Census Project Leads LP's Agenda

The Libertarian Party's major project for the near future will be one urging resistance to the upcoming 1990 U.S. Census.

The Census, conducted by the Department of Commerce every ten years to update population figures and compile other demographic statistics, is scheduled to begin April 1. Census officials hope for public cooperation and mention legal penalties against "resisters" only when necessary.

April 1st has been named "Census Day" by Census officials, but the day is still known to the rest of us as "April Fool's Day." The irony will certainly be pointed out by Libertarians active in local protest activities planned for the day.

The LP has recently put out a Census resistance mailing to over 20,000 people including the entire LP membership and contributor lists and "The Pragmatist" subscribers list. The mailing includes a card for recipients to attach to their Census Forms before returning them. The card informs Census officials that the individual has not cooperated fully, either by refusing to answer the questionnaire at all or by answering only those questions relating to the head-count, as authorized by the Constitution. (The card allows individuals to check one of these two options.)

In two to three weeks, a decision will be made regarding whether to mail to additional lists, including the "Reason" magazine and the Ron Paul campaign lists.

There are currently three bills before Congress which will, to various degrees, do what the LP has called for: repeal the penalties for non-cooperation with the Census. Currently, failure to fully complete the Census Form (the short form has 19 questions; the long form has 65) can result in a $100 fine. A fine of $500 can be issued to those knowingly falsifying information on a Census Form. Please write your congressmen informing them of your support for these pieces of legislation.

And Other Items of Note . . .

- Following last month's Liberty Pledge Newsletter mention of Nancy Lord's campaign for Mayor of Washington, D.C., we have heard from many people interested in contributing to her campaign. Contributions can be made to "Lord for Mayor" and sent to the LP National Headquarters address for proper forwarding.

- Tax Protest Day, coming up on April 16, will be the LP's next major project. For further details on local activities, please contact your State Chair.
Curt Kastens' elusive Libertarian dream

Story by Barbara Frye

As part of a fourteen-year study of people who feel that way, he adds.

Like most groups on the fringe, it's easy to dismiss them out of hand. But when you take working together over the ether activities with the potential that

For example— it doesn't work. Nowhere has there been a true, complete and open political party in this century. As a result, the keeping of moral authority in society is a function of an almost total loss of faith in self, in government. As long as we interfere with the thoughts and actions of people, there is no way to achieve real, lasting change.

Miller, who founded the Co-axial library, remains a member of the Co-axial committee. Ed Clark, in 1980. He convinced me that it was a real thing, that it could work. In the late 1970s, the Co-axial library was converted into a real library. Kastens, who also worked on the project, said that he was convinced of the idea by the time he was a teenager.

The party's national officer is David Belleau, a lawyer and political activist from Augusta, who joined the Co-axial library when he was 13 years old. As a result, he said, the party has a strong, long-held tradition of political activism. Kastens, who is also a lawyer, said that he was convinced of the idea by the time he was a teenager.

As a result, he indicated that people should be told to be aware of the freedom of expression, the right to associate, to speak, to write, and to assemble. With a little bit of armchair psychiatry, it is clear that people want to be able to think for themselves, to be able to express their ideas, to be able to associate with others who have similar ideas, to be able to speak, to write, to assemble. With a little bit of armchair psychiatry, it is clear that people want to be able to think for themselves, to be able to express their ideas, to be able to associate with others who have similar ideas, to be able to speak, to write, to assemble.

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FORT COLLINS, Mary Margaret came to appreciate five of a given population shares the same ideological point of view, that group city will be a much nicer place to live. Mary Margaret concluded ongoing personal project of Mary organized and fastidiously complete—they're only winding up in the Commerce. Over the past three years she has sent hundreds of packets filled with potential employers and propaganda from the Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce. The booster kits are carefully produced by Bellevue's Tom Isenberg and Kirkland's Dave Van Horn. It appears at 8 p.m. the first Friday each month.

ISENBERG, a technical writer for a Redmond computer software firm, is the moderator of the all-volunteer production. "We take one issue each month," he said, "usually one that doesn't get full treatment in the other media. We've handled drug prohibition, how government rent control is one of the main triggers of homelessness, the day care dilemma, gun control, environmental issues, and other subjects. "We try to get guests from a wide spectrum," Isenberg said. "We get lay people and we get people who worry about these issues for a living. For example, we've had architects discussing problems with zoning laws, and school teachers talking about the failure of public education. "Dave Van Horn and I have done eight shows of The Libertarian Alternative series now. When I first started working in public access television I produced a single feature segment at a time and tried to find somebody with a series who would use it—or I appeared as a guest on other producers' shows. But as Dave and I got more experience we decided to do our own series."

ISENBERG HAS BEEN a Libertarian for many years and now serves as an elected official of the Washington State Libertarian Party. He said, "I've always been frustrated by the fact that we don't get much coverage in the media. I was introduced to public access cable TV by another Libertarian, Larry Hays of Bellevue, who was learning to produce public access programming. He suggested that I check it out and showed me the ropes at I-1 studios in Seattle.

