CAMPAIGN 2000 & 2001...

Roy Innis and Bob Grant consider races in NY, NJ

Roy Innis is “in” and Bob Grant is “out” — that’s the latest word on two potentially high-profile campaigns in New York and New Jersey.

Innis, head of the Congress Of Racial Equality, has confirmed that he does expect to run for mayor of New York City in 2001, while Grant, a controversial talk show host on WOR, said he won’t run for the U.S. Senate in New Jersey as a Libertarian in 2000.

At the New Jersey state convention in late March, Innis told Libertarians, “Yes, I do expect to run” for mayor of New York City in two years, reported New Jersey Libertarian newsletter editor Jim Van Blarcom.

Innis, 64, is the African-American president of CORE, the third-largest civil rights organization in America. He joined the LP in 1997.

Meanwhile, Grant has backed away from a statement that he would run for U.S. Senate as a Libertarian.

In mid-April, Grant told listeners on New York’s WOR Radio (AM-710) that he was “very serious” about tossing his hat into the ring.

His declaration brought criticism from New Jersey LP members — who noted that Grant was not a party member, and never talked to anyone in the LP before making his announcement.

Party members also pointed out that Grant supports gun control and is vehemently anti-immigrant.

In response to the criticism, Grant announced in late April that if he runs, he would run as an independent.

Co-sponsors grow for anti-KYC bills

The number of co-sponsors to Congressman Ron Paul’s pair of bills to kill the “Know Your Customer” regulation has jumped dramatically over the past month — thanks, apparently, to the LP’s DefendYourPrivacy.com website.

Since early April, the number of co-sponsors for HR 516 (The Know Your Customer Sunset Act) has increased to 63 from 47, and the number of co-sponsors for HR 518 (The Bank Secrecy Sunset Act) has jumped to 13 from two, reported LP National Director Steve Dasbach.

During that same time, the DefendYourPrivacy.com site has generated 48,983 e-mail lobbying messages — targeting U.S. House members and asking them to become co-sponsors to Paul’s bills.

“House members appear to be feeling the heat from our DefendYourPrivacy.com lobbying effort,” said Dasbach. “The increased number of co-sponsors seems to validate the effectiveness of this Internet-based lobbying.”

Jimmy J.J. Walker: Liberty is “Dynamite!”

The Libertarian Party has won a “Dyn-O-Mite” supporter: Comedian Jimmy J.J. Walker.

Missouri Libertarian activist Ken Bush met Walker at the Funny-Bone Comedy Nightclub in St. Louis in late April, and had a chance to grill the comedian about his political beliefs.

Walker — long rumored to have libertarian sympathies — confirmed that he supported the Libertarian Party.

“I’ve always felt like I’ve had libertarian leanings but just didn’t know the label,” said Walker — until, that is, he started doing more reading about politics in the early 1980s.

“Simply put, the more I read, the more I liked about libertarians.”

Walker said he didn’t agree 100% with the LP, said Bush — but did like Libertarians’ consistent support of free enterprise and pro-choice policies on “so many issues.”

Walker, an award-winning writer and actor, is best known for his role on the CBS show Good Times (1972-1980) and for his trademark — and oft-repeated — line: “Dyn-O-Mite!”
Libertarians Begin to Put Reality Over Theory

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N POLITICS, as in baseball, a home run can be thrilling. The Ronald Reagans and Mario Cuomo's could drive a campaign out of the park. But, in baseball, not practicing fundamentals can ruin any political team.

This was the theme on Saturday at the Best Western hotel in Holtsville, where the Libertarian Party of New York, a perennial Bad News Bears outfit, was running its state convention. The former Texas lawyer accused Democrats and Republicans of conspiring to keep Libertarians out of the political process through ballot access laws.

Mr. Hornberger, who runs a Libertarian think tank near Washington, told the group of about 85 people they should guard against an erosion of freedoms outlined in the Declaration of Independence.

"You should be able to do whatever you like, as long as you don't murder, steal, rape, burgle, or defraud," he said. "It is the role of government to protect these freedoms."

Richard Rider of San Diego is a spokesman for the Libertarian Party of San Diego County. Email: RFRider@sanrr.com.

Libertarian candidate pushes for principles

FINDLAY, Ohio — The Libertarian Party can attract more independent voters if members stand by conservative principles, the party's 2000 presidential candidate told state conventioners.

"Your weapon is your principles," Jacob Hornberger said Saturday. "Without principles, you become just like the Democrats and Republicans."
Libertarian Policies Presented

By JOHN PHILLIPS
The Intelligencer Staff

The Libertarian National Committee has headquarters in Washington, D.C. in the Watergate office building. There are hundreds of state, county, college and local Libertarian groups.

"Libertarians are big on personal responsibility," added Babka, "and we're big defenders of the freedom of speech."

The philosophy of the Libertarians favors dramatically shrinking the size and cost of government, Babka said, "It's too big, not compassionate and not very effective."

One point was made by Babka as he passed enlarged $1 million bills out to the audience and explained, "The government spends $1 million every five seconds."

A fact sheet details the party favors eliminating laws that stifle the economy and control people's personal choices. The platform calls for vigorous defense of the Bill of Rights, free enterprise, civil liberties, free trade, no meddling overseas and private charity.

Gov. Ventura, hecklers trade jibes at luncheon

Jim Caple Staff Writer

On his hundredth day in office, the governor met a tough crowd.

Gov. Jesse Ventura, who is usually greeted enthusiastically when he speaks, received grumbling and dissent Tuesday at a luncheon sponsored by the Cato Institute. The libertarian think-tank based in Washington, D.C., would like to significantly shrink the size and role of government, including privatizing Social Security.

