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# History of the Libertarian Movement

Edited for New Libertarian participation

Samuel Edward Konkin III

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1998

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SEK3 and the revived MLL answered them positively with the pamphlet “What’s Left?” and subsequent meetings of the Karl Hess Club (successor of the anti-Party Libertarian Supper Club of Los Angeles and Albert J. Nock/H.L. Mencken Fora). But the Original Gang Libertarian ranks thinned considerably. Robert LeFevre had died in 1986; Karl Hess left us in 1994 and Murray Rothbard in January 1995. The struggle for the minds (what was left of them) and hearts of the Libertarian Movement was thus engaged.

*New Isolationist* revived first; then the long-awaited *Agorist Quarterly*, the theoretical journal of The Agorist Institute, challenged J. Friedman’s *Critical Review* and began the development of the foundations of Counter-Economics and the rest of Agorism. Finally, *New Libertarian* returned to set the movement straight again with NL187 in December 1996 (dated April 1997.) Deviationists, sell-outs and compromisers fled in terror; the hard-core and unyielding defenders of freedom, as well as those who had been shut out of dominant libertarian publications for their individualist, non-conforming viewpoints, rejoiced.

And they all turned into .PDF files (Adobe Acrobat™), moved to the World Wide Web of libertarian cyberspace, and lived happily ever after...

## 1991–Today

*Reason* had drifted further and further away from mainstream, let alone radical, libertarianism in the 1970s so that by 1985 only *Libertarian Review* and *New Libertarian* remained with plus-1000 circulations. When LR and *Inquiry* quit, NL was not left alone. Bill Bradford, a lifetime subscriber to NL, started his own Centrist Libertarian magazine, *Liberty*. Briefly, it was inclusive, but soon it purged Rothbard and Konkin (Bradford claimed an Editorial Board he created had the responsibility, not him) and it defined itself between agorist/inclusive NL, paleolibertarian *Rothbard-Rockwell Report*, and the neoconservative *Reason*. In 1991, *Reason* under its new editor Virginia Postrel crossed the line and became the only publication to be viewed by some as libertarian to endorse the Gulf War. Even *Reason*'s former editor Robert Poole and Cato's Ed Crane opposed the naked imperialist maneuver.

When the agorists returned to activism in 1994, they found a changed Movement – but not victorious, as they had assumed it would be. *Liberty* was rehashing objectivism and Ayn Rand's personal life over and over with the vapid sneering attacks by cowardly nom-de-plume "Chester Alan Arthur" substituting for political (or anti-political) analysis; the Libertarian Party had run an out-and-out scoundrel and party-funds embezzler, Andre Marrou, for President in 1992; Jeff Friedman was editing a "theoretical journal" claiming that Libertarianism was based on Egalitarianism (one of Murray Rothbard's essays and book titles was *Egalitarianism as a Revolt Against Nature*) and embracing chunks of deconstructionism, postmodernism, and even Liberalism; and, rather than rallying the demoralized, de-socialized Left to the Libertarian (black) banner, nearly all factions were cozying up to (different) parts of the already victorious and thus scornful statist Right. *Reason* was gone completely from Libertarianism, as was *Reason*.

With Chris Hitchens and Alex Cockburn calling for a revived New Left/Libertarian Alliance on CSPAN and in Left publications,

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of the *New Libertarian Alliance* #1. SNLA#2 began SEK3's *Agorism Contra Marxism* serialization and George Smith's criticism of Rothbard's "Leninist" Libertarianism. Within a decade, Rothbard had swung right and the Berlin Wall had fallen. (Agorism had made the East European Marxist journals and was vigorously debated in the early 1980s.)

On December 31, 1984 The Agorist Institute was formed on that symbolic date and with the logo of "the tip of the iceberg." So in 1985 MLL was turned over to Victor Koman and Mike Gunderloy while SEK3, J. Kent Hastings and John Strang concentrated on AI. The *New Isolationist* newsletter combined the editorial skills and writings of Konkin and Royce, with Alexander Cockburn and Noam Chomsky from the New Left, Thomas Fleming and Charles Reese from the Old Right, and many other anti-interventionists.

