

LIBERTY PLEDGE

JUNE 1997

newsletter

Libertarian National Committee, Inc. ♦ 2600 Virginia Ave, NW, Suite 100
Washington DC 20037 ♦ Phone: (202) 333-0008 ♦ Fax: (202) 333-0072

Ex-Congressman: LP cost Republicans 7 House seats

In a surprising accusation, a former Republican Congressman said Libertarians were responsible for the loss of seven GOP U.S. House seats in the '96 election.

On the nationally syndicated Gil Gross radio show on May 28th, ex-Congressman Bob Dornan said, "Seven good Republicans lost their seats because a Libertarian was in the race [in 1996]."

The accusation was significant because the Republican majority in the House dropped from 38 seats to 20 seats after the 1996 election. This means the GOP lost a net total of nine seats — seven of them at the hands of Libertarians, according to the former California Congressman.

Dornan's comments left Libertarians slightly surprised, but pleased.

"We know we have a significant impact on Congressional elections — but we're delighted that a leading Republican thinks we cost them so many seats," said the party's National Director, Perry Willis. "Republicans apparently believe we've become *very* influential."

IN ALL, THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY contested 170 U.S. House seats in 1996, with individual candidates winning from 1% to more than 6% of the vote.

Although he didn't list all seven races, Dornan said the victims of the Libertarian Congressional campaigns included: "Bill Baker of California, Andrea Seastrand [of California], myself, [and] four others across the country."

Willis agreed that Libertarian candidates have played a deciding role in numerous races, but said Dornan's accusation represented the first time a Republican has put a specific number on the LP's impact.

"It's also the first time Republicans publicly admitted that we have the ability to affect national politics — acknowledging that Libertarians have helped shape the partisan complexion of the United States Congress," he said.

In his accusation, Dornan seemed to suggest that LP candidates had pulled more votes from Republicans than Democrats.

"But that's not necessarily the case," said Willis. "Research seems to indicate that we draw votes evenly from both older parties. But if Dornan's theory is correct, maybe Republicans will start voting for smaller government — especially if they're afraid of getting bounced out of office."

Dornan's comments were broadcast on 170 stations on the CBS Radio Network.

Libertarian Party joins coalition to fight Congressional pay raise

The Libertarian Party has joined a national coalition to fight a Congressional pay raise — calling the proposed \$4,000 pay hike an "insult to taxpayers."

The LP joined with representatives of the Congressional Accountability Project, the Reform Party, U.S. Term Limits, and the Coalition for America to urge Congress to vote against a pay hike that will go into effect in July.

"If this raise goes through, politicians will be making nearly four times the median income of American families," noted Steve Dasbach, chairman of the Libertarian Party. "Congress should vote to reject this pay heist."

Senators and U.S. Representatives now earn \$133,600 a year, but will get a raise to \$137,340 in July under the automatic cost-of-living allowances (COLAS) that Congress voted for itself in 1989 — unless it votes to reject the raise.

The coalition's first action was to deliver a letter in early June to House and Senate leaders stating: "We stand with the overwhelming majority of Americans who believe that members of Congress should not vote themselves a pay raise. Members of Congress are public servants. One small step towards restoring humility and moral authority to our Congress would be to forsake this inappropriate pay raise."

Dasbach said the Libertarian Party joined the coalition because the pay raise issue showcases the party's opposition to higher government spending and perks for politicians.

"Yes, the dollar amount of the proposed raise is fairly small, in terms of the overall federal budget — but fighting a pay raise for politicians is an action that will resonate with voters," he said. "It's important for the Libertarian Party to play a role in defeating this insult to taxpayers."

Presidential candidates in jeopardy?

Several recent LP presidential candidates achieved a pop culture breakthrough in early June when they were mentioned on the popular TV game show, *Jeopardy*.

In the category of "Presidential Candidates" — in the show's patented answer/question format — panelists were asked: "Ron Paul, Andre Marrou, and Harry Browne."

The correct response, given by one of the contestants: "Who are the Libertarians?"

"We're becoming more a part of pop culture every day," said Harry Browne, the LP's 1996 presidential candidate. "We're getting further and further into the mainstream."

The episode was broadcast during the week of June 9-13 at various times and dates around the country.

It's time to prosecute conductors of illegal U.S. tests

By Steve Dasbach

An apology isn't enough. The victims of the Tuskegee syphilis experiments deserve justice. Considering the seriousness of the crimes committed, justice should include criminal prosecution and jail time for the politicians, bureaucrats and scientists who are responsible.

