

FREE Orange County

Newsletter of
the Orange
County
Libertarian
Party

May 1992

Enlightened judge decries prohibition

But Gray's alternative contains some unwanted lumber

Editor's note: Last month Superior Court Judge James Gray publicly repudiated the official War on Drugs, at least insofar as marijuana, cocaine and heroin are concerned. Citing a variety of pragmatic reasons familiar to libertarians, the judge has proposed legalizing those three substances and selling them at low prices through government-licensed pharmacies. Judge Gray said he thinks LSD, PCP, and other drugs should remain illegal or controlled in the conventional manner of prescription drugs, and that sales of the three substances he wants to legalize should be restricted to adults only.

Judge Gray appeared before a packed meeting of the OCLP (along with several Los Angeles LPers) on April 21 and elaborated on his plan. The meeting was covered by local media and videotaped by LP member Fred Singer.

By Roger Bloxham
OCLP Chair Emeritus

Judge James Gray's proposal for the government to control drugs in a less violent manner is merely a good sign. He does want to leave the government in charge and that is bad.

Judge Gray has probably come as far as he will toward the Libertarian position. All of us who love liberty and believe in achieving sovereignty for the non-aggressive individual should recognize the heroism the judge has demonstrated.

His plan will surely furnish the benefits that he projects. It will reduce violence on the streets along with a reduction of jail and court crowding.

But, Judge Gray has missed the free market boat. There are benefits to be gained if the additional step of complete removal of government control is to be achieved. A misguided concern for the young is expressed in Gray's plan. Government licensing of drug sales to adults and heavy penalties for all parties involved in juvenile acquisition and/or consumption of marijuana, cocaine or heroin is part of Gray's plan. I have a question.

Why retain any part of a demonstrably failed system of prohibition? Talk about sending bad messages! The prohibition of beer and cigarettes for

juveniles has largely served to entice segments of our youth that otherwise wouldn't be interested in beer and cigarettes. Experimenting with imbibing and smoking became ways to act "grown-up."

Pot, coke and heroin should not now join liquor and cigarettes as part of the rites of passage to adulthood, or its simulation. This will surely be the effect on our young people of the future. They would observe adults exercising special privileges to act stupid with the presently illegal drugs.

With drugs illegal for everyone, it has been a level playing (or screwing-up) field. No special privileges. Illegal drugs have been equally and readily available toll, young and old alike. Our young people have proved their inherent wisdom by observing and determining that their peers, as well as the adults, act stupid with drugs. They have responded with the consumption of drugs falling dramatically and consistently for the last several years in our schools and on our campuses.

To entice and titillate future generations with legal adult drug use is to invite more disaster for the youths of the future, the youths who may misguidedly believe that emulating government sanctioned adult stupidity somehow confers adulthood or its equivalent.

New meeting place! See back page.

Notes from the Chair

Gray draws a crowd; cities get organized

By **Brian Schar**

There is no doubt, of course, of last month's highlight. Superior Court Judge James Gray, who had only two weeks before come out in favor of relegalizing some illegal drugs, addressed our regular meeting for 45 minutes before taking questions from the crowd. And what a crowd! There were chairs for 70, all filled, with at least 20 more people standing wherever there was room. It was easily our biggest meeting to date.

KABC (Channel 7) and OCN both covered the event, as did the Orange County Register. The name of the Libertarian Party was prominently featured in each of the stories, and the coverage was fair and appropriate. Both our television clips were over 30 seconds long. Congratulations to Judge Gray for having the courage to come out publicly for relegalization!

The OCLP kicked off an intensive organizational activity on April 14th. Eleven of the thirteen city directors met and obtained their city's precinct directories. Our goal is for each city to have five

Dave Nolan summarizes the LP position on the Drug War

The so-called War on Drugs is a terrible mistake. By outlawing certain substances, the politicians have created a situation where distribution of these substances is totally controlled by huge, ruthless criminal empires. Prices are forced sky-high, making the drug trade immensely profitable. The lure of easy money proves nearly irresistible to inner-city youths, who become the foot-soldiers for the drug barons.

