Marrou Notches Victory in NH

Andre Marrou and the Libertarian Party shocked the media and public on Feb. 18, primary election day in New Hampshire, by seizing victory in the first ballots counted and grabbing the early headlines out of the state. All that day, Marrou "was the leading presidential candidate of all 63 who were in the New Hampshire primary, and people treated me that way," he said.

It all started just a few minutes past midnight when the 31 voters in the town of Dixville Notch cast their ballots in the presidential primary. Media representatives always attend this event and publicize the returns around the world. To everyone's surprise, Marrou defeated all of the other candidates, including President Bush. Returns showed 11 votes for Marrou, nine for Bush, three each for Bill Clinton and Pat Buchanan, and some other candidates receiving the rest. Nearly 36 percent of the voters had chosen Marrou.

"If we can tell the people who we are in a professional, upbeat way, they are going to respond at the polls," said Bill Winter, LPNH chair.

The "Dixville Notch strategy" was originally designed by Jim McClarin, the New Hampshire coordinator for the Marrou/Lord Campaign, and others. "I felt it was important to gradually introduce the people there to libertarianism" by setting up subscriptions for them to Reason magazine, and about seven or eight months ago I bought them subscriptions to Libertarian Lines, the NH state party newsletter," McClarin said.

Television and newspaper wire services found themselves at a loss to explain the Dixville Notch results, but soon picked up the news with a wide range of stories, photos, and interviews.

"I must have done 30 or 40 interviews today, certainly more than I've ever done before," Marrou explained. "They included people like the Associated Press, Time magazine, CBS, CNN, C-SPAN, NBC, and lots more. There is a tremendous response out there."

"We accomplished the objective of this campaign which was to break in to the national media awareness," McClarin said. "People are starting to recognize me and wave at me. We've got a good image, and we need to build on that. A happy image, a family image, an image of people who do have a sense of humor," Marrou said.

"America now knows the Libertarian Party has arrived."

The Marrou/Lord Campaign spent about $30,000 in New Hampshire, much less than all of the so-called "major candidates." Still, the results showed that the LP message was not only heard, but was accepted as well.

From the beginning of the Marrou/Lord Campaign, New Hampshire was targeted as a unique opportunity for the LP to break through to the national media and demonstrate the party's national strength and message.

New Hampshire's state LP is one of the strongest and most rapidly growing affiliates in the country. Led by Bill Winter, the LPNH has gained respect from both media and citizens in the past few years. Since the middle of last year, two elected state representatives, Calvin Warburton and Finlay Rothhaus, have joined the LP.

Another important factor in the New Hampshire strategy was the fact that since the LP gained major party status in 1990, New Hampshire voters who had registered as Democrats and Republicans in the past could, for this one primary only, ask to vote in the Libertarian primary. This meant that many NH voters could cast a protest vote against all of the media-labeled "major candidates" by voting for Marrou, but those voters would have to ask for the Libertarian ballot upon entering the voting booth.

Although final results were not available at press time, it appeared Marrou would receive 2,500 votes statewide.

"Now there is going to be a large pool of Libertarian voters that we are going to be able to tap into for the first time ever," Winter said. "We are going to have names and addresses for people who voted for Andre that we'll be able to get from the voter lists. So we are going to be able to launch our biggest-ever mail outreach campaign to all these voters and try to convince them to become paid members of the LP. And that's going to be our number-one priority following the primary."

Marrou said much of the credit for the success in New Hampshire should be given to Jim McClarin, Tonie Nathan, who volunteered her time to help with media relations and publicity, Bob Stevensen, and Norma Segal.

Marrou said he would be building on the New Hampshire success by entering five other primaries that the LP is eligible to enter—Nebraska, North Dakota, Idaho, Montana, and California.

"We are going to try to get some publicity and votes and build the party at the same time. It is an ideal opportunity to do it and obviously things are looking good now," Marrou said.

"In addition to getting votes for the national ticket," Marrou added, "we ought to be trying to elect, and of course re-elect here in New Hampshire the two legislators who converted, but elect at least one Libertarian legislator, hopefully half a dozen or so across the United States in November."
Ballot Access Excitement Begins

From the Chair

Mary Gingell, LP National Chair

I get the feeling that we are going to make our 50-state goal

90,000 raw signatures, and we have to pay 10 cents per signature to get the state government to validate them. But we have a new coordinator, Andrew Spark, on board to find, train, and oversee paid petitioners. We have about 15,000 valid signatures in hand. Florida LP volunteers, under the direction of Paula Zimmer-Crooby, have promised to collect 18,000, leaving Spark responsible for the remaining 57,000 signatures.

Massachusetts—Volunteers in New England have set up a subcommittee of the National Committee, called Ballot Access New England (BANE), under the leadership of veteran Massachusetts activist Les Nason. BANE has already raised over $5,000 to be used specifically for New England ballot drives. And Massachusetts executive director Gary Kendall has organized a massive volunteer effort in Massachusetts that he hopes will be able to complete the 10,000 valid signatures in Massachusetts drive entirely with volunteers, leaving BANE funds to be spent on other New England drives.

Kentucky—After much bureaucratic wrangling, U.S. Senate candidate Jim Ridenour has gotten the Kentucky secretary of state to approve a combined U.S. Senate/Presidential petition, which will save us signature costs in that state. The volunteer effort there is getting underway, and paid petitioners Al Anders and Scott Kohlhaas will be working in Kentucky on weekends.

West Virginia—A long-time libertarian activist has tentatively agreed to run for governor. Our new, enthusiastic West Virginia LP chair Brian Horton is organizing the drive to get both the gubernatorial candidate and Marrou on the state ballot. One percent for governor in West Virginia's general election will give the LP automatic ballot status through 1996. Our gubernatorial candidate will be running against Demo-cratic incumbent Gaston Caperton, who received an "F" grade from the Cato Institute for his tax-and-spend policies.

Missouri—Volunteer petitioning is under way, as LP activists Ken Bush and Eric Harris lobby in favor of recently proposed legislation that would reduce the signature requirement to 10,000, and do away with congressional district requirements.

Virginia—Our bill to reduce the number of signatures required in Virginia due to the redistricting not yet being finalized has passed the Virginia House. If this bill becomes law, National Ballot Chair and Virginia resident Bill Redpath is optimistic that Virginians will be able to complete their drive with an all-volunteer program.

We still have a long way to go, but as more and more volunteers and paid drives gear up, I get the feeling that we are going to make our 50-state goal.

Help Support Ballot Access in Your State

ABORTION CHOICE: In Harmony or In Conflict with the Rest of the Libertarian Party Platform?
For this new LFL flyer, send SASE to: Libertarians for Life 13424 Hathaway Dr., #8 Wheaton, MD 20906, 301/660-2141 Doris Gordon, National Coordinator

CO Election Going to Court

A controversy surrounding the results of a 1991 city council election in Colorado is now scheduled to go to the Colorado Court of Appeals.

