

# FLORIDA LIBERTY

## The Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of Florida

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### WE'RE JUST WILD ABOUT HARRY!

#### Harry Browne Wins Libertarian Party Nomination Jo Jorgensen Picked as Running Mate

Washington, D.C. - Harry Browne, investment advisor and best-selling author, won the Presidential nomination of the Libertarian Party at the party's national convention on the July 4th weekend. He now seeks an invitation to the televised Presidential debates this fall. Pulitzer prize-winning columnist David Broder, often called the "dean of American journalists" and one of the most respected political writers in the country, called for Harry Browne's inclusion in the debates and said that "the party to watch in the 21st Century may well turn out to be the Libertarians."

Mr. Browne, 63, won more than 68% of the votes from the over 600 Libertarian Party delegates gathered at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill hotel in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, July 6th. The final first-ballot tally was:

Harry Browne	416
Rick Tompkins	74
Irwin Schiff	32
Douglas Ohmen	20
Others	3
None of the above	60

The Florida delegation gave 21 votes to Mr. Browne and two votes to "none of the above."

In his acceptance speech to the cheering delegates and a live C-SPAN audience, Mr. Browne asked the question he said might change the direction of government once and for all: "Would you be willing to give up your favorite government programs if it meant you would never again have to pay income tax?" If elected, Mr. Browne promised to abolish the income tax and "get the federal government out of everything not specified in the Constitution," which would allow him to deliver "huge tax cuts now, huge spending cuts now, a balanced budget now."

"People everywhere recognize that government doesn't work," said Mr. Browne. "It doesn't deliver the mail on time; it doesn't keep the cities safe; it doesn't educate our children properly. Government has failed. Government reforms have failed. Government politicians have failed. Government doesn't work. So we don't want to reform the federal government. We don't want to slow its growth. We don't want to improve the management of it. We want to reduce it to the absolute minimum possible. It's time to return to Americans the freedom to run their own lives with their own money by their own values," he said. Mr. Browne concluded his speech by saying, "If you elect me President, I swear to you that I will not rest until I've repealed the income tax and your life, your resources, and your freedom are yours once again."

Selected as Mr. Browne's running mate was Jo Jorgensen, 39, the president of a software duplicating company in South Carolina and the third woman to win the party's Vice Presidential nomination in its 25-year history. The Libertarian Party expects to qualify for ballot access in all 50 states.

## **Presidential Debate in St. Petersburg October 9**

Mr. Browne, a resident of Tennessee, writes an investment newsletter and is the author of nine books, including his recent campaign manifesto "Why Government Doesn't Work," the #1 bestseller "You Can Profit from a Monetary Crisis," and "How I Found Freedom in an Unfree World." During his quest for the Libertarian Party nomination, he campaigned in 38 states and appeared on hundreds of radio talk shows. He is now running radio ads promoting his candidacy, and hopes to boost his polling numbers high enough to qualify for the Presidential debates - one of which will be held in St. Petersburg on Wednesday, October 9. The Libertarian Party's 800 number received over 12,000 calls during the convention and continued to receive calls at the rate of 250 to 500 a day after it ended.

## **Steve Dasbach Re-elected National Chairman; Candi Copas is Florida's New NatCom Rep**

Steve Dasbach of Indiana was elected to a second term as National Chairman of the Libertarian Party, receiving about 60% of the vote over challenger Gene Cisewski, Chairman of the Washington, D.C. LP. After the vote, Mr. Cisewski called for all delegates to support Mr. Dasbach in his new term. Karen Allard of Washington State was re-elected Vice Chair, and Hugh Butler of Utah was re-elected Treasurer. Gary Johnson of Texas is the new Secretary, replacing John Famularo, who did not run for another term.

Candi Copas of North Carolina is the new National Committee Representative for Region 4, which includes Florida. She succeeds Florida's own Gary Ilardi, who recommended Ms. Copas for the post and who will serve as her Alternate.

## **Convention Speakers Deliver Libertarian Message**

The convention boasted an impressive array of speakers, speaking both to the delegates on the convention floor and in separate sessions. To mention just a few of the highlights:

Keynote speaker Jacob Hornberger of the Future of Freedom Foundation galvanized the delegates with a rousing pro-freedom, anti-big government speech. He recited a litany of failed government programs and berated the Democrats and Republicans for continuing to cling to their "beloved welfare state" despite all evidence of its failure. He noted that Democratic and Republican presidents show great courage in sending American troops into battle, but "when it comes to entering into debate with Libertarians, they've got a yellow streak down their back a mile wide."