And to top it all off, the War on Drugs is not even working. In a recent magazine article, former San Jose Police Chief Joseph D. McNamara stated that "[i]t should be painfully obvious ... that this strategy has not worked ... most people in local law enforcement feel drug abuse has increased."

The solution must be obvious. We must acknowledge that the War on Drugs is a hideous and colossal failure. The short-sighted and vindictive policies enacted by American politicians have created a criminal monopoly on the the distribution of drugs, with all the attendant problems of crime, corruption, and violence. The drug war must be ended — now! We cannot save the American dream by forsaking our heritage of liberty!

— Excerpted from Nolan's keynote address to the 1991 Libertarian National Convention.

precinct managers by the June primary, and 20 by the November election. These precinct managers perform vital grassroots functions: getting out the vote, registering voters, calling other local Libertarians for special events, and other ad hoc duties as appropriate. We need your help! If you'd like to help out in your neighborhood, please call me at 840-6833.

The media guides have been completed, and are being taken to local media outlets — television, radio, newspapers and magazines. Gary Copeland reports that all the reporters who have seen the book have been impressed. One told him, "I guess I'll have to write something about you now!" Kudos to Fred Singer and all the others who have generously devoted their time and resources to completing this important project!

This month our meeting place changes to a classy, brand-new location. Randell Young has generously offered us the meeting room at his new restaurant, Randell's, for our monthly meetings. If you'd like to arrive early, the restaurant will be open for dinner and they make a mean pasta. Parking is free in the structure behind the 3 Hutton Centre tower. I look forward to seeing you there.



Published monthly by the Orange County
Libertarian Party

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Riots: We must listen carefully, respond thoughtfully

By Scott Bleser

The day the verdicts were announced in the Rodney King beating trial, I got a phone call from Bryon, a black friend of mine who grew up in South Central L.A. and now lives in the San Fernando Valley.

"Man, it is a white world, that's all I can say," he growled. I commiserated with him as best I could, agreeing that the verdicts were a travesty especially in light of the videotape evidence against the cops. But I was struck by the quality of the anger Bryon was expressing, for up till now in our 4-year friendship he had not indicated any particular frustration with our white-dominated power structure.

I remember when the tape was first released a little more than a year ago, and the public outcry which ensued. I also particularly remember a large number of other African-Americans writing to newspapers and calling radio talk shows with other stories of police brutality against persons of color.

The picture that developed from all these stories is of a police culture that routinely dumps on blacks, abusing them in arrest procedures and shafting them in the courts. And the Rodney King incident became the lightning rod attracting all these accumulated charges, for at last, here was a videotape providing apparently incontrovertible evidence of criminal police behavior. The indictments laid against the four police officers became, in the metaphorical public eye, indictments against every cop who brutalized a black person.

So the eventual verdicts served to repudiate not just King's claim against his abusers, but every black person's claim against the police and courts. As Libertarians we may tend to criticize this kind of collectivist thinking, and prefer to regard the King affair as a singular incident. But the nature of our legal system, structured on precedents, is such that the resolution of a singular incident reflects

on all similar incidents.

The reactions of outrage were predictable. The notion that blacks therefore have no rational interest in our system is plausible and perhaps true to some extent. But the violence that grew out of that rage was so ferocious it shocked many of the people who were originally outraged.

A talked to Bryon again after the riots burned through his former neighborhood. He told me that after the first day he went there to fetch his younger sister and move her to relative safety. His temper had largely changed from anger to shock and dismay. Many of the familiar settings of his childhood were destroyed. "All the shops I used to go and buy things at — they're just gone."

We discussed, for the first time in any meaningful sense, the situation of poor blacks in our society. Bryon had never seemed very "political" before and even now was reluctant to adopt a party line. But he did refer more than once to "twelve years of Reagan/Bush" as being particularly difficult for his former neighbors.

