

Sandhills Libertarian Gazette

A NEWSLETTER FOR LIBERTARIANS IN THE SOUTH CAROLINA MIDLANDS

City-County Tax Bill Bites the Dust

Seat Belt and Nutritionist Bills Also Dead

During the last legislative term, Libertarians spoke at three legislative hearings in order to voice their opposition to three different bills, and all three bills failed to pass!

CITY-COUNTY TAX BILL

In January, S.C. Libertarians launched an intensive effort to defeat the Local Government Finance Act (the City-County Tax Bill). John Heaton, Ron Heaton, Tom King, and Mary Lou Seymour started a petition drive in Aiken County, and this quickly spread to other counties. Members of the Libertarian Party put many hours into obtaining signatures on the petitions against the bill, writing letters-to-the-editor, and contacting legislators to urge them to vote against the bill. These efforts finally paid off when the bill died on May 7 - the House rejected an effort by Rep. Robert Sheheen to remove the bill from the Ways and Means Subcommittee where it was stalled.

The Local Government Finance Act was introduced in January in the House of Representatives. It had both Democratic and Republican sponsors, but few of these sponsors came to the defense of the bill when Libertarians began to criticize it. The bill would authorize cities and counties to impose income taxes, sales taxes, auto registration fees, and various other types of taxes. Libertarians have long recognized that this would increase the tax burden on South Carolinians and would make it more difficult for small businesses to offer new jobs.

The Libertarian Party is the only political party which opposed this bill, although other anti-tax groups (T.R.I.M. and Richland County Citizens for Tax Relief) joined the Libertarians. Jan Chapman wrote a letter which appeared in *The Columbia Record* listing the names of the sponsors of the bill, and shortly thereafter, Rep. Fred Day, one of the sponsors, wrote a letter to the same newspaper saying that "I will not vote for any bill that will raise taxes." Very interesting! Chapman also joined Steve Vandervelde in speaking against the bill at a Ways and Means Subcommittee hearing in February.

Altogether, over 2000 signatures were obtained on the anti-tax petitions. These petitions were presented to Senator Joe Wilson (R-Lexington Co.) and Rep. Jarvis Klapman (R-Lexington Co.) at a press



S.C.L.P. Vice-Chairman Bill Griffin (2nd from left) presents anti-tax petitions to Sen. Joe Wilson (left) and Rep. Jarvis Klapman (center). Looking on are libertarians Drew Amendola, Mark Johnson, and Jan Chapman.

conference at the State Capital on April 15 (see photo). Two television stations covered this event, but the newspapers ignored it. At any rate, the bill is dead for the year, and the Libertarians played a major role in defeating it.

SEAT BELT BILL

Libertarian opposition to the mandatory seat belt bill was not as conspicuous as the opposition to the tax bill, but it was spirited and consistent. David Morris spoke against the bill last December at a joint House-Senate committee hearing, saying that "It may be wise to wear a seat belt, but wisdom should not be legislated." On February 19, the Senate defeated the seat belt bill by one vote, but supporters vowed to revive the bill as soon as possible.

Libertarians thank all those who opposed the mandatory seat belt bill. John Wrisley was tireless in his opposition to the bill, Jesse McDugald (president of A.B.A.T.E.) and other A.B.A.T.E. members spoke out against the bill, and Senator Glenn McConnell (R-Charleston) actively fought against the bill in committee and on the Senate floor.

(continued on page 2)



Bill Griffin explains to the media why libertarians are opposed to the Local Government Finance Act.

(continued from page 1)

DIETETIC PRACTICE ACT

Libertarians found out about this bill from nutritionists and persons in the health foods business. This bill would have given the South Carolina Dietetic Association an exclusive monopoly over the dissemination of nutritional information. It would make it illegal for anyone without a government license to give nutritional advice or to use the words "nutritionist" or "dietician" to describe what they do. Apparently, similar bills have become law in Maryland, Ohio, and Alabama.

David Morris spoke against the bill at a House committee hearing on April 29. According to Morris, "The citizens of South Carolina should be allowed to make decisions about where to go for nutritional advice. The government should stay out of this." There was so much opposition to the bill that the committee tabled the bill immediately, which effectively killed it for this year.

Libertarians express their thanks to Taler Harris and Deborah Mitchell for providing information about the bill. Others who spoke eloquently against the bill include Marcia Halpern, Patricia Williams, Corma Edwards, and Eileen Newman (with her son John). One hopes that there is even more opposition if a similar bill is introduced next year.

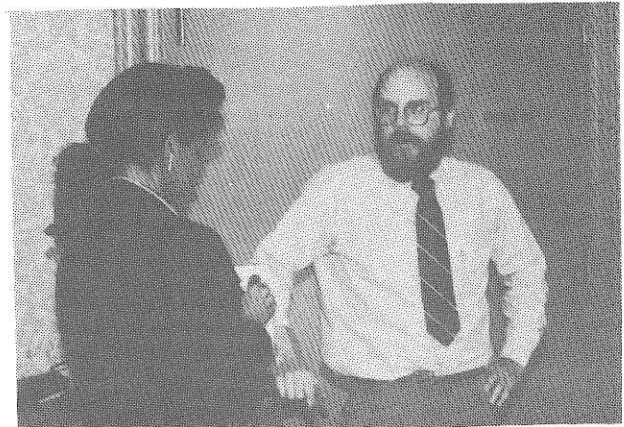
Libertarians Choose Candidates and New Officers

At the State Convention in Columbia on April 12, the S.C. Libertarian Party nominated three candidates for statewide office and elected party officers for the next two years. The convention was highlighted by well-received presentations by Jim Turney (National L.P. Chairman), Marshall Fritz (President of the Self-Government Advocates), and Kevin Cullinane (President of Freedom Country in Campobello, S.C.).

