

California Freedom

April 2009 — The official publication of the **Libertarian Party of California**

Seeking Gang Peace

Judge Gray: Drug War Fuels Violence

by Lawrence K. Samuels

On February 28, 2009, the Peace Coalition of Monterey County, Libertarians for Peace, and the Progressive Libertarian League co-sponsored a panel in Seaside, CA on "How to Prevent Gang Violence," held at Seaside's Peace Resource Center. Panelists included Judge Jim Gray, recently retired after 20 years as a Superior Court Judge in Orange County, and Kathy Mackenzie, social anthropologist.

The nearby city of Salinas has seen gang-related homicide rates double in recent years, and the local community is infuriated by authorities' failure to stop the violence.

Judge Gray said that the drug war is the main cause behind violent gang activity and political corruption. Mackenzie agreed, but suggested there



Kathy Mackenzie, Mark Carbonaro, and Judge Jim Gray

were too many guns in society. When an audience member asked Mackenzie to elaborate, she instead discussed the problems of alcohol and broken families. She agreed with Gray that antisocial and violent behavior by gangs is not caused by the drugs themselves, but

by drug money. The Peace Coalition of Monterey County, a group of 27 independent organizations, is seeking solutions to escalating gang violence in Salinas. Celia Bosworth, chair of the Peace Coalition, initially wanted the panel to blame

guns as the main culprit for higher incidences of gang warfare. She argued that the best solution was to confiscate all guns. But many coalition representatives agreed with this author, who argued that the drug war was the main cause of gang violence. When it ap-



Carol Ruth Silver

peared that the voting majority saw the drug war as the critical factor, the coalition put this author in charge of the panel.

After the panel, Judge Gray spoke at a speech/dinner fundraiser in Carmel Valley for the Libertarian Parties of California

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May 19th Election

Special Election on CA Budget

by Richard E. Venable

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and the California legislature came to an agreement in late February on a budget that was nearly 9 months overdue. But before the budget is put into effect, California voters will face six ballot measures in a special election on May 19th.

One measure involves a possible tax extension. Four measure involve shifting funds from one account to another. The sixth would freeze salaries of legislators and elected state officials during years the state is running a deficit.

The six measures are:

Prop 1A—Rainy Day Budget Stabilization Fund. Imposes a limit on the amount the state can spend each year based on revenue growth over

the previous 10-year period. Money above that amount would be saved in a rainy day fund, to be capped at 12.5% of revenue. Any amount over that would be used to pay debt or for one-time purposes. If voters approve the cap, temporary taxes that are part of the budget would be extended an additional two years.

Prop 1B—Education Funding. Modifies Prop. 98, the voter-approved minimum school funding guarantee, to protect K-12 and community college funding when state revenue rebounds after lean budget years.

Prop 1C—Lottery Modernization Act. Asks voters for permission to pay out larger lottery jackpots, to sell more tickets. Grants the state per-

mission to stop using lottery proceeds for education programs. Instead, schools would be financed through the general fund.

Prop 1D—Children's Services Funding. Redirects \$608 million in First 5 money for early child development to other children's programs for five years. Voters approved Prop 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cent tax to each pack of cigarettes.

Prop 1E—Mental Health Funding Budget. Shifts \$227 million in voter-approved funding from Prop 63, the state mental health fund, for two years to pay for a low-income child development program known as the Early Periodic Screen Diagnosis and Treatment Program.

**LPC ExCom
Recommends:**

- Prop 1A — NO
- Prop 1B — NO
- Prop 1C — NO
- Prop 1D — NO
- Prop 1E — NO
- Prop 1F — YES

Prop. 1F—Elected Officials' Salaries. Amends the Constitution to freeze the pay of lawmakers and state elected officers, meaning they would not be eligible for raises during years the state is running a deficit.

Vote!

Richard E. Venable publishes the Los Angeles Libertarian. He's enjoyed a long career in public and Navy journalism, and in public relations. Email: LPCNews@aol.com.

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From the Editor

Peace and Glasnost

by Thomas M. Sipos

When Mikhail Gorbachev became Soviet dictator in 1985, he announced a policy of *glasnost*, which has been translated as “openness.” He meant that Soviet media should freely promote a diversity of opinions, rather than parrot the party line. Party decision-making should be transparent. Criticism of party leaders should be welcome. Citizens’ opinions should be heard, however “negative.”

