

LIBERTARIAN LIFELINE



It's A Great Time to be a Libertarian!!!

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When I sat down to write this I was going to try and report like a real journalist. Who, What, When, Where, etc., you know like in school. Well, I can't. I'm biased. I got elected Vice-Chair of Contra Costa County and I couldn't be happier. Thank you for your support. Back to that journalist part.

The East Bay LP meeting held Tuesday 1/19 at the Englander Brewpub was a tremendous success. We elected a new slate of officers to lead us out of this Socialist Century into the new Millennium. I was thrilled by the large turnout for this important meeting. Whoever said leading Libertarians was like herding cats hasn't been to our meetings. **EVERY OFFICER WAS ELECTED UNANIMOUSLY!** Q:-D>

Chair Marion McEwen
(510) 889-9216
Alameda Co. Vice-Chair James Cantwell
(510) 655-9019

Co.Co.County Vice-Chair Scott Wilson
(925) 687-0460
Treasurer John Taylor
Secretary Linnea Nygren
Exec-Com Rep Terry Floyd

Jim Cantwell is also wearing the Web-Master Hat and I Q:-> am doubling as Editor. We can use all the help we can get. Speaking of new blood we signed up our newest members Wm Peter Stevenson, John DiLillo and had several first time attendees including, to name but a few, Jim Wolfe, Henning Mathew, Frances Grotesend and more. I'm sure I speak for all the officers when I say welcome. All politics are local. You make the difference. Come to "The Party!"

We also elected our Delegates to the State Convention. A hearty Thank you to all those that plunked down the up to \$300 + room to attend. All card-carrying Party Members who attend can be listed as Alternate Delegates. (See your Chair for details)

(Continued on page 3)

A father told his son; "When Lincoln was your age he walked three miles to school .>>>

Tools for Liberty

The first thing I found out about Libertarians, is we have opinions! How convenient that every newspaper has a opinion/editorial (Op/Ed) page. It is put there just for us, so we should use it up.

The second thing I found out was that we are long winded. Editors like to publish as many letters as possible so keep it short and sweet. 200 words is

a good target but never go over 250. Make sure at least one of those words is "libertarian". If possible refer to the article that ticked you off in the first place. Always include your name address and day-time phone. Most newspapers will call you to confirm you really wrote it. If you get one out of ten published you are doing great. (Persistence pays!) They will only print one a month so send them one everyday. Once your in, take the rest of the month off. Q:-D>

Express yourself!

Bastiat's Sophisms

PART 1

by Katherine McKay

Frédéric Bastiat was one of the 19th century's most prolific economics writers. He was not an original theorist but rather a brilliant pamphleteer, the greatest exposé of economic fallacies (most of which are in use today), and the most powerful champion of free trade in Europe in the first half of the century.

Some of Bastiat's best-known writings, available in English translation, are his Economic Sophisms and Economic Harmonies. In them, he analyzed various protectionist and socialist arguments, dissecting them to show the fallacious premises on which they were based and subjecting them to the test of exaggeration, where their fallacies were easily seen. He was answering the arguments of socialism long before his contemporaries considered it worthy of attention. Although his examples are set in 19th century France, they address illusions which recur down through the centuries. Some of his analyses were used in Henry Hazlitt's classic work Economics in One Lesson.

(Continued on page 6)

Did you know?

Only 28% of incumbent Congressman and Governors have Web sights, compared with 64% of challengers. Half of Americans are now using the Web to learn about specific candidates or party issues. (George Washington University)

2/3 of Americans with internet access would prefer to cast their vote over the Web. (ActionMedia)

Andy Ross' store in Bereley has been repeatedly vandalized and he has received postcards calling him a "cancerous Jew". Ross has been a leader among store owners who've been trying to get the city to stop homeless people from loitering outside their shops.(Reason)

"Don't ask, don't tell.' In a single policy Clinton summed up his entire legacy. He made it the law that lying should be a condition of public service. He imposed his own moral vacuity onto the lives of honorable gay and lesbian soldiers." (Andrew Sullivan, in the Advocate 10/27/98)

No truer words: "Foolish consistency is the hob-goblin of little minds!">>>>>

(Continued from page 1)

In addition to the election, Greg Lyon made a motion to support Cheaper President, Ned Roscos', proposed initiative to repeal Prop. 10's 50 cent per pack cigarette tax. Jim Wolfe raised the question "What would support entail and wouldn't it be better to support 'more popular' issues to reduce our negative image." Damn good question Jim,. Thank you for asking. John Taylor pointed out that Prop 10 passed by less than 89,000

votes. That is so close that this is an issue with considerable support. Walter Springer said the LP are frequently the early adapters, years ahead of "conventional wisdom". Wayne Nygren talked about the necessity of build-

ing coalitions with other persecuted minorities such as motorcyclists against helmet laws, medical marijuana users, and alternate and/or home schoolers. "Ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee!" Someone else said that support would not have to be financial but in name only. Our name could be listed in literature as supporting. A quick poll found that only 4 members did smoke, but when the vote was taken, the proposition passed unanimously.