Meanwhile, *New Libertarian* brought forth its long-awaited time capsule of the new generation of Science Fiction Authors of the 1980s in 1990. The triple-sized issue, first with a color cover, mutated into a tribute to Robert A. Heinlein who had just died. Contributors included Robert Anton Wilson, Robert Shea, Victor Koman, Brad Linaweaver, L. Neil Smith, J. Neil Schulman, Oyvind Myhre of Norway and Chris Shaefer on the films based on Heinlein writings. Libertarian science-fiction fans (frefen) had turned their parties into "Heinlein Wakes" in the late 1980s, and that culminated in the largest, most international gathering of libertarian writers at The Hague over the "Bank Holiday" weekend in late August where NL All-SF Triple Issue premiered. Final copies were not available until the NASFiC in San Diego the following weekend.

The Libertarian Party was in such bad shape that SEK3 called for a ceasefire and re-direction of energy in the previous issue of NL; with the collapse of the Berlin Wall, key libertarians "retired" to engage in a personal life for a couple of years.

*tarian Review*, which could not break the 5,000 level of circulation. At the 1983 LP National convention, Crane lost a close battle with the combined Right-Center coalition who put California state apparatchik David Bergland up against CFR member turned mild isolationist, Earl Ravenal. Koch's money was pulled out for the 1984 election and Ed Crane turned on the Libertarian Party.

In 1985, at the Libertarian International convention in Oslo, Norway, Crane and Konkin were to debate the validity of the Libertarian Party for libertarians. After SEK3's demolition job, Crane got up and refused to defend the party, even shaking Konkin's hand. Alas, Crane was moving rightward.

Rothbard, too, lost interest in the Libertarian Party with no one left of consequence to fight over it. A feeble attempt was made to stop Rothbard's candidate, Republican U.S. Representative from Texas, Ron Paul, from getting the 1988 nomination., mostly from the Association for Libertarian Feminists (ALF) who strongly opposed him on abortion. When Paul's vote continued the decline from the Clark high, Rothbard blamed the "Left" Libertarians (apparently still in the LP) and *luftmenschen* with no visible means of support (Agorists and other counter-economists?), and quit the party. With Llewellyn Rockwell, Rothbard formed the Ludwig von Mises Institute and announced an alliance with Rockford Institute's Thomas Fleming and his paleoconservatives as an attempt to revive the Old Right.

While the LP declined schism by schism, the New Libertarian Alliance sprouted to aboveground entities. In 1978, the Movement of the Libertarian Left was formed out of remaining aboveground activists to restore and continue the alliance Rothbard and Oglesby had begun between the New Left and Libertarians against foreign intervention or imperialism. MLL's internal newsletter was *Tactics of the MLL*; it also began a theoretical journal after the publication of SEK3's long-delayed *New Libertarian Manifesto*. The responses by Rothbard, LeFevre, and anti-voting/anti-activist Erwin "Filthy Pierre" Strauss and Konkin's replies became the basis of *Strategy*

## Before 1969

Prior to 1969, there was no "organized" Libertarian Movement. In the 1800s, circles formed around Lysander Spooner's individualist abolitionism in Massachusetts, followed by Benjamin Tucker and his *Liberty* magazine (not to be confused with the Seattle 'zine of the 1980s & 1990s) which upheld the black banner of individualist anarchy from 1870s to 1907. In that year, the entire stock of back issues and books were burned and Tucker left America to live obscurely in France until his death in 1939.

The orgy of statism peaked first with World War I and then receded. Randolph Bourne uttered the memorable line, "War is the health of the State" just before his death in 1918 and the Roaring Twenties saw a brief revival of freedom. The two main spokesmen were Albert Jay Nock and his *Freeman* magazine (where Suzanne LaFollette first came to prominence) from 1920-24, and then H.L. Mencken and his *American Mercury* in the late 1920s and through the 1930s until the approach of the second statist orgasm, World War II.

Nock's student, Frank Chodorov, was responsible for the first proto-libertarian student organization in the 1950s, the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists (still around, but now called the Intercollegiate Studies Institute). Murray Rothbard, a political fan of Chodorov (but disagreeing with his Georgist deviation on "The Land Question"), formed the Circle Bastiat in the late 1950s after being purged from William Buckley's *National Review*. (Buckley was a fan of Nock himself, and had described himself as a "philosophical anarchist" before anointing himself the avatar of modern American conservatism, having "seen a Dream Walking.")

Robert LeFevre and Leonard Read, like Rothbard and Chodorov, evolved from the "Old Right" alliance against the ultra-statist New Deal war machine of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Classical liberals (like John T. Flynn) and anarchists and even socialists like Norman Thomas joined in the great America First crusade against U.S. im-

perialism between 1939 and 1941 with never less than 80% of the people behind them... until Pearl Harbor.

