Oregon legislator becomes LP member

But no decision yet about switching party registration, or re-election plans

A Republican State Representative in Oregon has taken the first step towards a possible political defection by becoming a dues-paying member of the Libertarian Party.

State Rep. Chuck Carpenter "submitted his completed Libertarian state party membership form along with party dues" on April 30th, according to Richard Burke, Chair of the LP of Greater Portland.

However, "Though Carpenter agrees with the Libertarian philosophy of limited government, he is retaining his Republican voter registration for now," said Burke. "The people of my district elected me on the Republican ticket, so I think is would be wrong to change my registration during the legislative session," explained Carpenter. "But I'm willing to be part of any organization responsibly working toward limited government."

"Carpenter has not yet decided on which ticket he will seek re-election, but currently plans to defend his seat in 1996," said Burke. "At some point, I think he will agree that for all of its political viability, the Republican Party is too replete with social conservatives and so-called 'fiscal moderates' to be a true and reasonably consistent friend of liberty. Until that point arrives, I welcome him into our membership, and thank him for his willingness to work for liberty. I congratulate him for a courageous move."

Burke, discussing the political climate in the state which led to Carpenter's decision, said, "There are few libertarians in Oregon’s Republican Party. Oregon Republicans are typically either Christian-style social conservatives or so-called moderates (liberals)."

Carpenter, in his early thirties, works as an International Operations Analyst for a major sports shoe company. He is a first-term legislator, and will serve until November, 1996. As a dues-paying LP member, Carpenter will be able to vote at LP of Oregon business conventions.

"We welcome Representative Carpenter's first step towards becoming a full-fledged Libertarian Party member, and we invite him to take the next step when he's ready," said Steve Dasbach, Chair of the National LP. "If he decides to run for re-election as a Libertarian, we'll do everything in our power to support his campaign."

LP helps Texas Rep. fight Terrorism Bill

The Libertarian Party was asked to pitch in and help a Republican Congressman write an op-ed piece against the proposed Omnibus Anti-Terrorism Act (S. 390 and HR 896) — just hours before the party publicly condemned the bill.

The HQ got an urgent call from Jeff Van Fleet, an aide to Congressman Steve Stockman (R-TX), on April 26th.

"He said the Congressman was writing an op-ed piece against the bill, and they needed all the facts they could gather about it," recounted Bill Winter, LP Director of Communications. "He said they were calling several organizations in DC, and they called us because 'Your views on this issue are pretty close to ours.'"

Winter said he asked in return: "By that, I assume you mean you're opposed to a police state, too?"

"Yes!" laughed Van Fleet.

Winter immediately faxed Stockman's office information from the National Committee Against Repressive Legislation (NCARL), a coalition formed to fight the bill which the LP had joined. When it was available, Winter also faxed them the LP's April 27th press release denouncing President Clinton’s demand for increased “anti-terrorism” powers in the wake of the Oklahoma bombing.

The Omnibus Anti-Terrorism Act would grant the President arbitrary power to declare individuals “terrorists,” authorize secret trials, reverse the presumption of innocence for suspects, and allow the military to participate in law enforcement.

Gorman’s 10th Amendment Bill passes State Senate in NH

NH State Representative Don Gorman (L-Deerfield) has won his first legislative victory: His 10th Amendment Resolution has been passed by the State Senate.

The resolution — which asserts New Hampshire’s rights under the 10th Amendment — is part of a "burgeoning national rebellion of state legislatures against Washington," said LPNH spokesman Jim McClarin. The bill is expected to be signed by Governor Steve Merrill soon.

"It’s the first-ever Libertarian sponsored bill to succeed in New Hampshire, [even though] he’s outnumbered 423 to one by Demopublicans in the NH legislature [House and Senate]," said McClarin.
Libertarian leader: No smoke screens

By JULIUS MORREAL

The Libertarians, who are they? What do they stand for? Ask Bob Lehman of Bokeelia, who or what are the Libertarians, and he is sure to say they are not Democrats, Republicans, liberals or conservatives. Neither are they libertines or a sign of the zodiac, as some people believe.

As chairman of the Lee County affiliate of the Florida State Libertarian Party, Lehman has seen his party grow from a handful of followers to 330 members in Lee County.

Many members are disillusioned taxpayers from all parties who are in search of an alternative political agenda.

They are staunch believers in individual freedom with a minimum of government interference. It is the Libertarian view that Americans are tired of government surveillance, and they shudder at the thought of their privacy being breached. They are against any punishment for employers who hire undocumented workers, but they support government welfare and resettlement funds for non-citizens.

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Photo by JULIUS MORREAL

Bob Lehman of Bokeelia huckles of many, with an equal number waving their caps in wild approval.

