Libertarian Party endorses President Bush

John Hospers

As a way of getting acquainted, let me just say that I was the first presidential candidate for the Libertarian Party back in l972, and was the author of the first full-length book, Libertarianism, describing libertarianism in detail.

I also wrote the Libertarian Party's Statement of Principles at the first libertarian national convention in 1972. I still believe in those principles as strongly as ever, but this year -- more than any year since the establishment of the Libertarian Party -- I have major concerns about the choices open to us as voting Americans.

There is a belief that's common among many libertarians that there is no essential difference between the Democrat and Republican Parties -- between a John Kerry and a George W. Bush administration; or worse: that a Bush administration would be more undesirable. Such a notion could not be farther from the truth, or potentially more harmful to the cause of liberty.

The election of John Kerry would be, far more than is commonly realized, a catastrophe. Regardless of what he may say in current campaign speeches, his record is unmistakable: he belongs to the International Totalitarian Left in company with the Hillary and Bill Clintons, the Kofi Annans, the Ted Kennedys, and the Jesse Jacksons of the world.

The Democratic Party itself has been undergoing a transformation in recent years; moderate, pro-American, and strong defense Senators such as Zell Miller, Joe Lieberman and Scoop Jackson are a dying breed. Observe how many members of the Democrat Party belong to the Progressive Caucus, indistinguishable from the Democratic Socialists of America. That caucus is the heart and soul of the contemporary Democratic Party.

Today's Democrats have been out of majority power for so long that they are hungry for power at any price and will do anything to achieve it, including undermining the President and our troops in time of war; for them any victory for Americans in the war against terrorism is construed as a defeat for them.
The Democratic Party today is a haven for anti-Semites, racists, radical environmentalists, plundering trial lawyers, government employee unions, and numerous other self-serving elites who despise the Constitution and loath private property.

It is opposed to free speech – witness the mania for political correctness and intimidation on college campuses, and Kerry's threat to sue television stations

that carry the Swift Boat ads. If given the power to do so, Democrats will use any possible means to suppress opposing viewpoints, particularly on talk radio and in the university system.

They will attempt to enact "hate speech" and "hate crime" laws and re-institute the Fairness Doctrine, initiate lawsuits, and create new regulations designed to suppress freedom of speech and intimidate their political adversaries. They will call it "defending human rights."

This sort of activity may well make up the core of a Kerry administration Justice Department that will have no truck with the rule of law except as a weapon to use against opponents.

There are already numerous stories of brownshirt types committing violence against Republican campaign headquarters all over the country, and Democrat thugs harassing Republican voters at the polls. Yet not a word about it from the Kerry campaign. Expect this dangerous trend to increase dramatically with a Kerry win, ignored and tacitly accepted by the liberal-left mainstream media. This is ominous sign of worse things to come.

Kerry, who changes direction with the wind, has tried to convince us that he now disavows the anti-military sentiments that he proclaimed repeatedly in the l970s. But in fact he will weaken our military establishment and devastate American security by placing more value on the United Nations than on the United States: for example he favors the Kyoto Treaty and the International

He has been quoted as saying that it is honorable for those in the U.S. military to die under the flag of the U.N. but not that of the U.S. Presumably he and a small cadre of bureaucrats should rule the world, via the U.N. or some other world body which will make all decisions for the whole world concerning private property, the use of our military, gun ownership, taxation, and environmental policy (to name a few).

In his thirty-year career he has demonstrated utter contempt for America, national security, constitutional republicanism, democracy, private property, and free markets.

His wife's foundations have funneled millions of dollars into far-left organizations that are virulently hostile to America and libertarian principles. Not only would these foundations continue to lack transparency to the American people, they would be given enormous vigor in a Kerry administration.

Already plans are afoot by the Kerry campaign to steal the coming election via a legal coup, e.g. to claim victory on election night no matter what the vote differential is, and initiate lawsuits anywhere and everywhere they feel it works to their advantage, thus making a mockery of our election process, throwing the

entire process into chaos -- possibly for months -- and significantly weakening our ability to conduct foreign policy and protect ourselves domestically.

Let me repeat: we are facing the very real possibility of a political coup occurring in America. Al Gore very nearly got away with one in 2000. Do not underestimate what Kerry and his ilk are going to attempt to do to America.

George Bush has been criticized for many things – and in many cases with justification: on campaign finance reform (a suppression of the First Amendment), on vast new domestic spending, on education, and on failing to protect the borders.

No self-respecting libertarian or conservative would fail to be deeply appalled by these. His great virtue, however, is that he has stood up -- knowingly at grave risk to his political viability -- to terrorism when his predecessors, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Clinton did not. On many occasions during their administrations terrorists attacked American lives and property. Clinton did nothing, or engaged in a feckless retaliation such as bombing an aspirin factory in the Sudan (based on faulty intelligence, to boot).