LeFevre had a fling at running for Congress with the likes of Richard Nixon in 1948, but soon realized that one could not build a movement for freedom without first re-informing the American people what freedom was, something they had lost in five decades of non-stop statism. He formed the Freedom School in Colorado and his youthful graduates became the original activists in the student movement. Older people attended Read's Foundation for Economic Education in upstate New York.

Rothbard was attracted to the growing student movement and actually entered the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) with his small following. He broke with those libertarians still clinging to an alliance with the anti-New-Deal Right by opposing Barry Goldwater in 1964 and beginning publication of *Left & Right* in 1965. He actively attended New Left meetings, wrote for *Ramparts* magazine, and even formed tactical alliances at the Freedom & Peace Party conventions with Maoists against old-line socialists.

LeFevre's students began the *Libertarian American* in Texas and *Liberal Innovator* (then just *Innovator*) in California but, when Kerry Thornley became editor, also pursued a pro-New Left alliance. The *Innovator* leafletted Goldwater delegates at the 1964 Republican Convention at the San Francisco Cow Palace. *Innovator* also published the first articles concerning underground market activity which was later to be known as Counter-Economics. Alas, the *Innovator* contributors went underground just as the Libertarian Movement was about to explode aboveground.

Daniel Rosenthal, Sharon Presley, Tom McGivern and others broke from the Youth for Goldwater campaign to form the Alliance of Libertarian Activists, the first explicitly libertarian activist organization at the end of 1964 at the University of California at Berkeley. Meanwhile, the earlier 1960 Youth for Goldwater which had reformed at Buckley's Sharon, Connecticut estate continued to attract libertarian students largely unaware of the other groups. The

out in weekly production and never returned to regular on-time publication again. During that time, NLW not only became the premier publication of anti-party libertarians and "journal of record" of the Movement, but also took up the cause of opposing "monocentrism," the monopolization of the Libertarian Movement by Koch money and power, the legendary "Kochtopus."

Just as NLW sputtered down in frequency to just plain *New Libertarian* magazine, Rothbard broke with the Kochtopus. Relations between MNR and SEK3 were maximally strained during 1977 when Rothbard joined the Kochtopus and moved to San Francisco. Rothbard was described as the "Darth Vader" of the Movement (*Star Wars* had just been released). Rothbard lashed back with his attack on the "space cadets" of science-fiction oriented libertarians, and was attacked himself within the LP by "space cadets" who labeled his faction "grubeaters." But Rothbard had a falling out during the 1980 Clark for President campaign with Crane who controlled the campaign, and his "shares" in *Cato* were confiscated by the other Board members. NL promptly supported Rothbard in his cry, "They stole my shares" and relations were largely repaired.

Edward Clark and his vice-presidential running mate, David Koch, did get the highest number of votes ever for the LP (nearly 900,000) but at an incredible cost per vote. And the few thousand votes Hospers had received in 1972 had at least got him an electoral vote. The LP began its long decline. (Hospers himself turned against the LP.)

## 1981–1990

With Rothbard's opposition to the Kochtopus, Crane's control slipped fast. Students for a Libertarian Society quickly collapsed and its handpicked leader, Milton Mueller, dropped out of the Movement. *Cato's* attempt to reach out to Left-Liberals, *Inquiry* magazine, plateaued in circulation and was combined with *Liber-*

go... underground. SEK3's response to electoral politics was refusal to pay taxes, obey regulations or in any way give the State vampire its blood — Counter-Economics — combined with Libertarian Theory. In other words, politically-aware black marketeers, or *agorists*.

## 1975–1980

Aboveground, the Party was left with the dregs and vacillators of the Libertarian Movement; underground the NLA built its counter-economy. But still another factor entered in 1975: the vast fortunes of Charles and David Koch, and the Cato Institute they endowed. Ed Crane, already in control of the LP, became chair of Cato and disburser of funds. A complex of offices was set up in San Francisco and Cato bought *Libertarian Review* from Kephart, keeping Roy Childs as editor but hiring Jeff Riggenschach to keep LR actually running. Riggenschach wrote for NL as well.

*New Libertarian Notes* had come a long way; it serialized an interview that J. Neil Schulman had got with Robert A. Heinlein, the first such interviewed published in decades. NLN's circulation took off and it nearly hit a thousand at the 1974 World Science Fiction Convention in Washington, D.C. with the final installment of the Heinlein interview. In 1975, SEK3 finally gave up on the East and with the hardest core (except for John Pachak, the long-time layout artist), piled into a Toyota for a legendary three-week trip across the U.S. to relocate in Los Angeles.

