out to get him.

Beato has also written Reason magazine articles under such titles as, "In Defense of Extreme Pornography," and "Drop Barbies, Not Bombs, on Iran."

Reason claims to be a monthly magazine of "free minds and free markets." But the minds have been clouded by dope and the concept of "free markets" has been expanded to include practically any and all forms of destructive human behavior. This is not conservative in any sense, and may not even be, strictly speaking, libertarian. It is more like libertinism or hedonism. Soros, who proposes to transform America into an "open society," has the same vision.

"Reason and Reason Online are editorially independent publications of the Reason Foundation, a national, non-profit research and [educational organization](#)." So says the "About Reason" section of Reason.com. However, this disclaimer is contradicted by the Reason Foundation itself. There is a Reason Foundation board member in charge of the magazine.

When you examine [the board](#) of the Reason Foundation, you find an interesting mix of characters, ranging from [David H. Koch](#) of Koch Industries to Richard J. Dennis of the Dennis Trading Group in Chicago.

Here is where left meets right. It turns out that Dennis is a former chairman of the board of the Soros-funded Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) and that a "Drug Peace Award" has been named after him, in recognition of his efforts to legalize dope. The concept of "drug peace" will supposedly occur when America surrenders to the menace of illegal drugs.

Other DPA [board members](#) include Jodie Evans of Code Pink, former ACLU official Ira Glasser, and Arianna Huffington.

Dennis is also on the [board](#) of the Cato Institute, which, not surprisingly, takes money from Soros to fight the "drug war."

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It's hard to believe that the respectable businessmen on the boards of Cato and Reason understand how their "libertarian" organizations are promoting the "progressive" views of George Soros on such matters as drug policy.

But it's even stranger that this phenomenon is now tainting the once-respected and now under Christian ownership Hot Air blog.

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