Yet when President Bill Clinton recently met five living survivors of the government's secret syphilis experiment, he talked not of prosecution but forgiveness. The Tuskegee victims and their families, he said, are the only ones who have the "power to forgive."

Maybe. But only Clinton's Justice Department has the power to prosecute, and the president should use it. If equal justice means anything, politicians and bureaucrats must be held to the same standard as any other American. If a private citizen conducted a gruesome medical "experiment" in which at least 100 people with a potentially lethal disease were left to die, he would be prosecuted for murder.

That's exactly what happened at Alabama's

Tuskegee Institute starting in 1932. Government physicians lured 399 poor black men infected with syphilis into an experiment by promising them medical treatment and free meals.

Instead, the doctors left them untreated, years after a cure was found. Why? So they could cold-bloodedly study the long-term effects of this ravaging disease. Before a newspaper exposed the deed in 1972, thus bringing the experiment to a halt, the victims unknowingly infected 40 wives, and 19 children contracted the disease at birth.

Can these politicians and bureaucrats be tracked down and punished? Yes. This disgraceful experiment ended just 25 years ago. Scientists who conducted it may still be employed by the government. The bureaucrats who administered it may still have their jobs. The politicians who voted for it may still be in office.

Why is there no public outcry? Because, sadly, Americans are getting used to the concept of prosecution-proof politicians. The ruling class in Washington, D.C. blithely commits horrendous crimes, covers them up and, when caught, apologizes under a cloak of

anonymity and pays off the victims with tax money.

For example, lawsuits continue to pile up from as many as 20,000 Americans who are demanding compensation from the government for biochemical experiments conducted during the 1940s, '50s and '60s. On Sept. 28, 1994, a General Accounting Office official told a congressional subcommittee hearing that the government's covert experiments included exposing Americans to nerve gas, blistering agents, biological weapons and hallucinogenic drugs like LSD and PCP.

"Healthy adults, children, psychiatric patients and prison inmates were used," Frank Conahan said, and "in some of the experiments, university researchers exposed mentally disabled children to low doses of radiation." Researchers failed to inform the children's families about the nature of the experiments, he said, but "a university official later apologized for the use of children."

Now it's time to put an end to the myth that individuals responsible for these atrocities cannot be prosecuted. It's time for the American people to cry out for justice.

Steve Dasbach is national chairman of the Libertarian Party.

▲ *The Detroit News*
Detroit, Michigan, June 3, 1997

► *The San Diego Business Journal*
San Diego, California, May 12, 1997

▼ *The South Whidbey Record*
South Whidbey Island, Washington,
May 7, 1997

Go with the low flow

A missive from the Libertarian Party's Washington, D.C., office warns citizens that politicians aren't only in your bedroom, but they're in your toilet, too — and you shouldn't take that sitting down.

The object of their chagrin is the Energy Department bureaucrats "who mandated smaller-capacity toilet tanks."

The toilet tirade goes on to fret about the resulting backed-up potties, angry consumers, a "booming black market" in old-style crappers and a possible act of Congress.

"Politicians who claim the era of big government is over are busy regulating the volume of water in our toilets," said Steve Dasbach, Libertarian Party national chairman. "Talk about being bowled over by government intervention!

"When it comes to imposing mindless, meddlesome regulations, what will it take to get politicians to put a lid on it?"

Say what you will about the Libbies. They sure know how to milk a pun.

— Pat Broderick

It's party time for island Libertarians

By JIM LARSEN
Record editor

Island County's Libertarians have formed their own political party.

The Libertarian Party of Island County has been recognized as a separate regional organization by the Libertarian Party of Washington.

Coupeville resident Dave Maas chairs the new chapter. He comes right to the point when asked about Libertarian ideals: Support property rights and the free enterprise system, reduce the size of government and "leave us alone." Libertarians have run presidential candidates for many years and a few for state offices in Washington. A Libertarian candidate for state attorney general received 711

votes, or 2.6 percent of the ballots cast, in last November's election in Island County. "We got votes in every precinct," Maas said.

Brett Wilhelm, membership coordinator, said Island County's newest political party will initially spend its time increasing its membership. About 20 people attended a recent meeting at Teddy's in Freeland, he said, comparing that to similar turnouts for meetings of the traditional parties.