Last November, Katherine Schwinn, a member of the state LP, thought she had won a seat on the city council in Canon City. Election night the vote totals were reported as 709 votes for Schwinn, 708 for write-in candidate John Battin. Fremont County LP chair Philip Freytag explained that the "city clerk refused to certify the results of the election because one member of the three-member canvassing board, a municipal judge who is not a resident of the city, wanted to count write-in votes that the counting judges did not count." The city council sent the controversy to the district court, where a judge decided to assume jurisdiction and count all ballots himself. The new results gave the seat to the write-in candidate Schwinn and the LP have appealed the case to the state Court of Appeals.

LP members and backers of the appeal claim state law has been violated because the canvassing board opened the ballot box without a court order, that the canvassing board exceeded its authority, and that the ballots were not properly secured.

All legal costs in this controversy have been covered by contributions from local residents.

 Libertarian Party NEWS

Libertarian Party NEWS is the official newspaper of the Libertarian Party of the United States. Opinions, articles, and advertisements contained herein do not necessarily represent official Party positions unless so indicated.

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"You Libertarians Have a 24 Carat Gold Idea - Freedom - And You Can't Even Give It Away. Ever Ask Yourself Why?"

- Congressman Sam Steiger, July 1976

Why isn't everybody a libertarian? Why aren't people breaking down the doors to join the Libertarian Party?

When you explain libertarianism, why aren't people dropping to their knees and protesting, "All my life, with open arms, I've waited for you and your message. How do I join? When's the next meeting? What can I do? Is there a limit to how much money I can give?..."

Is There Something Wrong With Our Libertarian Ideas?

You be the judge.

Re-examine the political and economic ideas of Ayn Rand and Ludwig Von Mises, of Hazlitt and Hayek, of Friedman and Rothbard, of Bastiat and Heinlein, of Jefferson and Paine.

Browse through the catalogues of Laissez Faire Books, Freedom's Forum Books and Liberty Tree.

Scan the policy reports of The Cato Institute, The Heartland Institute and The Reason Foundation.

Leaf through Reason and Liberty and Freedom Network News and The Pragmatist. Or this issue of LP News.

Need more proof? Compare our libertarian ideas to the statist ideas you read in newspapers and magazines. To those you see on television. Liberal and conservative, socialist and fascist, totalitarian and populist.

Not even close, is it? Liberty wins hands down.

If You Advertise An Outstanding Product and No One Buys It, You Don't Say, 'Damn People, They're Idiots.' You Change The Ad.

Some libertarians have a 'More Rational Than Thou' attitude. Or 'Smarter Than Thou'. Or 'More Principled Than Thou'. Or 'More Ethical Than Thou'.

Their discussions are lectures. They try to convince by beating the other person into submission. They behave like torments, not mentors.

And when they fail to persuade, they blame the listener. The other person isn't rational enough or intelligent enough or good enough. It's always his fault.

That is the road to permanent failure.

Failure is feedback. It's telling us to do something different.

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How I Raised Myself From Failure to Success In Communicating Libertarian Ideas.

In 1976, I was the Arizona Libertarian Party candidate for Mo Udall's Congressional Seat.

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Ever so often, people would try to agree. But I didn't notice. I couldn't take 'Yes' for an answer.

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I began reading the first of over 1,000 books. On psychology, epistemology, semantics, salesmanship, cybernetics, self-help, hypnosis, communication and creativity. I interviewed people who excelled in communication and persuasion. I asked a lot of questions and took notes. I observed and listened.

I applied the scientific method to everything I learned. I tested every approach, technique and format.

In 1977, I published 'How To Get Converts Left & Right' in Reason Magazine. I followed this up with 'The Late, Great Libertarian Macho Flash' in 1978. 'The Militant Mentality'. 'The Myth of Mushrooms In the Night'. 'Leveraging Liberty With Language'. 'Intellectual Judo'.

I began conducting seminars and Marathon Weekend Workshops on The Art of Political Persuasion in 1978. In the United States and Canada. My education had just begun.

After 12 years of study, research and testing, I distilled and produced The Essence of Political Persuasion, a 3 hour audio tape learning program.

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'I have a set of these 'Political Persuasion' tapes. I had to learn before I could teach it. Thank you very much, Michael Emerling.'

Andre Marrou, speaking at the 1990 California Libertarian Convention said,

'The Essence of Political Persuasion' is bold, imaginative and brilliant. It is the most innovative and effective program of its kind.

Vince Miller, President of I.S.I.L. (International Society for Individual Liberty) says,

'Michael Emerling's 'Political Persuasion' tapes are superb. I have listened to them many times. I continue to be impressed by the power and sophistication of Michael's techniques.'

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Michael Emerling has ghost-written 6 books, 1 Doctoral Dissertation and 300 speeches for business people. He was the Organizer & Fundraiser of the '88 Marrou VP Campaign, PROJECT 51-'92, and Marrou For President Campaign. Between Fall 1987 and Fall 1991, Michael Emerling personally raised $519,344 for these projects. (Source: F.E.C.)
Colorado LP Taking Case to U.S. Supreme Court

Alabama
Advertising executive Glynn Reeves of Montgomery announced his candidacy for the 2nd U.S. Congressional seat on the steps of the state capitol. Reeves received excellent media coverage.

California
According to Mark Hinkle, LPC Northern vice chair, the Santa Clara LP is spearheading the drive against local tax increases. Dave Thomas, local party activist, wrote the three arguments and the rebuttals that will appear in the voters’ pamphlet for the special election on April 14. The issues involved are a bond issue of $40 million for the Orchard School District, a bond issue of $55 million for Sunnyvale Elementary School District; and a parcel tax of $60 per year for the Alum Rock Union Elementary School District. In the last election, the local Santa Clara LP campaigned successfully against three similar tax increases.

Also in Santa Clara County, Jon Petersen is running for Morgan Hill City Council (10 miles south of San Jose). Morgan Hill has a population of 24,000. He has the backing of a large “taxpayers watchdog” organization since he was very active in their campaign to successfully recall three of the five current council members (they basically went back on their word about putting a proposed utility tax up for a vote of the townpeople and instead just voted it in themselves).

All charges have been dropped against Dixianne Hawks for jury tampering in Butte County, CA. She had been charged with jury tampering for handing out “fully informed jury” information outside the courthouse in Oroville, where her son was being tried for violating the drug prohibition laws, and five of the recipients were juries in the case. In dropping the charges, the local district attorney said he didn’t want to give FLJA supporters a soapbox.