“Our positions on all political issues are crystal clear without any smoke screens,” Lehman says. “Some of our positions on major issues are eagerly accepted by all spectrums of the political arena. And other issues are vehemently rejected by the very same people.”

Ask Lehman any question on a heated political issue and you will get a straight answer. Without any hedging or beating around the bush he’ll tell you they are against all forms of gun control. “The Brady Law should be repealed,” he says, “as well as any other restriction on the right to bear arms as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.”

Affirmative Action, another hot potato, is firmly rejected by Libertarians. “The Libertarian position is not to give Affirmative Action,” says Lehman. “It is just as wrong to discriminate against the majority as it is against the minority. The hiring and firing of employees should be a natural process and should not be based on race. It exacerbates what is intended to eliminate。”

The Libertarian position takes the position that Affirmative Action is the reverse side of the coin, fomenting gross injustices, setting neighbor against neighbor and diminishing human potential.

The opening paragraph to the preamble of the Libertarian party platform reads: “It is the Libertarian philosophy that they are not middle of the roaders. Democrats, Republicans and conservatives are sure to find something in Libertarian philosophy that they can agree upon. And it is equally certain that the Libertarian position is loaded with hand grenades, buzzsaws, and certainly a couple of blackboards that cause you to clench your fists and bare your fangs. It is also crammed with issues that will enlighten you and provoke a greater interest in a particular issue. But if you happen to read the party’s platform, you may find a number of surprises both gratifying and exasperating, and never will you find them dull or uninteresting.

Do you want to know about victim and property rights, abortion rights, or women’s rights? You may or may not agree with the Libertarian philosophy, but it must be said it is certain that they are not middle of the roaders. Democrats, Republicans, and conservatives are sure to find something in Libertarian philosophy that they can agree upon. And it is equally certain that the Libertarian position is loaded with hand grenades, buzzsaws, and certainly a couple of blackboards that cause you to clench your fists and bare your fangs. It is also crammed with issues that will enlighten you and provoke a greater interest in a particular issue. But if you happen to read the party’s platform, you may find a number of surprises both gratifying and exasperating, and never will you find them dull or uninteresting.

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Privatization touted as tax-saving plan

Non-political promoter of privatization of government services discusses idea at Libertarian Party convention

By Sandy Michelson

A push to put government services in private hands was discussed Saturday at the annual state convention of the Libertarian Party of Wisconsin.

The party, which promotes a limited government and fewer laws to regulate the economy and citizens’ personal habits, asked the president of the Reason Foundation in Los Angeles to talk about privatization of government services, especially airports such as Wittman Regional.

“This project of putting out the management and operation of services can be applied to facilities like airports,” said Robert Poole, publisher of Reason magazine. “It’s a difference in incentives. A monopoly promoter doesn’t have a very strong incentive to look for new revenue sources or to cut down their costs.”

If city and county governments were in contract for such services as garbage collection, street sweeping and park maintenance, they would have much more incentive to think of cheaper and even more beneficial ways to do it.

Robert Poole

Poole said in an interview Saturday night, Poole said he wanted people to understand that “moving things into the private sector which have traditionally been done by government wasn’t the beginning of the end of modern society.”

He said there are a vast array of services which would be economically better provided by private business because of the difference in operation between a monopoly and competitive business. “For example, a city or county department that has always collected garbage, they don’t have much incentive to think of cheaper and even more beneficial ways to do it.”

“If those things come naturally to the private sector. That’s what being in business means.”

Libertarian: Party got GOP to seek limit on federal role

State leader says Republicans are “watering down” proposals.

By Jim Boren

The Fresno Bee

Gail Katherine Lightfoot, who chairs the Libertarian Party of California, said Friday that Libertarians can be credited for pressuring Republicans into trying to reduce the role of the federal government.

Lightfoot, a registered nurse from Pomona, said she doubts the Republicans will be successful because they have already begun “watering down” many of their proposals.

Libertarians have long pushed for a limited government that doesn’t grow, she said.

Its “core beliefs” include taking responsibility for one’s own well-being, no taxes on productivity and a sound money system.

Lightfoot is in Fresno this weekend to preside over a two-day meeting of the Libertarian Party’s executive committee.

The main topic will be the party’s budget and its goals and priorities for the coming year.

The Libertarian Party is the third-largest in the state.

Lightfoot said the Libertarians want to become a majority party.

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and are moving slowly but steadily in that direction.

There are a sprinkling of Libertarian Party members holding elective office in California, including four city council members and a county supervisor.

Lightfoot said the party will continue to field candidates at all levels of government.

The Libertarian Party is backing the California Civil Rights Initiative, which would bar race preferences in California public employment, contracting and college admissions.

Lightfoot said her party is supporting the ballot because it believes in a “color-blind, gender-blind” society that does not discriminate against anyone.

