

Libertarian Party of Hawaii

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2010 National Convention Report

By David Hudson

To understand the 2010 LP National convention, held in St. Louis, Missouri over the Memorial Day weekend (May 28-31), it helps to revisit the fractious and divisive 2008 convention in Denver, Colorado. That convention nominated former congressman Bob Barr (R-GA) for president, and Wayne Allyn Root for vice president. Barr was best known for his leadership role in the 1998/1999 effort to impeach President Bill Clinton. Root is a "spots handicapper" (bookie) based in Las Vegas, Nevada. Root was a candidate for president in 2008. He was eliminated on the fifth ballot, and threw his support to Barr on the sixth and final ballot. Barr then defeated long-time LP activist and author Mary Ruwart for the nomination, and asked the convention to nominate Root as his running mate, which it narrowly did on the second ballot over long-time medical marijuana activist Steve Kubby.

The 2008 convention was marked by the hysteria--there is no other word to describe it--over Barr's social conservatism as a Republican. Barr said repeatedly that he had repented of his conservative ways, and apologized for his sponsorship of the Defense of Marriage Act, but the "libertarian wing of the Libertarian Party" was having none of it. I was present at an emotional meeting in the hotel lobby in Denver, just after Barr and Root were nominated, when a walkout of at least several dozen activists was narrowly averted.

Fast forward two years to St. Louis. Root is the front runner for national chair, and running a very visible and sophisticated campaign. But he falters after leading on the first two ballots and loses to Mark Hinkle, former chair of the California LP, 281-228. Hinkle was lauded for his personal honesty and as a consensus builder. Mark Rutherford, Root's running mate, was elected vice chair and Alicia Mattson was elected secretary. Incumbent treasurer Aaron Starr was soundly defeated by James Oaksun for treasurer, 319-133. Oaksun's victory was widely anticipated and loudly applauded on the convention floor. Starr, it seems, had a reputation as a divisive force on the Libertarian National Committee, and allegedly acted in a secretive manner to advance a personal agenda.

The election of five at-large members of the LNC produced a stunning result--every candidate I voted for won! Root, who remains committed to the LP, led the field with 250 votes. He was followed by Ruwart, David Nolan, one of the founders of the national LP, outgoing chair Mark Rutherford, and Ohio Chair Kevin Knedler. All in all, the "libertarian wing of the Libertarian Party" prevailed, though leavened a bit by the victories of Rutherford for vice chair and Root's election to the national committee.

There was really only one discordant note at the convention. Bob Barr appeared on May 29 to give the keynote speech, and was the target of a "Bar not Barr" campaign that encouraged convention delegates to have drinks and sing songs at the hotel bar during his speech. Judging from the large attendance at Barr's speech, this was not a success.

I found the results of this convention to be satisfactory. We will see if Root, who has said he will not be a candidate for president in 2012, can "work and play well with others" on the LNC. There

was little of the emotional divisiveness of 2008, and a Oaksun's decisive win as treasurer is indicative that most LP'ers want to work together to build a strong party going forward, one that can appeal to dissatisfied Democrats and Republicans, as the Obama Administration flounders in its reaction to the horrendous Gulf oil spill, remains bogged down in two unwinnable wars, and spends money like the proverbial drunken sailor. It's almost (but not quite!) enough to make one wish for the bad old days of the George W. Bush administration.

Membership Issues

Value of membership

Dues

When the current Executive Committee was elected to take care of and guide the party we decided to suspend our usual \$25 per year dues for a year. Oops!! The year is up. Thus the reason this article is pitching to you. **Exchanging value for value in a free market is one of our basic tenets.** So what value are you getting for your \$25 of support:

- ❖ You have the right to run as a candidate under the Libertarian Party Banner. Most of you wouldn't do this, but I think you can recognize Libertarian Candidates on the ballot is a fundamental element of a "wanting to be" free society.
- ❖ Opportunity to pool your money with others to get behind somebody who will represent your interests in the game of all games.
- ❖ Opportunity to mingle and trade ideas with people of like mind. We have monthly meetings on Oahu with warm bodies attending and we have an un-moderated discussion list. To join the discussion email me: roger-taylor@hawaii.rr.com
- ❖ Instead of being angry without a cause, you can vector your anger in the Libertarian Direction and continue to put chinks in the armor of the established way of governmentally screwing things up.
- ❖ Many other reasons.

At some point in the next month or so you will get a chance to renew your membership. It will cost you \$25. If you don't renew at this point you will be added to our database as a subscriber and you will continue to receive the newsletter. To renew now or to send a donation, use our convenient website: www.libertarianpartyofhawaii.org or send your check to :LPH, c/o John Spangler, 712 Ulumaika St, Honolulu, Hi 96816. Thank you very much.

The Battle Over "Illegals"

By Ken Schoolland

June 12, 2010

Much has been said about the recent passage of a law in Arizona that allows police officers to require proof of legal residency whenever there is suspicion that a law has been broken—even a traffic violation. Anyone who cannot prove they are in the country legally may be arrested and subject to deportation.

Many Republicans say, "People who broke the immigration laws to come here must be kicked out. We are a nation of laws and we won't accept lawbreakers!" Never mind that there are both good laws and bad laws. The law is inviolable.

In opposition are mostly Democrats who say, "The law is discriminatory. By racial profiling, the authorities will unfairly target and harass people of color, especially

Hispanics!” As if kicking people out of the country would be okay if it was done in a racially neutral manner.