I fought back my urge to lay some standard Libertarian Party line on him, lest I come off implying that white racism is just something caused by affirmative action and quotas, or that we really need to abolish public accommodation laws so that white racism remains out in the open for all to see rather than being driven underground. I did manage to point out how occupational licensing and other regulations work to deny blacks access to jobs and careers.

Thanks to the senatorial campaign of Richard Boddie, Libertarians will find themselves talking directly with African-Americans in political contexts. For many of us this will be the first such experience. Given the current high level of passions aroused by the King verdict and the riots, it behooves us to think our arguments through carefully and above all else to *listen* to these people so we can better understand their frames of reference.

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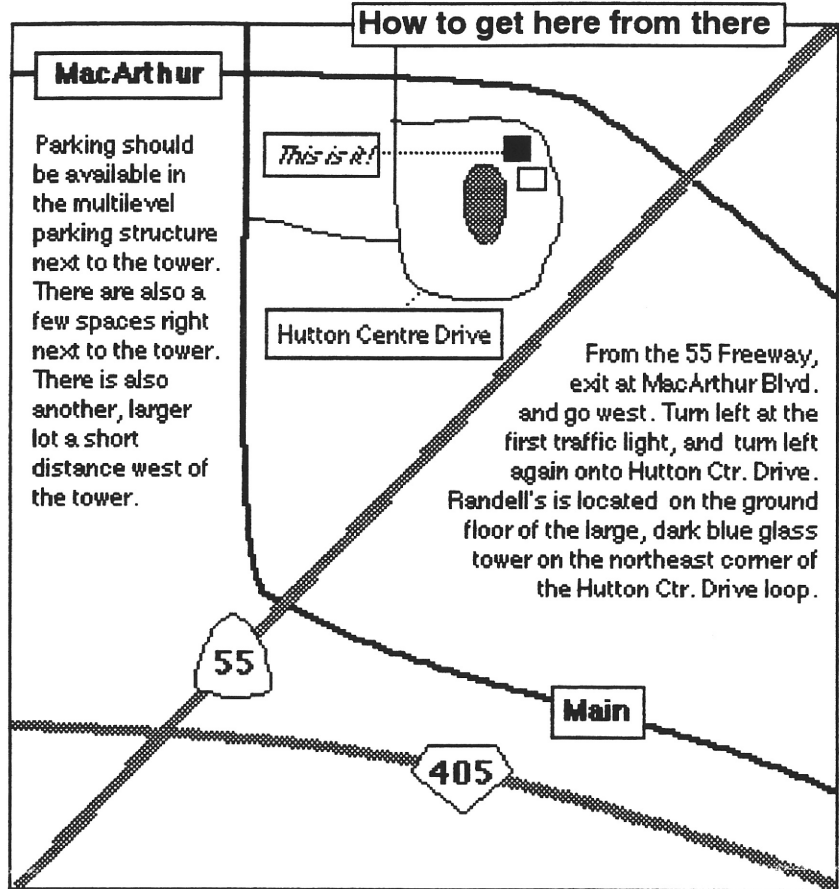
Meeting Time & Place


The Orange County Libertarian Party on the third Tuesday of each month at Randell's Restaurant, located at 3 Hutton Centre Drive (see map).

For up-to-the-minute details concerning the next meeting please call party Chair Brian Schar at 840-6833.

Important phone numbers

- Orange County LP (714) 540-5053
- California LP (800) 637-1776
- National LP (202) 543-1988
- Boddie for Senate (800) 6-BODDIE
- Marrou for President .. (702) 434-6362
- Liberty Bell BBS (408) 243-1933
- FIDO-Net: 143/6
- 8,N,1, 300/1200/2400 baud
- FREE Orange County . (714) 642-4745
- California Libertarian News
- Ted Brown, editor ... (818) 568-8404





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