An LP member, who is also a member of the U.S. Air Force stationed at Travis AFB, was sent in a copy of his pay statement recently. Printed on his statement was the “Air Force Vision Statement” which said in part: “Air Force people building the world’s most respected Air and Space Force—global power (italics added) and reach for America.” The LP member commented: “This should give you an idea of the government mind set.”

Colorado
The state party recently asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review a case in which Robin Heid was kept off the November 1990 ballot. Heid was the LP’s candidate for governor, but the petition to place his name on the ballot was rejected by the Colorado secretary of state, relying on a statute that requires that a candidate be nominated by petition be registered as “unutilized” for 12 months. The CLP’s challenge to this rule is based on the principle that a political party has a constitutional right to determine who are its members and who is best qualified to represent its views as a candidate. Heid was a member of the LP and was qualified to be the Libertarian candidate under the CLP’s rules.

Activities noted in newsletters and news releases

"Who is more fit to say who should represent us—our members, voting in our convention, or the Secretary of State?" asked Doh, CLP communications director.

The Colorado Supreme Court, in a 6-1 decision, ruled against the CLP and Heid last October. But the CLP decided to appeal this ruling in light of an opinion issued by the U.S. Supreme Court last month. The U.S. Supreme Court clarified the criteria to be used in deciding ballot access cases, stating that the Constitution protects the “right of citizens to create and develop new political parties.”

The CLP’s case is being handled by the ACLU of Colorado.

Florida
The state LP has opened a new headquarters at 613 Executive Dr., Winter Park 32789.

Larry Thornberry, ex-secretary for U.S. Congressman Andy Ireland, is the campaign manager for the five Libertarian candidates for Hillsborough County Commission.

Georgia
Jim Hudson has announced his plans to seek the LP nomination for the U.S. Senate. Hudson, current vice chairman of the state party, was the manager of the 1990 gubernatorial campaign of Carole Ann Braden. The Hudson campaign will focus on gun ownership rights, health care policy, and the economy. The Hudson campaign will be the first Libertarian campaign for federal office in Georgia.

State party chairman John Taylor is now a co-host on the weekly current affairs program, “Hometown U.S.A.,” produced by and shown on Channel 34 in Athens.

Maine
LP presidential candidate Andre Marrou made a swing through the state in late January and early February. He spoke in Portland, Bangor, Bucksport, and Rockland, as well as Bowdoin College and Bates College. State party activists Nick Youngers and Anne Alden coordinated the Marrou visit.

Michigan
The Taxpayers Association of Michigan, headed by Dick Jacobs of Holland, has launched a statewide petition drive to constitutionally lower and limit the state’s income and property taxes. Over 250,000 signatures will need to be gathered, but the start of this drive comes less than eight months after the association’s kick-off of a drive to limit the terms of politicians which successfully gathered 400,000 signatures.

Missouri
LP activist Ogden D. Scoville of Springfield is actively campaigning for governor. Scoville, who was nominated by the state LP committee, has already appeared on a number of television news shows, including a five and one-half minute segment of the Springfield ABC affiliate.

The party has a record number of candidates for the 1992 elections. The state party fielded 31 candidates.

Robert Lurvey was elected chair of the Greene County LP affiliate, and is busy directing and coordinating party organizing and petitioning efforts.

The LP of Southwest Missouri held a Christmas party last weekend and December headquarters were moved to 205 W. Kearney St., Springfield. Reports are that 23 activists attended.

Nevada
The state party is getting lots of publicity for two petitions they have submitted to the secretary of state. Tamara Clark, NatCom member and state party activist, submitted a referendum petition to abolish the new business employee tax. Jim Burns submitted a petition to limit terms of elected officials in the state.

New Jersey
Membership in the state party grew 25 percent overall from 1990 to 1991, according to state party treasurer Lou Stefanelli.

New Mexico
Jim Brown is running an active campaign for councilor, District 3, in Rio Rancho. Brown has issued news releases which address his positions on local issues, state issues, privacy, justices, and much more. Each release begins with “I am a libertarian.” His release on “Government” states in part, “Don’t expect government to take care of you—take care of yourself. You’ll be better off in the long run.”

North Carolina
Five members of the state party attended a Democratic Party sponsored town meeting in Raleigh to discuss alternatives for nationalized health care. LP activist David Knight drew a round of applause when he criticized big federal govenment for health insurance when we are still stinging from the S&L failure of federal regulation. Party troops also passed out about 300 flyers offering freedom as an alternative to the proposed health care proposals.

The state party produced three different hand-outs on health care, and you can get copies by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Lynn Fogwell, 1708 Bayfield Trail, Raleigh, NC 27614.

Pennsylvania
Things are really picking up in the state. The number of Libertarian affiliate groups has doubled in the last year. Local activities have really increased, and college groups, including students at the University of Pittsburgh, are also gearing up for the full election.

The party is also developing a good slate of candidates, many for the state house. State chair Randy Mahaffey said, “All three Libertarian groups interested in running this year, show up at the convention or call me.”

Petitioning for ballot access will begin at the state convention in Carlisle, March 13-15. Odhner hopes that only volunteer help will be needed to collect the approximately 38,000 signatures needed this year.

South Dakota
Gus Hercules of Rapid City is making it “a three-way race for U.S. Senate,” according to a South Dakota newspaper headline. The state party has submitted enough petition signatures to qualify for its own column on the ballot.

Hercules said he wants “to educate people about the philosophy of the LP. We like to think of ourselves as defenders of liberty.”

Texas
LP NatCom member Gary Johnson received 20 percent of the vote in a three-way non-partisan race for the Austin Independent School District. The election, held in January, forced a runoff between the two front runners who voted for Johnson’s endorsement. Both candidates have made property tax reform and saving the money the key issues in his race. Johnson hopes to influence his former challengers. Johnson carried two out of 17 precincts and tied for first in another.

Over 100 candidates have filed for the 1992 general election, including Andre Marrou and Nancy Lord. Eleven of the races are contested within the party, and LP candidates will be determined at various county and district conventions.

LP National Executive committee member Diane Pelcher organized a candidate campaign workshop in Dallas in late February. The workshop was conducted by Michael Emerling and featured an appearance by Andre Marrou.

Michael Lee, chair of the Dallas County affiliate party, said working with other groups is helping to improve the local LP organization. “We have actively courted other organizations who do not know our entire platform and may never agree with it 100 percent,” he said. “They agree with part of it strongly, agree with most of it at least weakly, and are neutral (and willing to think about the remainder).” These other organizations include an anti-income tax group, a pro-gun rights group, a pro-legal reform organization, and the pro-legalization of drugs organization.

Bill Walker of Balch Springs has been going to gun shops with libertarian literature, and several of the businesses have agreed to distribute this information to their customers.

International
Tom Gey, a former LP activist and congressional candidate from California, is running for president of Czechoslovakia, where he is Political and Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Slovakian Republic.
LP National Chair Gingell Responds to Bush

The following excerpts are from a news release issued by the Libertarian Party in response to the State of the Union speech by President Bush.