Nadine Strossen, president of the American Civil Liberties Union, stated that the Bill of Rights and the Constitution do not create a majoritarian society. No majority, she said, can take rights away from any minority, no matter how small. She blasted the Clinton administration for its record number of wiretaps, which rival the old Soviet KGB, and accused it of being "ignorant, unconcerned, and insensitive" on privacy matters. She said that scapegoating civil liberties is the wrong answer to today's social problems and received thunderous applause when she declared that the major parties invoke the family to justify their anti-civil liberties programs, but "the ACLU does not believe Big Brother is a member of the traditional American family."

Syndicated columnist Joseph Sobran described Clinton and Dole as "the morally disqualified" and the "intellectually disabled" and compared the U.S. government to "a mean watchdog that's no longer needed to protect the house but keeps biting the kids." He called for greater adherence to the 10th Amendment, which he described as an anti-trust act for government and charged that "this government isn't playing by its own rules."

Dade County LP Chairman Jim Ray spoke to the convention soliciting "Pennies for Perot." This campaign, conceived by Leon County's Daniel Walker, was prompted by the tragic occurrence of billionaire Ross Perot's Reform Party attempting to milk the public treasury for federal subsidies. Mr. Walker and Mr. Ray, their hearts

no doubt touched by this pathetic sight, began a drive to collect pennies for Mr. Perot in order to help him stay off the dole. As Mr. Ray told the delegates, "Contact your local Libertarian Party county leader. Say, 'I want to help keep Ross off welfare. I don't want to see a young party go astray. Two gangs of politicians raiding my wallet every election year are enough. Will you take my pennies and give them to Ross?'"

## **Banquet Raises \$150,000**

A fund-raising banquet honoring newly selected nominees Harry Browne and Jo Jorgensen was held on the evening of Saturday, July 6th. With Michael Cloud as fund-raiser, the Libertarian Party raised over \$150,000, much of which may be used for the Presidential campaign.

Awards given out at the banquet included: the Samuel Adams Award given to Don Ernsberger as the outstanding LP activist, the Thomas Paine Award given to keynote speaker Jacob Hornberger as the outstanding LP communicator, and the Thomas Jefferson Award given to the LP's founder David Nolan for Lifetime Achievement. The "Champion of Liberty" Award was given to Phil Zimmerman, the software developer who created PGP ("Pretty Good Privacy") encryption software.

## **Platform Changes**

The Convention made a number of changes in the party platform, including deletion of the controversial "Children's Plank." Our stance against the War on Drugs was moved to an earlier section of the platform, and a provision advocating medical uses of marijuana and other drugs (until such time as all drug prohibition is repealed) was added. The delegates approved a "sexual rights" plank which affirms the rights of consenting adults to make their own domestic contracts and living arrangements without interference from the state. For more on the platform, see "Platform Controversy" in this issue.

## **Convention Highlights**

The festivities began on the evening of July 3rd, when convention delegates attended a party at the Jefferson Memorial. The memorial, in accordance with Jefferson's wishes, faces the White House so that Jefferson may keep a watchful eye on its occupant. The delegates were entertained by, among others, the Echoes of Liberty Fife and Drum Corps, an ensemble from New Jersey comprised of home-schooled children, and by Libertarian actor Bruce Evoy, who, dressed as Thomas Jefferson, read the Declaration of Independence. During the convention itself, Mr. Evoy portrayed George Washington delivering his farewell address. Mr. Evoy's reading of Washington's speech was greeted by the delegates with cries of "Four more years!" On the night of July 5th, David Nolan, the party's founder, gave a presentation called "David Nolan's Living Room," in which he and other LP pioneers reminisced on the events which led to their founding of the party 25 years earlier.

## **AN INTERVIEW WITH HARRY BROWNE**

Following are excerpts from an interview with Harry Browne, the Libertarian Party Presidential nominee, by Tom Regnier, Editor of Florida Liberty.

**TOM REGNIER:** What do you think it will take to have the mainstream media covering the Libertarian candidate the way they cover the other parties?

**HARRY BROWNE:** I think just pounding away at what we're doing now, which is as many radio talk shows as possible, as many television shows as possible, as many press releases as we can put out that are really newsy and say something meaningful.