Between December 1976 and January 1978, SEK3 and those who had come from New York with him (Andy Thornton, J. Neil Schulman, Bob Cohen) plus Southern Californians like Victor Koman and Chris Schaefer put out *New Libertarian Weekly* — 101 issues of NLW before finally retreating to monthly and less frequent publication. Ironically, the publication with the best history of on-time frequent publication (even better than *reason* which delayed and skipped several issues early in its publication career) burned itself

new student group, Young Americans for Freedom, had one libertarian chair, the founder, Bob Schuchman, who rejected the label “Young Conservatives.”

Thus, while the early libertarian activists following Rothbard and LeFevre mostly fought on the side of the New Left, the later and much larger group of hard-core campus activists who sympathized with liberty found themselves on the opposite side in the largest anti-New Left group, YAF, in the summer of 1969.

## A Word About Ayn Rand

Jerome Tuccille's claim (in his book title and elsewhere) that *It Usually Begins with Ayn Rand* was not accurate, but was indicative. Tuccille himself joined Rothbard and others in the early pre-St. Louis attempt to create a Libertarian movement out of YAF and SDS chapters, the Radical Libertarian Alliance (RLA). Rand herself opposed independent political activism, always supported Republican candidates (going back to Wendell Willkie) or no one, and strongly rejected any association with libertarianism. She called her followers Students of Objectivism and they operated on campuses independently. (For example, at the University of Wisconsin in 1968-70, around 300 of them were called Committee to Defend Individual Rights, or CDIR.) But it is true that many YAF members were influenced by reading Rand, and chapters in Pennsylvania and Maryland were openly Randist. Don Ernsberger and David Walters of Pennsylvania formed the Libertarian Caucus within YAF with Dana Rohrabacher and Bill Steele of California (LeFevrians). According to David Nolan of Colorado, an earlier Libertarian Caucus was tried at the previous National YAF Convention of 1967.

Another of Rand's following who contributed to early libertarianism was Jarrett B. Wollstein, who created *Students for Rational Individualism* and *The Rational Individualist* magazine. Along with Rothbard's new *Libertarian*, which he changed when he found the

name was used by an obscure newsletter to *Libertarian Forum*, and LeFevre's *Rampart Journal*, *Rational Individualist* became the leading libertarian publication until 1971. Also influenced by Rand was Lanny Friedlander, who began a fanzine called *Reason* in 1968.

Writing for *RI* and *Rampart Journal* was anarcho-objectivist Roy Childs. Childs wrote an "Open Letter to Ayn Rand" which obtained no response from her other than the usual purge for questioning her ideology. But its case that objectivism lead naturally to free-market anarchy left unanswered provided a conduit for many conversions to libertarianism by such as philosopher and friend of Childs, George H. Smith.

In 1968, Ayn Rand split with her chief disciple, Nathaniel Branden, who had run her activist organization, Nathaniel Branden Institute or NBI. Ex-objectivists filled the ranks of YAF and SRI.

At the end of 1968, Rothbard attempted a Left-Right Anarchist supper club in New York with anarchocommunist Murray Bookchin which lasted two meetings. Rothbard was joined by the former speechwriter for Barry Goldwater, Karl Hess, in *Libertarian Forum* and in SDS activism. Hess went so far as to join the Black Panthers; his article in early 1969 in *Playboy*, "The Death of Politics," was second only to Robert A. Heinlein's *The Moon is A Harsh Mistress* (published serially 1967-68) with its portrayal of a largely successful libertarian revolution on the moon in swelling the ranks of the about-to-be-born libertarian movement.

## 1969–1974

If the Libertarian Movement has a golden age, it ran from August 1969 through around August 1974. The SDS convention split several ways, purging the anarchists before the other delegates even arrived. The Young Americans for Freedom began purging racist and Randist chapters in July, and both sides, libertarians and traditionalists or "trads," engaged in "papering" their chapters with

toral vote for its presidential candidate John Hospers, and its vice-presidential candidate, Toni Nathan, the first woman to get an electoral vote. As a reward for his defection from Virginia's all-Nixon electoral college delegation, Roger McBride was given the 1976 LP nomination and nearly brought it back down to total obscurity.

In October 1972, Samuel Edward Konkin III and LP founder David Nolan debated the morality of voting in *New Libertarian Notes*.

