

### **Roger Kerr, RIP**

The Reagan revolution wasn't an isolated movement, but one that was echoed from the shores of Britain to as far away as the Antipodes. One of the great stalwarts of that free-market agenda, Roger Kerr, passed away last month in Wellington, New Zealand, at the age of 66. He will be missed.

Mr. Kerr was the long-time head of the New Zealand Business Roundtable, a think tank dedicated to "individual responsibility and choice, competition, entrepreneurship and risk-taking." In Mr. Kerr's youth, these concepts were foreign to most Kiwis, who lived in a country shackled by tariffs, regulations and overarching state control of industry. Along with government reformers Roger Douglas and Ruth Richardson, Mr. Kerr played a key role in ripping down those barriers to prosperity, pushing an agenda colloquially known as "Rogernomics," after Mr. Douglas's stint as finance minister.

Mr. Kerr was a ferocious advocate for freer trade, less regulation and the elimination of the minimum wage, among many other things. Though sick with cancer, he told a national newspaper that he would be "carrying on" with his advocacy until the very end. True to form, just a few days before his death, Roger released a statement excoriating John Key's National government for not "maintaining a culture of spending restraint."

Mr. Kerr was also a keen observer of American politics. Writing to me in August, he cheered a possible Marco Rubio presidential run (a rumor at that time) and lamented that he wasn't "bowled over" by the other candidates. Even half a world away, Roger was always right on the money.

-- *Mary Kissel*