**TR:** How will you [as President] abolish the income tax without putting in a sales tax?

HB: The plan is to do away with the income tax and replace it with nothing; that's in the first year. Over six years we're going to sell assets to try to pay off Social Security recipients and pay off the federal debt. And I can tell you this, that once you have one year of no federal income tax, you will never have it again for as long as we live. It will take a generation or two or three before you could sneak it back in under any pretenses because people would never put up with that once they got away without it. The income tax touches everybody so directly that you don't have a situation like Ruby Ridge, for instance, where people think, "That was terrible what happened to those people, but that would never happen to me." But when you hear about somebody being hauled off to jail because his tax form didn't add up, people think, "That could happen to me." The income tax touches everybody and we've had it for eighty years with no real push to repeal it that ever got anywhere before now. But I think that it has reached the point that with all of the anti-government feeling, it's coming to a boil.

I think the flat tax is a politician's way of solving the income tax problem. There never will be a sales tax replacing the income tax per se because it would have to be so large that you would never get people to approve it. You will never get the flat tax approved because, by definition, if you are keeping the government at the present size, roughly half the people are going to be better off than they are now and half the people are going to be worse off, and they will measure it simply on the basis of, "Do I come out ahead or do I come out behind?" And if you've got half the people seeing themselves as coming out behind, you cannot make a monumental change like that. That's why you cannot repeal the income tax without reducing government. And, of course, I feel you can't reduce government if you don't repeal the income tax because you can't get people to accept the cuts unless they get rewarded for it. Another thing that people don't realize that I didn't discuss in "Why Government Doesn't Work" is that five years after the federal income tax is repealed, there won't be a state income tax anywhere in this country because no state could survive as long as some other state has no income tax; they would lose all their productive people. People in Georgia aren't going to move to Florida just because Florida doesn't have an income tax, because they still have to pay federal income tax. But once they no longer have to pay federal income tax, staying in Georgia means you have to make your affairs available to the state so they can see what you're doing and you can pay the tax. All I have to do is move across the border into Florida, and I'm free of the income tax forever. And that means that it's on the way out in every state in the country, even Massachusetts.

I have reduced the income tax issue to this - that we are going to get rid of the federal government's involvement in welfare, education, health care, this whole litany of items - the whole business - and if we do that, then we can afford to repeal the income tax and replace it with nothing. So what it comes down to is: if you have a favorite federal program - student loan, farm subsidies, whatever - would you give up your favorite federal program if it meant you never had to pay income tax again as long as you live? Because this is one package, we're going to do it all at one time, and so if you think that's a wonderful program, you have to realize that the cost of that program to you is paying income tax for the rest of your life, because you can't have your program without everybody else getting his program too. So would you give up your favorite federal program if it meant you could be free of the income tax for the rest of your life? And all people ever say is, "Of course I would." Or, "What favorite federal program?"

TR: So, then the government that we do have is going to be paid for with excise taxes and tariffs?

HB: At existing levels today, without having to raise any of them. As a matter of fact, in that six-year budget I have, at the end of the six years, if we get the 12 trillion dollars for the federal properties, you could actually lower the existing levels of taxes because those taxes right now are bringing in something like \$150 billion. You would assume that by the end of six years it would be closer to \$200 billion without raising the rates at all, just from the increased activity. And I figure that \$100 billion is all you need for a federal budget, so by the end of six years you can actually reduce those things too, so we would reduce tariffs.

TR: Wouldn't it be ideal for trade to get rid of them all?

HB: Well, sure, but you can say the same thing about excise taxes; they inhibit trade also. As long as you accept the idea that there is going to be some government, there has to be some taxation. Some Libertarians say, "No, you can do things like user fees and so on," but the way I see it - use what? There's not going to be anything left

for user fees. It's not as if we're going to have government operating Disneyland and people can pay admission when they come.

TR: Every time the army shoots down an enemy plane attacking we have to pay something?

HB: (laughing) Send a bill to Hussein every time we knock down one of his missiles!

TR: It seems to me that there's a larger theme that fits in with "Why Government Doesn't Work" and it's really the theme that authoritarianism doesn't work or central control doesn't work. In a business, for example, a boss who tries to micromanage every employee doesn't usually get great results. So I'm wondering if possibly what we're looking at with government is really part of a broader picture.