The real crucial election turned out to be the New York mayoral election of 1973; SEK3 and the LA had agreed to join the Free Libertarian Party of New York though explicitly urging the LP's destruction; SEK3 won election to the Executive Committee and promptly built a coalition of upstate minarchists and Manhattan radicals who matched in strength the New York City "anarchists" who were willing to oppose the state but embraced party politics: partyarchs (also coined by SEK3 in NLN). The only campaign which all participated in was Fran Youngstein for Mayor. Unfortunately, Murray Rothbard was attracted to Youngstein and his scornful opposition to the LP (he supported Nixon in '72 as did Rand) ended. The NLN anarchists, who were Rothbardian in most respects but adhered to the California Libertarian Alliance (LeFevre) anti-political position as most consistent, were forced to split and walked out of the 1974 FLP Convention just as their coalition partners were winning control, leaving a stalemate. However, enough won delegate status to the Dallas National LP convention to ally with the moderate Reformers of E. Scott Royce who ran against Edward H. Crane III and the Nolan National Office.

After Royce's defeat, Crane created an authoritarian machine and purged several state newsletters as sympathetic to SEK3 and the "radical caucus." Those campus LAers who resisted the LP and the LPrc who worked outside the party as a revived SLAM, now called for a New Libertarian Alliance which was announced in 1974 after Dallas. As partyarchs geared up for the 1974 congressional elections (which produced nothing), the NLA surged up only to



appearing in this publications disagrees.” Still influential was SIL’s *SIL Notes*, but it too began skipping issues. In New York, RLA’s *Abolitionist* was expanded into *Outlook* even as RLA changed its name to the Citizens for a Restructured Republic (CRR) and abandoned Weatherman tactics for electoral alliances. Rothbard urged support for Mark Hatfield or William Proxmire as anti-war candidates, but when they were eliminated, he balked at supporting George McGovern.

On the west coast, Rohrabacher, Leon and LeFevre published two issues of *Pine Tree* which became *Rap* magazine. As usual, the California Libertarians were far too early and hip for the rest of the movement or the market. Most ambitiously, Leon Kaspersky tried to distribute a monthly libertarian tabloid, *Protos* but gave up. All failed within a year. The earliest libertarian bookstore attempt was made by Berl Hubbel in Long Beach, the prophetically-named Agora Black Market Bookstore.

Lanny Friedlander, based in Massachusetts, sold *Reason* to minarchist (term coined by SEK3 in 1970 and appearing in *Newsweek* in 1972) Robert Poole and anarchist Manny Klausner who along with objectivist philosopher Tibor Machan moved it to California and relentlessly rightward, eventually out of the Libertarian Movement altogether. It did achieve the highest circulation of any publication calling itself libertarian at 10,000 (it continued to grow after it embraced neoconservatism); second was Robert Kephart’s *Libertarian Review* which peaked at 7,000 under its subsequent ownership by Charles Koch and control by Ed Crane.

In 1971, the *New York Times* published its cover story on Rossetto & Lehr of Columbia. In 1972, Edith Efron referred to Libertarianism as a third position distinguished from Liberal and Conservative in *TV Guide*. Libertarian media recognition began to drop because of a new organization appearing in early 1972 to the near-universal scorn of the highly anti-political and even revolutionary libertarian movement, the “Libertarian” Party or LP. To everyone’s amazement, including the few LP supporters, it won an elec-

members to maximize delegate strength in St. Louis for the National Convention over the Labor Day Weekend. Assisting the libertarians was the proximity of the World Science Fiction convention, also that weekend in St. Louis, and the number of Heinlein fans who would be attending and available to accept delegate status.

The trads, already in power, succeeded in stripping most of the libertarian delegates of credentials, but about 200 hard-core libertarians retained delegate status and many who came as trad supporters (such as the founding editor of *New Libertarian*) switched to the Libertarian Caucus when they saw the repressive treatment of the authoritarian trads. Agitating additionally was the small Anarchist Caucus of RLA and the Student Libertarian Action Movement, or SLAM. The AC peaked at about 30 delegates, and could not get more than that for self-styled “philosophic anarchist” Michael Ingallinera. Karl Hess led a rally under the famous St. Louis arch which was dispersed by the police.