The Libertarian Party reacted unfavorably to President Bush's State of the Union address in late January.

"As a headline on a Boston Globe editorial once said about Jimmy Carter, 'More Muhsh from the Wimp,'" quipped LP national chair Mary Gingell.

"This is what we were waiting for? This is why the President said we should 'stay tuned?' No wonder the White House was lowering expectations. If this is the Super Bowl of speeches, George fumbled," Gingell said.

"The Republican White House and the Democratic Congress are to blame for the recession. They have had their chance. Their policies have failed. The American people want to hear another voice," she added.

"The LP candidate for President, Andre Marrou, would have told the American people the truth and specified fundamental changes to solve our problems."

"The President's tax cut proposals are ridiculously inadequate and hypocritical," Gingell said. "For example, the only reason we have the job-destroying tax on the boat industry is because President Bush signed it into law," she observed.

"If the President really wanted to do something about taxes, he should have vetoed all of the new taxes and tax increases he signed into law in 1990 when he broke his promise 'Read my lips, no new taxes.'"

"The overburdened American taxpayers need across-the-board tax relief in the form of greatly reduced tax rates. Instead, the President only offered a few complicated tax gimmicks that create jobs for tax accountants and attorneys. Libertarians would repeal the federal income tax entirely," Gingell said.

Gingell called the military spending cuts insignificant.

"A $60 billion cut in Pentagon spending over five years averages only $10 billion a year. That's about 3 percent a year from the current $300 billion military budget," she said. "The Cold War is over. The Warsaw Pact has folded. There isn't even a Soviet Union an any more. The U.S. is not in a war. But, the President just wants to cut military spending next year by 3 and 4 percent? What happened to the peace dividend?"

"We need to bring home all U.S. troops from overseas and require our rich allies to pay for their own defense. We need to close obsolete and redundant military bases here at home," she added.

"Gingell criticized Bush for increasing federal spending for domestic programs at a time of a record-setting deficit."

"The higher appropriation for the War on Drugs will be a complete waste. It is time to admit that this is a repeat of Prohibition and an expensive failure," she said.

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- DR. SVETOZAR FEJOVICH - authority on history of conflict in Yugoslavia. ISIL. Board member & Prof. at Texas A&M.
- TOM GREY - Economic & Political Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Slovakian Republic (also LP Member & former Congressional candidate).
- VICTOR DAVIDOFF - Director of the Free Market Foundation/Moscow & ISIL. Rep. for Russia.
- Representatives from Polish Krakow Industrial Society will explain the transitional process for businesses formerly operating in the underground economy.
- Plus RICHARD EBELING, JACOB HORNBERGER and many others.

The Berlin Wall has fallen, the Soviet Empire has crumbled, and now it's time to start rebuilding the societies ravaged by socialism. Indeed, solving the thorny problems of economic recovery, nationalism and ethnic violence presents an enormous challenge to libertarians both here and abroad.

ISIL's 1992 world conference will bring together libertarian and classical-liberal intellectuals, academics, students, and government officials from across Eastern Europe and the world to seek alternatives to statism. Of particular importance will be the debates with Dr. Svetozar Fejovic, Leon Louw and Frances Kendall re defining the conflicts in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Republics.

Registration Costs and Information:
The entire conference, including all sessions, accommodations, all meals, a closing banquet and local sightseeing tour of a medieval castle is only $485.00. We have also scheduled a tour of beautiful Prague on the 9th (the day before the conference begins). This comes complete with 2-Star hotel accommodations, dinner and round trip charter airfare from Prague to Poprad ($125 -- highly recommended).

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   Name
   Address

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One of the most common complaints that Canadians give about their system is how long they have to wait for non-emergency treatment. For example, elective surgery is often delayed for months. Frequently, Canadians have spent a lot of time trying to be willing to grant unbearably large judgements when something goes wrong, even when there is not much evidence that the doctors could have reasonably prevented the results.

Part of the problem is due to unreasonable high expectations as to what can be expected from any doctor. Part of the problem is due to the fact that lawyers can often intimidate insurance companies into settling because the risk of loss is so high and the cost of litigation is so high even if the insurance company wins.

Naturally, the direct cost of malpractice insurance is added to the amount that is charged. What is often missed is that the risk of malpractice suits is so high, that many doctors feel compelled to do more tests and extra procedures than necessary out of self defense. The result again is much higher costs.

In addition, there is no real evidence that the increase in malpractice suits has actually reduced the number of bad doctors. The AMA and the State Licensing Board rarely discipline bad doctors, in spite of the fact that this is their justification for existence. Instead, they merely act like cartels.

Prolonging Death

One problem facing the medical profession is that 80 to 90 percent of medical costs incurred for most medical patients will be spent in the last six months of their lives. In countries with socialized medicine, dying people are sent home to die. In the U.S., people are not sent home until they are dead or bankrupt.

The cost implications of "heroic efforts" to keep people alive but non-functional are obvious. It makes good economic sense for doctors to use more and more sophisticated tests and techniques that keeps this situation alive. The current malpractice environment makes it virtually mandatory.

Few people want to put a price on human life. What they fail to realize is that socialized medicine does not give a choice. It lets them die. If the same practices were common in the U.S., costs would be much lower.

Subsidized Hospitals

Back in the late '70s and early '80s there was a major program by the federal govern- ment to promote the building and ex- panding of hospitals. The reason this pro- vided was the funds to operate those hos- pitals, and there emerged a substantial level of excess capacity.

It is typical that doctors are pressured to handle more cases on an "in patient" rather than "out patient" basis and are encouraged to extend hospital stays. This is done because the fee for each day is raised to allow nurses to charge higher rates to the patients (who are covered by third party payers, both government and pri- vate) because of the higher costs.

As a side note, many hospitals found it necessary to locate "addiction treatment centers" and the like to expand demand for their empty beds. Generally, these treat- ments are covered by insurance and are also often expanded at the cost of the U.S. medical system.

Drugs and the FDA

The subject of how the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) works to delay pro- viding necessary and useful medicine is beyond the scope of this article. What is significant is that it drastically reduces the amount of new drugs (estimates are as high as $10 billion a year) and has a material impact on overall medical costs.

FDA is simple. The FDA is "responsible" for ensuring that all drugs pro- vided to the public are proven to be safe and effective. Unfortunately, that is not easy to do and is far from cheap. Not every drug will work with every patient. It has to predict every possible allergy or unusual side effect of every drug.

The U.S. has the most rigid testing requirements in the world and they add considerably to the cost of medicine. The cost of testing is imposed upon the drug companies and thus is added to the cost of the drugs. For some reason, it is rare to find advocates of socialized medicine that are interested in copying the more reason- able drug testing standards of Europe.

