

Forget New Taxes and Bonds, all the Government Really Needs is Your Car

by Delmas Gault, Editor

In a recent issue of *Liberty* magazine I clipped out a cartoon of a couple sitting at the desk of an IRS auditor. While waving a revolver at them with a 'stick-em up' gesture, the auditor explains that this is the IRS's new *tax simplification program!* After a brief chuckle, I returned to filling out my '96 return. How comforting - the IRS is allowing me to fork over my share without the added stress of someone waving a revolver in *my* face. Those guys in IRS Customer Service are really doing a great job.

Good news must really travel quickly in the halls of government, however, for I'm seeing a similar program being adopted in California. But here, California is on the cutting edge in customer service. No lengthy forms to fill out. No need to save receipts. We're talking about asset forfeiture.

Last year, *Smog Check II* was released on the drivers of our state. Among the many draconian measures, unregistered vehicles can be pulled from the owners private driveway and demolished for Smog Credits; to be later sold by the city for up to \$7000.00 per credit to smoke stack industries eager to alleviate their own pollution problem. The city of San Jose will also ticket the most recent owner for the expense to haul it away and split up the ill-gotten booty. Politicians claimed those measures weren't in the bill and promised never to do it again.



For years the Drug Enforcement Agency has blazed the trail on asset forfeiture. Cars, boats (yachts if ya got 'em) and cold hard cash round out the breakfast table of any respectable DEA office. Quarterly auctions spin off the finest hardgoods the agents can seize. Don't get out of your chair; you can preview the complete line-up on cable Channel 60 the night before the big show.

Sadly, not all forfeitures come from drug lords of the streets. How many of us know elderly family members who still buy things the old fashion way - with cash? Try and buy an airline ticket with a roll of cash and you'll have salivating DEA agents on you like white on rice. After hours of interrogation, they'll keep your cash and escort you to the curb - not the gate. Enter F.E.A.R.

Forfeiture Endangers American Rights Foundation is a charitable organization assisting forfeiture victims. Comprised of concerned citizens, victims and lawyers, F.E.A.R. Inc. was formed in 1992 by a group of New Jersey Libertarians. Through government hearings, lobbying efforts, and grass root efforts, F.E.A.R. has battled the unjust seizure of property from Americans around the country. But it's been an uphill battle. Bills introduced in Congress to repeal over zealous forfeitures have never moved beyond subcommittee.

In a recent radio interview with Michael Savage (KSFO 560), former F.E.A.R. President Brenda Grantland warned of an up-coming bill on the floor of California's legislature. SB 457 would mandate state, county and municipal governments to establish agencies to oversee the sale and distribution of revenues from non-federal seizures. The bill currently cuts the pie up so that the state gets the biggest piece. The state's monies will be applied to the general fund to be later used for drug enforcement, drug education, and whatever else they feel like. Currently the DEA can seize the state's and local government's seizures and use the monies to fund the DEA's efforts. Enter competition.

Trying to keep up with competition, California's drug czars can't let the boys from up town keep all the dough. They need their own cut of the pie. We've been told that since Prop 13 money has been rather scare around these parts but S.B. 457 makes it all worth while. Those potential revenues are just sitting there next to street curbs waiting to be grazed like an 'all you can eat' salad bar. What's next? Turf wars among agencies? This could get very ugly.

F.E.A.R. can be found on the web at FEAR.org and is a wealth of information on forfeiture laws. The IRS can be found under most rocks.

May Meeting Notes

by Christopher Schmidt (CVASchmidt@ACM.org)

May's meeting at *Prime Time Athletic Club* in Burlingame touched on numerous miscellaneous subjects and we left with numerous potential projects to ponder.

Mary reviewed the list of project ideas for new members.

Delmas told us about an interesting speaker he has invited to speak at a future meeting. Bernie Jackson and Steve Marsland volunteered to serve as our **Publicity Co-Chairs**.

Mary reported that she had reserved a slot in the Redwood City **Independence Day parade** so we discussed her float proposal and related ideas. Subsequent to the meeting the parade's organizers called Mary and told her that political parties are not permitted to participate in the parade. I guess they were afraid we might spoil everything by calling attention to the *ideas* in the Declaration of Independence, whose anniversary the holiday nominally commemorates. I expect that we might discuss other ideas for the Fourth at this month's meeting.

Lacy Nelson reported on two San Mateo city council meetings he attended and a "town meeting" sponsored by Congressman Tom Lantos. A handout distributed at the "town meeting" characterized federal programs by how many "cents" in the "federal dollar" each costs. Lacy prepared a synopsis of the federal budget for our meeting using total dollars instead of cents per dollar. The "pennies" added up to **\$11,200 per taxpayer** last year!

Lacy briefly explained how a city council's 'consent calendar' works and how a citizen can effectively request that items be diverted from automatic approval. He offered to give any Libertarian tips on attending city council meetings.