Then shortly after Bush became president he was hit with "the big one:" 9/11. It was clear to him that terrorism was more than a series of criminal acts: it was a war declared upon U.S. and indeed to the entire civilized world long before his administration. He decided that action had to be taken to protect us against future 9/11s involving weapons of mass destruction, including "suitcase" nuclear devices.

Indeed, today it is Islamic fundamentalism that increasingly threatens the world just as Nazis fascism and Soviet communism did in previous decades. The Islamo-fascists would be happy to eliminate all non-Muslims without a tinge of regret.
Many Americans still indulge in wishful thinking on this issue, viewing militant Islam as a kind of nuisance, which can be handled without great inconvenience in much the same way as one swats flies, rather than as hordes of genocidal religious fanatics dedicated to our destruction.

The president has been berated for taking even minimal steps to deal with the dangers of this war (the allegations made against the Patriot Act seem to me based more on hysteria and political opportunism than on reality).

But Bush, like Churchill, has stood steadfast in the face of it, and in spite of the most virulent hate and disinformation campaign that any American president has had to endure. Afghanistan is no longer a safe haven for terrorists. Saddam's regime is no longer a major player in the worldwide terror network.

Libya has relinquished their weapons of terror. The Pakistani black market in weapons of mass destruction has been eliminated. Arafat is rotting in Ramallah. Terrorist cells all over the world have been disrupted, and thousands of terrorists killed. The result: Americans are orders of magnitude safer.

National defense is always expensive, and Bush has been widely excoriated for these expenditures. But as Ayn Rand memorably said at a party I attended in l962, in response to complaints that "taxes are too high" (then 20%), "Pay 80% if you need it for defense." It is not the amount but the purpose served that decides what is "too much." And the purpose here is the continuation of civilized life on earth in the face of vastly increased threats to its existence.

Bush cut income tax rates for the first time in fifteen years. These cuts got us moving out of the recession he inherited, and we are all economically much better off because of them. 1.9 million new jobs have been added to the economy since August 2003. Bush has other projects in the wind for which libertarians have not given him credit. For example:
1. A total revision of our tax code. We will have a debate concerning whether this is best done via a flat tax or a sales tax. If such a change were to occur, it would be a gigantic step in the direction of liberty and prosperity. No such change will occur with Kerry.
2. A market-based reform of Social Security. This reform, alone, could bring future budget expenditures down so significantly that it would make his current expenditures seem like pocket change. Kerry has already repudiated any such change in social security laws.

The American electorate is not yet psychologically prepared for a completely libertarian society. A transition to such a society takes time and effort, and involves altering the mind-set of most Americans, who labor under a plethora of economic fallacies and political misconceptions. It will involve a near-total restructuring of the educational system, which today serves the liberal-left education bureaucracy and Democratic Party, not the student or parent.

It will require a merciless and continuous expose of the bias in the mainstream media (the Internet, blogs, and talk radio have been extremely successful in this regard over the past few years). And it will require understanding the influence and importance of the Theresa Kerry-like Foundations who work in the shadows to undermine our constitutional system of checks and balances.

Most of all, it will require the American people -- including many libertarians – to realize the overwhelming dangerousness of the American Left – a Fifth Column comprised of the elements mentioned above, dedicated to achieving their goal of a totally internationally dominated America, and a true world-wide Fascism.

Thus far their long-term plans have been quite successful. A Kerry presidency will fully open their pipeline to infusions of taxpayer-funded cash and political pull.

At least a continued Bush presidency would help to stem this tide, and along the way it might well succeed in preserving Western civilization against the fanatic Islamo-fascists who have the will, and may shortly have the weapons capability, to bring it to an end.

When the stakes are not high it is sometimes acceptable, even desirable, to vote for a 'minor party' candidate who cannot possibly win, just to "get the word out" and to promote the ideals for which that candidate stands.

But when the stakes are high, as they are in this election, it becomes imperative that one should choose, not the candidate one considers philosophically ideal, but the best one available who has the most favorable chance of winning.

The forthcoming election will determine whether it is the Republicans or the Democrats that win the presidency. That is an undeniable reality. If the election is as close as it was in 2000, libertarian voters may make the difference as to who wins in various critical "Battle Ground" states and therefore the presidency itself.

That is the situation in which we find ourselves in 2004. And that is why I believe voting for George W. Bush is the most libertarian thing we can do.

We stand today at an important electoral crossroads for the future of liberty, and as libertarians our first priority is to promote liberty and free markets, which is not necessarily the same as to promote the Libertarian Party. This time, if we vote libertarian, we may win a tiny rhetorical battle, but lose the larger war.

John Hospers was the founder of the Libertarian Party