Individual Rights

There is another side to this issue...the libertarian side. Libertarians champion individual rights. The purpose of law is to protect those rights. When the law violates rights, then it is the law that is wrong and immoral, regardless of the racial mix of those affected.

America’s Founding Fathers broke the laws of England in declaring: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Risking arrest and death for treason, the signers of the Declaration of Independence brought many complaints against King George III, one of which was the king’s obstruction of immigrants to the colonies. “He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither...”

What? People have a right to move, to flee tyranny—be it religious, political, or economic? Yes.

Once the nation was founded, many slaves were still forced to come to American shores, but most people came with enthusiasm and none were refused entry for nearly a hundred years.

With passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, runaway slaves were forcibly returned from Northern states to Southern states. Still some brave abolitionists defied the law and founded the illegal “Underground Railroad.” Illegal? Yes. Moral and just? Yes.

Racism and Collectivism

Of course new newcomers weren’t always welcomed by the previous newcomers. Some hated the immigrant waves of Germans, Irish, and Italians. But national animosity didn’t alter the nature of immigration law so much as race and religion.

The nature of immigration law changed when thousands of Chinese were hired for the dangerous and difficult task of building the transcontinental railroads. Resentful white laborers lobbied and won passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

This Act rested on a collectivist notion that the state is the supreme owner of all decisions concerning employment and property. The right of an employer to control his enterprise and his payroll was superceded by the power of the state to decide, by race and religion, who was allowed to come. First targeting Asians, then blocking Catholics, Mormons, and Jews.

“Racism,” wrote Ayn Rand, “is the lowest, most crudely primitive form of collectivism. It is the notion of ascribing moral, social or political significance to a man's genetic lineage... Which means, in practice, that a man is to be judged, not by his own character and actions, but by the characters and actions of a collective of ancestors.”

The Right to Hire

Recent legislation has taken this a step further. Not only is the employer denied access to the employees of his or her choosing, but the employer also faces penalties, arrest, and imprisonment for daring to use his own payroll and enterprise as he wishes. Unapproved productive work and the employment of work are now crimes.

Says Robert W. Tracinski, a senior writer at the Ayn Rand Institute, “The irrational premise behind our nation’s immigration laws is that a native-born American has a ‘right’ to a particular job, not because he has earned it, but because he was born here. To this ‘right,’ the law sacrifices the employer’s right to hire the best employees – and the immigrant’s right to take a job that he deserves.”

The Arizona law not only threatens employers with prison for daring to hire the best employees, but the law also threatens those highly enterprising immigrants who would establish businesses and hire productive native workers...as did the immigrants who once founded Google, Yahoo!, eBay, and Sun Microsoft.

Wait in Line?

We are assured by the Arizona hardliners, “We aren’t against all immigration. Illegals should stand in line like those who came legally.”

Stand in line? That was the message given to the father of Anne Frank when twice denied a visa to come to America. The same message was given to millions who were crushed by Nazi, Fascist, Communist, and other tyrants because the quota was, and still is, full. It doesn’t matter on which side of the border the guard stands—preventing escape is collaboration with tyrants. The border bureaucrat shares responsibility for their fate.

Human beings have long been treated as if they are some kind of trash or pollution, rather than as miracles of genius, culture, productivity, and wealth. Politicians the world over fight for barrels of oil, yet reject humanity as if people were of less value.

Immigrants such as Albert Einstein, Enrico Ferme, Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek, and Ayn Rand contributed to the fabric of resistance to tyranny. How many more like them were lost or killed because of bureaucrats standing in the way?

Welfare

“But we can’t allow immigration so long as welfare is so generous,” practical men complain. “Many immigrants just come for the welfare!”

Welfare is the unjust robbing of one person to give to another. It is one of many violations of individual rights sanctioned by the state. It shouldn’t exist for anyone, not for immigrants and not for Natives.

However, blaming immigrants for the welfare state is like blaming a river for the rain. Immigrants are no more responsible for the welfare system in America than they are for tyranny in their homelands. Immigrants didn’t vote for welfare.

The people who *are* responsible for welfare in this country are the citizens, both Republican and Democratic, electing politicians who bribed them with promises of other peoples’ money.

If we are to allow people to oppose immigration until welfare is ended, then we admit that one kind of government abuse can serve as justification for another kind of abuse. If we

cannot have immigration until the welfare state ends, then the politicians might as easily say we cannot be allowed to have more than one child. We cannot allow people to eat a Big Mac. We cannot allow...*whatever they say* is costly to the welfare state. Under such logic, every liberty is in jeopardy.

These voters, of both major parties, have also sanctioned welfare 1) in the form of foreign economic and military aid to tyrannical rulers abroad and 2) in the form of corporate and union protectionist welfare that bans competitive imports from poor nations. Republican and Democratic voters have also sanctioned the continuing drug war that perversely ravages poor nations, just as Prohibition damaged the U.S. in the 1920's. Ironically, these policies contribute to the desperation of many folk to migrate.

Courage and Fear

To restate the Declaration of Independence, a libertarian credo: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Let us have the courage of our Founding Fathers. Courage welcomes competition. Fear shuts it out. Courage embraces the newcomer. Fear expels the newcomer. Courage champions liberty. Fear denies it.

Let us champion freedom, including that of courageous immigrants, as if we were in their shoes.

Note: Ken Schoolland will be debating this topic at Freedom Fest in Las Vegas, July 8-10, <http://freedomfest.com/>

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