I’ve been told that I shouldn’t discuss America’s foreign interventions. I should only print material that “all libertarians agree on,” otherwise I’m being “divisive.” I shouldn’t cover LNC meetings, or disagreements and embarrassments, or debate and discussion. I should only print “positive” stories. Doing otherwise violates *CF*’s Mission Statement.

Yes, *CF* has a MS. Here is the part at issue:

“*CF* is the official publication of the LPC. Its purpose is to promote and enhance the political success of the party. To accomplish this it provides an informative and entertaining blend of political news, analysis, features and advertising for its members. Its content focuses on: 1. California events, rather than national; 2. Externally oriented politics, not internal debate; 3. Our successes, rather than our disappointments; 4. Libertarian analysis of political positions enjoying support from the mainstream of California voters; 5. Practical guidance on winning elections and changing public policy.”

At the 2007 LPC convention, I asked Elizabeth Brierly about the MS’s origins. She told me that Bruce Cohen had asked her to draft a MS to guide future editors. Elizabeth prepared a first draft, which went round robin between herself, Bruce, and Aaron Starr, with the two gentlemen offering changes until the MS met their specifications.

ExCom approved the MS on August 20, 2005.

Like a Constitution, a MS must be interpreted. To say that *CF*’s content “focuses on” X rather than Y can mean either that X articles/LTEs should *predominate* over Y articles/LTEs (the free speech-oriented interpretation); or that X should



exclude Y (the restrictive interpretation).

It’s been suggested that my coverage of LNC activities violates the rule against “internal debate.” Why? Perhaps because it’s an “internal” (party business) rather than “external” (election campaign) matter.

But if we interpret “focus” so restrictively, *CF* could not promote or cover party conventions. Conventions are “internal.” Yet I assume that, even post-MS, *CF* always covered libertarian conventions, state and national.

Clearly, there is no absolutist ban on covering “internal” matters.

Perhaps the problem is with “debate”? I may cover “internal” matters, but not debate about internal matters. Actions by party leaders may be reported, but not questioned.

No, I can’t believe that’s what the 2005 ExCom intended, despite some party leaders’ distaste for *glasnost*. (One reason the LNC persecuted Angela Keaton was for her live blogging the September 2008 LNC meeting to the membership.)

I interpret the MS’s phrase “focuses on” to mean that X material should *predominate* over Y (comprising a majority of *CF*’s content), but not *exclude* Y. Certainly, antiwar is a position “enjoying support from the mainstream of California voters.”

I would like to print more about county LP events and election campaigns, but I’m getting few submissions. I assume we’re in a post-election year doldrum. If you want to read about “California events,” then *write* it. I can’t publish what I don’t get.

Finally, I was told that *CF* should not print discussion or debate about contentious party issues, because those are properly left to the conventions. The problem is,

many members aren’t aware of internal controversies unless they’re reported. If they don’t know, they may not attend the convention. This creates the risk that party business will be ceded to well-organized minority factions.

I have changed the tone of *CF* from two years ago. I hope I’ve brought *glasnost* to it. Transparency about party matters, and openness to debate, may bring “divisiveness” and “negativity.” But it would be ironic if a libertarian publication had less *glasnost* than the late Soviet Union.

We’re All Demopublicans Now

On March 9, Donny Ferguson, LNC Director of Communications, sent out a mass email, writing: “the most important principle is winning” and “There is nothing more noble and principled than winning an election” and “winning elections is the most important libertarian principle there is.” These sentences were bold-faced and underlined to emphasize his theme.

Winning is also the Demopublicans’ most cherished principle; all other principles are negotiable. Seems the LNC has just equated Demopublicans with Libertarians.

Susan Hogarth reprints Ferguson’s article, with her reply: www.colliething.com/2009/03/deconstructing-donny.html.

Libertarian Muslims

In every war, The Other is demonized. I’ve never confused Russians with Communists, or Germans with Nazis, yet always, some self-styled patriots will conflate the actions of some with an entire race, religion, or ethnicity.

It needs repeating: most Arabs and Muslims are not terrorists. Some are libertarians. Their website: Minaret.org.

Independent Political Report

A critic accuses me of insisting on the last word. He’s miffed that I replied to one of his articles.

He’s also wrong. Many of my editorials are sprinkled with urls. Rather than have the last word, I often give you “heads up” on key issues, then send you off to research further.

