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LNC considers eliminating dues structure

In February, members of the Libertarian National Committee voted to increase membership renewal dues to \$50 per year. The change — the first increase in dues in 15 years — is scheduled to take place in January 2006. Under that plan, new members would still be able to join for \$25.

The fact that the decision — which was approved 11-6 — was made on a secret ballot has been widely publicized.

The LNC is expected soon to consider an entirely different proposal: Eliminate membership dues altogether, as well as the Unified Membership Payment (UMP), through which a member can become a member of the national LP and their state LP at the same time.

Eliminating UMP would, of course, be a necessary corollary to eliminating membership dues. By eliminating the connection between joining the state party and the national party, state LPs will be able to charge what they like for membership — whether they want to eliminate membership dues or keep the \$25 membership fee currently charged by the national LP.

Several LNC members have said they voted the way they did on the dues increase because they knew the “zero dues” proposal would be coming along soon thereafter, and they knew there would be time to reconsider the increase.

George Squyres, a champion of the “zero dues” concept, said he supports it “because it puts the states in the driver’s seat in the running of the party.”

In opposing the proposal, many people, he said, are reacting merely to the idea of reducing dues to zero — which would threaten revenue coming in both to the national party and the state affiliates — and are ignoring the details behind the concept.

“Everyone is focused on the single point of reducing dues to zero without reading the rest of the proposal and recognizing that it transfers the fundamental point of membership and activism to the states, while forcing the LNC

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LP Exit Plan for Iraq released

On June 28, President George W. Bush told Americans that the war in Iraq is no longer about liberating Iraq or finding weapons of mass destruction, that the goal is now an ongoing hunt for terrorists.

The very next day, Libertarian Party national headquarters staff released the “Exit Plan for Iraq,” showing how the United States could pull out of Iraq quickly. The Bush administration has recently said that the U.S. could be involved in conflict there for up to 12 more

years — an intolerable outlook.

Bush continues to be silent concerning any plans for withdrawal from or success in Iraq, while Democrats berate the GOP for not coming up with an exit strategy. Despite their insistence that a strategy is needed, the Democrats have still not released a comprehensive exit plan.

In his address on June 28, Bush continued down his path of vague missions and plans, stating that “we’re helping Iraqis build a free nation that is an ally in the War on Terror. We’re advancing freedom in

the broader Middle East.”

“The Libertarian Party strongly disagrees with President Bush’s unclear mission: We are not ‘hunting down the terrorists,’” said LP Executive Director Joe Seehusen. “We are enabling them and providing Iraqi insurgents with a common enemy. And we are not advancing freedom. Instead we are advancing chaos in the Middle East.”

Because of the other two parties’ protracted failure to produce a plan for leaving Iraq, LP staff had been working on an exit strategy

for weeks before the Bush speech. His noncommittal comments made it clear that it was time for the LP strategy to be released. It was posted on LP.org, and word quickly began to spread.

[The Exit Plan for Iraq is printed in its entirety on pages 10-11 of this LP News.]

For the first few hours, signatures in support of the plan appeared on LP.org at a rate of approximately one per minute. Within a day, the rate had slowed as some libertarians

See **EXIT PLAN** Page 4

Supreme Court rules American homes can now be seized for private use

By **J. Daniel Cloud**
LP NEWS EDITOR

The Supreme Court ruled on June 23 that local governments have broad power to take private property in the name of “economic development.”

In the case, *Kelo v. City of New London*, the justices handed down a 5-4 ruling against a group of homeowners in New London, Conn., who claimed the city is trying illegally to force them to sell their property. The city wants to make way for a hotel, an office building and other privately funded facilities.

Government agencies including city and county governments have long been allowed to condemn private property so that public buildings, roads and other infrastructure can be built. Called “eminent domain,” this practice is constitutional as long as the power is exercised strictly in accordance with the Fifth Amendment’s “takings clause.”

This clause states that “no person ... shall be deprived of life, liberty or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.”

But now the Court has declared that “public use” can be interpreted to mean “public benefit.”

“This ruling sets a frightening precedent that will affect poor and middle class families across the nation,” said Michael Dixon, national chairman of the Libertarian Party. “Dazzled by the possibility of increasing tax revenue and employ-

ment opportunities, local government officials will now be able to claim entire communities for the benefit of private corporations.”

Justice John Paul Stevens wrote the majority opinion, saying that “promoting economic development is a traditional and long-accepted

function of government” and that the court was unwilling “to second-guess the city’s considered judgments about the efficacy of its development plan.”

It bears mentioning that the Supreme Court recently had no such qualms about “second-guessing” the

right of individual states to allow the growth, sale and use of marijuana for medical use.

The condemnation of Kelo’s home and the others remaining in the neighborhood “unquestionably serves a public purpose,” Justice

See **EMINENT DOMAIN** Page 3



■ On June 29, 20-odd Washington, D.C., libertarians gathered in front of the Supreme Court building to protest the Supreme Court’s decision on eminent domain, which effectively strips private property owners of any hope of protecting their homes against government confiscation. The protest was cut short, however, when an unidentified airplane was sighted over the district — leading to the temporary closure of streets around the court building. The Capitol and other federal buildings were evacuated, as well. It’s hard to get any notice for a protest when all traffic — pedestrian and vehicular — is prevented from approaching the protest site. (Photo by LP News Editor J. Daniel Cloud)

NEWS BRIEFS

PA LP opposes minimum wage increase

Libertarians in Pennsylvania are opposing a proposed minimum wage increase in their state. Gov. Edward Rendell recently told reporters that he would demand a minimum wage increase from lawmakers in exchange for endorsing a legislative pay raise.

If approved, Rendell's proposal would boost Pennsylvania's minimum wage to \$7.15 an hour.

"Our legislators are already among the highest paid in the country and their performance does not warrant a pay raise," said state LP Chair David Jahn. "And Rendell compounds the damage to Pennsylvanians by using the pay raise as a hammer to pound through a minimum wage increase that will hurt Pennsylvania's economy and poor."

How can raising the minimum wage damage the economy or hurt the poor? When businesses have to pay each minimum wage worker more, they typically hire fewer such workers — and spread out the work among fewer employees. Some may even eliminate existing jobs to make up for the increased wage expense.

"Teenagers and others seeking initial job experience that will allow them a first step onto the economic ladder are usually the ones impacted," Jahn said.

If the legislature approves the minimum wage increase, then, they will punish taxpayers in two ways: first by making it more difficult for businesses to afford workers, and secondly, by taking more tax money to support their own pay increase.

Judge Gray addresses civil liberties forum

Judge Jim Gray, a judge in California Superior Court in Orange County who ran as a Libertarian for U.S. Senate in 2004, was in Washington, D.C., on July 8-10 to speak at a forum sponsored by the Institute for Humane Studies.

"College students from around the country were there for the weekend to learn all about civil liberties," Gray said. "This was a very civic-minded group of young people."

On a panel that addressed the students on civil liberties, Gray spoke about his signature issue, the War on Drugs, about which he literally wrote the book: *Why Our Drug Laws Have Failed and What We Can Do About It: A Judicial Indictment of the War on Drugs*, published in 2001.

"What they discussed all weekend were libertarian issues," Gray said. "This is a great opportunity to reach them. These are the people we'll be counting on ten years from now to be running the show."

Gray got back behind the bench as a judge soon after the November elections, but he is keeping busy with Libertarian activity even though he isn't currently a candidate for office.

One of his new activities is writing a bi-weekly column about libertarian issues.

"These columns are being syndicated around the country," he said. "For no charge, your local newspaper will be welcome to join the syndication." Interested? Contact Gray via his Web site: www.JudgeJimGray.com.

Bush should fire Karl Rove, LP says

A longstanding Bush administration scandal came to a head recently when it was revealed that White House Deputy Chief of Staff Karl Rove disclosed the identity of an undercover CIA employee, Valerie Plame, to a *Time* reporter. Opponents of the Bush administration claim that Plame's occupation was leaked in retaliation after her husband, Ambassador Joe Wilson, spoke out against claims made by President Bush in his 2003 State of the Union speech.

In the speech, Bush uttered what are now known as the infamous 16 words: "The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa."

While on its face the statement was true — the British government had made such a claim — much of the evidence backing the claim was based upon a fake document relating to the sale of "yellowcake" from Niger to Iraq. The CIA later admitted in an internal document that "we no longer believe that there is sufficient other reporting to conclude that Iraq pursued uranium from abroad."

Ambassador Wilson, a strong critic of the Bush administration, pointed out the inconsistencies between Bush's statement and the truth. As a result, it is believed by many that the White House retaliated against Wilson by "outing" his wife as an undercover CIA employee.

Commenting on the matter, Libertarian Party National Executive Director Joe Seehusen stated, "When the scandal first came to light, President Bush said that if any White House employee was responsible for the leak, they would be fired. We know now that Karl 'the Architect' Rove was a source of the leak. It's time for Bush to follow through with his promise by firing his deputy chief of staff."

California Libertarian leading the crowded San Diego mayoral race?

"Only in San Diego would we expect a Libertarian to be in the front of the pack," said Michael Marcotte, moderator of a KCBS panel — televised on May 27 — about the candidates in the San Diego, Calif., mayoral race.

The Libertarian in question is Richard Rider, chairman of the successful San Diego Tax Fighters and one of 11 active candidates for the special mayoral election to be held July 26.

And Marcotte wasn't alone in his estimation of Rider's chances of success in this race: Rider, a retired stockbroker and financial planner, has routinely been named as one of the top few candidates. Others include a former San Diego police chief and a city councilwoman.

This isn't Rider's first run for office. Since 1988 he has run for office several times as a Libertarian — for county supervisor, county treasurer, state assembly, governor and Congress.

This race, he says, is different.

San Diego is in trouble, and the city needs a mayor who is dedicated to lowering taxes and to solving the city's problems in a fiscally responsible way, he said.

Actually, the city's problems are why there is a special election coming up: Mayor Dick Murphy announced his plans to resign, effective July 15, just months after he was elected to his second term. He had been heavily criticized both in California and across the nation for San Diego's host of ongoing difficulties.

Two city councilmen are standing trial on corruption charges, federal and local authorities are looking into

the city's financial practices, many fear the city is approaching bankruptcy, and the city pension fund has a current shortfall of at least \$1.4 billion due to poor management.

Some candidates even advocate filing for bankruptcy. Rider isn't one of them. In addition to his financial experience and his dedication to cutting taxes, Rider is getting praise for his consistency.

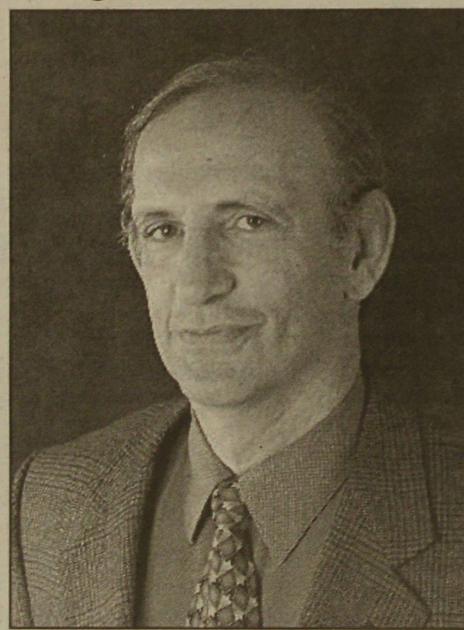
In the KCBS panel discussion on the election, moderator Marcotte said, "You have to admire Rider, you know, for coming off the sidelines where he is free to be a critic, and jumping right into the fray."

San Diego Union-Tribune reporter Greg Moran replied, "He has had a very consistent message over the years and you kind of wonder if this is sort of his time. It seems that all of the forces have kind of come together."

Rider has promised that if he is elected he will not accept a city pension — thus drawing further attention to the city's broken retirement system.

He says the city's pensions and salaries must be rolled back; he wants to privatize city services like libraries, parks, swimming pools and garbage pickup; he promised he'd take a 30 percent pay cut from the mayor's \$100,464-a-year salary; and he wants to stop subsidizing the city's sports teams.

Some of his promises — includ-



■ Richard Rider

ing cutting city pensions and privatizing some services — have been picked up by other candidates.

"One interesting aspect of this campaign is that people are stealing each others' ideas," he said. "For better or worse, they steal mine more than others'."

"I just wish they meant what they said. No one knows what these people will do in office — [but people] do know what I will do if I'm elected!"

Rider said he expects the large number of people in the race to help his chances of being elected: If no candidate receives more than 50 percent of the vote, there will be a runoff election this fall.

For more information go to www.RiderForMayor.com.

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Ore. LP opposes utility takeover

Portland General Electric, an Enron-owned electric utility company, is up for sale because of Enron's bankruptcy restructuring, and the city of Portland, Ore., wants to buy it.

"The bankruptcy trustees would like to sell it off, to pay Enron's creditors, but Portland wants to own it," said Richard Burke, executive director of the Libertarian Party of Oregon.

"Portland General Electric is worth about \$3 billion, and it serves a vast area of the Northwest, as far south as San Francisco," Burke said. "The bankruptcy trustees have a fiduciary responsibility to get the best possible price, the best possible return for Enron's creditors. And Portland has threatened to use eminent domain to get their hands on it."

In early July the Portland City Council unanimously adopted an ordinance authorizing the sale of \$3 billion in revenue bonds to buy the utility — showing they are financially able to buy it if they can work out a deal with Enron.

Now, Libertarians in the Portland area — specifically Frank Dane and Kurt Weber, chairman and secretary of the Multnomah County LP — are trying to get enough petition signatures to force the city either to ask the voters in a referendum whether the city should issue the bonds, or to simply repeal the ordinance.

If they want to force the referendum, Oregon Libertarians have until Aug. 5 to collect 17,794 signatures.

Dane appears confident that the petition drive will be successful; he reportedly told Portland city council members that they can expect "an outpouring of support to reverse

[their] decision."

"In Oregon, anything the government does — any law they pass — can be referred to the voters in a referendum," Burke said. "If we can get enough signatures to force a referendum, there wouldn't be a vote until probably next May. Our hope is that Enron would basically decide they don't want to wait that long, and it would prevent the pub-

lic takeover of that utility."

Enron representatives have told Portland officials that they will let them know by the end of July whether the city is considered a credible purchaser for the utility. Enron's plans currently call for transferring ownership of the utility directly to Enron creditors by establishing a publicly traded company and giving them stock.



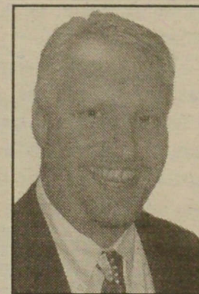
■ Morgan Catha, a member of the University of Washington Libertarians, poses with a World's Smallest Political Quiz poster following an outreach event on the UW-Seattle campus. The dots on the poster mark where dozens of UW students fit on the diamond-shaped political map. The campus Libertarians have been giving the quiz to students as part of a weekly outreach effort, Catha said — noting that "some people were surprised to find that they leaned further right or left than they expected, or even libertarian!"

(Photo provided by the UW Libertarians)

POLITICS 2005

'Libertarians Abroad,' radio and regulation

■ On July 15, after *LP News* went to press, Libertarian Party of Indiana Executive Director Brad Klopfenstein was expected to be a guest on Indianapolis radio station WXNT's "Abdul in the Morning Show." Also on the guest list were the state executive directors from the other two largest political parties in the state, Democrat Mike Edmondson and Republican Luke Messer. This was to be the second time all three executive directors have been together on the show, and it could become a regular feature.



■ Klopfenstein

■ The Libertarian, Republican and Democrat parties of Washington state are back in federal court, arguing again that the state's new primary system is unconstitutional — that it infringes on the parties' right to free association. Under the new system, approved by voters last fall, a candidate for office is allowed to run under any party on the ballot instead of only on his (or her) own party's ticket. Only the top two vote-getters go on to the general election. The new system also allows voters to vote across party lines in the primary. Stay tuned.