Since 1997 is an election off-year, the Libertarians will spend that time organizing. By 1998, Maas said, they might be ready to run candidates in "selected local races." He stressed, however, that they will not oppose incumbents who share

some of their small government philosophies.

Wilhelm noted that Libertarians have some Republican beliefs and some Democratic beliefs. Like Republicans, they favor free enterprise and tight spending, but like Democrats they support individual rights.

The local party founders are disgruntled former Republicans. Maas said he was active for several years in the county's Republican Party, but he decided to quit when he saw little action.

"Talking and doing are two different things," he said.

Such disillusionment leads many people to consider Libertarianism, said Reece Causey, public relations director.

"A lot of people are cynical," she said. "That's why there's so much interest" in the new party. "A Libertarian would never vote to raise taxes."

The three speak enthusiastically about smaller government and less taxes, but with less fervor about more controversial Libertarian ideas such as the decriminalization of illegal drugs. Maas agrees with that, pointing to the high cost of the "drug war" that is never won.

"There's been a great destruction of civil liberties" in the process, he said. But he emphasized that people can disagree on specific issues and still be welcome in the Libertarian Party.

For information about the Libertarian Party of Island County, call 360-222-3020.

Browne fires up Libertarians

Party leader addresses local members

By AL SLAVIN
Staff Writer

Harry Browne has this dream.

He would like to sell the government's assets to the highest bidder. He wants to abolish the Internal Revenue Service. He wants huge cutbacks in government spending.

But he said he needs a lot more help from his compatriots in the Libertarian Party. Browne, who was the Libertarian Party's presidential candidate in 1996, was in Fairbanks on Saturday to address members at the group's state convention.

"The Libertarian Party remains irrelevant and the government just gets bigger and bigger

and bigger," Browne told a group of 68 people. He admitted later that the tone was strong but said he needs to be truthful with the members.

The political party was founded 26 years ago on an independence platform. It's members believe firmly in an individual's personal freedoms and that government should not be a hindrance.

Browne spoke Saturday of dismantling a governmental beast that has become a drain on taxpayer's dollars, a topic he has addressed in several books. He said the federal income tax should be abolished and the voting public should then decide whether it's necessary.

"The American people should be given a choice," Browne said. "They have never had the opportunity to register a vote on that one way or another."

The American voters did have a chance to register a vote on

Browne's run for office. Nearly a half million supported Browne's candidacy and the candidate himself said he was pleased.

He felt the bigger victory was gained in reaching the media. Browne said his campaign helped legitimize the Libertarian party's political plight with regard to news coverage. Despite being excluded from debates, Browne, 63, said he did have adequate access to certain news outlets.

The Nashville, Tenn. resident has formed an exploratory committee regarding another presidential run in three years. The overwhelming factor in his choice will involve the growth of the party itself.

He said some notable celebrities including Kurt Russell, Clint Eastwood and John Larocquette, have been supportive of the libertarian philosophy. Browne suggested this may be one way to generate interest in the fledgling offshoot of traditional politics.

He said the party's nationwide membership of 22,000 must grow tenfold and they need to have an organized campaign effort. This could attract more candidates to the party. Part of that process involves a recruiting drive aimed at increasing the ranks.

"We are not worrying about how many people know that government is broken," Browne said. "What we're worried about is how many people know and do nothing?"

Len Karpinski, chairman of the state party, said the membership drive was the main reason for bringing Browne to Fairbanks. Karpinski said the group boasts about 100 members in Alaska.

He is hopeful that members who drifted away years ago to the Alaska Independence Party will return to the Libertarian fold.

"My educated opinion is that AIP is on the way down and we want to get back some of those Libertarians," Karpinski said.

Libertarianism: The best of both worlds

Libertarianism is a political philosophy that has been around for a long time, a philosophy that strongly influenced the founders of our nation. The Libertarian political party has existed since 1971, when it was founded by a group of scholars and students who saw a need for an alternative to politics as usual by the Republicans and Democrats.

The Libertarian Party has run candidates on the Idaho ballot consistently since 1976.

Libertarian presidential candidates have been John Hospers (1972), Roger McBride (1976), Ed Clark (1980), David Bergland, (1984), Ron Paul (1988), Andre Marrou (1992), and Harry Browne (1996).

Over the years, Idaho Libertarians have run for governor, the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and numerous seats in the Idaho Legislature.

Some Libertarians find their philosophical roots in the writings of such thinkers as John Locke and Thomas Jefferson. Others look to more modern writers, including Ayn Rand, Thomas Szasz, Nathaniel Brandon, Murray Rothbard, and Ludwig Von Mises.