HB: Well, I think it is. I don't want to sound like a utilitarian - God forbid! (laughing) - but force is inefficient, and good managers learn that you can command people to do things, but you don't get the response that you want, and it applies in so many areas of life that it is the least efficient way to get anything done. And central control is nothing but central force of decision-making.

TR: I know that in working with Libertarians, that's one of the basic rules I keep in mind: you don't go around giving orders.

HB: On a talk show recently, the host said, "I'm in sympathy with just about everything you folks stand for, but I could never subject myself to the dogma of any party." And I said, "Well, welcome to the Libertarian Party. There isn't anybody here who will do that either."

TR: When I read your biography in "Why Government Doesn't Work," I was impressed with your non-professional interests - classical music, opera, food and wine, sports, drama, old movies, and fiction. What is your favorite opera?

HB: I would say that the one that moves me the most probably is "Die Frau Ohne Schatten [The Woman Without a Shadow]" by Richard Strauss. I think the most perfect opera ever written, and certainly entertaining and moving, is "Hansel and Gretel by Humperdinck" - either "Hansel and Gretel" or "Turandot" by Puccini. And then, of course, I love Puccini operas like "Tosca" and "La Boheme" and "Madame Butterfly" and "Girl of the Golden West." And I love Wagner; I think "Gotterdammerung" is certainly in my top five operas. And also I like the others - "Rheingold" especially. I'm definitely in the Romantic era just after Beethoven, starting with Chopin and Mendelssohn all the way up to Prokofiev or Shostakovich, and just about anybody in the middle there is fine with me.

TR: I have one other question: What is the date of your birth? I know a psychic who wants to do your chart.

HB: My chart has already been done. It said I was going to be President of the United States.

## **Things You Can Do to Help Get Harry Browne in the Debates**

- 1) Spread the word about Mr. Browne to your friends.
- 2) Write letters to your local newspapers about him; call local talk stations. Mention his name several times, and stress the basic theme of his campaign: "Government doesn't work."
- 3) Contribute to his campaign. More money will allow Harry to buy more radio ads, which may be able to push his public opinion polling numbers high enough to win inclusion.
- 4) Buy a copy of "Why Government Doesn't Work." Buy an extra copy for your friends and family.
- 5) Write letters to local news media, national networks, and major news magazines and encourage them to cover the Harry Browne campaign.

# Platform Controversy

At the national convention, the LP delegates rejected a proposal to revise the sentence in the Statement of Principles, "We, the members of the Libertarian Party, challenge the cult of the omnipotent state and defend the rights of the individual." The proposed re-wording would have eliminated the phrase "challenge the cult of the omnipotent state." Because a seven-eighths majority is needed to change the Statement of Principles, the proposal was narrowly defeated. Below are two opposing views by Florida delegates.

## In Favor of the Original Wording

by Jon Asfour, Platform Committee Member

The issue before us is whether to eliminate the phrase "challenge the cult of the omnipotent state...." If we decide to do this, the LP will perhaps be the first political party to have, at least implicitly, taken a position against - poetry. As proof of this, as evidence that certain elements within the party believe that politics and poetry do not mix, I offer the following:

Some years ago, I proposed to the platform committee a complete rewrite of the preamble. In the debate that occurred, I especially remember three comments. The first, a negative comment, was that my proposal sounded like objectivist poetry. The second negative comment was that it sounded too much like a Beatles song. The third comment, which was positive, was that my proposal was inspiring and that it should be passed by the committee so that it could be read to the convention. Nevertheless, it did not pass out of committee. Is the lesson to be learned that we wish to exclude objectivists, or poets, or people who like Beatles songs? Imagine that!

The current language in our statement of principles is passionate, it is powerful, and it is poetic. The proposed change is weak and wishy-washy.

It is claimed that the current language is "off-putting to the average voter and sounds somewhat 'cultish' itself." Is this a put-on? Should we take seriously any libertarian who proposes changes because they appeal to the average voter? Should we believe that our lack of electoral success is due to a few words sprinkled throughout our platform? Would it not be more accurate to state that our platform, as a whole, is "off-putting" to the average voter?

Also, where is the proof to back up the criticisms? Have there been any scientific studies to back up the assertions? I think not. These assertions are not merely illogical, they are non-logical. They make no sense. There is nothing supporting them but hot air.

It is said that the current language "raises unnecessary questions in people's minds," such as "what does this mean?" The "cult of the omnipotent state" means statism. It is simply a more poetic way of saying the same thing. It is statism that we challenge, is it not?