"Scott Scowcroft of TCI studios helped me learn to produce television shows. It's a little involved finding people to help with service function, finding producers and camera operators—it's all volunteer labor done by people who really believe in public access TV. "When the idea for the Libertarian series came along Dave and I pretty well knew what we were doing. I've got each show down to the standard TV talk show formula. I find many of our guests through my contacts within the Libertarian Party."

How does a Libertarian who opposes most forms of government intervention feel about working in a medium that is mandated by government? (In return for the cable monopoly, local government requires the cable company to provide studio facilities for public access productions and to broadcast the results.)

Isenberg says, "I figure it this way: It's a cable monopoly, so I don't feel too much pity for a cable company whining that they have to provide these expensive facilities. If it were up to me there wouldn't be a cable monopoly and then I wouldn't take advantage of the situation."

What's on Isenberg's agenda? "We're going to get a little more technologically advanced and do some location shooting. I hope to see well-edited complex stories in our series soon."

Ron Arnold is a Bellevue writer and media consultant. His column appears on Tuesdays.


FORT COLLINS, MOVE OVER

Mary Margaret Glenie is trying to convince people to move to Fort Collins. Over the past three years she has sent out hundreds of packets filled with demographic profiles, newspaper clippings about the economy, a list of potential employers and propaganda from the Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce.

The booster kits are carefully organized and fastidiously complete—chamber of commerce dream. Except they're only winding up in the mailboxes of Libertarians. It's all part of Freedom Now, the ongoing personal project of Mary (as she prefers to be called) to bring a thousand Libertarians to the sedate northern Colorado college town of 95,000. Mary Margaret concluded several years ago that if just 1 percent of a given population shares the same ideological point of view, that group could have a profound impact on the rest of the population, politically and socially. "If you are out of step with the political system, that's how you survive—by coming together," she says. With a thousand Libertarians coming to Fort Collins, Mary Margaret figures, the city will be a much nicer place to live.

At least it will be a much more Libertarian place to live—something Mary Margaret came to appreciate five years ago. She was an active figure in the state's Republican party when someone accused her of being a Libertarian, she recalls. She mistook the word for "libertine"—a slut—and got insulted. But after consulting the dictionary, she decided her critic was right. Mary Margaret soon relinquished her position as a national Republican delegate to become a Libertarian delegate. Her ensuing battles on local issues—fighting against tax-subsidized development projects, for instance—led the daily paper to dub her a political "terrorist" and "Fort Collins' Moammar Khadafy.

Those descriptions don't jibe with Libertarians' fundamental belief in "non-aggression," especially by government. "By definition, a Libertarian will leave me alone," she explains. "With a higher percentage of Libertarians [in Fort Collins], other people would understand our peaceful nature."

Though libertarian ideals have been around as long as our government, she says, the political party is relatively new. It was founded in Colorado in reaction to Richard Nixon's wage and price controls, and the state ranks eighth in the country in Libertarian population. Mary Margaret describes the average Libertarian as having a "scientific profile" or being a "free spiner and considers "live and let live" the ideal motto. The two U.S. politicians who had the worst impact on personal freedom, she says, were Franklin Roosevelt for his "New Deal" policies and Lyndon Johnson for his "Great Society" programs.

Unlike those cornerstones of liberal Democratic values, the Libertarians are dedicated to minimizing government control, which they view as coercion even when well intentioned. Their approach would stimulate free enterprise, says Mary Margaret, which is more efficient than bureaucracy. She envisions such results as a privately owned police force keeping peace in a Libertarian town. "If your goal is to have the greatest freedom, education, health care and standard of living, I'm not sure what the Libertarian way of living produces that goal," she says.

Tired of constantly fighting the system on her own, Mary Margaret created Freedom Now three years ago to enlist some help. She asks recipients of her packets to send S6 to help underwrite her coping and mailing costs. So far she's received 600 serious inquiries about moving to Fort Collins—"about half plan to move here," she says—but only a couple of dozen have made the leap.

Moving to a new town is a momentous decision, she admits, and that's why her kits are so complete. She even includes information from Employment Connections, a Westminster-based employment agency. Bob Wayand, who runs the agency, says he's not a Libertarian but agrees with a lot of the party's philosophies. "I want as little involvement of government in my life as possible," he says.

The Fort Collins booster groups whose material is included in Freedom Now kits don't mind the exposure, either. "I'm not sure we have a formal reaction to her," says chamber Executive Vice President Mike Hauser. "The great thing about this country is we have the right to pursue any political belief we want. Besides, facetiously speaking, I'd say that's an unusual form of economic development."

Ed Stoner, executive director of the Fort Collins Inc. economic development group, opposed Mary Margaret on her anti-development battles when he sat on the city council. Yet he echoes Hauser's tolerant attitude toward Freedom Now. "We have not put any effort into encouraging or discouraging her; we have no opposition at all; the Libertarian point of view is not adversarial to Fort Collins Inc.'s goal," he says. "It's mostly to have more people to associate with who have like minds—I can understand that."

Mary Margaret is optimistic that those like minds will eventually arrive. "There are a couple million Libertarians on the planet," she notes, "and I'm only looking for a thousand."

—Gil Asakawa