I often refer you to IndependentPoliticalReport.com.

This is the current “hot spot” for discussions (and flame wars) about the LP. Party lead-

ers post here. LNC meetings are posted -- while in progress. The site is uncensored, unmoderated, and easy to post to. Anonymously, if you wish.

Glasnost indeed!

Rob Power Resigns

Rob Power resigned from ExCom at the conclusion of their March meeting. He writes that he “went to Long Beach with every intention of resigning” and he “merely signed” his resignation letter at the meeting’s conclusion. He adds, “I’m going to be writing a detailed explanation of why I decided to resign.”

Power’s term was to expire in 2010. Now there’ll be an additional At-Large seat to fill at the Visalia convention.

Late March Issue

The March *CF* went out late. I finished it in February, but I have no say when issues are printed or go online. Even so, I’m sorry the Riverside LP meeting notice ran late. I advise future LP event notices to be submitted way in advance.

Libertarian Peacenik

If you can’t get enough of my long, rambling, “antiwar obsessive” editorials, visit me at: <http://libertarianpeacenik.blogspot.com>.

Peace. *Glasnost*.



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Letters to the Editor

LPC Poll Tax Unfair

I moved to California just under a year and a half ago. After being extremely disheartened to find that Bob Barr was the only LP candidate on my ballot in November 2008 (and there was no way I could vote for him), I looked forward to attending the next state LP convention. Upon seeing the registration information, though, I was shocked!

While I was not surprised at the fees charged for meals or banquets, I was stunned to discover that the state LP charges \$99 to people who just want to attend the business meetings! That's a ridiculously high price and smacks of a "poll tax" for those who want to participate in the business of the state party.

In contrast, the Oregon LP charges just \$8 to \$12 for those who just wish to attend the meeting but not to take part in any of the extracurricular meals or banquets (<http://www.lporegon.org/downloads/pdf/buscon.pdf>). That small fee covers the administrative expense of preparing a delegate tag and a convention packet—but there's no way that \$99 is a fair and reasonable amount for the same amount of product.

As someone who has organized party conventions in the past, I endorse the concept of a convention making money (too few do!); but that's what the banquets, meals, and on-site fundraisers are for. You shouldn't make your profit off the backs of the activists who just want to come and have their voice heard in the deliberations of the LP of California.

— Robert Hansen
Sacramento, CA

Reclaim the LP

I am gravely concerned about the future of the Libertarian Party in this time of economic crisis. The so-called "mainstream media" have apparently convinced the great majority of Americans that the failures of the world's financial system are somehow the fault of capitalism and free markets, and that only a massive increase in government spending and regulation can possibly save us from otherwise certain doom.

You and I know this is hogwash. Cheap money, pumped

out by the Federal Reserve, is the primary cause of our economic woes. Millions of people were sold homes they could not afford, often obtaining loans through government-chartered entities. Now the bubble has burst. Trillions of dollars in debt will have to be written off, and the Obama administration seems hell-bent on forcing American taxpayers to "share the poison." The U.S. economy is contracting, unemployment is rising, and people are mad.

This *should* be a golden opportunity for the LP. But sadly, the party's national leadership and the staff at national HQ in Washington, DC are backpedaling away from the principled positions that made the LP the only consistent voice for liberty in American politics. Clear, uncompromising stands on issues were cast aside in the hope of "electing people now." The national office chose as its phone number the inane 1-800-ELECT-US. The LP website -- lp.org -- sports the slogan "Smaller Government. Lower Taxes. More Freedom"—virtually identical to the phrase on Dick Armey's Freedomworks site —freedomworks.org—"Lower Taxes, Less Government, More Freedom."

Our most recent Presidential candidate called for cutting the Federal government's budget by a whopping 7% -- and called for (sort of) ending the War on Drugs because it was not cost-effective, instead of denouncing it as a vicious, destructive violation of individual rights.

On February 23, Donny Ferguson sent out a "Monday Message" from LP national HQ that stated "it is up to you and me to listen to [the] voters, learn what they want us to do and promote solutions voters agree on."

Wrong, Donny. The LP does not exist to pander to the media-manipulated voters and "learn what they want us to do." It exists to promote clear, principled policies that are consistent with the libertarian philosophy and explain why those policies will work better than the statist nostrums being pushed by Obama and the Republican "opposition."