During a discussion of his budget priorities, for example, Ventura asked rhetorically whether transportation was a proper role for government. A chorus of audience members surprised him by answering with a loud "No!"

Who built "the roads you drive on?" the governor asked, and heard more grumbling from the ballroom at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Minneapolis.

"Let me finish while you yell your 'no's.' You're a libertarian aren't you?" Ventura asked. "You're the guys with the candidates who get about 1,800 votes. You don't really want to win, do you? You just want to complain."

When audience members answered that they do want to win, Ventura replied, "You do not. Because you could have been on board with me."

Ventura expressed irritation that audience members wanted to eliminate programs that don't directly pertain to their interests. When someone asked about the possibility of eliminating a tax on medical providers that funds a state health care program for low-income Minnesotans, Ventura said, "If you do that, then you have to find a way to fund MinnCare or scrap MinnCare."

The words "scrap MinnCare" drew loud applause, and Ventura responded, "Well, it's easy to say scrap it. It probably doesn't affect you."

Ventura, a popular governor who has made personal responsibility a central issue, has been criticized by constituents who want more government aid for groups like college students and single parents. The complaints Tuesday came from the opposite end of the political spectrum.

Ventura called himself a realist and said there is a governmental bureaucracy "that can't be changed by yelling and heckling from the crowd."

Cutting short his speech to take questions from the audience, Ventura said, "I've got a schedule like a bureaucrat. I'm not a libertarian. I've got to go out and earn a living."

While the audience groaned at that, it laughed and applauded when Ventura chided loudly, "C'mon, have a sense of humor." And Ventura was applauded when he finished his speech.

"I hope we weren't rude but he challenged us and we take challenges seriously," said Charles Test, chairman of the state Libertarian Party. Test said he was upset that Ventura thought libertarians should have joined his campaign last year.

"He's no libertarian. He's a Democrat," Test said of Ventura. "The Reform Party is made up of Democrats who believe in more government, and you just have to get the right people there (into government) ... We were hoping and praying he would do what he said he would do and he hasn't."

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Libertarian: Tourism can be promoted without taxation

Roy Pitchford
Arkansas Libertarian Party

April 26, 1999
Washington, DC

Washington (AP) — Flush with their success in forcing regulators to drop proposed rules on tracking bank customers' habits, civil libertarians and other groups are organizing a big e-mail campaign to end reporting requirements for cash transactions.

Law enforcement authorities, in response, are warning against any weakening of the Bank Secrecy Act.

Officials of the Justice and Treasury departments and the U.S. Customs Service are expected to tell Congress today that the 1974 law is an essential tool for detecting and prosecuting money launderers and drug traffickers. They are scheduled to testify at a hearing of the House Banking subcommittee on oversight and financial institutions.

Far-reaching legislation pushed by Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, would repeal the Bank Secrecy Act, which requires banks to report customers' cash transactions of $10,000 or more, as well as suspicious activities, to law enforcement authorities.

The law is designed to combat money laundering techniques used by drug traffickers and other criminals to hide illegal profits.

But Paul maintains it violates the Fourth Amendment prohibition against unreasonable search and seizure and that at any rate, it has failed to help catch drug dealers, who he says "are smarter than most banksters."

The Libertarian Party, the American Civil Liberties Union, privacy advocacy associations and other groups are mobilizing to generate support for Paul's bill.

"We will try to inundate Congress with another torrent of e-mails," Libertarian Party spokesman George Geitz said Monday.

Geitz was referring to the earlier blasts of some 225,000 e-mail messages and letters, nearly all in opposition, received by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. on proposed anti-money laundering rules that would have tracked the transaction patterns of bank customers.

Bowing to the public outcry over privacy, the FDIC and three other federal banking agencies scrapped the proposal last month.

This time, Geitz said, the Libertarians want people to contact their member of Congress, since the Bank Secrecy Act already is law and there is no request for public comment from the banking regulators.

"We've got a bigger gun this time," he said, explaining that the group can draw on the people who earlier protested the so-called "Know Your Customer" rules.

Wimberly said he became concerned about the tax talk when the newspapers quoted Mason at a civic club meeting as saying those who oppose the tax oppose small business.

"I care about small business, and I resent that remark," Wimberly said.

Wimberly said he tried to get on the program of the same club, but was told the program agenda was filled for at least two months. He said he was also told that Mason's comments occurred at the end of a talk by El Dorado city services coordinator Elizabeth Eggleston, who was the invited guest speaker.

Wimberly said he asked to have five or 10 minutes at the end of a program, but was told that wasn't possible.

Club officials did offer to get back with him, Wimberly said.

"I didn't want to wait two months for a rebuttal," he added.

Wimberly admitted that his round-up plan could create bookkeeping problems, but diners and patrons and motel owners would likely opt not to join a voluntary association. But he said he preferred voluntarism to coercion, and said he believed the ultimate work-product would be better.

Wimberly said he supports coordinated advertising and promotion of El Dorado, and said he feels the A&P Commission has done good work.

But he said he feels it can be done better without taxes and governmental involvement.

"Just because the state of Arkansas sets it up doesn't mean we have to do it," he said.

Wimberly acknowledged the accuracy of those who say most other large Arkansas cities and towns have adopted such taxes, and that El Dorado residents who go to such places pay support their promotion.

"When I was a teen-ager and used the 'everybody's doing it' excuse my Daddy would ask me if everyone jumped off the Red River Bridge, would I do the same," Wimberly said.

"There's lots of people who don't want to be saved, but I do."