Along similar lines, the U.S. system restricts prescription of medication to MDs. In many counties, pharmacists are per- mission to prescribe standard medications without a doctor's prescription. As it is, trained pharmacists are often better quali- fied to know which medications should be prescribed and what their side effects are than the doctors. Of course, this reduces the number of $60 doctor visits merely to get a prescription.

Conclusion

It is extremely unlikely that Canadian style of socialized medicine could be implemented in the U.S. even if there were more support for it. Politically, we are stuck at a system which has bankrupt most insurance companies, thou- sands of trial lawyers, and private health care providers, while drastically limiting the earning power of doctors (who will cover their debts?). It would give a level of service that would be far lower than most employed Americans would accept—with extremely long waits and no controls.

What they propose is something like medicine from the same people that gave you DMV.

What is more likely is a system of mand- atory health insurance coverage by all businesses (which will drive many of them out of business), plus a massive expansion of the Medi-Cal type system to cover more of the poor. This would require upwards of $20 billion a year on top of already obscenely high federal budget deficits.

The free market approach of breaking the medical monopoly—giving patients more control over spending and incentives to shop, changing who gets the deduction for medical insurance, getting rid of the FDA, etc.—is not as politically "sexy" as programs which provide fee-for-service medical care, but it is much more likely to work.
T.J. Johnston, 42, has gained a reputation as one of the nation's most outspoken supporters of the Second Amendment. As founder of the California-based Gun Owners Action Committee, Johnston has emerged as a "radical," advocating the defiance of recently enacted gun control laws.

Born and raised in Orange County, CA, Johnston has lived in Anaheim all his life. Although he is the holder of a 5th Degree black belt in the martial arts, Johnston realizes the need for additional protection.

"Indeed, the only way to defend yourself against a firearm at a distance, is with a firearm," Johnston explained.

Johnston bought his first handgun at age 18, and soon began reading magazines on handguns, as well as other para-military type magazines.

"I found out that the world of handguns is extremely exciting and intriguing," he said. In 1984 he became an NRA-certified instructor in firearms.

"In 1988, we got together a bunch of shooters because we were concerned that indeed a lot of media and legislation was turning against the private ownership of firearms," Johnston said. At the time, the (CA) attorney general at the state started making noises about so-called assault weapons. Then there was the shooting in Stockton which started the ball rolling against so-called assault weapons.

All of my shooting friends, all of the people who are acquainted with my interest in shooting, came to me and said, "What can we do?" So we motivated shooters in the area to get out and protest, to get out and become politically active. We came to find out the American system of government, no longer is answerable to the people. It was a horrific shock to all of us. Because we thought if we wrote letters, if we made phone calls, then our legislators would follow along. In fact, our local state senator received calls eight to one against the assault weapons legislation, and she voted for it. No matter what we said or did, we could not impact them. I was horrified, shocked, I felt helpless. I said this is not the way our government is supposed to work. This is not representing the people. This is an aristocracy, a bureaucracy that is indeed independent of the people, and I became politically active at that point.

[Gun Owners Action Committee] is a 501(c)(4). Because we are politically active, we are tax-exempt, but we cannot accept tax-deductible donations. We started out as just a group to stop gun legislation, and found out that we needed to have some funds to buy signs, to send out letters, stuff like that. So then we formed a California corporation called the Gun Owners Action Committee.

NEWS: Is that what you do for a living?

Johnston: No. I'm full-time employed at the American Broadcasting Company, ABC television. I'm the production manager on a show called "General Hospital," and I'll be the stage production coordinator for the Academy Awards. That's what keeps me off the street. And then my public arts, firearms training, and political activism is what I do in my spare time.

NEWS: I understand you are currently advocating that gun owners defy recently enacted gun control laws in California.

Johnston: Absolutely. I'm going to be speaking at the Libertarian Convention in Anaheim. And the point that I'm going to bring up is where we as citizens are obligated to defy unjust laws passed by our government. It is a problem here in California that they have passed legislation that bans 54 arbitrarily defined firearms, and that's against the law. By the establishment of the 2nd Amendment we have every right to own so-called para-military styled firearms, by the fact that we are obligated to form a militia to defend our government. And we need the weapons in the militia. By the 1934 Firearms Act we can't own machine guns, which I think is a travesty. I think the average citizen should have the freedom to choose as long as they are responsible for it and with it. The point is that we find the government has passed these laws and it is our obligation to stand up for the higher law of the Constitution of the United States and defend them.

NEWS: What has been the reaction by other gun organizations and publications to your defiance?

Johnston: We find that the California Rifle and Pistol Association thinks of us as an embarrassment, because they would say that 'we really don't need those kind of rifles. We are bench-rest shooters, we aren't really interested in those rifles.' We find that some members of the old guard in the NRA are thinking we are a bunch of radicals who are bringing a bad name to the National Rifle Association. I'm a life member, and I'm running for the board of directors to see if we can change that attitude within the NRA. Because we are going to have to become radicals, that's the only way to stop the tremendous erosion of all our rights, including the right to keep and bear arms.

NEWS: What do you see in the future for gun control legislation in the U.S.?

Johnston: We are going to see a marked change in the elections of 1992, I think. I don't know, I hope that conservatism is on its way back, that people are tired of the extreme taxation, the over-regulation of business, the intervention of government in every facet of our lives, including firearms regulation. And that we are going to see, I hope, a tremendous upsurge of more conservative ideas in terms of who's elected to office in the 1992 elections. If not, if that does not hold true, then we are going to see for the next decade a continuing slide into liberalism, socialism, collectivism that is now so much a part of our local, state, and federal governments.

NEWS: What do you think we can do, other than vote, to fight this legislation?

Johnston: The most important thing people can do is to band together with like-minded people to form local activist groups who will meet every city council person and let them know they are interested in protecting individual rights, whether it be the gun issue or the right to own a business without having it licensed with every agency they want, they should have that every freedom, individually protected by that councilperson, by that county board member, by that school district member, and by that state legislator and federal legislator. That each citizen will organize with like-minded people to stand up for their individual rights until we get control of the government once again.

NEWS: You are obviously aware of the Libertarian Party's stand on the 2nd Amendment. Why do you think Libertarian Party candidates have such difficulty enlisting the support of gun owners?

Johnston: I would suggest to you that gun owners are the most fervent supporters of the Libertarian Party, at least in my neck of the woods. The Gun Owners Action Committee is mostly libertarian. The problem within mainstream America is the central mass doesn't think that their life is being encroached, infringed upon by government. So when the Libertarian Party talks about, we don't need laws making drugs illegal, we don't need laws for this and that, 'we find people in the center going I feel vulnerable, I do think we need some laws, and I find the Libertarians are extreme and therefore I won't support their party.'
Your Help Needed for Ballot Access Success

By Bill Redpath
LPBAC Chair

We'll soon be getting to the heart of the ballot access season, and the question no doubt foremost on the minds of LPers is, "Will we be in in all 50 states and D.C.?" The answer at this point is a definite maybe—but the goal is definitely in reach. We'll make it if the LP has enough money to pay petitioners where a volunteer effort alone won't get us there, and if we have a good volunteer effort everywhere we don't now have ballot access.

