

# LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF CALIFORNIA

5332 College Avenue  
Suite 100  
Oakland, California 94618  
(415) 652-5223

Contact: Lisa Hosbein  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## LIBERTARIANS CALL FOR OVERHAUL OF NUCLEAR INDUSTRY

OAKLAND--As thousands of anti-nuclear power demonstrators gathered to protest the beginning of operations at the Diablo Canyon plant, Libertarian Party state chairman Bill Evers contended that only "thorough-going structural reform" that would put the nuclear power industry "completely in the private sector" would ensure the safety of such plants and provide an adequate test of their financial soundness.

Libertarians, according to Evers, have a unique position in the debate over nuclear power. "We are neither for nor against nuclear power itself," he said. "What we are for are the rights of taxpayers, property owners, and possible accident victims."

Libertarians maintain, Evers said, that the very existence of the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission and of any federal coverage of liability for damage from large accidents weakens safety at nuclear plants. "These government roadblocks to safety should be removed from the picture, and full liability for accidents should rest with the power companies. The tough standards that the private insurance industry would impose on nuclear plants would guarantee safety much better than a federal agency that is governed solely by political pressures."

"Is nuclear power commercially sound?" asked Evers. "We and all other members of the public cannot find out. It's impossible to know." The reason this cannot be discovered, according to the Libertarians, is that the present structure of the nuclear industry prevents us from ever finding out.

"Right now," said Evers, "the taxpayer is paying for research and development and for the fuel enrichment cycle, and the taxpayer could easily be saddled with the damages from a big accident. These costs should be borne by the industry."

"At the same time, the nuclear industry is being bled to death through endless hearings and delays plus burdensome rules and restrictions. The outlandish longterm security requirements, for example, that the NRC has imposed at Diablo Canyon have held up the project and added millions to its cost."

Only, according to Evers, if the nuclear industry paid its own way in full and if it were not burdened with the costs of politically-motivated regulations could we see if nuclear power would succeed in the marketplace. Then, according to Evers, the plants would be "safer by far," and "taxpayers would be protected from further raids on their pocketbooks."