Frank Minishak reported that 3 of the 5 seats on the **Belmont city council** will be open at the next election. There is usually little interest in Belmont in serving on the city council, so a Libertarian who filed papers might be elected by default if no more than 3 candidates did so. In recent years, seats on the Burlingame and Belmont city councils have been filled this way. Any volunteers?

Mike reported that a "Moloney for Congress" sign was featured briefly during the Bay-to-Breakers race **television coverage!**

I turned over to Mike an 8-cassette **audiocourse** on how to run a **Libertarian campaign** by Andre Marrou and Michael Emerling. The series was donated by Chuck Olson. Anyone who wants to borrow these tapes should make his wishes known at a meeting or by contacting any officer.

Mary asked that Libertarian members of **local interest groups** call her. When booking speakers with organizations, it helps immensely if she has an introduction.

Delmas announced that he will be moving out of the county in July. It would be great if a dependable volunteer could step forward to **edit this newsletter** starting some time before the end of the year. Alternatively, I would be willing to return as editor if someone else were to serve as secretary and write this monthly column.

Delmas also reported that he was on the air 3 or 4 times last month, calling in to radio talk shows. You can spread the word of freedom this way, too!

In a previous column I reported that Mike, Mary, and I had successfully teamed up to write and submit a rebuttal to the San Mateo-Foster City School District's bond argument for the upcoming June 3 ballot. At the last minute the **county pulled our rebuttal** off of the ballot pamphlet on the pretext that we sacrificed the right to submit a rebuttal by failing to file an initial argument against the measure. This would not be so irritating had I not consulted with a county election official on this very question *prior* to preparing our rebuttal. Since no other argument against was filed, one wonders what they think the purpose of the voter pamphlet is...

Given the bad news above, we decided to make our '**get-out-the-vote**' mailing (authorized at the April meeting) exclusive to Redwood City. Margret Schmidt and I donated the design, printing (\$52), labels, and preparation of the mailing. The party paid \$82 to mail 1200 postcards. This promises to be a *very* close election with a *very* small turnout, so we *might* make the difference. At least this mailing should increase awareness of Libertarian opposition to public debt. If you think this is the kind of project we should undertake in the future, please make a donation to the local party at our San Mateo mailing address and indicate your reason for contributing. Thank you!

The **next meeting** of the Libertarian Party of San Mateo County will be Wednesday, June 18, at the Prime Time Athletic Club, at 1730 Rollins Road, Burlingame; between Broadway and Millbrae Avenues, a few blocks north of the Broadway train station. Sandwiches/salads/smoothies 6:30-7:30 in the Cafe; business meeting 7:30-9:00 in the multipurpose room. The receptionist can direct you to either location. Come for either or both!

McVeigh Verdict Proves that Violence is not the Solution

With a single word - "Guilty!" - the jury in the Oklahoma City bombing trial confirmed the futility of violence as a means of accomplishing political goals, the Libertarian Party said earlier this month.

Hopefully, this guilty verdict will make people like Timothy McVeigh realize that political objectives are never more important than the lives of innocent people," said Steve Dasbach, chairman of America's third largest political party.

Violence begets only violence - and now Timothy McVeigh will have to pay the price for his violent act," he said.

McVeigh was found guilty of setting off the thunderous explosion that destroyed the Alfred J. Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in 1995, killing 168 people and injuring 500 more. The sentencing portion of the trial will soon commence with McVeigh facing a possible death sentence.

"Whatever the punishment, we hope the survivors and relatives of the victims of the tragic bombing - the innocent people who suffered because of McVeigh - will feel that justice has been done," said Dasbach.

The Oklahoma City bombing trial was of particular interest to Libertarians because prosecutors charged that McVeigh was motivated by "anti-government" sentiments. In fact, some of McVeigh's criticisms of the federal government were shared by Libertarians - and millions of other Americans. But that's where the similarities end, said Dasbach.

Timothy McVeigh thought he was a patriot. But the real patriots are Americans who see problems and create solutions, who see violence and try to prevent it, and who see government abusing its power and work peacefully for liberty," said Dasbach.

As we see the tear-stained faces of the survivors, we are reminded again that the way to protest abuses of government power is not with violence and bloodshed. The solution is to work peacefully through the political system to reclaim our rights."

Now that the trial is almost over, the challenge for the future is to make sure an Oklahoma City-style bombing never happens again, said Dasbach.

Our goal should be to ensure that no American ever feels that violence is their only option," he said. "Our goal should be to make all Americans feel they have an important role in the political system, and a voice in this nation's decision-making process, and an opportunity to make constructive change.

An open political system and robust freedom of expression - that's the best way to discourage violent acts like the bombing in Oklahoma City," said Dasbach. "And a country where no one has to live in fear of either their own government or of terrorists like Timothy McVeigh - that would be the best legacy of this tragic trial."