On Friday, March 6, I spoke at the 2009 Liberty Forum in Nashua, NH, and observed that if the LP is to have any purpose and meaning, it cannot be just a pale, slightly-more-tolerant version of the GOP. Now, more than ever, we must "stick to our guns" and differentiate our party from the two old-line parties that have

collaborated to create the mess we are in.

But the gang of neophytes currently running things at LPHQ has other ideas. The "Monday Message" for March 9 states that "the highest principle" for libertarians is "winning." Not defending individual rights. Not honesty, or consistency, or building a network of people who believe in defending liberty without compromise. Just "winning."

This is what you'd expect from the tawdriest Republican and Democratic hacks: winning is all that matters.

I find this deeply disturbing. Unless this trend is reversed before 2012, the LP may as well go out of business. There are already two large, well-financed parties whose "highest principle" is "winning." There is no need for a third.

For this reason, I've joined with other longtime libertarian activists to launch a new organization, The December 11 Group—so named to recognize two important events that occurred on that date: the birth of George Mason, "the father of the Bill of Rights," in 1725, and the founding of the LP in 1971.

If you share my concerns, and want to restore the LP's historical commitment to defending liberty consistently and without equivocation, I hope you will join The December 11 Group. Sign up at www.december11.org.

I urge you to relay this message to every true libertarian you know. Send it to your personal email list. Post it on blogs. Spread the word on chat boards.

The future of the LP, and perhaps the fate of liberty for a long time to come, depends on you taking action!

— David F. Nolan
Tucson, AZ

Market Distortions Hurt Economy

Since hearing so many labor under the delusion that the U.S. is a free market, I'm motivated to list some of the market distortions that caused the current economic debacle. If you believe any of the following is free market, or you are unable to follow the cause and effect of each, yet alone imagine their cascade effect in creating other market distortions, then your worldview has so crippled whatever critical analysis capability you had that you are beyond hope.

The following distorted the supply of credit or the demand for Real Estate: Fines and imprisonment for failing to accept fiat money for payment of debt; Fractional reserve banking;

Centrally controlled fractional reserve rate; Income tax; Income tax deductions for loans; FHA; Fannie Mae; Freddie Mac; Zoning regulations; Construction regulations and fees; Slow-growth policies; Federal, State, County and City lands; Army Core of Engineers; EPA; HEW; Affordable housing; Coerced payment and attendance in government schools according to residence

address; Relaxed lending criteria mandated due to bogus Federal Reserve "red-lining" report; Accolades from D.C. for those institutions with the least stringent lending criteria.

Still believe the politicians, bureaucrats and their media mouth pieces?

— Bill Holmes
Beaverton, OR

Party of Choice "Top Two" Threatens Third Parties

by Richard E. Venable

State Senator Abel Maldonado, a moderate Republican whose district serves Santa Barbara County and southern San Luis Obispo County, will be termed out in 2012. He'd received accolades from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, and there was talk of Maldonado running for State Controller in 2014.

In mid-February, Maldonado cast one of the deciding votes to break the gridlock over the state budget. He exacted three conditions from the governor

and the state legislature. One condition was for the legislature to pass bills that will allow an "open primary." More onerously, the Maldonado bill calls for a "top-two" election system.

The two bills are SB 6 and SCA 4. A two-thirds vote was needed to suspend the normal rules that require public notice for bills that will appear on the ballot.

Under "top-two" election systems, all candidates run in the primary on a single ballot,

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End State Marriage



Photo: Lawrence K. Samuels

LPC Northern Vice Chair Richard Newell introduced Ali Shams (pictured above) to explain his "Domestic Partnership Initiative" to ExCom at their March 21st meeting in Long Beach.

Shams's initiative would recategorize all civil marriages in California as "domestic partnerships," available to both straight and gay cou-

ples. Private organizations (e.g., churches, synagogues, mosques) could still perform legally non-binding marriages.

After hearing Shams, ExCom passed a resolution to support his initiative.

Kaelan Housewright will discuss this initiative at the LPC Convention in Visalia.

— Lawrence K. Samuels

Party of Economic Liberty

CA Budget Travesty

by Kevin Takenaga

The budget package passed by the California legislature last February is an absolute travesty. It shows just how little concern the Democrats and Republicans in Sacramento have for ordinary, hard-working individuals and businesses in California.