■ A new organization called "Libertarians Abroad" is seeking expatriate Americans who are LP members — or who consider themselves libertarians — and encouraging them to start local chapters of the organization where they live. Libertarians Abroad was founded by Gary Dale Cearley on July 4. There are now four chapters, in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; Cyprus; Japan and South Korea. "The expatriate ballot gets counted, so we have as much work to do in the American overseas communities as the Libertarian Party does at home," Cearley said.

■ Free County Project? The *St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times* reported July 13 that a five-acre island in the Upper Tampa Bay was recently put up for sale on Ebay. The current owner is Larry Pendarvis, who (according to the *Times*) wants to sell the land and use the money to "help finance a Libertarian-led government in remote Loving County, Texas — population 67."



■ The California Fair Political Practices Commission is supposed to be a watchdog, making sure that donors to political campaigns file the appropriate disclosure forms. One Norm Ryan of Long Beach is apparently the watchdog over the watchdogs: In a recent three-week period, he found 220 major campaign donors who didn't file the proper forms. The official watchdog group didn't act quickly enough, so Ryan filed a lawsuit. If he wins, he reportedly stands to collect about \$1.5 million — half of the \$3 million in penalties the state would collect from the donors who didn't report their contributions. It has also been reported that if Ryan wins, he plans to give most of his share to the Individual Rights Foundation.

■ The Mercatus Center at George Mason University and the Weidenbaum Center at Washington University in St. Louis recently issued a report that estimates how much of federal agency budgets and staffing goes to writing and enforcing regulations. The report estimates agency spending devoted to regulation will be \$41.4 billion in FY 2006, which starts Oct. 1, a 4.8 percent increase from the \$39.5 billion estimate for FY 2005. Meanwhile, "Ten Thousand Commandments," an annual report by the Competitive Enterprise Institute, measures the regulatory bureaucracy by counting the number of pages and rules in the Federal Register. It found a record number of pages, 75,676, were published in 2004, a 6.2 percent increase from the previous year.

■ The head of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting was recently called on the carpet for allegedly injecting politics into public television. But the Republicans leading the meeting weren't concerned with the discussion of politics, but with a perceived liberal bias in public broadcasting. Some 15 percent of the PBS and NPR budgets comes from federal taxes through Congress. The Cato Institute's David Boaz was at the hearing: He reportedly pointed out that bias of some sort is "inevitable" and that government shouldn't be involved in paying for any news medium, anyway. After all, he noted, "we wouldn't want the federal government to publish a national newspaper."

Eminent domain power expanded

Continued from Page 1

Stevens opined — and four other justices agreed.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor — who has since announced she is retiring — authored the dissenting opinion, saying the ruling means that "any property may now be taken for the benefit of another private party."

She said further that "the beneficiaries are likely to be those citizens with disproportionate influence and power in the political process, including large corporations and development firms."

O'Connor was joined by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas in her dissenting opinion.

"I would like to thank these Supreme Court justices for standing up for the rights of private property owners," Dixon said. "It is indeed a pity that five justices believe it is appropriate to confiscate property from one private party, with the intent of giving it to another private

party that wields more power."

While the Libertarian Party supports the right of corporations to do business, "we even more strongly support the constitutional rights of the individual," he declared. "And those constitutional rights are being trampled on by local governments around the country."

Because the Supreme Court's decision gives government agencies much broader power to confiscate private property, the Libertarian Party calls on both state legislatures and Congress to stand up for the rights of private landowners.

"This country was founded on the principle that people have the right to protect their lives, their lands and their liberty," Dixon said. "It is the sworn duty of elected officials to stand up for the individual rights of their constituents. Well, now is the time for them to do so."

Some people, rather than trusting that state and local governments to voluntarily protect private property, are taking matters into

their own hands.

Soon after the decision, a private developer contacted the board of selectmen in Weare, N.H., which is where Supreme Court Justice David Souter lives — asking the local government what the procedure would be to initiate eminent domain proceedings to take Souter's property to make room for a hotel.

To be named The Lost Liberty Hotel, the hotel would certainly provide more tax revenue for Weare than Souter's home currently does.

This means the sole criterion established by the Supreme Court would have been met, and the home could legitimately be seized by the town and given to the developer, who could replace it with a monument to the death of property rights, advocates of the plan say.

The question of whether the proposed action — which the developer insists is not a mere prank — will have any effect on the eminent domain issue or on Souter himself remains to be answered, of course.

Exit plan draws rants/raves on the Web

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began criticizing the plan — but by mid-July, some 1,300 people had signed on.

Their biggest complaints were that the plan calls for troops to be removed from Iraq over a year's time, that some of the troops leaving Iraq will be sent to other countries in the Middle East region where the United States already has military bases, and that direct aid is proposed to go to Iraq.

In response to complaints that the strategy goes against the LP platform, Thomas L. Knapp pointed out in a July 10 article for *The Libertarian Enterprise* that Libertarian thought as expressed in the party's platform is actually implemented in the exit strategy.

Knapp addresses one-by-one all of the various protests about how the strategy goes against the platform, concluding: "Based ... on my reading of the plan, I regard it not only as in keeping with the LP's platform, but as the kind of uncompromising, radical but realistic proposal that the Libertarian Party should be making.

"At some point the LP needs to decide whether it wants to implement its platform, or to continue clicking its heels together and wishing things would just happen automatically, with no need to address the fact that the platform is meant for implementation in the real world. With the 'Exit Strategy,' the LP seems to have finally begun to engage reality — and I congratulate it for doing so."

Other people complained that the members of the Libertarian National Committee didn't approve the plan before it was released, implying that such approval was required.

Contrary to what some libertarians said on the blog at LP.org, members of the LNC were informed — about a week before the strategy was released — that such a plan was in the works and that it would soon be completed. Despite this, some party members (and even some non-members) complained that it wasn't appropriate for LP staff to come up with such a plan without running it past the LNC for approval.

After the plan's detractors had effectively derailed discussion from the plan, choosing to focus on controversy instead, LP National Chair Michael Dixon posted comments to the blog, noting that the strategy was "gaining momentum across the Internet and catching the eye of individuals who may have never even

heard of the Libertarian Party."

Dixon acknowledged that the plan is neither perfect nor a "verbatim recitation of the [LP] platform."

However, imperfect as it may be, "it is a real world (and real time) response to very real problems being faced every day by far too many American families," Dixon said. He encouraged Libertarians to view the exit strategy as a movement in a libertarian direction, and to join him "in focusing efforts on posi-

"THIS IS POLITICS, folks. This is how it works. If you don't want a political party to engage in politics, why are you here?"

— TIMOTHY WEST

tively promoting the Libertarian Party while continuing your vocal opposition towards the actions of the Republican and Democrat politicians who actively work to diminish freedom within our great nation."

Despite the negative reaction from some Libertarians — who protest that any perceived deviation from the LP platform is unconscionable, even in a document meant for real world implementation — response to the commonsense Exit Plan for Iraq has been predominantly positive, with many people noting on LP.org that they decided to join the party because of the plan.

Timothy West, of LibertyForSale.com, called the exit strategy "the best thing the LP has done in many years," adding that he donated to the party specifically because he believed the plan will help the LP to "be seen as advancing politically possible policy according to our principles."

"This shows me that there are people within the LP who are more concerned with advancing liberty in a practical manner that we can enjoy while we are still alive [rather than] discussing a libertopia at some point in the distant future," West said. "This is politics, folks. This is how it works. If you don't want a political party to engage in politics, why are you here?"

A few days after the Exit Plan for Iraq was posted on LP.org, Libertarian Stephen Gordon — who contributes material for the LP blog — produced a listing of quite a few other Web sites that had mentioned or linked to the strategy. Some of them included:

■ Reason magazine editor Nick Gillespie linked to the plan, noting that it "is well worth reading, despite your view on the invasion and the occupation."

■ Rational Review News Digest

editor Thomas Knapp wrote: "Even with [its] flaws, however, the LP is ahead of the curve. It is the only political party speaking for the majority of Americans who now realize that the war on Iraq was a bad idea and is a failed venture. I applaud the LP for being the only party to take a mainstream approach to the problem — and, moreover, for having stood on principle and waited for the mainstream to accept reality, instead of abandoning principle and reality to chase that mainstream."

■ In his new blog, Noninterventionist.com founder Gene Trosper stated: "I have to give props to the LP for coming out with a plan that outshines anything the Democrats or Republicans have proposed. I encourage everyone to sign on to this plan. We can use this plan to pressure the Republicans and Democrats to begin withdrawing our troops as quickly as possible. It's time Iraq and all Middle Eastern nations start taking responsibility for their own problems."

■ Michael Van Milligan from *Stolen Cheese* wrote: "About time the LP gets on the ball and puts together some political strategy. This

will be a great thing to have flying around the noses of the D's and R's come election time. We'll have a trump card that will probably only leave the others in an ad hominem cat fight."

■ Danny Feemster of *Liberty Now* said: "This exit strategy from the Libertarian party is excellent, and I am thrilled to see them release it."

■ At AntiWar.com, Tim West said further: "This is the first policy proposal advanced by any political party in the U.S. that spells out in detail how to disengage ourselves without putting our troops in more harm, and as such it is worthy of discussion by Antiwar.com readers."

And many other bloggers and Webmasters jumped on board as well, putting up advertisements or links for the Exit Plan for Iraq on their sites.

It is interesting to note that many of those who digitally signed the plan said they have been watching the Libertarian Party for some time but hadn't gotten involved, that they always wondered when the LP was going to get politically active, or even that they decided

because of the exit strategy that the LP is their political home.

Many Libertarians continue to be unwilling to support a plan that they think doesn't mesh with the LP platform.

But as Seehusen noted, President Bush's plan is to avoid setting a goal for success in Iraq — because after all, you can't fail if you don't set goals. However, it's also impossible to succeed, given those circumstances.

In the LP's proposed Exit Plan for Iraq, Americans were presented with a workable solution, and it's not just Libertarians who are recognizing its value.

The list of signatories includes many current and former members of the military who said the plan sounds workable — even if it isn't perfect.

"I urge all Americans — including all Libertarians — to review this solution to the occupation of Iraq and show their support by signing onto the plan," Seehusen said. "Our troops are in harm's way every hour of every day in Iraq. Our troops, their families and the people of Iraq deserve a strategy for success."

Membership dues may be eliminated

Continued from Page 1

to provide the real support to the states that they need — rather than abdicating that responsibility with a welfare check," Squyres said.

The proposal will likely be altered before the LNC's August meeting, but it currently says:

■ Membership in the national party shall be without payment of any dues, and shall require only the individual's name, address and email. The only benefit the member will receive is a membership card. Significant benefits will instead accrue to contributors. Membership in the national party will be automatic if one is a member of a state affiliate party.

LNC member BetteRose Ryan points out that to become a member, an individual will still be required to sign the pledge, which says: "I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals."

"Our bylaws say you are a member if you have signed the pledge but you are a voting member if your 'dues' are 'current,'" she said.

■ Additional benefits of membership will be given to members who donate \$25 per year or more to the party. At the \$25 level, donors will continue receiving a hard copy of *LP News* in the mail.

It will also be possible for states who elect to charge membership dues to purchase discounted subscriptions of *LP News* as one component of a package of benefits of membership, Ryan said.

The benefits of contributing at levels higher than \$25 per year had

not been decided as of mid-July.

■ The UMP program would end, with a codified agreement between the state affiliates and the national LP to be created, specifying benefits and obligations for both national and the states. The agreement — including suggestions for necessary changes to the party's policy manual and bylaws, will be presented at the LNC's August meeting.

Some items the agreement between the states and the national LP is to include are: an agreement by the states to put the national LP's presidential candidate on the ballot if they have ballot access and to cooperate with LNC-driven efforts to improve ballot access; the states will have access to the LNC database if they agree to submit all of their donor/member names to the LNC; the states will be able to purchase *LP News* subscriptions for state members and donors for \$10, as a component of a package of benefits for state party membership; state affiliates will be responsible for the "behavior of their members and candidates insofar as they reflect on the party at any level"; states will be expected to maintain compliance with FEC requirements where necessary; and all state affiliates will have to maintain a "common purpose" with the national party, including supporting the national platform and maintaining a specific (as yet undetermined) core of positions that identify them as Libertarian.

Under the zero-dues proposal, in return for being affiliated with the national LP, state parties would be

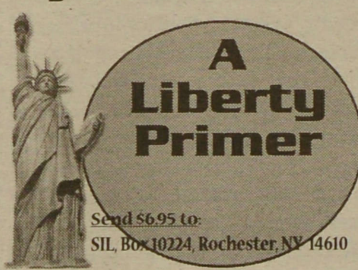
provided various benefits from the national party.

Some anticipated benefits include training for new state chairs and executive directors; regular professional training sessions for organizers, candidates and other state LP representatives; potential scholarships to the Leadership Institute's training sessions; help with ballot access, FEC compliance and fundraising; and training in use of the national LP database, if the state doesn't have its own database.

Other issues covered by the proposal include expectations for membership recruitment, for contributor renewals and mailing efforts, for candidate recruitment and training, and for training of state party executive directors.

The LNC will consider the completed proposal at their August meeting.

Beginner's Introduction



LP News

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THE ADVOCATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!

Fastforwarding  **Our Libertarian Future**

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WITH **HUGH DOWNS** AND **ROBERT RINGER**

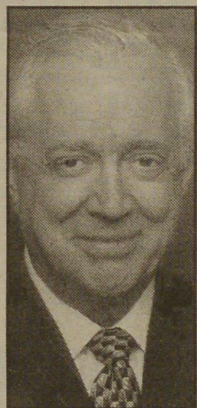
Join **Hugh Downs**, **Robert Ringer**, and a spectacular line-up of the planet's most exciting speakers at the Advocates for Self-Government's gala 20th Anniversary Celebration.

This is the first time that former 20/20 co-host **Hugh Downs** will appear before a libertarian audience! And it's the first time in a quarter century that **Robert Ringer**, author of the classic libertarian bestseller *Restoring the American Dream*, will speak at a libertarian event! This is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

The theme of the event is "Fastforwarding Our Libertarian Future," and the focus is on optimism, friendship — and results.

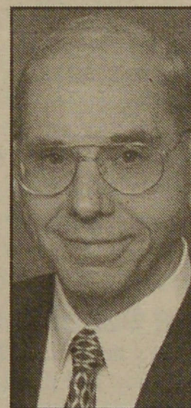
In three jam-packed days, you'll meet

HUGH DOWNS



He's the beloved and respected newsman who spent 21 years as co-host of ABC's 20/20 and a decade as host of *The Today Show*. In 1997 he said, "All the really good ideas belong to the libertarians." He's also spoken out for the Second Amendment and against the War on Drugs.

ROBERT RINGER



He wrote *Restoring the American Dream* — one of the most influential books ever written about libertarianism. To the general public, Ringer is probably best known as the author of the bestselling self-help classics *Winning Through Intimidation* (1975) and *Looking Out for #1* (1977).

the freedom movement's best and brightest. You'll discover proven techniques for spreading the ideas of liberty. You'll be inspired and energized. You'll have fun!

Sign up now for only \$349. That price includes three days of activities, every speaker and panel, 2 luncheons, a dessert reception, and the gala banquet.

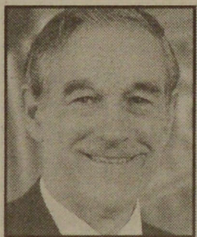
This is THE libertarian event of the year. Don't miss it! Space is limited; register now.

■ **DATE:** October 14-16, 2005.