Before I get to the nitty-gritty details, an organizational note. At the December 1991 NatCom meeting, a reorganization of the LP was approved that did away with the self-funding status of the Ballot Access Committee. There are now no self-funding action committees in the Libertarian Party. As chair of the Ballot Access Committee, I supported this change; I thought there had been too many organizational "Chinese walls" built within the LP and thought this was a step in righting this situation.

Here are the specifics:

We are now certified for the ballot in 23 states. They are: Maine, New Hampshire, Delaware, Michigan, South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Wisconsin, Kansas, Texas, New Mexico, Idaho, Utah, Nevada, California, Oregon, Hawaii, Maryland, Montana, Wyoming, Alabama, South Dakota, and Vermont.

There are two states in which we won't have to petition, but are not yet certified: Arkansas and Louisiana.

We have finished petitioning and waiting for certification in two states: Arizona and Nebraska.

Petitioning is nearly complete in three states: North Carolina, Indiana, and Alaska (volunteer).

There are seven other states that should be done strictly through a volunteer effort: Washington, Minnesota, Ohio, New Jersey, Colorado, Tennessee, and Iowa. Of these, Ohio, New Jersey, and Colorado, and Iowa are already underway.

That leaves 14 other states that will be completed with a combination of volunteer and paid signatures. These states are: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. A few of these states may ultimately be done on a volunteer basis. The Florida ballot drive is approximately 20 percent done and gaining steam. The Oklahoma ballot drive will be underway by the time you read this. Other drives that can start now include Connecticut, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

At the December NatCom meeting, $185,000 was budgeted to be spent by the LP for ballot access in 1992, and the Marrou/Lord campaign has announced they intend to contribute $75,000 to ballot access. Combined, that's $260,000. Believe me, we're trying to work all of this so that amount will just get us on in 50 states and the District of Columbia. This compares to over $550,000 spent on ballot access in 1988. But to make it on that amount, the best LP volunteer petitioning effort ever is essential. Please help in your state by contacting your state ballot drive coordinator. If you don't know who your coordinator is, contact your state chair.

After that, it's a matter of money and personnel. If you're interested in petitioning on a full-time basis for compensation in one of the 14 states listed above, please drop me a line at the national office in Washington, DC. If you're interested in financing this effort, please send a check, payable to the LP, to the national office.

Only three non-Republican and non-Democratic presidential candidates in the last 75 years have made it onto the ballot in all states. Of course, the LP's Ed Clark was one of them; the other two were John Anderson and Lenora Fulani. With the right combination of resources, Andre Marrou will become the fourth. Whatever you can give to this effort will help get us there.

If you would like to help the LP secure a spot on the ballot in all 50 states and D.C. by volunteering your time or with a donation, write:

Bill Redpath
LPBAC
1528 Pennsylvania Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20003
202-543-1988

Libertarian Party Membership

Name
Address
Phone: Day Evening
*Employer *Occupation

*Federal Election Commission requires we ask.

GOVERNMENT MANDATED NOTICES

The United States Postal Service requires that
we notify you that LP NEWS subscription cost of $35 is included in your membership dues.

The Internal Revenue Service requires that we print contributions are not tax-deductible
on all fund-raising appeals.

Coming Soon!
"Paperwork Reduction Act Notice"

I want to join the Libertarian Party as a national member. I understand $25 of my membership fee goes toward my LP NEWS subscription. I wish to join in the category indicated ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

"I hereby certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals."

Signature
(required for membership only)

Yes! I want to help support the national Libertarian Party with a contribution of:

$25 $50 $100 $250 $500 $1,000 $2,500 $5,000 $10,000

| $1,000 | $ or $100/month | Life Benefactor |
| $500 | $ or $50/month | Patron |
| $250 | $ or $25/month | Sponsor |
| $100 | $ or $10/month | Sustaining |
| $25 | | Subscribing |

I am joining the Monthly Pledge Program in the amount indicated above. The Liberty Pledge News will be sent each month.

Please send a reminder notice each month.

Please charge my credit card (number above).

Send me information on automatic checking withdrawal.

Bill my: MC VISA Exp.

Acct. #

Signature

Liberatarian National Headquarters • 1528 Pennsylvania Ave., SE • Washington, DC 20003

Grand total raw signatures needed: 372550

Ballot Status Update

States where petitioning is going on or could be going on:

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Other states where petitioning will be needed:

Must wait until:

Virginia 14500 redistrict 21000 Aug 21
Illinois 25000 May 5 35000 Aug 3
North Dakota 4000 Jun 6 5700 Sep 4
Rhode Island 1000 Jun 8 1400 Sep 4
Minnesota 2000 Jul 7 2800 Sep 15
D.C. 2600 Jul 12 3700 Aug 18
New York 20000 Jul 21 28000 Aug 18
Washington 200 Jul 25 250 97850

Figures as of Feb. 14, 1992
Breaking the News Blackout
A Surprising Call to Action

By Perry Willis
Marrou/Lord Chief of Staff

We must understand what news is.

Our job, by contrast, is to make the news. If we do what we should, then we can supply journalists with product. If we don’t do it, but claim that we are, then we look foolish. We are not suppliers of news.

COROLLARY—we do not own the media companies. We have no right to coverage, no right to promote our message at their expense. If we want something they want in order to get what we want.

Journalists desire what all human beings desire. Understanding and respect. They’re just like us. They do the best they can. We must help them improve, not demand that they do so.

3) We must excel as news providers.

Talk’s cheap. Every two-bit group in America claims it deserves coverage. How do reporters decide?

The answer is in their point of view. There were 63 candidates in New Hampshire. Did all deserve equal value? Is it to each according to his need, from each according to his ability? Or to have a minimally informed audience about media coverage, or should candidates and parties make the front page the old fashioned way. You know, e-e-a-r-t-h-r-i-t-e-n-

We know that we’re the hottest thing since thermonuclear fusion, but they don’t know it. How could they? Why should they? Ignorance is an excuse. Saying you’re such and such doesn’t mean you are. They’re right to ask, “Where’s the proof?”

Let’s see you walk your talk. You claim you’re America’s fastest growing party, how about some numbers?

There’s more to a political party than a platform. There’s competence, efficacy. Which brings me to my next point.