And make no mistake, even those Republicans who voted against it share the blame. The state's fiscal mess didn't just happen overnight. It took years of arrogance, neglect, ignorance, and willful disregard for taxpayers by both major parties to reach this point. The state's \$40 billion deficit was utterly predictable. Both parties were copartners-in-crime in approving ever larger spending plans that far outstripped the state's rising revenues. Despite a slowing economy, the state still separated taxpayers from a record amount of their money last year.

And even with record revenues, the state has fallen further behind in quality of life compared to low-tax states like Nevada, Arizona, Texas, and Florida. Our government-funded educational system ranks near the bottom of the 50 states, our traffic is among the worst in the nation, we have more state employees per capita than we ever have, and Democrats and Republicans still think the problem is "not enough revenue."

Not only has the legislature threatened the future prosperity of Californians, but it will

place on the ballot a proposed constitutional "open primary" amendment that would prevent voters from choosing from a wide field of candidates in a general election. A "top-two" system will effectively deny voters the opportunity to choose third party candidates who could offer the best hope for a return to sound budget practices.

Despite this double whammy, the LPC will again field candidates at the local, state, and federal levels in the 2010 election cycle who will offer policies that will prevent us from ever reliving this budget mismanagement nightmare. We offer the political choice that Californians desperately need right now.



Kevin Takenaga is Chair of the LPC. His email: chair@ca.lp.org.

Party of Economic Liberty

CA Tax Increase Hurts Poor

by Richard Rider

"It's only pennies per day." Such is the mantra for all tax raising efforts. But is the current batch of state tax increases passed in the Democrat/Arnold budget really just chump change? And how are the lower income folks going to be affected?

You decide. Go to the Sacramento Bee's online state tax increase calculator: <http://tinyurl.com/av457j>. The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association confirms that the calculations closely align with the Jarvis analysis.

On that calculator webpage, you can make sample inputs, and it lists out the extra taxes you'll pay. Most people will enter their own situation, but won't try other "what if" scenarios. It's worth experimenting.

The interesting part is to see how well the Democrats are taking care of their lower income core constituency. Think the cumulative tax increase is pennies per day? Guess again.

Try this example of a struggling young working family: \$35,000 total salary, \$15,000 worth of cars, two kids at home. This family lives paycheck-to-paycheck, getting by as best they can. Total tax increase? A crushing \$660 a year. That's almost a week's gross wages of \$673.

Now consider this example: A couple with a combined

\$100,000 salary, \$35,000 worth of cars, and no kids. Total tax increase? \$534.

The Democrats have put together one of the most regressive tax packages we've seen in California. While there is a case to be made that people with school age children should pay more, that's not what Democrats profess. The slogan of the Big Spenders is "It's for the children."

Government labor unions are the Democratic Party's priority—not the poor, the working class, young families—and certainly not the kids. The state budget package includes no significant cuts in public employee salaries or benefits, while the poor and the working class get hammered.

Many Democratic voters will be surprised and enraged when they discover how they got snookered in this package. Or not. Most will never figure it out.

I guess that, from the Democratic Party's standpoint, California's public education system works! For such proponents of tax increases, an under-educated and numerically illiterate electorate is a gullible electorate.

Sadly, the mainstream media has been equally gullible. To my knowledge, not one California daily newspaper reported the grossly regressive nature of these tax increases.

California's high taxes have

consequences at every economic level. In the past decade, our net domestic migration (movement between states) has cost us an amazing 1.4 million people. And these are not welfare cases departing. It's the young, the ambitious, the wealthy, and our retirees seeking more bang for their buck in low tax states.

Ironically, a major component of the departees are public employees leaving with their fat pensions—which we'll be paying for decades to come.



Richard Rider is a former LPC candidate for governor of California. He is Chair of San Diego Tax Fighters, and a paid columnist for the North County Times. To get his free weekly "Rider Rants," email him at RRider@san.rr.com.

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Please Join our Coffee Club

Film Review

“Illegal” Immigrants Crossing

Review by Laura G. Brown

(*Crossing Over*, Directed by Wayne Kramer; Cast: Harrison Ford, Ray Liotta, Jim Sturgess, Ashley Judd, Alice Braga. 2009)

This latest film about immigration in Southern California doesn't have as many intertwining stories or a plot line as compelling as *Crash*, but it might make libertarians reflect on why they chose the Statue of Liberty as their symbol, and also help them to remember what's written on its base.