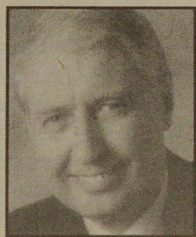
■ **LOCATION:** Renaissance Concourse Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia. (Room rate: Only \$100 per night plus tax.)

■ **MORE INFO:** 1-800-932-1776. Or visit: www.TheAdvocates.org

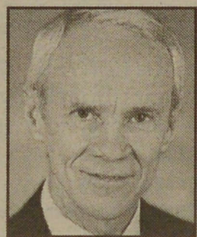
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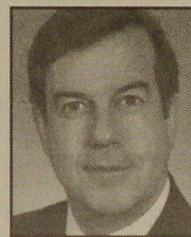
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1984 Pres. Candidate;
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Author, *Healing Our
World In An Age of
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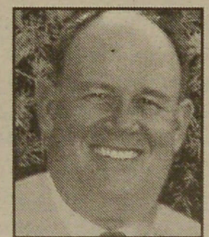
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Senior Fellow, Cato
Institute; Director,
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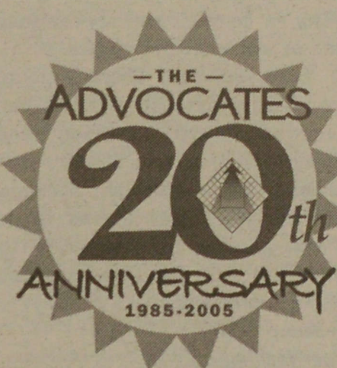
Michael Cloud
Author,
*Secrets of Libertarian
Persuasion*



Sharon Harris
President,
Advocates for
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Marshall Fritz
President, Alliance
for the Separation of
School & State



YES! Sign me up for _____ **ticket(s) to the Advocates' Gala 20th Anniversary Celebration.** Enclosed is \$349 per person. **TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:** \$ _____. **PAYMENT:** ☐ Check/money order. Please make payable to: "Advocates for Self-Government." ☐ Credit card (info below): ☐ Visa ☐ Discover ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express.
MAIL TO: The Advocates for Self-Government, 213 South Erwin Street, Cartersville, GA 30120-3513.

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HOTEL INFO

Renaissance Concourse Hotel,
1 Hartsfield Centre Pkwy, Atlanta
This 4-Diamond hotel is just a five-minute shuttle ride from the airport and easily accessible from all major highways. It features extraordinary comfort and convenience — renovated guest rooms, a variety of restaurants and bars, an indoor swimming pool, and a beautiful 11-story interior atrium. Special room rate: Only \$100 per night, plus tax.

TALKING POINTS

Guns, artificial enhancement, exit strategy and marriage

■ Out of poverty

The delusion that rich countries can pull poor countries out of poverty if they so choose is on public display as the month of July begins. Bob Geldof organized rock concerts in cities around the world to push that idea, while the G8 meeting in Scotland largely focused on debt relief and massive increases in foreign aid to save the world's poor.

Already, the United States and Great Britain have agreed to write off the debt of 18 heavily indebted countries, and President Bush has pledged to double U.S. aid to Africa. The British are calling for new Marshall Plan for Africa.

If history is any guide, the G8's initiatives will do little to reduce

poverty in Africa, the world's poorest region and the focus of rich country efforts. Debt relief itself has not proved effective in the past.

Since the 1980s, heavily indebted poor countries, most of which are in Africa, have received more than \$30 billion in debt forgiveness, yet the debt problem has gotten worse. In practice, countries have been rewarded for having poor economic policies and foreign aid has encouraged their maintenance.

—IAN VASQUEZ

The Washington Times
July 8, 2005

■ Amped-up artists

Before Congress, Kentucky senator and former Philadelphia Phillie Phan Phan said records set by juiced-up ballplayer should be "wiped out." Why stop at baseball? Shouldn't we question the accomplishments of everyone who has used performance-enhancing substances?

[This text was followed by images of the following personalities and their drugs of choice: Judy Garland, amphetamines; the Beatles, acid; Vincent van Gogh, absinthe; and Rush Limbaugh, Oxycontin.]

—Playboy

August 2005

■ Marriage benefits

Number of federal benefits in the United States that are tied directly to marriage: 1,138.

—HARPER'S INDEX

Harper's Magazine
June 2005

■ Justice O'Connor

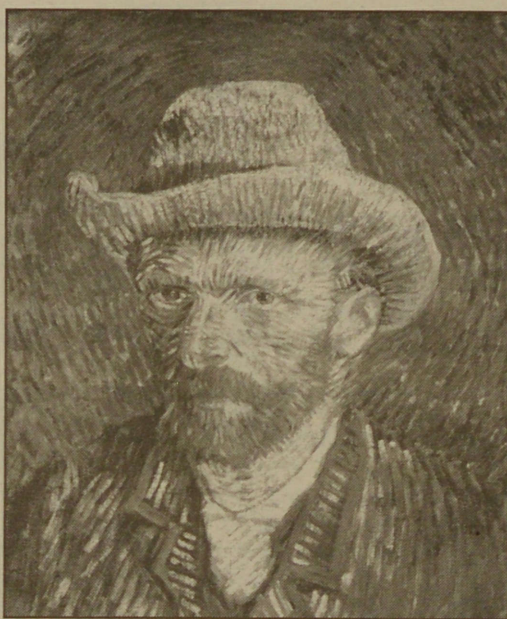
Consider this last term, [Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's] swan song. The Court had an opportunity to push beyond faltering precedents that impose modest limits on the federal government's power. The case was *Gonzales v. Raich*, which challenged federal power to disrupt California law protecting sick, marijuana-using patients. The majority voted for the status quo — a win for big government. Where was O'Connor? In a lucid dissent, she stood up for aggressive constitutional checks on federal power.

Or, let's talk about private property. In *Kelo v. City of New London*, a majority of the Court voted for yet another expansion of the government's power to confiscate the property of ordinary citizens — this time, holding local governments can grab private homes if they turn them over to rich developers who

will make "better" use of the land (read generate more taxes). Where was O'Connor? Writing an eloquent dissent that argued for far more aggressive constitutional property protections than the Court has considered for decades.

—MARK MOLLER

Orange County Register
July 3, 2005



■ Exit strategy

You know who's birthday it is today? President Bush. Happy birthday to President Bush. He's 59 today. If you haven't gotten him a birthday gift yet, I know he's still looking for an exit strategy for Iraq.

What does a bicycle have in common with the war in Iraq? Apparently President Bush doesn't know how to stop either one of them.

—JAY LENO

The Tonight Show
July 6, 2005

■ Smokin'

On Tuesday, June 14, the D.C. City Council heard testimony on a bill that would make it illegal to smoke in a bar, even if the owner, the employees and the customers all agree that smoking should be permitted.

One wonders if this is really the sort of thing police should be focusing on in the on-again, off-again murder capital of the United States. But the idea that the police should focus solely on protecting us from crime is one that many have come to think of as archaic.

The new view is that it's also law enforcement's job to protect us from our own bad habits. In a 2003 sting operation, Fairfax, Virginia police officers entered 20 bars, administered breathalyzer tests, and

arrested nine patrons for intoxication. Fairfax police Chief J. Thomas Manger declaimed: "Public intoxication is against the law. You can't be drunk in a bar."

The D.C. smoking ban is only the latest example of this trend. More and more public officials are warming up to the idea that the full force of the state should be brought down on people making unhealthy choices.

—GENE HEALY

Cato Daily Commentary
July 3, 2005

■ Passport security

The State Department, which issues passports, does not have access to the extensive FBI watch lists, federal auditors said Wednesday in a report that shed light on the latest example of the government's failure to share information with itself.

The Government Accountability Office, which serves as the investigative arm of Congress, tested the names of 67 fugitives, including nine suspected murderers and five suspected child molesters. Only 30 of those fugitives turned up on the lookout lists used by the State Department to process passports.

The probe also found that passport officials did not have access to the federal Terrorist Screening Center list of suspected terrorists who are

U.S. citizens.

—JULIA MALONE
Cox News Service
June 30, 2005

■ First Amendment

The fact that most people dislike a given message, speaker or cause doesn't mean that they — or the government — can legally silence the speaker.

Americans usually proudly embrace the right to speak freely — at least until they fervently disagree with someone else's speech or expression.

—SHYLOH KARSHNER

Northwest Indiana Times
July 15, 2005

■ File sharing

In its ruling today against peer-to-peer file-sharing software makers Grokster Ltd. and StreamCast Networks Inc., the U.S. Supreme Court said companies may be liable for copyright infringement conducted by their customers.

"We hold that one who distributes a device with the object of promoting its use to infringe copyright, as shown by clear expression or other affirmative steps taken to foster infringement, is liable for the resulting acts of infringement by third parties," Justice David Souter wrote in the unanimous decision.

The decision suggests that honesty may not be the best policy for companies that make hardware and software capable of copying copyrighted content.

—THOMAS CLABURN

InformationWeek.com
June 27, 2005

■ Gun 'buyback'

Police collected about 450 guns at two locations Saturday during "Operation Cease Fire," [West Palm Beach, Fla.'s] first gun buyback program. The city awarded gift certificates to Target, Best Buy and BrandsMart U.S.A. in exchange for the firearms, which included relics from world wars, a .38 brought in a Ziploc bag and rifles wrapped in garment bags.

Whether the buyback program will really help stop the killings in the city and get guns off the streets is uncertain, officials said. Most people who showed up for Operation Cease Fire were elderly residents who had never used a gun and people who said they wanted to return an unused gun for the gift certificates.

But protesters who showed up at Saturday's events said gun buyback programs do not work.

Three protesters from the Libertarian Party of Palm Beach County arrived holding signs, but were not allowed to approach people returning weapons.

"We would prefer to see a gun-safety program," said Karl Dicke, chairman of the Libertarian Party of Palm Beach County. "That would be a much better use of taxpayer money."

—IVETTE M. YEE

WPTV NewsChannel 5
July 10, 2005

■ Militarization

A new Pentagon strategy for securing the U.S. homeland calls for expanded U.S. military activity not only in the air and sea but also on the ground and in other less traditional, potentially more problematic areas such as intelligence sharing with civilian law enforcement.

The strategy is outlined in a 40-page document, approved last month, that marks the Pentagon's first attempt since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, to present a comprehensive plan for defending the U.S. homeland.

The document ... raises the likelihood that U.S. combat troops will take action in the event that civilian and National Guard forces are overwhelmed. At the same time, the document stresses that primary responsibility for domestic security continues to rest with civilian agencies.

Along with civil liberties groups, many senior Pentagon officials have tended to be wary of seeing troops operate on U.S. soil. Military commanders argue that their personnel are not specifically trained in domestic security, and they worry that homeland tasks could lead to serious political problems.

—BRADLEY GRAHAM

The Washington Post
July 6, 2005

**"THE SMALLEST
MINORITY
ON EARTH IS THE
INDIVIDUAL."**

— AYN RAND —

Not to argue with Ayn Rand (who would dare to?), but sometimes it seems that the smallest minority on Earth are the Libertarians. There just aren't as many of us as there should be. That's why the support of each individual Libertarian Party member is so crucial for our party to succeed. And Job One (for all of us) is to figure out ways to get more Libertarians. Here's one way you can do your part to help the party grow: Name the party in your will or insurance policy. For a confidential discussion of this option, call National LP Treasurer Mark Nelson at (563) 340-6151. Or e-mail him at: treasurer@lp.org, and include "Planned Giving" in the subject line.



Hugh Downs to address Advocates anniversary event

Former "20/20" co-host Hugh Downs, who won a place in libertarians' hearts when he famously praised them for having "all the good ideas," has been confirmed as a speaker at the Advocates for Self-Government's 20th Anniversary Celebration.

It will be the first time that Downs, one of America's most beloved television personalities, will speak at a libertarian event, Advocates President Sharon Harris said.

"We're tremendously excited to welcome Hugh Downs ... and to give freedom-lovers a chance to meet him, up close and personal," she said. "This will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to find out why Mr. Downs was willing to break ranks with his media counterparts and fearlessly endorse pro-liberty ideas."

The Advocates' 20th anniversary event, "Fastforwarding Our Libertarian Future," will be held Oct. 14-16 at the Renaissance Concourse Hotel in Atlanta, Ga.

Downs will join almost two dozen other speakers, including Robert Ringer, author of the classic *Restoring the American Dream*, two-time Libertarian presidential candidate Harry Browne, and U.S. Congressman Ron Paul.

Other speakers at the event will include: David Bergland, the LP's 1984 presidential candidate; Michael Cloud, author of *Secrets of Libertarian Persuasion*; Dr. Mary Ruwart, author of *Healing Our World In An Age of Aggression*; Marshall Fritz, president of the Alliance for the Separation of School and State; Tom Palmer, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute; and Robert A. Sirico, co-founder of the Acton Institute.

At the event, Downs will give a speech explaining why he finds libertarian ideas so appealing.

Downs may be the highest-profile media figure to ever praise libertarian ideas and political organizations. Over the years, Downs has said:

■ "This country is a one-party country. Half of that party is called Republican and half is called Democrat. It doesn't make any difference. All the really good ideas belong to the Libertarians." ("Politically Incorrect," March 31, 1997.)

■ "The Libertarian Party is, by far, the very largest political party after the Republicans and Democrats. Elected Libertarians serve in various offices all over the country. Every year, Libertarians gain more registered voters — defections from the two big parties." ("Perspective" radio commentary, July 7, 1996.)

Downs has also expressed broadly libertarian sentiments on a number of specific issues.

In a 1995 radio commentary, he said: "I sympathize with people who want to ban guns, but I can't agree with them. We have to be careful that in our zeal to abolish guns we don't wind up pushing counterproductive legislation that will leave armed only those people most likely to do harm with the weapons."

And in a 1994 radio commentary, he said about marijuana: "Here is a weed, growing wild, that millions use ... It kills no one. It has been in continuous use for about 5,000 years that we know of, and it has recognized medical applications. And yet the government is waging a deadly and expensive war against it."

However, Downs does not describe himself as a libertarian, and has publicly supported government regulation of both drugs and guns.

Downs has had a career almost as long as that of the television industry itself. He was the announcer on "Sid Caesar's Hour" (1956-1957); was Jack Paar's sidekick on "The Tonight Show" (1957-1962); hosted the game show "Concentration" (1958-1968); and hosted "The Today Show" (1962-1972).

From 1978-1999, he was the co-host of the news magazine "20/20," sharing the screen with libertarian commentator John Stossel.

In 1985, Downs made it into the

Guinness Book of World Records for having logged more hours on television than any other person in U.S. history. By May 1994, he had spent 10,347 hours on the small screen.

He won an Emmy Award in 1988; was named "Broadcaster of the Year" by the International Radio and Television Society in 1990; and was honored by the Museum of Broadcast Communications in 1995. In 1999, he retired from network television. He has written 10 books.

Downs has served as a chairman

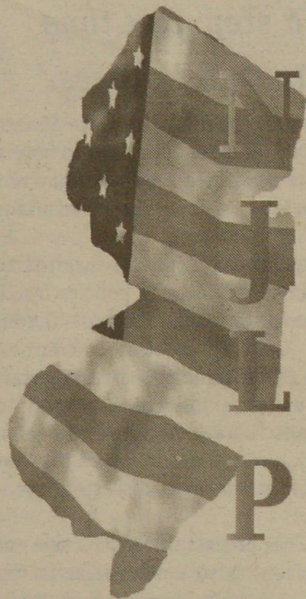
for UNICEF, as a member of the National Academy of Science, and as a member of NASA's advisory council.

"The emphasis [at the 20th Anniversary Celebration] will be on honest optimism and how you can help make the liberty movement flourish," Harris said. "You'll leave this event excited, inspired, and with a renewed passion for freedom!"

For information about the celebration, call (800) 932-1776; e-mail anniversary@TheAdvocates.org; or visit: www.TheAdvocates.org.

