

LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF CALIFORNIA

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LIBERTARIANS CALL FOR HALT TO STATE ANTI-MEDFLY PROGRAM

Oakland--Terming the current malathion spraying program "an insult to the American tradition of respect for privacy and property rights," Libertarian Party state chairman Bill Evers called for an immediate halt to the aerial spraying and urged turning over to the private sector all efforts to eradicate the Mediterranean fruit fly.

Carefully separating his party's criticisms of the anti-medfly program from those of critics who cite alleged health hazards, Evers was nonetheless equally severe in his criticism.

"The anti-medfly program to date," according to Evers, "has:

- wasted millions of dollars on the wrong ground spray and helicopters that don't work;
- vastly multiplied the fly population by importing hundreds of thousands of fertile flies;
- unjustly confiscated tons of fruit from the backyards of innocent propertyowners;
- threatened fruitgrowers each with hundreds of dollars in fines in an on-again, off-again fashion that can only be called arbitrary and capricious; and
- given something of a police state atmosphere to the Santa Clara Valley with nighttime air raids and National Guard and highway patrol conducting street searches."

"The Libertarian Party," added Evers, "believes that the fly infestation is a burden that fruitfarmers should be the ones to shoulder and not a burden that is imposed unwillingly on the rest of us."

Evers outlined what he described as the Libertarian Party's solution to the problem. First, eliminate government funding and enforcement of anti-medfly efforts. Second, farmers' associations and others involved in fruit production should negotiate with property owners for permission to put out flybait, whether on the ground or by air, or negotiate to buy out fruit crops. Holdouts' property could be surrounded with concentrated doses of flybait or by releases of sterile flies.

"This course of action would knock out the fly, save the taxpayer immense amounts of money, and preserve us from constant invasions of privacy and property," said Evers.

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