The face of the new, improved INS now goes by the cool acronym ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement). The name change reflects post-9/11 priorities. While "Immigration and Naturalization Service" seemed to include the mission of helping immigrants become naturalized citizens, ICE rings coldly on the enforcement side, with a mission of keeping contraband (including dangerous people) OUT.

One of these "dangerous" people, as depicted in *Crossing Over*, is a 15-year-old high school student from Bangladesh, whose family is here illegally. She gives a distasteful, offensive speech in class defending the 9/11 hijackers, and is investigated by Homeland Security. She's found to have visited Jihadist websites and is promptly deported.

Is incendiary speech, such as hers, seditious or protected? Because she lacks documents, does she also lack First Amendment rights?

This part of the film recalls the recent suit brought by L.A. College student Jonathan Lopez. He gave a speech against same sex marriage after Prop. 8 passed. His professor called him names and told him to "Ask God what your grade is."

Libertarians argue that, in both cases, the message may be abhorrent, but the opinion should be aired. In his book, *Defending the Undefendable*, libertarian Walter Block even defends yelling "Fire!" in a crowded theater.

Some scenes in the film ring false: An "honor" killing because a young Iranian woman sleeps around; long, gratuitous nude scenes with a tempting Australian actress who offers sex to immigration caseworker Ray Liotta to clear her case; and a ranting diatribe delivered

by an ICE agent (with a gun to his head) amid a bloody convenience store shootout.

Harrison Ford is that ranting agent's partner. In an enervated

performance, he half-heartedly attempts to plant a human face on ICE. He doesn't just callously round up beatific sweatshop workers like the one played by



Alice Braga. He listens to her pleas about a child left behind, and drives her kid to Tijuana to be with his grandparents. He doesn't just file a report when the woman, deported and desperate to reunite with her son, pays "the wrong coyote" and ends up dead. He drives to Tijuana again and delivers the message to her parents personally, the prince. Then he awakes the next day to another round of raids.

In reading other reviews,

continued on page 6...

Registration for LPCA Convention 2009

April 24 - 26, 2009

Holiday Inn - Visalia Hotel and Conference Center
9000 W Airport Dr, Visalia CA

Instructions for Registering

Choose one or more of the options on the other side of this form. Your convention registration *does not include hotel accommodations*. Ask Holiday Inn-Visalia for the Libertarian Party discount (NOTE: discount may not be available after April 3rd: **(559) 651-5000**)

Submit the completed form with payment. Prices are date sensitive. **At-the-door** prices are effective beginning 5:00 pm Thursday, April 23rd. Make checks payable to LPCA, with memo "2009 Convention".

Complete the registration below, then mail, fax, or e-mail the completed document.

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Address / County	
City, State, Postal Code	
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm applying to be a delegate	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm registered with the California Secretary of State as Libertarian or DTS (Decline To State) party affiliation
Telephone: <input type="checkbox"/> Daytime <input type="checkbox"/> Evening <input type="checkbox"/> Cell	
E-mail Address	
Check or Money Order Enclosed? (payable to Libertarian Party of California)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes Total check or charge: \$
Charge my Credit Card Number	
Expiration Date	
Name on Credit Card	
Signature	

- We'll send confirmation to the address or e-mail address you provide through Monday, April 20th.
- After April 20th, we will confirm registration by e-mail or phone if you include that information.

Questions? Call 818-782-8400 or e-mail convention2009@ca.lp.org.

Crossing Over

continued from previous page...

I was surprised to find the usually liberal-minded Owen Gleiberman of *Entertainment Weekly* decidedly less liberal on the topic of immigrants (whom he calls “illegal aliens”). He concludes: “But when the film wags its finger at the U.S. for deigning to protect itself by cracking down on those who haven’t earned green cards, it...starts to look like...knee-jerk empathy.”

I guess I’ve got knee-jerk empathy. Is there any other kind?

How does “earning” your green card make you any less of a security risk? Timothy McVeigh didn’t earn one, and he was more of a threat than the average immigrant.

In tough times, people tend to look at immigrants as scapegoats, and these times we’re in look pretty tough. As one who’s always been drawn to the libertarian ideal of open borders, I can only hope that, post-9/11, they’re not slammed shut.



Laura G. Brown is a teacher and writer living in San Gabriel. She is a veteran candidate for State Assembly. Her email: lauragbrown@sbcglobal.net.