At the convention, the S.C.L.P. nominated Jan Chapman to run for State Treasurer, David Morris to run for Secretary of State, and Andrew Amendola to run for Comptroller General. All three candidates will be on the ballot in November. This is the first race for Morris and Amendola, but Chapman has been a candidate twice before. In 1982, she ran for Secretary of State against a Democratic opponent and received 42,097 votes (7.5%). In 1984, she ran for the State Senate in District 23 against three opponents (one of them a write-in) and received 1.2% of the votes.

The delegates chose John Heaton of Aiken to serve as S.C.L.P. Chairman for the 1986-1988 term. Bill Griffin of South Congaree was elected Vice-Chairman. The Executive Committee chose Jan Chapman of Lexington to be the new S.C.L.P. Secretary, and David Morris of Lexington was re-elected Treasurer.

The convention will re-convene August 17, and additional candidates might be nominated.



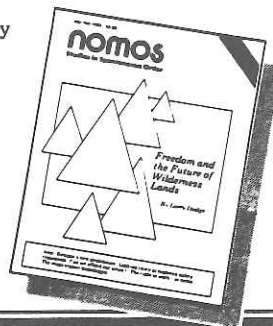
John Heaton, S.C.L.P. Chairman, talks to the news media at the State Convention.

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EDITORIAL

PORN-BUSTING IS IN STYLE

Almost every week the newspaper mentions some group or official who wants to crack down on pornography or to harass persons whose only "crime" is to go topless in a bar or to engage in prostitution.

Richland County Sheriff Frank Powell is apparently not content to harass prostitutes or video store owners. Now he wants to harass topless barmaids. A court has restrained him from the latter, but Powell then said he wanted a new regulation prohibiting topless waitresses in any establishment that sells alcohol. It's nice to see our tax dollars being spent so wisely!

Laura Hudson, Director of C.A.D.R.E., wants to outlaw the possession of pornographic material, but she is unable to give a definition of pornography. Neither does she realize that sections of The Bible could be considered pornographic by some standards.

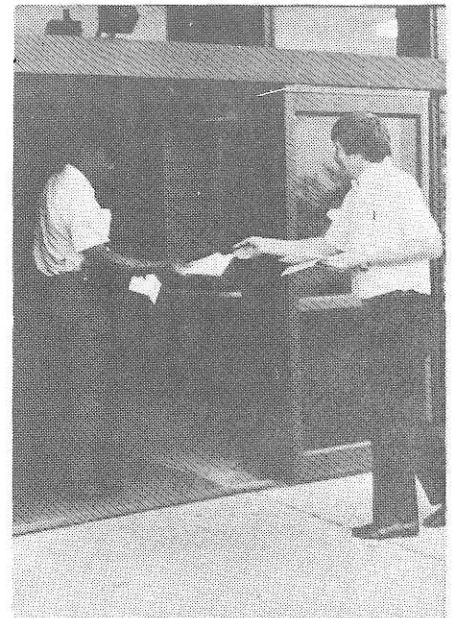
Powell has done a good job fighting violent crime, and Hudson has put a lot of effort into fighting drunk driving. They should confine their future efforts to these types of activities.

As disgusting as pornography and prostitution may be, they don't violate anyone's rights if no force is used.

We would all be much happier if we could just worry about our own lives and quit meddling in the lives of others.

Government is not reason; it is not eloquence; it is force! Like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master.

George Washington



Statement of Principles

We, the members of the Libertarian Party, challenge the cult of the omnipotent state and defend the rights of the individual.

We hold that all individuals have the right to exercise sole dominion over their own lives, and have the right to live in whatever manner they choose, so long as they do not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live in whatever manner they choose.

Governments throughout history have regularly operated on the opposite principle, that the State has the right to dispose of the lives of individuals and the fruits of their labor. Even within the United States, all political parties other than our own grant to government the right to regulate the lives of individuals and seize the fruits of their labor without their consent.

We, on the contrary, deny the right of any government to do these things, and hold that where governments exist, they must not violate the rights of any individual; namely, (1) the right to life — accordingly we support prohibition of the initiation of physical force against others; (2) the right to liberty of speech and action — accordingly we oppose all attempts by government to abridge the freedom of speech and press, as well as government censorship in any form; and (3) the right to property — accordingly we oppose all government interference with private property, such as confiscation, nationalization, and eminent domain, and support the prohibition of robbery, trespass, fraud, and misrepresentation.

Since governments, when instituted, must not violate individual rights, we oppose all interference by government in the areas of voluntary and contractual relations among individuals. People should not be forced to sacrifice their lives and property for the benefit of others. They should be left free by government to deal with one another as free traders, and the resultant economic system, the only one compatible with the protection of individual rights, is the free market.

TAX PROTEST DAY: Jan Chapman and Bill Griffin give literature to angry taxpayers at the Columbia Post Office on April 15.

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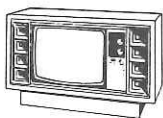
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