Would you donate to guarantee a Libertarian gubernatorial candidate appears in televised debates?

In New Jersey, a candidate for governor who qualifies for matching funds is guaranteed by law to participate in a series of televised debates with his opponents.



This is exactly what happened in 1997. The Libertarian Party's candidate debated his Republican and Democrat counterparts in three venues across the Garden State. The state and national media treated him as a serious candidate and he received coverage on a daily basis in the press and on radio and television. And it was reflected at the polls: in one of the most liberal states in the nation a Libertarian received 114,172 votes—nearly 5% of the vote.

This year we're poised to surpass that performance. We have a strong candidate for governor in Jeffrey Pawlowski, a former municipal councilman who knows how to campaign and how to win. If we can get Jeff and his message before the voters there's no telling how far he can go. And all it will take is a donation of as little as \$30 from you.

Most importantly, Jeff's race is one of only two Governor's races in the entire country and that other race does not have a Libertarian candidate. This makes Jeff's campaign the most prominent race in the nation for the Libertarian party.

To qualify for matching funds, Jeff needs to raise \$300,000 before Sept. 1. With 10,000 donations of at least \$30 from each of us we can create another national sensation for the LP.

Let's face it: hard work has to be backed up by hard cash if it's to produce hard numbers. And we know how hard it can be to write that check. But we're not offering you promises or a fantasy scenario. We are telling you what the law says. We are telling you exactly what happened once before.

Write that check now for as much as you honestly can. Would you consider giving the maximum donation of \$3000? Let's not lose such a golden opportunity: a strong candidate, a strong ticket and the law on our side.

For more information

Visit

<http://pawlowski2005.org>

**Make Checks to: Pawlowski
for Governor**

**Mail To: Pawlowski For Governor
PO Box 177
South Amboy, NJ 08879**

Full Name of Contributor

Contributor Employer's Name
(if contributions more than \$300, aggregate)

Address of Contributor - include City, State, and Zip

Contributor Employer's Address - include city, state, and zip
(if contributions more than \$300, aggregate)

Phone Number

Email Address (optional)

Occupation of Contributor

Donation Amount

Signature of Contributor and Date

THE PROFILE

Musician Paul Marshall

By Bill Winter

THE ADVOCATES FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

What is the connective thread between 1960's psychedelic bubblegum band The Strawberry Alarm Clock, the movie "Beyond the Valley of the Dolls," and the Libertarian Party?

The answer: Paul Marshall.

You may not have heard of him, but he's lived a life almost as serendipitous as the fictional Forrest Gump, landing in the middle of some of the most interesting musical, cultural and political movements of the last four decades.

A songwriter, singer and musician, Marshall performed with The Strawberry Alarm Clock, toured with Lynryd Skynyrd, appeared in "Beyond the Valley of the Dolls," wrote songs for Patty Loveless

— and has been a committed libertarian since the mid-1970s. He currently plays with the alt-country band I See Hawks in L.A., and *Gritz* magazine called him "one of the best country singer/songwriters working today."

Marshall started early in music. While still in junior high school, his band, The Treetoppers, signed to Mustang Records and released a few singles. In college, he joined a band that played rock-n-roll at frat parties. In 1969, he became the new singer for one of the country's leading psychedelic/pop bands, The Strawberry Alarm Clock, which had its first hit in 1967 with "Incense and Peppermint."

With the band, Marshall toured the country (once with just-out-of-high school Lynryd Skynyrd as an opening act) and performed in the 1970 movie "Beyond the Valley of the Dolls," Russ Meyer's outrageous quasi-sequel to Jacqueline Susann's campy "Valley of the Dolls".

When The Strawberry Alarm Clock split up in 1971, Marshall learned to play the bass guitar and returned to his first love, country music — which he calls "the white man's blues."

Over the next three decades, he toured the United States with various country bands; wrote songs for Patty Loveless, Juice Newton, Highway 101, and others; worked as a studio musician (including a stint with Brent Mydland of the Grateful Dead); and produced records. Marshall also released a solo album, "Weed and Water," in 2000.

Marshall is now the bass player for the Los Angeles-based I See Hawks in L.A., which combines country-folk, bluegrass-gospel and "redneck stomp." The band has released two critically acclaimed CDs, the self-titled "I See Hawks in L.A." (2001) and "Grapevine" (2004). In 2003, the band was named Best Country Band in the *L.A. Weekly's* music awards.

One thing that has remained constant during Marshall's wide-ranging career: his belief in liberty. He told *Gritz* (September 2001) that he joined the Libertarian Party in the mid-1970s because it was the only "party dedicated to the Constitution. To the Bill of Rights. To individual liberty. To responsibility for one's own actions. As soon as I heard about it, I knew it was my political party."

Marshall told *Gritz* that he is especially passionate about Second Amendment issues ("I'm a responsible gun owner who enjoys shooting at ranges. But I also know that if I were to depend on the LAPD or the state for protection to defend my home and my family, I would be at the mercy of the criminals and plain old luck"); Drug Prohibition ("The laws against drugs... have caused more harm to our society than the drugs themselves ever could"); and personal responsibility ("I think we should all be held responsible for our actions, specifically, actions that directly harm others").

Marshall's libertarianism has had an influence on his new bandmates. I See Hawks in L.A. guitarist Paul Lacques noted in *Arcata, California's North Coast Journal* (June 16, 2005): "Our bass player's a libertarian and we have huge political arguments, but we all agree that the government should leave people alone. We all feel the hammer coming down and America slowly turning into an oppressive society with a powerful central government."

■ This is a recurring column about celebrities who call themselves libertarian. This article reprinted with permission from the *Advocates for Self-Government*. To read profiles of dozens of libertarian celebrities, visit: www.TheAdvocates.org/celebrities.html.

Newly elected Maine Libertarian sets his sights on higher offices

On June 14, Maine LP committee member Charles Jacques was elected to a three-year term on the Monmouth Sanitary District board of trustees. His win was a surprise, he said: "I was not even a candidate for the office. My name did not appear on the ballot."

How does that happen?

"There were two candidates running for three seats on the board," Jacques explained. "It appears that some 97 people cast a variety of write-in votes for the third seat and, as it turned out, my name garnered the most write-in votes."

With election victory, Jacques has started planning out his political activity for the next few years.

"The good news is that as an elected municipal official, I am now eligible for appointment to be Monmouth's representative on the county budget committee," he said, noting that he plans soon to begin lobbying the town's selectmen to appoint him to that committee.

And he anticipates no difficulty getting the position.

"Monmouth didn't even send a representative [for the county budget committee] this year," Jacques said. "Since no one else wants the responsibility, this may be a slam dunk, which will give me and Libertarian solutions a higher visibility as next year's county budget process rolls forward — and setting the stage for a possible county commission run in 2008."

Jacques isn't new to political

activity in Monmouth: He is a two-term member of the town's Economic Development Commission and is chairman of the Monmouth Budget Committee — which he said "was instrumental in delivering a property tax decrease in FY 2005."

"I'll bring some credibility to vot-

can, literally, get more bang for the buck, whereas in a larger town or media market, instead of being seen as the committed idealist willing to take the time to work for a better community, you're often seen as a fringe gadfly."

Libertarians are sometimes criticized for focusing on small races, but getting elected to any position is a good way to get involved in the political process, Jacques added.

"An election to a board of trustees in a 4,000-person town (by 4 votes at that) hardly sets our sights on the White House," he acknowledged. "But Libertarian victories will come as voters see that we can be a good choice. We earn that respect a step at a time in small offices. Being on volunteer boards and running for the offices that represent easy wins ... is how we build [our] resumes."

Apparently the respect-earning process is underway.

Libertarians were a majority on the Monmouth Budget Committee this year during the town's budget process, and one non-libertarian member of the town's board of selectmen said the committee was "the most involved, thorough and conscientious budget committee that we've had in recent years, no matter what you think of their politics," Jacques said.

"Slowly but surely, we are awakening those people out there to their inner Libertarian. Chairman Dixon is right. If you want liberty, go out and fight for it."

**'LIBERTARIAN
victories will come
as voters see that we
can be a good choice.
We earn that respect
a step at a time
in small offices.'**

ers when I run for the state Senate in 2006, and I'm appealing to voters in the five-town area who may not know who I am, or who Libertarians are."

Jacques said he was inspired to get involved in local politics by LP National Chairman Michael Dixon, who "said at the last convention that if we want to move Libertarian victories forward, we need to get out there, meet our neighbors, speak out and get involved in what we often see as a distasteful process."

"That process of constructive engagement is so much easier in the small towns," Jacques said. "You

GOD & LIBERTARIANISM

A NEW COMMENTARY
IN
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AFFILIATE NEWS

Playing poker, winning office and a 'libertarian' legislator

■ NEW HAMPSHIRE

Positive results at recent OPH booth

On July 9, members of the NH LP set up an Operation Politically Homeless table at the New Hampshire Coalition of Taxpayers Annual Cookout at the Hopkinton Fairgrounds.

As usual, the booth included an opportunity for passers-by to take the World's Smallest Political Quiz — which ranks respondents by their political leanings as left, right, centrist, statist or libertarian.

"Because this was a mix-and-match meeting of like-minded individuals and groups, we only did two World's Smallest Political Quizzes between 12:15 and 4:30 p.m.," said Howard L. Wilson, who worked the booth.

Despite the extremely limited participation at the table, however, and the fact that "no authorized prospects resulted" from the event, Wilson reported being pleased with the OPH booth's results.

The results of one of the two quizzes placed the quiz-taker at the most libertarian corner of the quiz. He scored 100 points on both the social and economic scales.

Better yet: "The person who took that quiz is a seated New Hampshire legislator — Sam Cataldo — who also is a member of the Gun Owners of New Hampshire's board of directors," Wilson said.

Maybe there really is a chance that New Hampshire could become the United States' libertarian stronghold.

■ NEW YORK

Poker tournament to protest NYPD 'hijacking'

On July 14, members of the New York LP planned to hold a poker tournament at the entrance of One Police Plaza — to protest the NYPD's recent raid of two popular Manhattan poker clubs and the seizure of \$100,000 in players' money.

"The Manhattan district attorney admits the players themselves did nothing illegal, yet the police walked off with \$100,000," said Jim Lesczynski of the Manhattan LP.

On May 26, the NYPD Vice Squad raided two poker clubs, Lesczynski explained — noting that while "it is not illegal to play poker for money, it may be illegal to 'promote' gambling."

In addition to confiscating money from the tables at the clubs, the police arrested 39 club employees.

"They claim the money was confiscated for 'evidence' — as if anyone needs evidence that poker is played for money," Lesczynski noted. "The police say they have no plans to return the money to the players and that it will eventually become city property. It is not hyperbole to say that is simply armed robbery by the NYPD."

■ NORTH CAROLINA

Ballot access petition drive continues

"The North Carolina LP has maintained continuous ballot status since 1996, an amazing feat considering that our state is by most accounts the third most difficult state in the country to gain ballot access," state LP Executive Director Sean Haugh said recently. "Being on the ballot for eight straight years has been the single largest factor in our tremendous growth during that time."

As in many other states, Libertarians in North Carolina have to collect petition signatures to get on the ballot in their state. Unlike most other states, however, the North Carolina party has to collect almost 100,000 signatures.

As of early July, the NC LP had

received 24,446 signatures; their petition drive began immediately after the Nov. 2, 2004, elections. The state Board of Elections says they have until Nov. 2, 2005, to finish.

A bill to change ballot access requirements — H-88 — is stalled in the state House of Representatives' finance committee, Haugh said.

If the bill is approved, the party already has enough signatures on hand to qualify for the ballot through 2008, he said.

The party is also contesting the Board of Elections' ruling that they must finish their drive by Nov. 2.

"Our reading of NC statutes says our deadline is June 1, 2006," Haugh said. "We are awaiting the state BOE's response to our memo on this point."

■ PENNSYLVANIA

LP member selected as township supervisor

David W. Owens of the Chester County LP has been sworn in to office as the newest township supervisor of Landenberg, Pa., a town of about 10,500 residents.

Owens is enjoying the taste of victory — which was made even sweeter by the fact that he had been actively campaigning for the office.

He was planning to run for the office in November, and was appointed to replace the incumbent, who recently resigned. He will now run on Election Day as an incumbent, rather than facing the incumbent in that election.

Owens had campaigned extensively for the office, going door to door, placing yard signs, courting the media and spreading his message to everyone who would listen.

And the number who listened was apparently sizeable: When his erstwhile opponent quit over disagreements with others in the township's administration, Owens was selected to fill the vacancy.

"I must have said something that rang true to the people in the position of making the choice, as there were other candidates that could have been selected," Owens said after his appointment.

"Doing real politics is nothing new to many Libertarians," he added. "It is not magic nor is it rocket science; it is just hard work. It is getting out and meeting people and listening to them and being honest about what you stand for — not flinching if someone doesn't agree completely with you."

Libertarians need to be willing to "take a stand and convince people that you have the integrity that is so lacking in politics these days," Owens said.

■ TENNESSEE

Partial victory won against sales tax

On June 6, Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen signed legislation that represents a partial victory for the Tennessee LP against the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax (SSUTA).

The Tennessee legislature had previously passed bills that would

have made the state a participant in the SSUTA beginning on July 1. This newly signed legislation will delay the plan for another two years.

The SSUTA is a 42-state plan designed to help states collect the sales and use taxes on items their residents purchase via phone or Internet from out-of-state companies.

"In spite of the name, this plan greatly complicates the sales tax collection and reporting for a vast number of businesses in Tennessee, making it more of a burden than it already is," state LP Chair Alicia Mattson said.

Current law in Tennessee says that the tax collected on a sale must be the sales tax rate at the physical location of the business selling the product or service. Under SSUTA, the sales tax rate on the transaction would be based on the physical location where the buyer takes possession of the item.

So vendors who deliver products to another sales tax jurisdiction — or who do on-site labor in another jurisdiction — would have to collect the sales tax rate in effect at the delivery point.

The vendor would have to use the customer's nine-digit zip code to determine the proper sales tax rate to collect. Then the vendor's monthly sales tax return would have to break down totals in each sales tax jurisdiction — whether in the state or out-of-state — to which the vendor delivered products/services.

"It's not hard to see how complicated and burdensome a system this would be for Tennessee businesses," says Mattson.

"We eventually want a permanent repeal of this legislation, not just a two-year delay," she said. "But the delay buys us more time to work on a permanent reversal, of course."



■ Mike Kole, Libertarian candidate for Indiana Secretary of State, was a guest on Indianapolis radio station WXNT on June 27. Indiana LP Executive Director Brad Klopfenstein was serving as the substitute host on the three-hour morning talk show — *Abdul in the Morning* — and invited Kole to participate. Kole is the only announced candidate seeking the Libertarian nomination for the secretary of state race, which is the LP's ballot access race, Klopfenstein explained. (Photo by Brad Klopfenstein)

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Exit Plan for Iraq: A Commonsense Solution from the Libertarian Party

■ Introduction

Regardless of an individual's stance on the initial invasion of Iraq, it is now clear that there is no end in sight to the sustained violence in the region. A commonsense strategy for success is the first mandatory step to end this conflict.

After two years of American presence in Iraq it has become evident that there is no military solution that will achieve peace within that country. The Libertarian Party, along with supporting organizations and individuals, proposes this exit strategy for use by the Bush administration — for the benefit of members of the armed forces, for their families and for the people of Iraq.

■ The Invasion of Iraq

After September 11, 2001, the United States re-examined countries that could be potential threats to national security. Iraq was considered a gathering threat by the Bush administration. It was presented to the American public that Saddam Hussein was actively reconstituting Iraq's nuclear weapons program. Additionally, British intelligence erroneously reported that "Saddam Hussein sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa".