“Top Two”

continued from page 3...

and all voters use that ballot. In California, our primary is in June. In the November election, the only candidates for any office would be the two who got the most votes.

Currently, the State Constitution says that political parties have the right to have their nominees on the November ballot. The “top-two” measure will be presented to voters on the June 2010 ballot.

The main argument for “top-two” is that more moderate candidates will win. Normal party primaries produce extremists.

“Top-two” could edge out minor parties such as the LPC.

California presently uses a modified closed primary, under which political parties let only those individuals registered in their party to cast votes for their nominees. I use the word “modified” because the Democratic Party, for instance, in the last election let those registered as “Decline to State” vote for their nominees.

There have been at least two attempts to initiate an open primary in California, in 1996 and again in 2004.

In 1996, there was a blanket primary. Several political parties joined in a lawsuit, *California Democratic Party, et al vs Bill Jones, Secretary of the State of California* (#97-17440), to oppose this blanket primary.

Then LPC Chair Gail Lightfoot joined leaders of the Democratic Party, Republican Party, and Peace and Freedom Party. She stayed as the LPC’s representative for the next four years as the case wended its way through the U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit; the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California; back to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, until it reached the U.S. Supreme Court.

On April 25, 2000, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of letting state political parties decide who may vote in their primaries. In handing down its decision, the Court quoted part of Foot Note 18 to the decision of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which read in part, “An interesting example of how a party’s desire to limit its membership could conflict with state law is suggested by the testimony of plaintiff Gail Lightfoot, a member of the State Executive Committee of the Libertarian Party: ‘You become a member of the Libertarian Party by joining, by asking. It’s a request to become a member. And you pay dues and sign a pledge [of nonviolence]. In California, because of state law, state law says that all registered voters that take the name Libertarian are members of the party. But we consider pledge-signing individuals who have paid their dues and signed the pledge to be the true members of our party.’”

In November 2004, California voters defeated a “top-two” initiative, 54% to 46%.

Registration for LPCA Convention 2009

Registration Prices

At-the-Door prices will be imposed for all registrations received after 5:00 pm April 23rd.

Two-Day Convention Admission + 4 Daytime Meals + Banquet

Includes all business meetings, 2 breakfast and 2 lunch buffets, plus the Saturday Evening Banquet		Regular \$278	At-the-Door \$308
PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR BANQUET ENTREE' CHOICE			
Prime Rib	Salmon Wellington	Vegetarian Wellington	

Two-Day Convention Admission + 4 Daytime Meals

Includes all business meetings, plus 2 breakfast and 2 lunch buffets		Regular \$209	At-the-Door \$229
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Two-Day Convention Admission

Includes all business meetings only. Can be combined with Saturday Evening Banquet		Regular \$119	At-the-Door \$129
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4 Daytime Meals

Includes 2 breakfast and 2 lunch buffets only. Can be combined with Saturday Evening Banquet		Regular \$99	At-the-Door \$109
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Saturday Evening Banquet

Includes seating at the Saturday Evening Banquet only. Can be combined with 4 Daytime Meals and/or Two-day Convention Admission		Regular \$69	At-the-Door \$79
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Prime Rib	Salmon Wellington	Vegetarian Wellington	

Sponsorship

If you're interested in donating to cover specific convention expenses, please contact the Party's office at 877-884-1776, or at convention2009@ca.lp.org.

Vendors

Get vendor booth information by calling 818-782-8400 or by e-mailing convention2009@ca.lp.org

Refunds

- 80% if requested before Friday, April 17th (midnight PDT)
- 30% if requested before Friday, April 24th (5:00 pm PDT)
- No refund if requested after 5:00 pm PDT Thursday, April 23rd

Judge Gray

...cont'd from page 1

and Monterey County, held at the home of relatives of Monterey County LP vice chair Savva Vassiliev. Introduced by Prof. David R. Henderson, professor of economics at



Savva Vassiliev and Beau Cain

the local Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Gray delivered a short speech on how to advance libertarian activities.

Afterwards, LPC Secretary Beau Cain began his fundraising pitch. Many audience members made monetary pledges. But the real money poured in during Cain and Henderson's auction of books, items, and private dinners. The fundraising was doing so well, someone joked about auctioning off the paintings on the wall! Over \$2,000 was raised.