By Ron Cackenber

A political party exists for the purpose of affecting public policy through the fielding and election of candidates to public office. While the Demopublicans consistently legislate, regulate, and tax away your freedoms, the Libertarian Party promotes individual liberty by offering candidates who believe in and advocate the libertarian principle of strictly limited government and the protection of individual rights. As a political party, running and electing pro-freedom candidates must be our first priority.

The goal of Campaign ’92, the Libertarian Party Campaign Committee, is to recruit well qualified candidates, to provide training in methods of effective campaigning, and to provide technical and financial support. We also provide election return news and help to retain ballot access.

The LP will field over 500 candidates in the 1992 elections cycle. Have you considered being one of them? There is no better way to get your ideas implemented than to place candidates in front of the voters.

People listen more openly to ideas that are presented to them by a human being, rather than by advertising or literature. If you’re like most Libertarian Party members, are sick of the status quo of politics, and are burning with the desire to do something to reverse the dwindling of our freedoms, I urge you to become a candidate in the cause of liberty.

There are many degrees of involvement for our candidates, ranging from simply being a line holder to running a full-time campaign to win. Just how much you should do will be determined by how much time and energy you wish to contribute and by the dual strategy of concentrating our resources of the LP’s candidates who have the best chance of winning, while offering the voters a Libertarian choice at every ballot position possible. Your candidacy can make an important contribution by helping both educating the public on the value of the freedom philosophy and by offering voters who agree with us the chance to voice their opinion at the ballot box.

Campaign ’92 Committee is ready to provide candidates with their support in a number of areas. A team of advisory experts is available for consulting on various aspects of campaigning. We have inexhaustible supply of literature, graphic, TV, radio, and print ads, and talking point papers for you to use. Also available are samples of campaign plans, commercials, polls, and fundraising letters. All candidates who contact Campaign ’92 will receive a candidates’ newsletter with tips on tactics and strategy, and with success stories from the field. In short, we can help you to win without having to waste time reinventing the wheel.

If you have any interest in becoming a candidate, or would like to know more of what it might entail, contact me at 181 New Hope Road, Locust Grove, GA 30248; or call my home at 404-867-6825. The campaign will be launched with a weekend campaign training seminar, beginning Friday evening, May 29-30, in Las Vegas, NV. Pricing will be $250 per day. Contact me for more information.

March 1992 Libertarian PARTY NEWS 9
Letters: Voting, Guns, Abortion, and More

Direct Vote
Tom Jones (Jan. 1991 NEWS) objects to the delegate method of selecting candidates and for making changes to the platform. He suggests direct voting by mail. I agree, that would be better, but then we wouldn’t have an excuse for having a convention, and conventions are fun, plus they attract media attention.

Instead of each state getting so many delegates and so many alternates, have everyone come to the convention in person and vote. Simple—one person, one vote. OK, not everyone is going to be able to make it. Those wags can sign a proxy to a person who is (1) willing and able to make the trip, and who (2) closely represents the values of the wag’s views. All proxies would be instantly revocable (in my vision) should the SOB vote the wrong way on any issue.

Every person making the trip could solicit proxies from whatever means he deems appropriate. The proxy holder could charge for their services and thus help finance the trip, or they could pay people for the privilege of representing them (buy their votes) and thus get support for a minority position. You could track proxies by name and phone number so conflicts could be easily resolved.

If it works, and I don’t know why it wouldn’t, we could propose this type of representation for local, state, and national government also.

Direct vote on all laws by proxy. No more messy general elections. Everyone would have a representative, not just the people who voted for a winning candidate. Pay would depend on how many persons a proxy holder represents and how much they pay him. The next logical step (as I see it) is being subject to only the laws and taxes that your proxy holder promotes. This could get some real competition going.

Frank J. Germann  
West St. Paul, MN

Letters from members and readers

were more open-minded, less doctrinaire than other people. It is disappointing to find, among your readers, so many knee-jerk reactions to a point of view which differs only in minor respects from their own.

Lastly, I would appreciate it if you could manage to spell my name correctly.

Charles Platt  
New York, NY

Interviews

Thank you very much for the interview with Carl Oglesby. This could be a superb section of the NEWS. Please identify the interviewer in the future. All interviews are not the same.

Paul E. O’Neil  
Fullerton, CA

Editor’s Note: Randy Lanham interviewed Carl Oglesby.

Education

Thank you for “Crisis in State Education” (Jan. 1992 NEWS). I find the information true, succinct, and the statistics useful. Thank you too for the names and addresses of organizations who offer information concerning the educational choice issue. Many thanks to George L. O’Brien for this article.

Every senior center in the nation would save a priceless purpose if they taught pre-schoolers and kindergarten children handwriting, spelling, sounds of the alphabet and numbers, the way they learned.

Katharyn Y. Rees  
Anacortes, WA

Abortion

As a new member of the LP I have attempted to read the NEWS extremely thoroughly to acquaint myself as much as possible with the party’s ideals and positions. I became interested in the party through the television coverage on C-SPAN of this summer’s national convention. One issue that I did not hear mentioned or see addressed to my satisfaction was the abortion issue. I would like to offer my plan for (hopefully) resolving the issue which I think would be consistent with the party ideals.

Let’s have the federal government mandate a one-time voter referendum in each and every state. Each state would be required to put the abortion issue on the ballot and give every citizen of that particular state a chance to vote for the plan of his or her choice.

This plan would give each state the opportunity to select which position reflects the will of the voters in that state. It stands to reason that someone desiring an abortion in a state whose voters have rejected it could travel to a nearby state where it is legal, much in the same way people who live in a “dry” county can travel to a neighboring county to obtain alcoholic beverages if they so desire. This plan would give the rights to the states thus lessening the federal government role in our personal decisions (a party ideal).

Michael J. Palma  
Columbia, SC

Comments

I have a mild criticism with regard to Dr. Lyon’s and Mr. Figg’s personnel accounts of socialized medicine and government secrecy (Jan. 1992 NEWS). Printing such accounts in the NEWS is tantamount to preaching to the choir. It would be more effective if these types of editorials were submitted to local newspapers or the national media.

With regard to the editorial on public education, please release it to the media.

With regard to the letter from David Miller referring to the campaign tactics of Dave McCann, I have voted in the typical strategy of Republicans and Democrats. We are supposed to be the Party of Principle.

One of the things that has attracted me to the LP is that is that its members have principles that they don’t compromise. I hope to hell that somehow Mr. Miller got his facts wrong.

James J. Oddie  
Glendale, AZ

National Director

Isn’t it about time you ran a photo of Nick Dunbar, our national director? After all these years I still don’t know what he looks like.

Calvin Walls  
Duarte, CA

Editor’s Note: You asked for it!

More on McCann

I was sorry to read the letter by David Miller (Jan. 1992 NEWS). I find it hard to believe that Mr. Miller can criticize the campaign of David McCann for state senator that turned out to be one of the most successful in LP history.