As another reason for war with Iraq, the Bush administration advertised that Iraq was hiding stockpiles of biological and chemical weapons. Secretary of State Colin Powell testified during a meeting of the United Nations Security Council that the United States had obtained intelligence proving conclusively that Hussein was actively producing weapons of mass destruction.

In addition to the threat of weapons of mass destruction, members of the Bush administration claimed that the Iraqi government had supported and protected Al Qaeda terrorists. They asserted that terrorists who fled from fighting in Afghanistan were hiding out in Iraq, with protection provided by Hussein's government.

In the final days before the invasion, President George W. Bush declared that Iraq was in violation of United Nations disarmament resolutions. President Bush set a deadline for Saddam Hussein to surrender his weapons of mass destruction and subsequently disarm. It was made clear that if Saddam did not comply with all of the U.N. resolutions, the U.S. would invade Iraq and remove him from power.

On March 19, 2003, the U.S. invasion of Iraq began with a massive bombing campaign and a large ground invasion. The active campaign lasted forty-four days, with an end to major combat operations announced by President Bush on May 1, 2003, aboard the U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln.

■ The Continuing Occupation of Iraq

American and coalition troops have remained in Iraq for over two years since Bush's declaration of victory. According to the Bush administration, the continued military presence is needed to assist the new Iraqi government in providing security and fighting the "insurgency." Supporters of the United States military's continued occupation of Iraq refuse to announce a time for pulling out of the country. They claim that if a timetable for removing troops is announced, the "insurgency" will simply pull back, regroup, and wait until the deadline has passed to strike against Iraq's fledgling government with even greater force — once the deterrent of an occupying force has been removed.

"Timetables simply send the wrong message," White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan has said. "They send the wrong message to the terrorists; they send the wrong message to the Iraqi people. They send the wrong message to our troops who are serving admirably and working to complete an important mission."

Those who support the continued occupation of Iraq assume that those fighting against U.S. forces in Iraq are the remnants of Saddam Hussein's regime and foreign fighters who

are working to prolong the conflict. They claim once American troops withdraw, former Ba'ath Party members would attempt to overthrow the new Iraqi government and once again to subjugate Iraq to a totalitarian regime. Because many believe the U.S. military is being opposed on the ground by Islamic militants, the United States is willing to accept nothing less than total victory, which at the current moment remains undefined. In this scenario, the Bush administration argues a withdrawal of U.S. troops will signal a victory for terrorists and a defeat in the War on Terror.

The Libertarian Party refutes this argument. The so-called "insurgents" are primarily Iraqis who have taken up arms against the occupying forces in order to protect themselves and reclaim their nation. Evidence shows that the continuing American military presence is, in fact, fueling the continued resistance by Iraqi citizens.

According to a report produced by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, those fighting are, in large part,

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those who have lost loved ones fighting U.S. forces. They are driven by "the political and economic turmoil that accompanied the occupation." The CSIS report refers to CIA reports that many of the "insurgents" are newly radicalized Iraqi Sunnis — not remnants of the Ba'ath party. The Sunnis have lost power both politically and economically during the U.S. occupation of Iraq, with reports of Sunni unemployment soaring to 60 percent in many areas of the country.

While it is now clear that al-Qaeda members and other foreign terrorists have moved onto Iraqi soil since the invasion, they represent only a small portion of the insurgency and could be dealt with quickly by a competent Iraqi security force.

The U.S. military occupation is becoming increasingly unpopular with Iraqis. A recent Zogby opinion poll in Iraq found that 82 percent of Sunnis and 69 percent of Shiites were in favor of the withdrawal of American and coalition forces "either immediately or after an elected government is in place." That poll was taken in January 2005.

While it is too late for U.S. troops to be withdrawn "immediately," elections for the new Iraqi government have been accomplished, fulfilling the other condition.

Polls both in Iraq and in the United States have demonstrated that a majority of citizens in each country want American troops to be pulled out of Iraq.

The strategy below takes into account the wishes of the Iraqi people, the history of the Middle East, and the greater good of the United States. By withdrawing our troops from harm's way we are respecting Iraq as an independent, sovereign country, not as an American protectorate.

■ Developing an Exit Strategy

With the continued loss of American life, the decline in troop morale, the ongoing and exorbitant expenditure of American taxpayers' money, and with the declining acceptance of the American presence by Iraqis, it has become necessary to develop a sensible plan for troop withdrawal.

American military deaths are mounting. There was an in-

crease in May 2005 of American military casualties, to the highest monthly level since January of the same year. In mid-June, the American death toll passed the 1,700 mark. In addition, the invasion and the resulting occupation have taken a great toll on Iraqi civilians. It has been estimated at least 22,353 Iraqi civilians have been killed since the invasion by U.S. troops. Public support for the war is rapidly eroding. The American public is now questioning whether invading Iraq was worthwhile. In a national CNN/USA/Gallup poll conducted on May 3, 2005, 57 percent of those polled said they did not believe it was worth going to war. This was an increase of 7 percent from February 2005.

Now is the time for the United States to initiate an exit strategy, as the main military objectives have been accomplished. Saddam Hussein has been captured. He will be tried for war crimes in an Iraqi court. Saddam Hussein's government has been overthrown, with many senior officials either captured or killed — including Hussein's sons, Uday and Qusay. A democratically elected, functional interim government is in place. The new government has a sufficient military and police force to maintain security, and training of new military and police forces continues. The longer the United States has troops stationed in Iraq, the more we will be seen as occupiers and not as liberators.

As costs for military operations in Iraq continue to escalate, an exit strategy with a defined timetable for troop withdrawal will assist the Pentagon and the Bush administration in projecting and controlling costs. Military operations in Iraq are costing the United States about \$5 billion per month. We are unable to afford a long, open-ended military commitment.

This proposed exit strategy should provide the basis for a reasoned, practical solution to the current situation in Iraq. Taking a sober look at the situation, it is evident there is no easy solution to reducing our presence in Iraq. Ensuring a stable, democratic Iraqi government will not be accomplished without difficulty. Adherence to this exit strategy will end the senseless deaths of American soldiers in Iraq, ensure that Iraqi nationalists do not have an occupying force to oppose, help slow the rapidly escalating cost to American taxpayers, and allow a successful end to the conflict.

■ Iraq Exit Strategy: Troop Withdrawal

The first step is immediately to begin the withdrawal of all American troops from Iraq. Currently American troop levels are at about 140,000. Troops would leave gradually, in increments of approximately 11,600 per month, resulting in a complete withdrawal in one year's time. This will bring the troops out of harm's way quickly, preventing more unnecessary loss of life. Allowing a year for the withdrawal will give the Iraqi government time to train and deploy a sufficient security force in trouble areas.

As the United States removes troops from Iraq, 30,000 will be relocated to other Middle Eastern countries. Ten thousand troops will be placed in Afghanistan for peacekeeping purposes. Decisions regarding troop reallocation will be based on the locations of existing U.S. military bases in the Middle East. The most likely candidates would be Turkey, Bahrain, Egypt and Oman. These countries were chosen based on current foreign military base information in the Department of Defense Base Structure Report. All of the previously mentioned countries have U.S. military bases that possess additional acres to house more troops. The remaining troops, numbering approximately 100,000 would return home rather being relocated to other Middle Eastern countries. This would help reduce the strain on military reserves and free up military resources for the War on Terror.

Those against the immediate withdrawal of American troops believe an American departure will create a significant power vacuum. They assert that Iraqi security forces are ill-equipped to stand alone. It is feasible that, given a year for training, the Iraqi security forces would be able to control the insurgency. As of January 2005, the Iraqi Army had a total of 68 operating battalions which includes the Iraqi National Guard that was incorporated into the Iraqi Army. The Iraqi government has its own Special Operation Forces, including a counter-terrorist force to combat insurgents. As of January 2005 there were approximately 55,000 trained Iraqi police officers. Furthermore, there are five police academies that together train approximately 3,500 police officers a month. Using these numbers, approximately 42,000 officers could be trained in one year, almost doubling their current numbers.

At the end of the troop withdrawal process, the Iraqi government could have 97,000 police officers trained and placed on the streets.

By removing our troops from Iraq and relocating them to various bases in the Middle East, we remove the insurgency's

common enemy. The insurgency consists of many different factions with no central leadership. One faction consists of leftover remnants of the former regime, such as the Ba'ath party, Republican Guard and the paramilitary Fida'iyyin. A second faction consists of religious groups who wish to turn Iraq into an Islamic state. Some of these groups are trained overseas or are foreign nationals, the latter including Syrians, Saudis, Yemenis and Sudanese¹⁵. Another faction is comprised of nationalist groups who oppose American troops being stationed in Iraq and were against Saddam Hussein's regime¹⁶. According to the Strategic Studies Institute, most of the armed opposition has been Sunni¹⁷. Even though major Sunni political parties such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the Iraqi Islamic Party are participating in the political process, many Sunni clerics have strongly opposed the American military presence. "Without the occupation as an outside enemy, those much smaller sectors of the resistance that are motivated largely by religious extremism and who are responsible for some of the worst violence against civilians, will likely become isolated from the broader sectors of the resistance," the Strategic Studies Institute authors noted¹⁸.

Negotiations with nationalist groups not tied to the former regime should take place in tandem with the withdrawal of U.S. troops. "We are not going to win the unconditional surrender from the insurgents and have no choice but to somehow bring them into society," said retired Army Colonel Paul Hughes, an Iraq war veteran who is now at the government-funded U.S. Institute for Peace¹⁹. There is evidence suggesting that these groups would consider surrendering in exchange for immediate and complete U.S. withdrawal and major political concessions to the Sunnis²⁰.

Removing the Sunni nationalist groups will help to isolate the more extreme elements of the insurgency. Divisions between secular Iraqi insurgents and Muslim extremists are becoming more evident; insurgents native to Iraq have denounced the brutal tactics of the extremists²¹. It is hoped that a negotiated settlement with the mainstream faction of the insurgency will help to further polarize the extremists.

Direct Aid Program

After U.S. troop withdrawal begins, a direct-aid program will begin for the Iraqi government. The U.S. government will disperse funds directly to the Iraqi government to be used strictly for the creation of viable infrastructure. The Iraqi government will exercise complete control over the spending of funds and the contracting of projects. Giving Iraqis complete administrative and fiscal control over rebuilding their infrastructure will allow them to tap into local "know-how" that only Iraqis possess.

Safeguards will be put in place to ensure U.S. aid is spent efficiently and effectively. Strict accounting guidelines promoting transparency and accountability must be in place prior to the disbursement of aid. An independent third-party auditor must be hired to perform an audit every six months until the program has ended. These audits will be made available to Congress and to the American public. If fraud is detected, aid monies will be withheld until the problem is corrected. The Iraqi government will be required to choose and hire a private firm to perform oversight on private contractors. The firm's mission will be to ensure that all contract work is completed in a timely and efficient manner and to prevent fraud, waste and inefficiency. The overseeing firm will be required to furnish reports to the Iraqi and American governments. Additionally, these reports will be available for full public disclosure.

Even though the direct-aid program will be a substantial cost to American taxpayers, the United States is now obligated to make sure Iraq becomes a stable, independent and functional country. Substantial progress has been made in rebuilding the Iraqi infrastructure, but this does not satisfy the need for additional aid. A conservative estimate by USAID projects a total reconstruction expenditure of \$150 billion²².

Based on current estimates, oil sales alone will not provide adequate funding for reconstruction projects. A Centre for Global Energy Studies report states that if Iraq were to pay all financial obligations without any outside assistance, the nation would continue to run a deficit into 2016²³. Additionally, Iraq has not met the projected 2.5 million barrels per day (MBPD), with their average output in the second week of June at 2.16 MBPD²⁴. Iraq's oil revenues for the entire year of 2004 were \$18.1 billion²⁵.

Iraq's national debt is estimated to be between \$119 billion and \$135 billion before any debt forgiveness has occurred, and the country owes an estimated \$50 billion in war reparations stemming from the 1991 Gulf War²⁶. Many debt forgiveness initiatives are already underway. Paris Club members have agreed to forgive a total of \$42 billion of Iraq's debt²⁷. Iraq is still

obligated to repay the Paris Club nations almost \$8 billion²⁸. The United States has agreed to forgive \$4.5 billion of Iraq's debt²⁹. Other countries will not provide debt relief until a freely elected government is in place. It is still unclear whether or not Kuwait will forgive Iraq's debt, estimated at \$16 billion, or the outstanding war reparations³⁰. It is probable that, even with the institution of debt-forgiveness programs, a direct aid program administered by the United States will be required.

A direct aid program will give Iraq the best chance of becoming a stable, democratic, free-market-oriented country. It is imperative that the Iraqi economy be fully developed as quickly as possible. Vast, persistent unemployment would create a fertile breeding ground for terrorists. The direct aid program will give Iraq vital assistance while giving the Iraqi people, through their government, control over the disbursement of funds. In previous successful postwar reconstructions, such as Europe after World War II, the reconstructing governments managed the Marshall Plan funds, not the United States³¹.

Conclusion

Our troops have completed their missions: the liberation of Iraq, the capture of Saddam Hussein, and the provision of security for the Jan. 30, 2005, elections. American military personnel should be commended for accomplishing these difficult tasks and performing them in a courageous and selfless manner.

We cannot continue to keep our servicemen and women committed to an open-ended, violent conflict in Iraq. By removing our troops in an orderly and systematic fashion over the course of one year, we will withdraw our troops on our terms while retaining the honor and respect that they deserve. By creating a direct aid program for Iraq, we give them the necessary funds to become an advanced, industrialized, democratic nation. By giving the Iraqi government full control over the disbursement of aid funds, we respect the wishes of the Iraqi people and foster the development of good diplomatic relations. Our exit strategy will help to end the senseless loss of American and Iraqi lives. It will ensure that Iraq is rebuilt in an efficient and expedient manner, at the lowest possible cost to the American taxpayers.

Above all else, the intent of this proposed strategy is to remove our troops from harm's way and, in the near future, return them to their families — who have been supportive through these trying times. Our hope is that the great loss of life seen by both American and Iraqi families will give the Bush administration pause to consider and deploy this strategy for eventual peace.

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If you would like to sign on to this proposed exit strategy, which will be delivered to the Bush administration, please go to LP.org/plan and sign it electronically. If you do not have Internet access, please send a note to LP headquarters ASAP, listing your first and last name, your complete address, and a comment expressing your support. Keep comments to 50 words or less, please. Your signature and comments will be added to the online listing of signatories — which in the first 48 hours had already reached 800 signatures and is still growing. For security purposes, only the city and state portion of your address will be published on the Web site.

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LP attacks 'PATRIOT Act' in petition, press conference

The Libertarian Party's constant opposition to the invasive PATRIOT Act continues, both in LP-only action and in coalitions the party has joined.

On June 18, LP Executive Director Joe Seehusen was invited to take part in an anti-PATRIOT Act press conference in Harrisburg, Pa., sponsored by the ACLU's Red, White and Blue coalition.

"We are not a part of that coalition, but Bob Barr's group — Patriots to Restore Checks and Balances — was invited to join in for the day, and we are a part of Barr's group," Seehusen explained.

Seehusen was asked to speak for a few minutes about the LP's opposition to the act, and was able to tell the group of activists and reporters that "the Libertarian Party is a party committed to protecting our civil liberties, and to oppose any curtailment of those liberties," he later reported.

"We view the PATRIOT Act as an intrusion on our civil liberties, recognizing that it has the potential to do more harm than good to us."