If someone were to ask, what does "cult of the omnipotent state" mean, think of that as an opportunity, not as a problem. What more perfect opening could a libertarian have to explain what we advocate, what we are about, what principles we uphold.

Are we to use that mythical creature, "the average voter" as the standard for determining what appears in our platform? If we begin on the road to appeasement in language, we will end on the road to appeasement in action. We will have lost the war for liberty.

## In Favor of Changing the Wording

by Tom Regnier, LPF Secretary

The issue is not appeasement but clarity. The word "cult" has many meanings - including religious devotion, either moderate or extreme. It often implies a small group of fanatics cut off from the mainstream. Bigots frequently use the word to stigmatize new religions and other non-conforming groups. Even we of the LP have been labeled a cult. For this reason, independent-thinking people are rightly suspicious of anyone who tries to dismiss his ideological opponents by branding them as a cult. Our use of the word, though we clearly had no bigoted intention when we put it in our platform, may make it appear that we too are going for the quick and easy smear rather than a reasoned dialogue.

Because the word "cult" has been so abused and distorted by others, it may cause confusion. Not all first-time readers of our platform will be so lucky as to have a libertarian of Jon Asfour's eloquence on hand to explain the phrase. Many people will first view the platform after downloading it from the Internet. On seeing the word "cult," they may think we are talking about religion or that we are claiming that government is a small, isolated group (if only it were!). Have you ever started reading a book and found that the first few sentences were so confusing that you put it down and never picked it up again?

It is important that our platform communicate clearly to those who wish to understand what we are about. Making our language more understandable does not mean compromising our principles. On the contrary, the more unambiguous our language, the more difficult it will be for us to stray from the principles it expresses. The issue to me is this: Do we wish to remain a small, isolated party in love with its own rhetoric? Or do we wish to reach out with a clear, understandable message to as many people as possible? Eliminating the "cult" from our rhetoric would be one small step toward reaching a broader audience.

## **NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE**

**Dade County:** The Miami Herald recently published an Op-Ed article on ballot access by Dade LP Chairman Jim Ray.

**Sarasota County:** Andrew Spark's informal dispute resolution with the Florida Division of Elections has so far resulted in the Division promising to add information about minor parties to its education program and to specifically list the LP as a registration option when it begins online registration in a few months. If, when registering, you encounter any instructions which seem to discourage you from registering with the LP, please report them to Mr. Spark at 1800 2nd St., Ste. 808, Sarasota, FL 34236, (941) 954-0744. On June 25, Mr. Spark was appointed to the Sarasota County Public Facilities Financing Advisory Board.

**Collier County:** Scott Diehl, an active Libertarian for ten years in Michigan and Florida, is running for County Commissioner in District 5, where he faces the incumbent Republican. He is attempting to repeal the local 5-cent gas tax and prevent a proposed 3% utility tax. Campaign contributions should be made payable to: Scott Diehl for County Commissioner, P.O. Box 2286, Immokalee, FL 34143.

**Leon County:** The Leon County LP is selling three autographed, hardback copies of Mark Skousen's "Economics on Trial: Lies, Myths, and Realities" for \$37.50, as well as non-autographed, hardback copies for \$22.50. The book is a devastating critique of many nonsensical doctrines of "mainstream" economists. Paperback copies of Faustino Ballve's "Essentials of Economics" are also available, for \$6.25. Send check or M.O. (payable to Leon County LP) to: Daniel Walker, 221 E. 7th Ave., Tallahassee, FL 32303. Please include your phone number, in case there is a need to contact you about your order.

**Charlotte County:** 15-year-old Suzy Howard, daughter of LP activists Ron and Susan Howard, is a professional singer who has sung the national anthem at major league spring training games as well as for 1992 LP Presidential candidate Andre Marrou. She has expressed her eagerness to sing for the LP and can be reached by contacting Mrs. Howard at (941) 637-3969.

**Pinellas County:** Jay Tynan has arranged to have printed at low cost a quantity of booklets containing the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution - ideal for fund-raising. To learn how to get copies for your local affiliate, contact Jay at (813) 391-2619.

Duval County: Randy Graves, who recently became Duval LP Chairman, has adopted a mile of Beach Blvd. between Kernan and St. John's Bluff in the name of the Libertarian Party.

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This page maintained by [Marshall Sutherland](#) and the [Libertarian Party of Alachua County, Florida](#).