I became a Libertarian when I was first introduced to the party in 1980. I found it to be the only political philosophy that logically and consistently adheres to principles I believe in.

In a nutshell, Libertarians advocate free market economics and personal liberty. We differ from conservative Republicans as much as we differ from liberal Democrats.

Like liberals, we advocate reduced government spending for defense programs. Like conservatives, we advocate reduced government spending on social programs.

Like old-fashioned liberals (remember the 1960s), we advocate better protection of civil liberties like freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of lifestyle, and we oppose the draft. Like conservatives, we advocate better protection of property rights, including gun ownership.

The fundamental principle that supports the Libertarian political philosophy is as follows: The purpose of government is to protect people's rights to life, liberty and justly acquired property. No more. No less.

Any law, policy or action by government that has the effect of depriving a person of these rights is morally wrong.

In accordance with this principle, Libertarians support



Donovan
Bramwell

the enactment and enforcement of laws that prohibit murder, assault, rape, theft, fraud, trespass and breach of contract.

We also support maintenance of a military force sufficient to protect the rights of U.S. citizens on U.S. soil. We regard pollution as a form of unlawful trespass, and we support laws that treat it as such.

Libertarians recognize that modern government in the U.S. has grown far beyond its rightful purpose of protecting citizens' rights.

Government has become a monstrous institution that systematically abuses people's rights and unnecessarily interferes in their private and economic lives.

Libertarians advocate the elimination of most government agencies, including the Internal Revenue Service; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; the FBI; the Drug Enforcement Agency; the Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Reserve banking system.

We advocate drastic reductions in government spending, the elimination of confiscatory taxes such as income and property taxes, and their replacement with voluntary taxes and user fees.

Gasoline taxes, for example, are voluntary; you can avoid paying the tax if you choose to not use the service.

We see the public school system as a government-imposed monopoly. We support vouchers and other means to encourage private competition to the public schools, and we advocate the eventual replacement of the tax-supported public schools with a system of private and parochial schools.

We advocate the repeal of "victimless crime" laws, including gun control laws, laws that restrict the sale and use of prescription and recreational drugs, laws that prohibit gambling, and laws that proscribe sexual conduct between consenting adults, including prostitution laws.

We support laws that promote victims' rights.

The foregoing examples serve to give the reader an idea of our position on a few important current issues.

I will give a fuller explanation of our position on specific issues in future articles. For more information, write to the Libertarian Party at 2600 Virginia Ave. NW, Suite 100, Washington DC 20037, or see our web site at <http://www.lp.org>

Bramwell, a Lewisville farmer, is a member of the Libertarian Party and has run for office under that party's banner. He is one of five local columnists who appear Sunday on a rotating basis. Write to him care of the Post Register, P.O. Box 1800, Idaho Falls, 83403.

▲ *The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*
Fairbanks, Alaska,
May 11, 1997

◀ *The Post Register*
Idaho Falls, Idaho,
May 25, 1997

Local activists putting together tri-county Libertarian organization

By **STUART FROHM**
and **RALPH E. WIRTZ**
of the **Daily News**

J.R. and Carrie Lightstein met in Arizona. A native of Baltimore, Md., he was an Air Force firefighter and a part-time dance instructor. She was a dance instructor, too.

Now they're living in Hemlock, where she has roots, and working in Midland. In their free time, they're preparing to organize a Midland-Bay-Saginaw County branch of the Libertarian Party — paying for phone calls and stamps out of their own pockets.

The Lightsteins aim high. "We hope to have the biggest affiliate in Michigan," Carrie said.

New to the party and to organized politics, they got training during the Libertarians' state convention in Traverse City last weekend.

Two additional workshops for prospective campaign managers and candidates are planned in June, and the Lightsteins say they plan to attend both.

Is a Lightstein candidacy in the future? Probably, Carrie said, but the office hasn't been nailed down.

Instead, they'll be trying to organize local meetings of people who are or think they might want to be Libertarians — or even Libertarian candidates. And Carrie plans to be campaign coordinator for the party's tri-county wing.

The organizational effort's steppingstone is perhaps a dozen names of local and area people who at one time were interested in the party. The Lightsteins expect to receive more names soon, they said.

"One of our goals is to try to get more younger people involved," said J.R.



Daily News photo/STUART FROHM

Carrie and J.R. Lightstein

Political notebook

He's 24. She's 23. At the state convention, where everyone they saw looked closer to 30 or even older, they heard such comments as "Glad to see young faces."