By participating in Patriots to

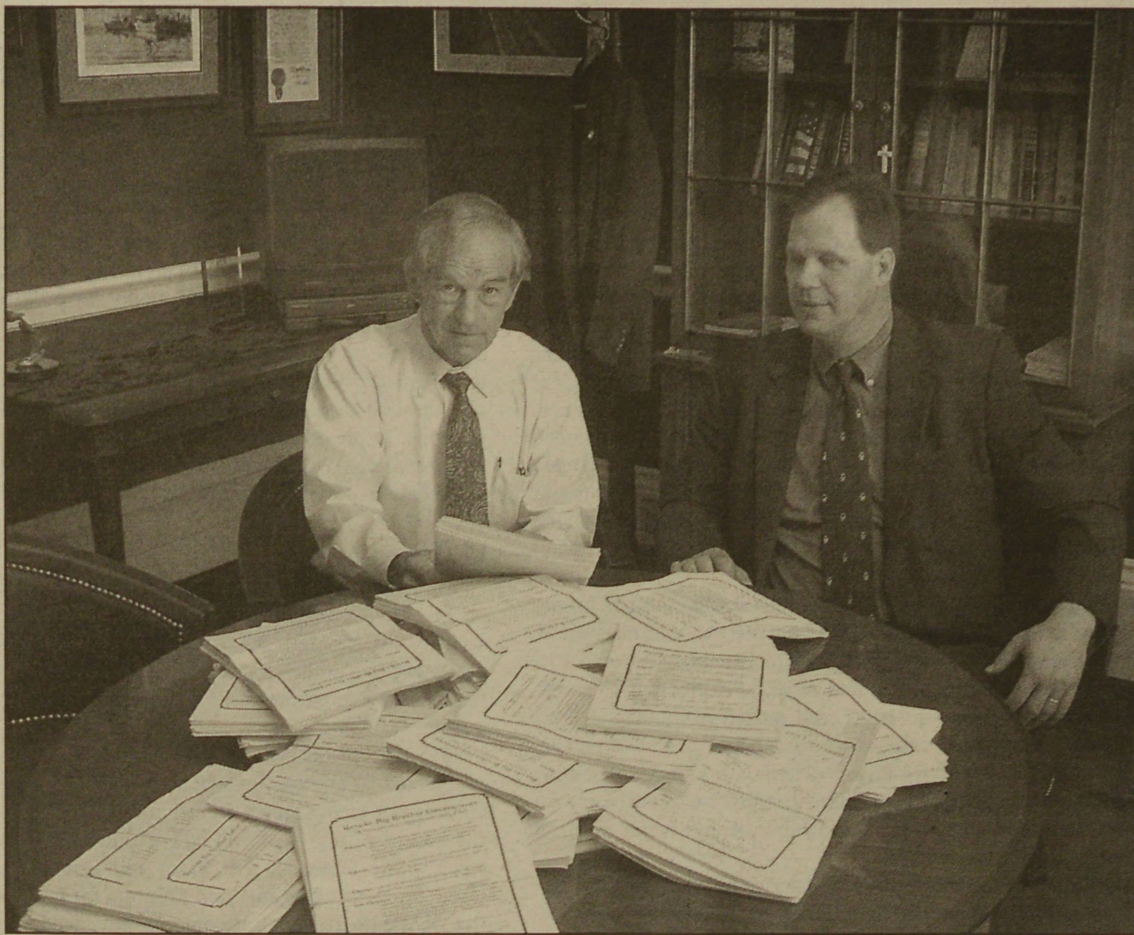
Restore Checks and Balances, Seehusen said, the Libertarian Party is able to show its willingness "to stand shoulder to shoulder with a consortium of political organizations that are dedicated to protecting civil liberties."

Following the press conference, Seehusen was also invited to sit on a panel at a panel discussion for about 100 political activists.

"This seminar was attended by those political activists in Pennsylvania who are — or are going to be — involved in fighting the PATRIOT Act in that state," Seehusen said.

Because both of Pennsylvania's U.S. Senators are Republican backers of the PATRIOT Act, activists in that state were encouraged to "put increasing pressure on their senators, to ensure that the PATRIOT Act is either allowed to expire, or is brought in line with the Constitution," he added.

"That piece of legislation, with its condemnation of civil liberties, needs to be eliminated. If organizations such as the LP don't speak out, there will be no opposition to this type of legislation."



■ Congressman Ron Paul (R-Texas) and LP Executive Director Joe Seehusen pose with some of the thousands of signed petitions collected by the Libertarian Party — petitions which asked Rep. Paul to encourage his fellow congressmen to oppose the PATRIOT Act. Paul, the LP's 1988 presidential candidate, is one of the few congressmen who have steadfastly opposed the legislation. (Photo by LP intern Luke Phillips)

— Libertarian Party Material Sales Center —

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■ **I'm Pro-Choice on Everything!** (Red, white, & blue.)

■ **Don't Blame Me... I Voted Libertarian** (Blue & white; 800-ELECT-US phone number below.)

■ **Vote Libertarian/800-ELECT-US** (Blue & white.)

Buttons

Cost: \$1 each; \$7.50 for 10; \$50 for 100

■ **Don't Blame Me, I Voted Libertarian**

■ **Vote Libertarian**

■ **Libertarian Party: Pro-Choice on Everything**

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■ **Ending the Welfare State.** Two-color. **Cost:** Sample for 50 cents, or \$7 for 100.

■ **What Happened to Your Family Budget?** Two-color. **Cost:** Sample for 50 cents, or \$7 for 100.

■ **Equal Rights for America's Gun Owners.** Two-color. **Cost:** Sample for 50 cents, or \$7 for 100.

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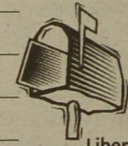
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'Food codes' lead to regulation of farmers' markets

I never thought the government would tell me I couldn't eat scones for breakfast.

In times past, my morning ritual was to go to Passport Coffee and Tea, a small, independent business in my hometown of Zionsville, Ind., where I would order a cup of coffee and a homemade scone.

That changed when someone complained that Passport wasn't using a government-sanctioned kitchen. Passport was forced to postpone scone sales until they could upgrade to a Board of Health certified kitchen. However, they could still sell scones at the Zionsville Farmer's Market, which is

By Becky Oberg

held every Saturday morning from June to October.

And then someone complained to a county commissioner, Republican Betty Lee Cooper, about this Norman Rockwell-esque event.

Cooper filed a complaint with the county health department, and a representative was sent out to investigate. He ruled that under state law, the Farmer's Market Organization was a not-for-profit, but the individual vendors were for-profit and therefore subject to what is commonly called "the food code".

For a vendor "to obtain a food-permit I need to make an inspection of the kitchen facility they are going to use to prepare food," the health department inspector said. "I check to see that they have the nec-

essary sinks, ovens, stoves, refrigeration, work area and lighting. If everything is in order they need to fill out an application and pay the fee, which would be \$25 to \$125 depending on the type of business."

Donna Klingler, a grandmother who sells homemade candy, paid \$50 to get herself and her church kitchen certified — not a small amount for her.

"This is the only way I have to pay bills through the summer," said Klingler, 76, who works for the Zionsville Community High School cafeteria during the school year.

Beverly Boxley of Passport Coffee agreed, saying the new rules "hurt every merchant at the market."

According to the Boone County Health Department, a "retail food

establishment" is any "operation that stores, prepares, packages, serves, vends or otherwise provides food for human consumption; where consumption is on or off the premises; and regardless of whether there is a charge for the food," according to the department's Web page.

"Some examples of retail food establishment would be a catering operation, restaurant, grocery store, convenience store or tavern."

Minnick explained the individual vendors must meet Indiana Retail Food Establishment Sanitation Requirements unless they are selling whole, fresh vegetables, fruit, fruit jams and jellies, honey, or syrup.

Fruits and vegetables must be packaged, unless the produce is nuts in the shell or is intended for hulling, peeling or washing by the consumer before consumption.

The vendors must use utensils such as deli tissue to handle the produce, as well as maintaining the foods at appropriate handling temperatures. Baked goods vendors cannot cook out of their home kitchens, but must use a Board of

Health certified kitchen.

"They do not have to become a certified food handler if they only prepare baked goods such as breads, rolls, doughnuts, cookies or fruit pies," said Minnick in an e-mail message.

Minnick said the tests and training to become a certified food handler can range from \$60 to \$125. Indiana's certified handler law, which requires that retail food establishments have at least one licensed food handler on staff, went into effect on January 1.

Gone are the days of buying from the farmer selling produce from the back of the truck—or the baker selling goods from a small stand.

"I guess it's a state law," said Teresa Gordon, shrugging as she sold food for her family-run business, Gordon Family Baked Goods. "Farmer's markets have been a different thing in times past. I kind of wish it could go back to that."

■ **About the author:** *Becky Oberg is a Libertarian Party member from Zionsville, Ind.*

Low military enrollment reveals American youth's disillusionment

I have some thoughts to add to the story "Libertarian military officer is not an oxymoron," by Mark B. San Souci, which was published in the July 2005 LP News.

I am a Regular Army Officer. After 26 years service I was placed, at my request, on inactive status as a full colonel in 1972. For the next 15 years my now-deceased wife and I operated a business in the Republic of Panama. For 30 years I lived outside the United States. And when I was introduced to Libertarian concepts in 1987-88, I became a card-carrying member.

This is a story of conversion — getting away from suppression of thought and having an acute desire to see change in a dumbfounding system.

Having graduated from high school at 15, I immediately enrolled in the North Texas Agricultural College at Arlington, Texas, part of the Texas A&M system at that time, and entered the ROTC program. We had no fraternities: You were a member of the Corps, and there lay your loyalty. Three semesters passed in a quasi-military unit: rules, mission, obedience.

When I was out of money, I had to leave school. So at 17 I got married to my high school sweetheart, enlisted in the Army to get the GI Bill and shipped out. Joining the Service and getting married was an irrational act happening throughout the war — World War II — but it was not deemed nonsensical in 1946. With some education and military training I was accepted for OCS (Officer Candidate School), commissioned and sent to Korea in 1947.

I bounced to Japan, Korean War, Japan, Africa, Vietnam and Panama. I literally grew up in the Army. We accepted authority, relied on our civilian bosses to know what was right and to direct our actions/missions. In the military you rely on the president, his cabinet, the Congress and the courts to always act for and in the best interest of the country.

In the military, career development, growing family and numerous moves leave scant time for reflection. In dumb allegiance, you close your eyes to obvious malfeasance, hypocrisy, incursions on the Constitution.

I was not stupid; I had my MBA. But you conform because to do otherwise would be tantamount to treason, destroying morale and unit effectiveness.

The politicians in both parties have labeled dissent and criticism as "unpatriotic." I gave almost a third of my life to protect this country. How can it

By Bobby R. Lang

be unpatriotic to say that my effort was — and that the efforts of others are being — squandered by self-righteous megalomaniacs bent on imperialistic conquest?

Enlightenment comes with age and experience; action is predicated on circumstances. I retired because I could no longer in good conscience follow orders from some misguided administration.

I am sure that among professional military men and women there is a growing realization that the missions are bogus, but obedience is ingrained and mutiny unimaginable. Only with a change in the mindset of the leaders of our country can we hope for neutrality, liberty and freedom.

I would like to see us out of the UN, NATO, SEATO, and all other alliances. Get all U.S. forces back on U.S. soil in defense of this country. The Koreans, China and Taiwan, and Israel and Palestine would have settled their disputes long ago if the United States had remained neutral.

Contrary to my generation — when we followed our fathers and brothers in patriotic service to our country, the present generation is opting out of military service. Despite the mind-numbing state education, it is becoming apparent that the American youth is seeing a glimmer of the reality of perpetual interference in other countries.

Witness failed enlistment goals. A few years ago when the Retired Officers Association pressed for retirees to propagandize the desirability of a military career to high school graduates, I declined because of the administration's misuse of the resource.

So what is the military to do? I personally would like to see compulsory military service for every 18-year-old, no deferments, and with permanent enrollment in the military reserves to age 60.

And when that has happened, just listen to the howls of protest when the president or Congress tries to start a war.

Also, I want the Commander-in-Chief, every cabinet member and every congressman who voted for the war to be put in uniform and on the battlefield. If those august representatives are infirm, they can send their first-born children. Let them see firsthand the actual effects of war.

If these proposals wouldn't put an end to unnecessary, unjust wars — nothing would.

■ **About the author:** *Bobby R. Lang, of St. Augustine, Fla., is a retired colonel of the U.S. Army and a long-time member of the Libertarian Party.*



■ Teresa Gordon and members of her family (above) sell food at the farmer's market for Gordon Family Baked Goods, while below, Donna Klingler sells homemade candy both to supplement her own income and to benefit her church. All such food sales have come into question by their Indiana county's "food code," which — in its bureaucratic zeal to regulate all food sales — is threatening to outlaw such activity at the Zionsville Farmer's Market. This is a classic example of government over-regulation. One vendor noted, "We all need to be members of the Libertarian Party, because we don't need any more government help." (Photos by Becky Oberg)



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THE FORUM

Given an actual choice, would Americans choose socialism?

I recently spent two weeks in the very troubled, Hugo Chavez-ruled, increasingly less-free country of Venezuela. In that time I saw much which made me appreciate the security, the prosperity, and the freedom of the United States, but nothing which so clearly brought the point home as the comments of two vastly different women.

By Kory Richards

The first was an American, young, idealistic, pleasant enough, and naively happy. She heard me speaking English on a beach full of Europeans and a few fortunate Venezuelans with the financial means to afford a beach getaway in their increasingly socialist country.

Within minutes of striking up a conversation with me, she proudly described herself as a graduate in the field of political theory and a socialist. She boasted of her recent travels to Venezuela, Cuba and Costa Rica. I quickly gathered by her comments that this girl, like so many young

Americans, was clearly on a mission to show the world that not all Americans believe in the evils espoused by her mostly free and capitalist nation.

I asked about her impressions of Cuba and Caracas, Venezuela. Regarding Caracas, she expressed surprise at the level of poverty and pollution she had witnessed there. Regarding Cuba, she was surprised at what she called the "classism" there and the fact that in a county ruled by her romantic system of socialism, there was a striking division of classes manifested so deeply that her hosts had refused entry to some fellow human beings of a lower social status.

This revelation was a shock to her, about which she unabashedly expressed her dismay.

The second woman was a Venezuelan, a woman who has spent all of her 30 years living behind chained gates and barbed wire in one of more affluent areas of Caracas.

This woman, who I spent two weeks conversing with and getting to know, had developed some useful computer skills which afforded her a modest degree of success. Despite this

woman's extremely developed skills and relative success, she still lived at home with her parents for reasons of both economics and security. She dreamed of one day having children and living in a place where they could play outside and explore — as many children do without fear.

She told me that she knew this would never be possible in Venezuela, where Chavez's anti-capitalist policies make things worse every year. To her, education and self development brought mere survival. To this young Venezuelan woman, a trip to the beach — such as that so casually enjoyed by the American girl — was an extravagance requiring exceptional success and long-term, disciplined saving and sacrifice.

When I told my new Venezuelan friend about the pro-socialist comments of the American girl, she was genuinely surprised to learn that there are Americans who exhibit such attitudes. In speaking of the American girl, she remarked that it must be easy for the American girl to have such ideas because she doesn't have

to live them.