With so many of us attending the State Convention in February a motion was made to hold the next regional meeting in March. Passed. Motion to alternate meeting sights between Co.Co. County and Alameda month to month. Passed. Watch next months Libertarian Lifeline for details.

" Ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee!"

A Libertarian's New Year's Resolutions

by Harry Browne

1. I resolve to sell liberty by appealing to the self-interest of each prospect, rather than preaching to people and expecting them to suddenly adopt my ideas of right and wrong.

2. I resolve to keep from being drawn into arguments or debates. My purpose is to inspire people to want liberty -- not to prove that they're wrong.

3. I resolve to listen when people tell me of their wants and needs, so I can help them see how a free society will satisfy those needs.

4. I resolve to identify myself, when appropriate, with the social goals someone may seek -- a cleaner environment, more help for the poor, a less divisive society -- and try to show him that those goals can never be achieved by government, but will be well served in a free society.

5. I resolve to be compassionate and respectful of the beliefs and needs that lead people to seek government help. I don't have to approve of their subsidies or policies -- but if I don't acknowledge their needs, I have no hope of helping them find a better way to solve their problems.

6. No matter what the issue, I resolve to keep returning to the central point: how much better off the individual will be in a free society.

7. I resolve to acknowledge my good fortune in having been born an American. Any plan for improvement must begin with a recognition of the good things we have. To speak only of America's defects will make me a tiresome crank.

Somebody's listening!

At the National LP Convention in 1996, Charles Murray (noted libertarian author) said in a speech; "The old saw, 'A conservative is a liberal that has been mugged', can now be updated because now the mugger is The Government."

Later in his speech he said; "The Government is no longer

'We the People',

the Government is 'THEM'."

8. I resolve to focus on the ways America could be so much better with a very small government -- not to dwell on all the wrongs that exist today.

9. I resolve to cleanse myself of hate, resentment, and bitterness. Such things steal time and attention from the work that must be done.

10. I resolve to speak, dress, and act in a respectable manner. I may be the first Libertarian someone has encountered, and it's important that he get a good first impression. No one will hear the message if the messenger is unattractive.

11. I resolve to remind myself that someone's "stupid" opinion may be an opinion I once held. If I can grow, why can't I help him grow?

12. I resolve not to raise my voice in any discussion. In a shouting match, no one wins, no one changes his mind, and no one will be inspired to join our quest for a free society.

13. I resolve not to adopt the tactics of Republicans and Democrats. They use character assassination, evasions, and intimidation because they have no real benefits to offer Americans. We, on the other hand, are offering to set people free -- and so we can win simply by focusing on the better life our proposals will bring.

14. I resolve to be civil to my opponents and treat them with respect. However anyone chooses to treat me, it's important that I be a better person than my enemies.

>No poorer source: (Sean Penn as he lights a cigarette on 60 Minutes 1/24/99)



Notes from the Chair

By Marion McEwen

It is exciting to be Chair in this year sure to be a banner year for Libertarians. Thank you to all the new and usual suspects who joined us for dinner and the election meeting at The Englander in San Leandro. We were very well received and the staff asked us if we would like to hold meetings there on a regular basis. This was the largest gathering we have had in over a year, except for the candidates' rally that outgoing Chair Jeffrey Sommer organized last election season.

Thank you for the vote of confidence in me and thank you to all the eager volunteers for the other officer positions. We have an excellent group, proven volunteers, who will with all your help make this the year of the Libertarian. It was good to see all the regular faces and all the new faces. I hope that I will see each and every one of you at the convention in San Jose this month.

I want to welcome each of you to a New Year

This year it's our Party's party.

of the Libertarian brand of politics. This is not your typical lying, cheating, stealing kind of politics. We don't sign people up on SSI or State Disability or Welfare to act as activists for us, we volunteer to do the work ourselves. We don't ask the government for grants or other funds stolen from hard working taxpayers, we only take honest to goodness donations, voluntarily given by individuals.