They also heard "optimism about our country and the future of it," and belief in the principles of the founders of the United States, J.R. said.

Libertarians believe that government exists to defend individuals' rights, they couple said. And, the Lightsteins said, they'd like to see needy people helped by the private sector, rather than government programs.

"We don't advocate coercion or use of force to achieve political or

social goals," J.R. said. But he backed a military force for national defense.

The couple learned about Libertarian Party by reading material from a World Wide Web site on the Internet. You can try this Web address if you'd like to learn more: www.lp.org.

If you want to talk with the Lightsteins about their local organizing effort, try (517) 642-5966.

TAX FREEDOM DAY AND THE WORLD WIDE WEB

In a news release Friday, the national Libertarian Party promoted a World Wide Web site set up to allow people to compute their

personal Tax Freedom Day, based on their income and location. It's the day when you stop working to pay taxes and start working for yourself, according to a news release from the party.

The address is www.libertyconnections.com/tax.

The Tax Foundation designated May 9 as Tax Freedom Day nationally. In the Libertarians' news release, party Chairman Steve Dasbach is quoted as saying, "Think of it as Paycheck Emancipation Day. After spending one-third of the year as an indentured servant to Uncle Sam, you're no longer working for the politicians."

Courting votes for Libertarians, he adds: "The Libertarian Party is working every day to slash taxes and let Americans keep more of what they earn."

WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE THEY CHOSE THAT BUILDING?

On the bottom of the above-mentioned fax from the Libertarian Party is this mailing address: Watergate Office Building, 2600 Virginia Ave., NW, Suite 100, Washington, D.C. 20037.

◀ *The Midland Daily News*
Midland, Michigan, May 10, 1997

▼ *The Daily News*
Longview, Washington, May 16, 1997

Libertarian positions often misunderstood

ADAM T. SIMPSON KALAMA RESIDENT

Totally disgusted at the financial shenanigans of both the Democrats and Republicans, I have become a contributing member of the Libertarian Party. Have you heard the shocking claim that we libertarians want to "legalize" drugs and prostitution? Not true — we want to decriminalize both activities.

While our society pretends not to condone drugs and prostitution, we continue to lose the war against both. To continue to battle when we are being "whipped" is not only stupid, it is suicidal. Wouldn't it be logical to withdraw our forces, reevaluate our tactics against these enemies, and try another strategy?

If we truly desire to protect our children against the very real threats of drugs and prostitution, we must first shed the illusion of safety — that by making such activities illegal we have somehow magically solved the problem. We must also confront an economic law: wherever there is a demand for a product or service (i.e., drugs and prostitution), said product or service is going to be supplied laws be hanged! Making such activities illegal not only has not stopped drugs and prostitution, it has actually

encouraged them in unintended ways.

Anything forbidden is a natural attractant, especially for adolescents seeking a way to rebel against parental authority. The knowledge they can amass large sums of

“
If we truly desire to protect our children against the very real threats of drugs and prostitution, we must first shed the illusion of safety ...
”

untaxed monies is not lost on drug dealers, pimps or prostitutes. Illegal activities attract those unafraid to use violence to get what they want. Someone suffering withdrawal from drugs who cannot legally obtain them is not hesitant to murder our child for a few dollars to purchase drugs from pushers. Someone denied sexual pleasures from a consenting prostitute may have little qualms about raping and murdering our spouse or child to get their "kicks." Isn't

this exactly what is happening?

Another irony is the tens of millions of dollars lost in taxes from illicit drug and prostitution activities, which must be made up from somewhere. Guess who pays? You and I (and our families), who do not participate in such activities, are forced to make up for those lost revenues. In a real and tragic sense, our taxes subsidize the very activities we claim we are trying to stop. If this does not make us fools, then what will it take?

Decriminalizing drugs and prostitution, which will always exist no matter how many laws we pass, would propel both activities into the searing light of day. We might first be surprised at just who is participating in both activities, like politicians, TV evangelists, movie stars and athletes. We would remove the profit incentive and reduce the violence from criminals now dealing in these "illegal" activities. We could monitor the quality of drugs and needles, and the health of prostitutes, thus reducing deaths from overdoses, AIDS and other STDs (sexually transmitted diseases).

Finally, we could punish (by taxing) those who participate in, and those who supply, drugs and prostitution ... instead of the current asinine policy of punishing those of us who do not.