This is the second time that Lightfoot has served as state chair of the Libertarian Party.

Her first term was in 1990.
Liberarians hand out big bucks in protest

By EDMUND MANDER
Journal Inquirer Staff Writer

The million-dollar bills Libertarian Party members are handing out to tax filers at post offices across the country this week are fake, but their grievances about big government are genuine enough, they say.

Each $1 million bill represents what the federal government spends every five seconds, says Richard Loomis of Enfield, a Libertarian Party of Connecticut member, as he prepared to greet some taxpayers mailing their returns Monday in time for today's midnight deadline.

While he does not expect people to take the bills seriously — they depict a president with a bag over his head — the government does not take taxpayers' genuine money any more seriously, he complained.

"It's a way to get people to think about how fast government grows," Loomis said, calling the federal levy "a horrendous tax."

The Libertarian Party considers many aspects of government to be unnecessary at best, and unconstitutional at worst. Many of its functions should either be abolished or left to private enterprise, the party argues.

For instance, Libertarians oppose public education and social service programs, arguing that both can be better performed by the private sector. The party also is a staunch defender of the Second Amendment right of citizens to bear arms.

Liberarians also are opposed to drug prohibitions, arguing that the war on drugs is an expensive failed attempt to control people's behavior. Far from curing the problem, they say, the profited drug dealers by driving up the price of drugs, they say.

Connecticut Libertarians plan to be outside post offices in Enfield, Haddam, Stamford, Easton, Oxford, and Seymour, while their counterparts hold similar demonstrations in other states, according to Carl Vassar, the party's state chairman.

Outside the Windsor Post Office, Richard Loomis hands out one of his bogus bills to Laurel Stewart of Meriden, a 41-year-old supervisor of a state drinking and drug treatment facility. Stewart is not impressed.

"It's mainly to increase the awareness of the Libertarian Party," Vassar said. But while the party finds taxes abhorrent, it is not suggesting that people withhold them, he added.

"We don't advocate breaking laws, we want to change the system through the process." This marks the second year the party has handed out the bills.

"It's fun, too many people refuse million-dollar bills," Loomis said.

In another stunt, the party during the early 1980s handed out fake tax forms that, tongue-in-cheek, requested citizens to report their income and send a check for the entire amount to the government.

Liberarian politics
Third political party building a home and following in Stamford

By Dan Mangan

Less government, lower taxes, and more personal freedom are the rallying cries of a new political organization that has opened up shop in Stamford.

The Stamford Libertarian Town Committee, which began meeting in January, is backing any candidate in this year's city elections. But since 1997, the group hopes to have several members run as at-large candidates in the local Republican and Democratic town committees.

"We feel it's important that we begin to develop some political clout," said Courtney Hough, chairman of the party's Stamford Committee, which now has about 25 to 35 members who meet once a month.

And, "it's important to translate that clout into the libertarian goals of paring down the size of government and enacting new laws — such as drug prohibition alternatives — that limit individuals' personal freedom."

News of a new party came as a surprise to the heads of the two major parties. "Liberarian? What does that mean?" asked Ellen Cudahy, chairwoman of the Stamford Democratic City Committee.

When she was given a rough idea of libertarian philosophy, Cudahy called it "anarchy," and then said "I'm against any third party." She argued that the town's party would fall short of "something that affects — only that person." Please turn to PARTY, Page 99

But libertarians also espouse many ideas that people consider liberal. They oppose drug laws, school prayer, and just about any law that forces a person to do or not to do — something that affects only that person.

Lance Lombardia, a member of the Stamford Libertarian Town Committee, said that what attracted him to the party was the realization that while the Republicans valued property rights, they were less concerned about individual liberty. And vice versa with the Democrats.

"It was not acceptable to sell off my property at any price," Lombardia said. "We feel that cooperation rather than coercion is the proper way to run a society," said Hough, the Stamford committee chairman.

A 41-year-old supervisor of a luxury spa, Hough was campaign manager for Irving Sussman's bid as a Libertarian for the Fourth Congressional District seat. Sussman polled more than 1 percent of the vote, which ensures a party ballot line for the 1996 congressional elections.

Hough's association with the philosophy dates to 1976 when he read a Saturday Evening Post article about the Libertarian presidential nominee Roger MacBride. Other reading also influenced his thinking, including Friedman's work "The Road to Serfdom," and Ayn Rand's "Atlas Shrugged," a novel that has introduced many to the libertarian ideal.

Ask him how he would apply libertarianism to Stamford, and Hough replies that he'd like to research how various city departments could be eliminated. Eventually he'd like to see just the police and courts remaining to protect people from each other, and some administrative functions — such as the town clerk — to keep track of property transactions.

And: "I would abolish the Urban Redevelopment Commission."

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