As for our own Region, it is time for us to

step forward and take the opportunity to form coalitions with all the people struggling to maintain what little freedom they have left. This off-election year will give us many opportunities to win some of the single issue and special elections that are held in these years. It is up to each of us to follow local politics. Ask your coordinator and me for help whenever you see an opportunity to bring the Libertarian point of view to the voters. Don't be shy about calling any one of the officers and coordinators in your area for help with a local issue. The sooner you discover an issue, the sooner you call for help the more impact our message and efforts will have on the election.

A special warm, thank you to our outgoing editor, Terry Floyd. He should be proud of himself for the wonderful job he has been doing these past four years. Terry will be working with Scott Wilson, our new editor, to ensure a smooth transition and help maintain the quality we have all come to expect. Scott has taken on a rewarding and sometimes thankless job. Please give him all the support you can in terms of articles, ideas and volunteer help at the folding parties. I promise that all volunteers at the folding parties will be fed.

I am looking forward to a year of Libertarian wins supported by wild, enthusiastic volunteers. As the rest of the political world is dragged screaming into the year 2000, we will be dancing our way in. This year it's our Party's party.

Somebody's listening!

At the National LP Convention in 1996, Charles Murray (noted libertarian author) said in a speech; "The old saw, 'A conservative is a liberal that has been mugged', can now be updated because now the mugger is The Government." Later in his speech he said;

"The Government is no longer **'We the People'**,
the Government is **'THEM'**."

For the last few years Readers Digest, the worlds most read magazine, has run regular articles titled "That's Outrageous" highlighting government and judicial inefficiencies. Last month for the first time they titled an article

"Mugged by the Government!"

Somebody IS listening! Q:-D>

According to Bastiat, all economic sophisms "have common roots: *the disregard of men's interests in their capacity as consumers*. To show that this sophism is the *starting point* for a thousand roads to error is to teach the public to recognize it, to understand it, and to mistrust it under all circumstances."

Protectionism

Why is it that in every generation the same arguments for protectionism, price-fixing, and other policies of government meddling arise and are so hard to see through by the majority? Bastiat gives us a succinct answer to this puzzling question:

But, it may be asked, are the benefits of freedom so well hidden that they are evident only to professional economists? Yes, we must admit that our opponents in this argument have a marked advantage over us. They need only a few words to set forth a half-truth; whereas, in order to show that it is a half-truth, we have to resort to long and arid dissertations. This situation is due to the nature of things. Protection concentrates at a single point the good that it does, while the harm that it inflicts is diffused over a wide area. The good is apparent to the outer eye; the harm reveals itself only to the inner eye of the mind. In the case of free trade, it is just the reverse. The same is true of almost all economic questions.

Because most people are unable to sit down and go through the lengthy process of analysis each time a question arises, Bastiat undertakes to furnish such an analysis ready-made for many popular protectionist fallacies.

Producer vs. Consumer

One of the basic flaws of the protectionist position is its exclusive concern with the problems of producers, when in fact all of us are both producers and consumers. Many protectionist solutions address only one class of producer and, in redressing the difficulties of this group, make things more difficult for all consumers. Bastiat observes that tariffs and subsidies are

meant to favor producers, but will have repercussions on consumers. What will be favorable to one producer - that is, keep his prices artificially high because of an artificial scarcity of his product - will hurt the consumer, who will have to pay more for a less available product or service.

It seems evident to most of us that it is preferable to live in abundance rather than scarcity, but protectionist measures always operate on the theory that scarcity is to be desired. This is because protectionists (1) confuse prices with real wealth, and (2) forget that for every producer favored there are consumers disfavored. The basic principle of artificial restrictions is the sacrifice of the consumer to the producer, of the end to the means. True abundance is brought about by a system of free trade, the repeal of restrictive laws, and the removal of man-made commercial barriers. As a modern example of this, American sugar producers are subsidized and protected from world markets, where sugar sells for half the American price. American consumers are thus paying twice as much for sugar as consumers in other nations are, in order to prop up the domestic sugar industry.