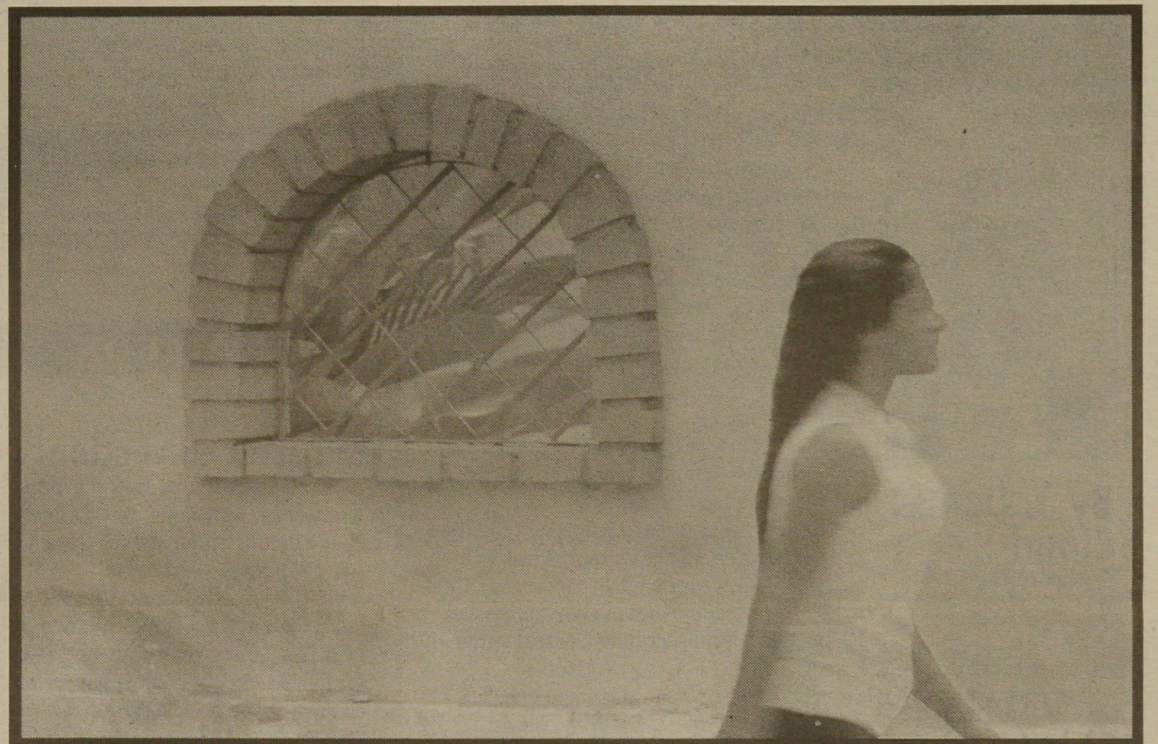
How well said. And how true.

Perhaps if more Americans could see (or live in) the conditions wrought by the absence of basic freedoms, there would be more Libertarians and less clamoring for increased government control.

As for me, a long term Libertarian, I wondered if the American girl ever did get it, or if she would be willing to trade places with my Venezuelan friend who is living in the "utopia" of a socialist tyrant.

Somehow, I doubt it.

■ **About the author:** "Kory Richards" is the pseudonym of a Wisconsin Libertarian who, for security purposes related to this story, asked that his real name not be used.



■ A young Venezuelan woman walks past one of the many walled-in private residences in Maracaibo, Venezuela. As the author of this article notes, Venezuela is rapidly becoming more socialistic under President Hugo Chavez, who idolizes Fidel Castro, and a new generation of Venezuelans are being familiarized with the dangers of socialism. Many American young people believe a socialist-communist form of government would benefit America — but then, they've never lived under such a government.

(Photo by LP News Editor J. Daniel Cloud)

Congress desecrates an American 'symbol'

"O, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light..." the Star Spangled Banner goes. Inspired by the flag's waving in the breeze during the War of 1812, Francis Scott Key penned this famous poem.

By Tony Ryan

The flag was then, as now, a symbol of what the United States stands (or stood) for: independence, personal freedom and rights (protected by our Constitution).

Yet, today, our nation's legislators want to pass a flag-burning ban, saying the action desecrates the most visible symbol of what our founding fathers, well, founded.

We now have the Patriot Act (new and improved!) and Supreme Court decisions effectively crushing state's rights and personal property rights.

Even as Congress appears ready to pass the flag-burning ban, Democrats are debating about infringing on the right of free speech. Maybe they're showing evidence of conscience? Looking more closely, however, you can see that their real concern is about "political damage"

to the party.

As the headline to a June 24 Associated Press story said, the "Flag-burning bill could divide Democrats."

So, the risk of losing votes next year and in 2008 can trump one of our basic rights?

The flag is a symbol of the best aspects of our country — our freedoms. Doesn't that include the freedom of dissent, the freedom to protest injustice in any way that doesn't infringe on the rights of others?

Or, maybe, the freedom to keep one's personal residence even if someone wants to steal it in the name of a better tax base?

Doesn't tearing away our basic rights — tearing at the very fabric of our freedoms — also desecrate a symbol of our nation?

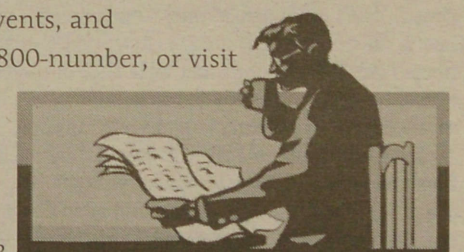
So, which is worse, having the flag burned by a few protesters, or seeing our nation's leaders tear apart the meaning of the flag by taking away our basic rights?

■ **About the author:** Tony Ryan, a retired police officer who lives in Sioux Falls, S.D., is an alternate regional representative to the Libertarian National Committee.

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THE EDITOR

It's time: Quit arguing and start working

"Libertarians are NOT politicians," an unidentified writer recently commented on the blog at LP.org. "Politicians deal in the art of compromise. Libertarians ... do not compromise!"

Unfortunately, this poster was arguably correct. For too long, most members of the Libertarian Party haven't been politically active, fearful that getting involved in politics would damn the party, that we would lose sight of the principles that make us the "Party of Principle."

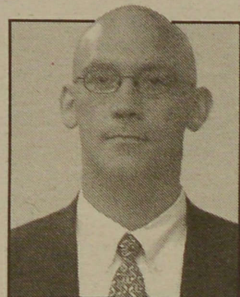
Hey, I'm guilty. I detest politics. That's why I got involved in the LP: I want to change the political picture, to eliminate the elements I despise. But saving ourselves from politicians requires being involved in politics.

The No-Name I initially quoted said (when he was asked, wouldn't it be better to take a small step toward liberty than to be philosophically pure and take no step at all?) that he "would rather have nothing accomplished at the moment" than to "bargain or make deals."

Thanks to such decisive inaction, the party now stands pretty much where it did more than three decades ago. I'm 32 years old. As long as I've been alive there has been a Libertarian Party in the United States. But the party's principled stand has not created a groundswell of freedom. The party has not seen a massive influx of new minds, new ideas and new power as Americans discover that there is a party that calls for individual freedom.

Why? Because most Libertarians are too busy explicating the "non-initiation of aggression" principle to bother with politics.

The national LP recently released its Exit Plan for Iraq, in which we call for the gradual withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq over a year's time, and for direct aid to be paid to Iraq for the damage the U.S. government caused in that nation. If



By J. Daniel Cloud

LP NEWS EDITOR

you haven't read the plan, it's on pages 10-11 of this newspaper.

Is it a perfect plan? No. Is it perfectly libertarian? Again, no. If implemented, would it serve a libertarian purpose while saving lives, alleviating the damage our government did to another country, and saving American taxpayers' money? Yes, I believe it could work — because it isn't a purely libertarian plan. The LP has previously called for pulling all U.S. troops out of Iraq immediately. That's a purely libertarian idea. And what effect did it have? Libertarians applauded, by and large. We patted ourselves on the back and considered our job accomplished: We had shown the world that we have principles.

Hear me now. The world doesn't care that the Libertarian Party is the Party of Principle. For the most part, Americans don't care about libertarianism at all. Those who have heard of the LP generally agree that the party is, at best, an interesting anomaly, and at worst, irrelevant. And they're right.

Do I want to compromise principles? No. But if we're going to save America from politicians, I see two possible solutions.

We could go revolutionary on the bastards and be summarily slaughtered when our small arms prove ineffectual against the U.S. military. And the result would be the immediate suspension of Second Amendment rights. Future generations of Americans would be disarmed, and we would have failed.

Solution Number Two: We become politically active. We show that incremental enactment of libertarian principles can be effective.

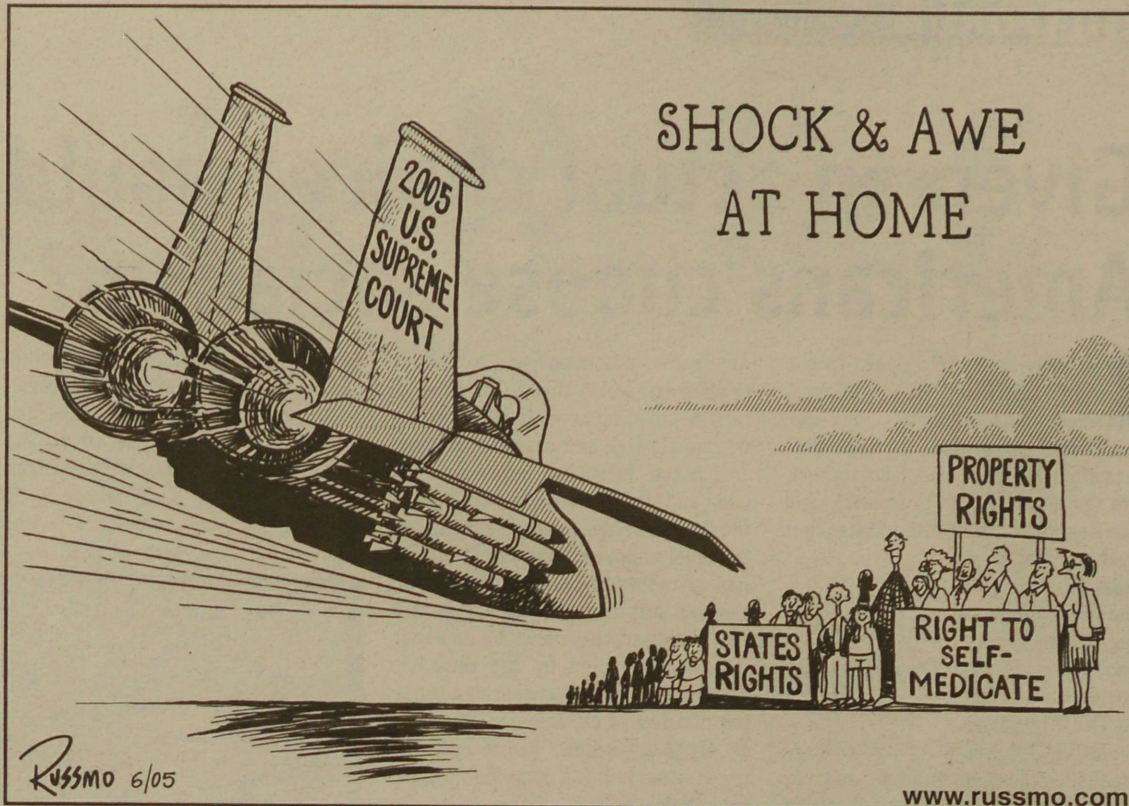
As a blog poster named Corey noted, "You can't make America a libertarian country overnight. We can sit here and talk about ideals until we are blue in the face, but we will be just doing that — talking."

I'm tired of talking. I'm sick of listening to Libertarians argue about the number of libertarian principles that could dance on the head of a pin. I am disgusted with the e-mail warriors who think the best use of their time is to fight amongst themselves.

I want to see some Libertarians get off their principled asses and do something to enact those principles in America. And I'm ready to do something myself. That's why I helped write — and proudly signed — the Exit Plan for Iraq. It ain't perfect. But it shows Americans that the LP wants to see U.S. troops leave Iraq. It shows that we're tired of the killing. It shows that we are willing to accept incremental change, so long as change occurs. It shows that we are capable of thinking in terms of "transition" instead of "revolution."

The party spent more than 30 years trying to change American politics from the outside, with philosophical purity in place, and we failed. If you are one of those who think Libertarians shouldn't be politicians, feel free to continue sending nasty e-mails complaining that the Libertarian Party is "compromising" too much, that we're settling for incrementalism.

But I believe those of you who complain will be in the minority. The rest of us will be busy. We're trying to change the face of American politics, and we've got a lot of work to do.



THE MAILBOX

Letter correction

I was appalled to find my name incorrectly attached to a quote about Dennis Miller, in the June issue of *LP News*.

As a vocal advocate of mass murder (the Iraq war), Miller is obviously NOT a Libertarian. He's not even funny. As far as I know, he never claimed to be a "Libertarian on everything" on "The Daily Show."

Please run a correction in the next issue.

—JAMES BABB
Norristown, Pennsylvania

[Editor's note: Consider it corrected. Whether or not he actually is "libertarian on everything," Miller did claim on "The Daily Show" that he holds libertarian views. However, the issue here is whether a letter addressed to the LP News regarding Miller's libertarianism actually came from James Babb of the Pennsylvania LP. Apparently, it did not. My apologies, Mr. Babb.]

Redefining marriage

[RE: Marriage contracts, *The Forum*, June 2005 *LP News*]

Mr. Vock's piece in the June *LP News* surprised me. As a former contracts law professor, I didn't know that contracts were limited to only two parties. Contracts are not so limited under any law I am aware of.

Mr. Vock's comment that marriage is a contract between two people by definition concerns the issue of how marriage should be defined, not how it is currently considered under the law.

From a pure libertarian perspective (self-ownership/non-initiation of force principle) there is absolutely no necessary reason to understand a contract to be limited to

only two persons. Many more than two adult persons have the right to agree to live as a married group, their respective rights and obligations to one another to be set forth with particularity in an enforceable contract — one where the law could provide a remedy for breach of same by any of the parties to the contract.

**IS IT POSSIBLE THAT
we've misdirected
our energy ...?
Might we be more
effective if we used
our votes for leverage?**

—WILLIAM MURLEY

From a strictly functional point of view, the marriage arrangement has no inherent attributes or characteristics that limit the arrangement to only two persons. From what I understand, the Mormons and others have enjoyed successful and satisfactory polygamous relationships for a long, long time.

There are general contract policies limiting the legal enforceability of agreements. For example, the law generally will not enforce certain contracts between adults and children. Mostly this has to do with the value and legitimacy of consent and concerns of undue influence, etc. Thus, contracts to marry might be limited to consenting adults or at least to adults and emancipated minors.

—WILLIAM E. SCHETLICK
Flemington, New Jersey

Tax Day protests

[In 2006, April 15 will fall on a Saturday.]

Next year is our year to be heard. There should be no excuse of "I have to work."

Now is the time to organize a tax day protest like no other. If we don't do it, who will? If not next year, then when?

It's going to be a Saturday. If we all gave one day for our party and let our voices be heard, who knows how many people we might meet and influence?

Our party is growing again, but we need to organize to keep growing. Saturday, April 15, 2006 will be marked on my calendar. This should be a day that we come together as a party united against big government and high taxes. Every post office in the country should have Libertarians outside, giving out literature.

—STEVEN ADLER
Boothwyn, Pennsylvania

Fair Tax

As Mr. Obenski said in the June *MailBox*, there is no such thing as a fair tax. Theft in any form is never fair. And I would never be part of a Libertarian Party that promoted any kind of tax in its platform.

That said, I see no harm in individual Libertarians working toward passage of The Fair Tax Act, HR 25, while at the same time working toward passage of The No Tax Act. The first will be a stepping stone to the second.

The Fair Tax Act, unlike any of the other proposals presented to the President's Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform, is not a reform, but a replacement. It dissolves the

THE MAILBOX

IRS and repeals the income tax, Social Security tax, corporate taxes and several other income taxes most people are probably not even aware of.

The Fair Tax Act calls for a 30 percent exclusive sales tax at the final point of purchase on new goods and services for personal consumption.

What do I like most about the Fair Tax Act? It opens eyes. The tax rate of 30 percent seems awful high. But it is revenue neutral. That is, the federal government will receive the same amount of revenue as it receives today.

How many people know how much the federal government takes out of their checks every payday? Some may even think their employer pays their taxes. But when they pay a high sales tax at the counter, every time they go to the counter, I think they'll start scrutinizing their federal government a bit more and start questioning government spending.