Miller laments the handling of the drug issue by the McCann campaign. However, it is not necessary for Libertarian candidates to campaign on a platform for drug legalization in every election in which they run. Had Mr. McCann been electable... I am certain that had any bills proposing stricter drug laws been proposed Mr. McCann would have voted against them...

The campaign is to be praised and emulated, not taken to task to “weakening principle.”

John LaBeaume  
University City, MO

Write More Letters

Recently on C-SPAN they showed Debra Potter, CNN correspondent, speaking on “News Media and Politics.” She said journalists should not be biased and if they fail to be fair, they lose credibility and public trust. She also mentioned that CNN was starting a daily, or Monday through Friday, half-hour program, “Inside Politics.”

I’ve always written to them requesting them to be fair and unbiased and cover the Libertarian Party, Marrow, and Lord.

We all should take every opportunity to further our message. So grab paper and pen and write to the shows and networks you watch!

Betty McAllister  
Merced, CA

Natural Constituency

The recent exchange of letters on the subject of selling gun owners into the party has driven me to air a major gripe: I have with the Libertarian Party: I haven’t seen any Marrow in ’92 ads in pornographic magazines! This is a two-pronged complaint. Drug users, pornographers and their customers, prostitutes, johns, yes, gun owners—they are all panah groups in this country. None of them are by nature guilty of any wrong-doing in our eyes. Of all the political parties, only we defend their rights. They are our natural constituency, and if there is anything which proves that we are not serious about trying to get elected, it’s our refusal to actively court our natural supporters, despite the distaste some of us may have for some of them... We are never going to get many votes from authoritarian prudges.

The Demo-publicans have put together a coalition of people who are willing to be oppressed in return for the opportunity to do some oppressing. We can put together a coalition of people who are willing to leave each other alone in return for being left alone. But we can’t do it if we aren’t willing to associate with the people who have the most reason to vote for us!

Brett P. Bellmore  
Capac, MI

Social Security Numbers

You can’t believe what’s happening in California.

Effective January 1992, we must give our social security numbers on applications for a driver’s license or vehicle registration.

The sponsor of this police-state legislation, Rebecca Morgan (R-Los Altos Hills) claims the reason is to help district attorneys catch parents who are behind on their child support payments.

Apparently, some $2 billion in welfare costs is attributable to delinquent child support payments, and this bill, by entrapping all 20 million California motorists, will enable them to catch those delinquent parents.

I have subsequently learned that this bill will return a forecast $30 million to the abandoned mothers.

I guess that reality about crowning the privacy and invading the civil liberties of 20 million people in order to catch one and one-half percent of the lost monies ($30 million/$2 billion) is a logical trade-off for a stop-the-Republican mentalitazing... I’ve sent letters to various newspapers and my own local representatives urging immediate repeal of this law... I hope we have a few Libertarians in this state who will help in this campaign to overturn this totalitarian legislation.

Don Hull  
Costa Mesa, CA
Federal Budget Deficit: Who Cares?

By Dave Barry

It is a proven fact that the average American doesn't care about the federal budget deficit. Sometimes on the "NBC Nightly News," or for fun, Tom Brokaw will say, "Next: the federal budget deficit." Then they'll show a 15-minute videotape, without sound, of a dog eating peanut butter. The point is to get a single phone call, because the instant Tom says "budget deficit," the viewers grab their remote controls and switch to sleazy tabloid shows full of "news" about Roseanne Barr Arnold's tattoos and the William Kennedy Smith sex-change operation.

Of course YOU'RE different. YOU'RE not an 'average American.' YOU care about the issues, right? You liar. You're not even reading this paragraph. You're saying to your spouse: "Hey, it says in the paper that William Kennedy Smith had a sex-change operation."

Well, he didn't. I just said that to stimulate the sagging libel-suit industry, and to make the point that nobody cares about the deficit. This is good. The deficit doesn't matter.

To understand why, let's compare the U.S. government to a typical American family, headed by "John and Mary Smith," who have a combined annual income of $22,000. Let's say that the "Smiths" have drawn up a budget, listing what they want to spend in the coming year for various items such as food, housing, and court costs to have the quotation marks legally removed from their names. Let's say that the budget totals $27,000.

This means the "Smiths" have an impending budget deficit of $5,000. So what is the only logical thing for them to do? They guessed: They should spend $500 million to build a moving sidewalk in Altoona, PA.

That's how Congress is handling it. With the budget deficit running at several hundred billion dollars per year, Congress passed a transportation bill that, according to a news report by Reed Karam of Knight-Riddler Newspapers, includes $50 million for a "high-tech" moving sidewalk in Altoona, which happens to be in the district of Rep. Bud Shuster, the ranking Republican on the surface transportation subcommittee.

I don't know about you, but as a taxpayer, I am outraged to discover that, in this day and age, Altoona residents are still being forced to walk around on regular low-tech stationary sidewalks. I'm thinking of maybe organizing a group of us to go there and carry Altoonans around on our backs until they get their new sidewalk. I'm also thinking of maybe a high-tech computerized lift launcher that will fire laser-guided gobs onto the moving sidewalk, so the Altoonans won't have to do this manually. "What have I done today to help keep 'Bud' Shuster in Congress?" is a question we all need to ask ourselves more often.

We also need to think about Rep. John Paul Hammerschmidt, who inserted a provision into the transportation bill that cannot be enforced as long as the government pays for it. They can get away with it because they're in power.

You can find out more about this at our new Web site. We'll have a news-blurb button you can click and see the details.

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Court Hears CA Tax Case

Los Angeles County LP members argued in a state appeals court to overturn Proposition C, a half-cent countywide sales tax to fund transportation projects.

The tax is illegal because it was passed by only a simple majority of voters rather than the two-thirds mandate required by Proposition 13, according to John Vernon, who is the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit against the state Board of Equalization.

Vernon organized a group of 10 plaintiffs, all Libertarians, including 1980 presidential candidate Ed Clark and Ted Brown, chair of the LA County LP.

Proposition C was approved in November 1990 by 50.4 percent of the voters. Proposition 13 requires a two-thirds vote to impose special tax, but Vernon claims the state legislature illegally authorized the tax using a section of the state Public Utilities Code that permits adoption of a tax by majority vote.

Notice

Last month's issue of LP NEWS contained an article reporting on some of the rather humorous responses the Libertarian Party has received to its requests for the name of the employer and occupation of contributors.

As a political organization required to file financial and contributor information with the Federal Elections Commission, the Libertarian Party is required by law to make a good faith effort to obtain the occupations and employers of certain of its contributors. The LP makes that good faith effort by requesting that information on its contributor solicitation response cards and membership application forms.

It is not LP policy to encourage our contributors to provide incomplete, inaccurate, or humorous responses to those questions. Any implication to the contrary in last month's article was inadvertent and should be disregarded.

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