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

There has been much talk lately about school vouchers as a way to break the monopoly of the public education system. School vouchers may succeed temporarily in this quest, but, it will only be a matter of time before all the current private schools will become part of the monopoly and join the current public school system in lobbying for more taxes.



As it now stands the private schools are lobbying for less taxes so their clients have more money to spend on private schools. As all good Libertarians know, anytime the government pays for something the costs are higher than the market price.

[Charles Tolleson](#)
Foster City

The GOP's latest wacky suggestion: The "Taxpayer Protection Agency"

The IRS is dead! Long live the Taxpayer Protection Agency!

That's the plan of Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-MS) - but his suggestion to change the name of America's most feared government agency has Libertarians laughing out loud.

"You can call a pig an eagle, but that won't make it fly," scoffed Steve Dasbach, chairman of the Libertarian Party. "And politicians can call the IRS the Taxpayer Protection Agency, but that won't make Americans hate it any less."

Lott's suggestion to give the Internal Revenue Service a new, friendlier name came during a little-noticed speech to the Economic Club of Chicago last month.

Arguing that the income tax system is too complicated, Lott said, "When it comes to the IRS, don't mend it, end it. My own preference is to replace the IRS with the Taxpayer Protection Agency."

Upon hearing that suggestion, Dasbach's first reaction was: Didn't George Orwell think of this first?

"We're waiting for Senator Lott to change the name of the CIA to the Ministry of Truth; the Pentagon to the Ministry of Peace; the Agriculture Department to the Ministry of Plenty; and the BATF to the Ministry of Love," he quipped, referring to Orwell's classic 1984. In that novel, the government told its citizen-slaves that "War is Peace" and "Freedom is Slavery."

"And in Trent Lott's America, a government agency that seizes \$629 billion annually from our paychecks and routinely terrorizes honest Americans is called the Taxpayer Protection Agency," said Dasbach. "It's a suggestion that would make even George Orwell blush!"

But Senator Lott had more on his mind than just Orwellian name changes. In the same speech, he advocated a massive tax cut for all Americans. In fact, Lott said government should take "not just a lower share of income, but less money, period."

"Then, a few weeks later, Lott helped negotiate the budget agreement with President Clinton that increased the cost of government by \$270 billion over five years!" said Dasbach. "In Trent Lott's America, truth is falsehood and tax cuts are budget increases."

But, ironically, that budget deal could lead to the one real benefit from Lott's proposed IRS name change, said Dasbach.

Americans will be able to call the new Taxpayer Protection Agency and tell them: Protect us! Republican and Democratic politicians are trying to steal \$270 billion more of our money!

Yes, taxpayers need protection - but we need protection from deceitful politicians like Senator Lott."

What the Senate Majority Leader can't grasp, said Dasbach, is that the problem with the IRS is not the name.

"Ask any American and they'll tell you: The problem is that the IRS is a powerful, arrogant agency that tramples our civil liberties," he said. For example:

- The IRS has the power to conduct taxpayer "lifestyle audits," prying through personal belongings, shopping habits, and bank accounts for evidence that their lifestyle doesn't match their tax returns. IRS Commissioner Margaret Richardson boasted that the program allows IRS agents to "audit the taxpayer, not just the tax return."
- The IRS makes 10 million annual demands for additional taxes - but 70% of those tax assessments are overturned by the IRS's own Appeals Office.
- Over 800 IRS employees were caught snooping through the tax records of friends, neighbors, and celebrities - and a third of those

culprits received no punishment.

"A rose by any other name would still smell as sweet - but the IRS by any other name would still stink," said Dasbach. "It would still be a tax-grabbing, citizen-hassling, record-snooping, Constitution-violating bunch of bureaucratic thugs. It needs to be abolished, not given a warm and fuzzy new name."

Number of Libertarians in office sets new record: 192

The number of Libertarians serving in public office has jumped to another new record - 192 - thanks to a flurry of election wins and appointments over the past several months.

Mark Dierolf was elected to a four-year term on the Hartnell Community College Governing Board, becoming the 21st Libertarian in office in California. Moreover, Anne Lindl is now serving on the Livermore School Board.

In addition to the new Libertarians in office, Art Olivier was elected Mayor Pro Tem (Vice Mayor) of Bellflower, a city of 63,000 just south of Los Angeles. Olivier, a member of the city council for three years, won the promotion in March thanks to a vote by the five-member council. As Mayor Pro Tem, he will assume the duties and responsibilities of the mayor whenever necessary.



After being outnumbered for the past several years while fighting tax increases and new regulations, Olivier said this year's council looks more promising because of the election of one anti-tax Republican and one anti-tax Democrat. "That gives us a fairly strong pro-freedom majority," he said.