Dana Rohrabacher, the “Johnny Grass-Seed” of the Libertarian Caucus, could not get more than 220 votes and was most popular of the pure libertarians. Harvey Hukari of Stanford, running independent of both the “National Office” trad slate and the LC, did better but still could not win. James Farley, claiming to be a libertarian running on the NO slate, on the other hand, received the highest delegate vote total (around 500 out of 800). Samuel Edward Konkin III, a Wisconsin delegate, and his anarchist friend Tony Warnock (both rightly suspected of having been won over by Rohrabacher and Rothbard) found they had been replaced by alternates when they had gone for a late breakfast, even though they arrived back an hour or more before their state’s votes were to be declared.

The most spectacular moment at the St. Louis YAF convention of 1969 occurred when an AC member lit a xerox of his draft card in front of television cameras and was attacked by YAF trads football-style. Libertarians tried to form a line to protect him and the subsequent physical battle radicalized a lot of “fusionist” libertarian-

conservatives. Though some like Jared Lobdell tried to mollify libertarians with a strong anti-draft minority plank, and unopposed Chairman David Keene appealed to both sides for unity, the purges continued after the convention.

That fall, the Libertarian Caucus and the Students for Rational Individualism merged into the Students for Individual Liberty, dually based in Pennsylvania and Maryland around Ernsberger/Walters and Wollstein/Childs. Rohrabacher and Steele, after their purge, formed the California Libertarian Alliance, and announced a huge convention in early 1970. Rothbard and Hess jumped the gun with a Left-Right Conference at the Hotel Diplomat in October 1969 (Columbus Day Weekend).

The RLA conference did attract New Left individualists and former YAF anarchists, but the free-marketeers stayed to hear Rothbard and his Circle Bastiat brothers, Leonard Liggio and Joseph Peden, discuss economics and revisionist history, while Hess led a contingent to join the March on Fort Dix of New Leftists. When the latter returned pursued by FBI agents, the RLA collapsed and Rothbard swung right.

In February 1970, backed by Riqui and Seymour Leon of LeFevre's relocated Rampart Institute (in Santa Ana, California), the California Libertarian Alliance hosted the Left-Right Festival of Mind Liberation at USC. Nearly 500 activists showed up to hear LeFevre, SDS former president Carl Oglesby, Hess, Rohrabacher, SEK3, and most of the early activists. Press coverage of libertarians (such as the con coverage in the *LA Free Press*) was growing, peaking with the 1971 color cover on the *New York Times Magazine* (see below).

Libertarian Alliances and SIL chapters spread to every major campus during 1970. The Madison, Wisconsin, UW Libertarian Alliance sprouted chapters in neighboring high schools and started the newsletter, *Laissez Faire*. Its five issues were the first volume of what was to become *New Libertarian*. During the Cambodia demonstrations in May, UWLA rallied former YAFers and YIPpies and was

attacked by both National Guard tear gas units and Maoist Progressive Labor heavies.

During the summer of 1970, SEK3 established contacts with Eastern libertarians, and brought Columbia students Stan Lehr and Lou Rossetto (now publisher of *Wired*) into the Movement. They formed the Columbia Freedom Conspiracy. SEK3 moved to New York University and formed the NYU Libertarian Alliance, changing the newsletter name to NYU/New Libertarian Notes (in ironic homage to New Left Notes) and recruiting most of the NYU Science Fiction Society as the kernel of NYULA. Quickly seeding LA's on other campuses, he formed the New York Libertarian Alliance, but in deference to the older group, formed from the objectivist Metropolitan Young Republican Club (MYRC), called by Gary Greenberg the New York Libertarian Association, NY LA was seldom used publically, leaving "NYLA" to the association. NYLA was part of SIL while the Libertarian Alliance was strongly identified with the California LA.

NYLA and the New York LA worked together on Libertarian Conferences such as Freedom Conspiracy's Columbia Libertarian Conference of 1971 where Milton Friedman was confronted by SEK3 as to his responsibility for the withholding feature of income tax. Friedman's ready embrace of the "credit" excused as needed to fight World War II (which was questioned by most of the revisionist-historical libertarians there) discredited him and his Chicago School throughout the Libertarian Movement and put Ludwig von Mises (and Murray Rothbard)'s Austrian School of Economics in the forefront of free-market theory. NYULA attended Mises Circle meetings at NYU and Mises was guest of honor at subsequent East Coast Libertarian Conferences hosted by SIL at Drexel Campus in Pennsylvania.

By 1972, *NYU Libertarian Notes* had evolved from a mimeoed fanzine into a typeset semi-prozine; with the growing infrequency of *The Radical Individualist* (now just *The Individualist*) it became the major cross-factional publication with its credo, "Everybody