Wealth

Bastiat makes a distinction between money and wealth which is often obscured by advocates for protectionism. An abundance of goods and services is the real wealth of a nation, no matter whether it has a great deal of money or not. The law of supply and demand - which has not yet been successfully repealed by any legislature or dictatorship requires that scarcity of a commodity lead to high prices for it. Restricting imports from foreign countries, or burdening them with tariffs, so as to support domestic producers causes an artificial scarcity of a commodity which *otherwise* would have been more plentiful if foreign producers were allowed to compete freely. This tactic may keep prices high, but the supply of the commodity will be lessened, and therefore real wealth (abundance of goods and services) will be lower. Restrictive measures can raise the price of goods while reducing their abundance so that everyone is monetarily as rich as he was before the diminution of real wealth, while free competition will increase the supply of goods and services and thus

lower prices.

Sometimes protectionist measures prevent goods from coming into being, such as subsidies to farmers not to grow certain crops in order to keep the price high of those that are grown. Whether goods are used up, destroyed or prevented from coming into being makes no difference to the *prices* of similar goods; but it makes a great deal of difference to the *wealth* of a country; and wealth is what we should be chiefly concerned with.

Plunder

Bastiat considered that the only two ways of making a living are by producing and by plundering. Since governments cannot produce anything, they must resort to plunder to survive, and there are only two methods of plunder: force and fraud. The basic types of plunder are: war and slavery (plunder by force), and monopoly and theocracy, defined as "fictitious services rendered in exchange for goods" (plunder by fraud). Variations of plunder include taxes, tariffs, duties, subsidies, regulations, wage and price controls, restrictive licenses, etc. All trample on the voluntary exchange of services between individuals and have the aim of transferring wealth from individuals who produce it to the *bureaucrats* supervising the frauds, so that they may make a living without producing anything of value.

Why does the electorate willingly give bureaucrats such power to plunder them? Because they have been persuaded by sophistry that they are being robbed for their own benefit. Bastiat puts it concisely: "We may be certain beforehand that every *sophism* is the precursor of an act of plunder. My friends, when you detect a sophism in a petition, get a good grip on your wallet, for you may be sure that this is what the petitioners are aiming at."

The modern Japanese government has rested on a system of robbery by subsidy for years. From money collected by the central government (the top tax rate on individuals is 65%), subsidies, loans and other favors are given to certain businesses but not to others. The system of preferences doled out to these businesses has resulted in overgrowth of some industries and stagnation of others - exactly the effect a command economy has. Crony capitalism is merely a variation of this. In the devastation of Asian economies over the last two years, we see the predictable result of such policies. Bastiat predicted that in redistributing wealth, plunder would always destroy a part of it; because of this, plunder always has an end, because eventually the cost becomes too great for the society.

The next issue will conclude this article.

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The Libertarian Party is the Party of Principle. To assure and affirm that our party never strays from its principles, we request our members to sign the pledge below. (Non-signers cannot vote on party business.)

I hereby certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals.

Signature: _____

Membership Application

I choose to set my dues at:

- \$25 Basic _____
- \$100 Sustaining _____
- \$250 Sponsor _____
- \$500 Patron _____
- \$1000 Life _____

Plus additional contribution to LPC:

- \$__ Monthly Pledge _____
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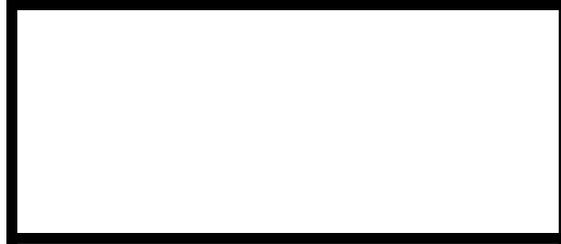
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Come to "The Party!"



Extra Extra Read all about it:

I DON'T WANT YOUR MONEY!!!

Hi. I'm the new Editor. Q:->

Have you been buried in requests from the LP, Liberty Council, LPC, CATO, Heritage Foundations, etc like I have? I don't want your money, send it to them.

Have the Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, United Way, Second Harvest or Food Bank reminded you it was time to give? I don't want your money, send it to them.

Are Visa and Master Card smiling at you because of the holidays? I don't want your money, send it to them.

Adam Smith wrote in the first Encyclopedia Britannica "Utility is the primary function of any publication."

The way I say it is; "An Editor without a readership is like a Hot rod without wheels. Lots of noise but nothing happens."

We send out over 700 copies of Libertarian Lifeline, I'd like to know how many get read. I'm asking from the bottom of my heart to please send me your name, address, "Read it" and any other comments. I'll send you your stamp back and a special surprise. You see;

I don't want your money,
I want what Julian Simon called "The Ultimate Resource". I want your attention, thoughts and action.

Let's PARTY because it's 1999!
This is a privately funded request. Mail to:
Scott A. Wilson Q:->
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