Carol Ruth Silver, a former San Francisco Supervisor, do-

nated a six-person dinner at her favorite restaurant in San Francisco, which someone bid up to \$195. Silver is an attorney who served during Harvey Milk's era. She was targeted to be shot along with him in 1978, but was saved by a late coffee break with a friend. She is a member of LEAP (Law Enforcement Against Prohibition) and the Pink Pistols.

Silver mentioned that she used to be a life-long Democrat, but now considers herself a libertarian.



Lawrence K. Samuels is Chair of the Monterey County LP, and a member of the LPC ExCom. His email: lawsamz@hotmail.com.



Volunteers Needed

Outright Libertarians L.A. has officially organized. Our first event is a booth for L.A. Pride. Our new Vice Chair, Elinor Brandt, is providing the table and folding chairs. We need people to service the booth and donate OPH materials.

The festival runs

Saturday, June 13th, noon to midnight, & Sunday, the 14th, 11a.m. to 10 p.m.

Volunteers may contact:

Angela Keaton at angela@angelakeaton.com.

Plan now to attend the

2009 Libertarian Party of California Convention!

Friday through Sunday, April 24th through 26th 2009

Holiday Inn Convention Center – Visalia*

Details at www.ca.lp.org/events.shtml
Contact Beau at 818-782-8400 or office@ca.lp.org for info and registration!

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"Top Two"

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As a result of his breaking with other Republicans on the budget, Maldonado is no longer the "fair-haired boy." And evidently he had not read his history or he would not have rammed through the "top-two" bill.

He did one thing right. He got the legislature to eliminate a proposed 12 cents per gallon gasoline tax increase.

Let's follow the old adage: "If it ain't broke, don't try to fix it." Let us hope the political parties and voters will again vote down another bad idea. There are better ways, such as proportional representation or instant runoff voting, for minor parties to have their vote be more effective. The open primary won't do it.

May 19th Election

Prop 1A's Sleazy Roots

by Jason Gonella

California's government, faced with a budget deficit of unprecedented proportions, chose the only option that a politician thinks is available. The legislators voted to raise taxes instead of learning to live within their means.

Because all tax increases in California require a 2/3 majority to pass, three Assembly Republicans and three Senate Republicans were needed to join with the Democratic majority and vote to raise taxes.

It may be tempting to regard those six Republican legislators as rogues who betrayed their party, but that is not the case.

Radio personalities John and Ken of KFI 640 AM have, through their investigative journalism, discovered that these six were not acting in opposition to their fellow GOP legislators. Instead, these six were picked at caucus meetings to be the ones to take the fall, because most of them were on

their final term and could not be re-elected anyway. Republican legislators knew these six were going to vote to raise taxes before they did so, and supported them in it.

This arrangement was made so that those who did not vote to raise taxes could say to their constituents that they did not break their promise to not raise taxes. Yet while they did not cast the votes themselves, they are guilty of "aiding and abetting" the raising of taxes.

Just as a getaway driver in a bank robbery is a guilty participant in the robbery, these Republican legislators are guilty participants in raising taxes. They could have stood up to their caucus and opposed the tax increases. They did not. They went along with the deal, and in some cases asked favors from the selected fall guys to get pet projects into the budget.

Now the budget deal has been put on the May ballot as Prop 1A. Prop 1A has two op-

tions. A No vote raises taxes. A Yes vote raises taxes for two years and gives a phony budget cap.

That's a choice?

Many people won't know that Prop 1A's budget cap is fake, or that 1A extends tax increases, because the ballot arguments—for and against—won't mention it. That's part of the corrupt deal behind Prop 1A.

Although voters have been denied a true referendum on the budget, the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer's Association (www.hjta.org) is filing suit, and reportedly working on a ballot proposition to overturn the budget deal.

The state of California is in a death spiral. The best option is for the state to go bankrupt, and have a judge cancel contracts so the state can balance its budget.

We want to thank the following members who have stepped right up and joined the LPC Coffee Club since its kick-off. A Coffee Club member donates a minimum of \$42 per month or \$500 or more each year.



Jason Gonella is Chair of the Antelope Valley LP, one of the Los Angeles LP's eight internal regions. His email: AynRKey@aol.com.

Raise your Cup to Coffee Club Members!

- Suzanne Bell
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Photo: Lawrence K. Samuels

Judge Jim Gray outside the Peace Resource Center
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