That will be the stepping stone to limited government. I urge Libertarians to visit www.fairtax.org and give the Fair Tax Act a fair hearing.

—JOE WARTMAN
Petersburg, Kentucky

Missing marbles

[RE: The Supreme Court's eminent domain ruling]

Panic! Citizens encouraged to look for lost marbles of five U.S. Supreme Court justices.

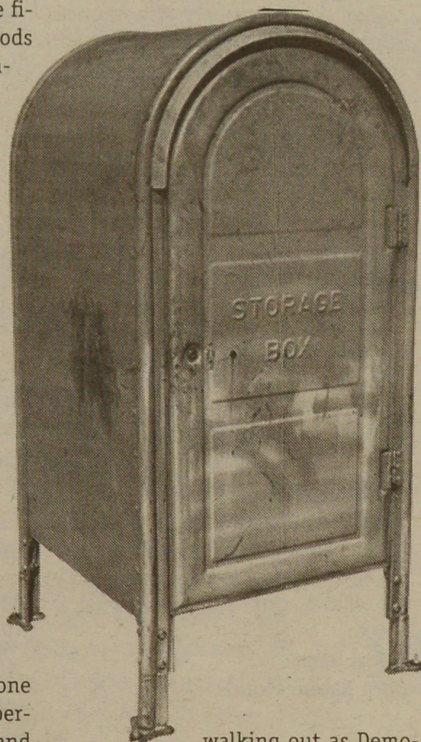
—WENCESLAO M. HEVR
Lawton, Oklahoma

Nonsensenbrenner

Congressman James Sensenbrenner recently introduced the appalling bill H.R. 1528, which would increase the damage already being done to our society by the insane War on Drugs by, among other things, requiring people to snitch

on their friends, relatives and co-workers or else face a possible prison sentence.

In his role as chair of the Judiciary Committee, Sensenbrenner recently ended a hearing by



walking out as Democrats attempted to protest the renewal of the unpatriotic Patriot Act.

This man clearly needs to go. I encourage the LP of Wisconsin to run their best candidate against Mr. "Nonsensenbrenner" and make an example out of him.

We need to show the politicians that even if we do not win a lot of elections, we can get rid of the worst politicians from other parties. I don't doubt that other organizations would rally behind such an effort to remove Sensenbrenner from office. Just hearing of such an effort might have an effect on him.

—SCOTT FROST
Kenmore, Washington

Irrelevancy

I wish to acknowledge the letter from David Thomas in the June issue. I have been a registered, dues-paying Libertarian for 30 years. I first learned about, and became infatuated with, the libertarian philosophy and Libertarian Party principles in the mid-1970s while my wife and I were living in Hawaii. The more I read, the more intense became my passion.

How could any voter, I thought, dismiss such radiant political rationality? They have only to open their minds to realize how empty and uninspiring is the Demopublican option, to comprehend how futile and parasitic and predatory are all other regulation-of-society considerations.

My enthusiasm fueled some measure of political activism: I eventually "converted" my spouse, family members and a few friends; held intelligent discourse with others who couldn't be persuaded; gathered sig-

natures on ballot-access petitions; distributed literature; and prepared and delivered speeches on libertarian themes.

My excitement weakened as years passed, however, as I saw how little effect we were having on the political process, how slightly the political playing field changed, and how irrelevant we seemed in the big picture.

Back to the present. Is it possible — and so it seemed as I read Mr. Thomas' letter — that we've misdirected our energy for so long? Might we be more effective if we used our votes for leverage, as he suggested? Surely, Republicans and Democrats have no less a desire to win than we, and one or the other might be receptive to our suggestions in exchange for additional, assured vote totals.

I like Mr. Thomas' ideas and fervently hope they can pump up our influence.

—WILLIAM MURLEY
Omaha, Nebraska

Eminent domain

Recently the Supreme Court ruled that the concept of eminent domain can be expanded, allowing it to benefit private property interests.

They decided, in essence, that if another private entity can build a bigger, better structure or provide a bigger or better service on privately owned land, the government (local governments included) can seize that property and hand it over to the entity that can provide a better service or facility.

The idea is that by increasing property value, you can increase tax revenue. I was always taught that private property was sacred and only when public safety or the public welfare were threatened did government have a duty to intervene.

Public safety, public opinion and the welfare of the general public along with the individual's right to own property do not even factor into the Supreme Court's new equation.

This ruling benefits large corporations, large government, large law firms and the real estate lobby, and it threatens small businessmen, "mom and pop" operations and homeowners. It threatens the very concept that individual Americans can ever truly own anything.

This is absolutely the most un-American, un-democratic, anti-Libertarian, anti-free market, pro-Marxist, pro-Maoist, pro-Stalin, Orwellian ruling that I can remember. It makes me wonder who truly won the Cold War.

I implore every patriot to write to newspapers, lawmakers and the Supreme Court justices and let them know that this must not be allowed to stand, not in our America.

—DR. MILES BATEMAN
Trenton, Illinois

Platform facelift

With the LP national convention in Portland (to be held in 2006) fast approaching, it's time the LP platform got a facelift.

THE REVIEW

A coming Saudi oil crisis?

■ *Twilight in the Desert: The Coming Saudi Oil Shock and the World Economy.* By Matthew R. Simmons. Published June 2005 by John Wiley & Sons. 352 pages, \$24.95. Available at Amazon.com.

Reviewed by Matthew Dailey
LIBERTARIAN PARTY POLICY ANALYST

The United States depends heavily on its relationship with Saudi Arabia, whose oil is important not just to the Americans but to the entire global economy. We take it for granted that Saudi Arabia will produce massive amounts of relatively cheap oil well into the future.

What if the predictions concerning Saudi Arabia's oil production are wrong? What if that nation is going to run out of oil sooner than expected?

In *Twilight in the Desert*, these very questions are raised. Matthew R. Simmons, an investment banker who specializes in energy issues, relies mainly on technical papers from the Society of Petroleum Engineers and information from engineers employed by Saudi Aramco — the national oil company. He claims the Saudi government is hiding information about the future production decline of their oilfields, the so-called "twilight in the desert." Saudi oil production has already or will soon peak, then plunge into major decline within the foreseeable

future, leading to a catastrophic shortage, Simmons claims.

Simmons looks briefly at the history of Saudi Arabia and how its oil industry rose to global prominence. For those unfamiliar with the nation and its oil industry, he provides a solid historical context for the present problems with Saudi Arabia's oil production and exploration.

Saudi Arabia was relatively unknown until the 1973 oil embargo, which illustrated the United States' growing dependence on foreign oil and Saudi Arabia's rapidly increasing global influence. Only a few years before the embargo, U.S. oil production peaked and began an irrevocable long-term decline. At various times during the last 30 years — such as the decrease in U.S. oil production, the Iranian revolution in 1978 and the 1991 Gulf War — Saudi Arabia has rapidly ramped up its oil production, placing a significant strain on its reservoirs.

Simmons notes that while Saudi Arabia was able to become one of the world's largest oil producers, it has only a small number of oilfields, with the two largest oilfields producing the majority of the country's output. Simmons notes that no "super-giant" oilfields have been discovered recently, and expresses doubts Saudi Arabia will find a new "super-giant" oilfield to replace the older, diminished fields. He is skeptical regarding Saudi Arabia's ability to continue producing consistent amounts of oil from the same oilfields in the future.

Today, Saudi Arabia produces more oil than any other country in the world. But some other experts agree with Simmons that the Saudi reservoir may be depleted sooner than anticipated.

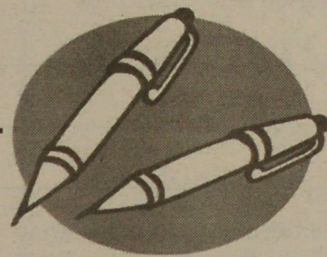
Simmons looks at obstacles Saudi Aramco has encountered in trying to maintain a high oil output. He also gives a technical overview on the process of producing oil — giving a great deal of technical information that informs and reinforces his arguments.

Simmons describes in detail the problems associated with each oilfield. This provides a transition to the last section of the book. The last section gives a detailed outlook on the Saudi oil industry. This is the heart of the book and casual readers could skip ahead to this section to be informed of the author's main points. Simmons points to Iran as a parallel to Saudi Arabia. Iran, like Saudi Arabia "continually boosted its oil production to meet soaring global demand," Simmons says, noting that many of Iran's giant oilfields peaked a long time ago and were unable to recover from the subsequent decline.

This book sheds much-needed light on the current state of Saudi Arabia's oilfields. By withholding information on oil production, the Saudi government dangerously perpetuates the myth it has an almost unlimited supply of oil.

A casual reader may think Simmons packed in too much technical information — but much of that background is necessary for the author to prove there is a potential Saudi oil crisis on the horizon. If you like, view the more technical chapters as a reference and skim over them. I recommend this book to anyone interested in becoming more informed about Saudi Arabia's oil industry and its future prospects.

■ **About the reviewer:** Matthew Dailey is a policy analyst for the Libertarian Party. He recently graduated from George Washington University with a Master's in public policy.



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THE MAILBOX

The most successful platform in history was the Communist Manifesto. Ten simple planks, something for every socialist to love. Witness its immense success worldwide — the amazing growth of the state and the shrinking of individual rights.

By contrast, the LP platform has something for every Libertarian and every other American to hate. It has 32 pages and 61 planks, and the sheer volume is sure to drive potential LP members away. Or people actually do read it, and that drives them away.

Who knows how many potential members we have lost due to the platform.

Harry Browne, LP presidential candidate in 1996 and 2000, and Nancy Lord, LP vice presidential candidate in 1992, had to fend off attacks during their campaigns, based on the odious platform planks. Mary Maas, former Washington state LP chair, was roasted on Seattle talk radio over the open borders/open immigration plank.

It is appalling that we are expecting to win elections while utilizing such a tedious, outmoded document fraught with land mines waiting to devastate our candidates.

Shouldn't our platform be an asset rather than an impediment? It should be short — no more than 10 planks. And it should be more

American than apple pie, with planks including "the LP supports private property" and "the LP supports the Bill of Rights." It should be short enough and American enough that you could hang it on your neighbor's doorknob in Topeka and bring a smile to his face.

With all of the marketing expertise available in the LP today, it's time we entered the 21st century and designed a platform that will truly appeal to all Americans.

—PATRICIA MICHL
Sumner, Washington

■ Best of the Blog

I would love to read a "best of the blog" in *LP News* every month. It would be a very informative addition to the already informative *LP News*, and would give us a chance to hear what people other than Libertarians are thinking on the issues.

—GERALD BARYCZ
Clinton Township, Michigan

■ Medical marijuana

Like it or not, the recent decision by the Supreme Court on medical marijuana was probably correct as to the law.

This decision makes clear exactly why so many of us give so much to the LP — politics matters.

It is not the proper role of the Supreme Court to save Americans from every stupid, silly or unwise congressional act. Nor should that be the role of the Supreme Court. So, why blame the court for doing its job?

The fact is Congress is delegated vast powers. Included is the power to outlaw drug trade under its Commerce Clause authority.

Luckily, however, nothing commands Congress to wage war on Americans.

As soon as people are elected who have a decent sense of restraint and a modicum of respect for individual liberty, dignity, and responsibility, then the Supreme Court will affirm (based on its recent ruling) congressional authority to repeal all federal drug laws, thereby freeing up the market in drugs, and also to restrict any state's right to interfere in the drug trade, thus ending the nightmarish War on Drugs.

Those at work in the LP know this will happen someday — hopefully, someday soon.

—J. MILLS
Tacoma, Washington

■ Eminent domain II

Last week's Supreme Court decision to redefine the Fifth Amendment was shocking and confusing. The term "public use" has gone onto a completely different path. In their decision the justices expressly rewrote the amendment to change

the wording from "public use" to "public purpose". Now, in light of their ruling, any municipality with an argument of generating a higher tax base can take one's home, business and property.

I live in a community with 100 residents. Should Palm Beach County commissioners decide that they could generate higher taxes by having a Wal-Mart, Home Depot or even higher priced homes, under the new Supreme Court's interpretation of the Fifth Amendment, they would be just in kicking me and the other 99 people out of our homes.

What is even more shocking is that people haven't taken to the streets in protest of this new dangerous direction, as an over-intrusive government slowly exercises its muscle over its citizenry. It is happening so slowly our citizens are oblivious to its direct impact on their lives.

I am appalled and hope that others that are equally appalled will join forces to fix this travesty. As chairman of the Libertarian Party of Palm Beach County and a candidate for the Florida Senate in District 30, I expect our citizens to stand up for what is right and crush what is wrong.

—KARL DICKEY
Boca Raton, Florida

■ Fair Tax II

The purpose of the Fair Tax (www.fairtax.org) is not to elimi-

nate taxation in America. Ken Obenski complains in his letter that the federal government will use a sales tax to stick its nose in every single business transaction.

The current income tax system already provides means for the federal government to track the financial records of all businesses in America, as well as every single citizen. Aside from the extra privacy of having the government no longer tracking individual citizens' incomes, the government would be spending considerably less money and fewer resources to manage tax collection, since they would only be concerned with final sales.

You think that somehow the federal government should not collect any taxes. Well, it ain't going to happen.

We, as Libertarians, should all get behind the Fair Tax movement not because it will lower taxes, but because it will at least level the taxation playing field so that everyone is paying his fair share and to discourage the federal government from being involved in our day-to-day lives.

A retail sales tax will not encourage cheating on taxes any more than the current income tax does.

Rather, it will encourage collecting from everyone, instead of allowing exemptions for half of the people and totally ignoring a large part of society that doesn't pay taxes because they work illegally.

—HARRY KECK

The
Power of
Just One
Signature

X *Steve Sault*

Do you think our government has gotten too big and too powerful? Do you think bureaucrats and politicians are slowly eliminating the freedoms Americans used to take for granted? Do you think the Bill of Rights is being silently repealed — one precious freedom at a time?

If so, you can help change that by joining the Libertarian Party! We're the only political party that is fighting — with 100% of our energy — to lower taxes, to reduce the size of government, and to defend the Bill of Rights. With your support — and your proud signature on this membership form — we can work harder than ever to build a powerful political force for freedom.

But we need your help to do it. Join us today!

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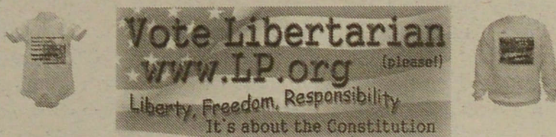
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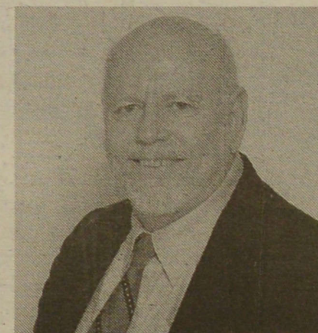
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UPCOMING

July 23-31, 2005

Free State Project Freedom Festival, at Roger's Campground, Lancaster, NH. Admission is free. For reservations, call the campground at (603) 636-1062. Go to freestateproject.org/festival for information.

July 31-August 6, 2005

Young America's Foundation's 27th Annual National Conservative Student Conference, at the George Washington University Cafritz Conference Center, in Washington, D.C. Speakers to include columnist and economist Walter Williams, former U.S. Sen. Newt Gingrich, and Ron Robinson, president of Young America's Foundation. Call (800) USA-1776; or go to www.yaf.org for information.



■ Williams

August 2-7, 2005

American Legislative Exchange Council's 32nd Annual Meeting, at the Gaylord Texan, in Grapevine, Texas. State legislators, business leaders and public policy experts will gather for this "exchange of ideas" about how to further the goal of limited government that promotes free markets and individual liberties, according to ALEC's Web site. Go to www.ALEC.org or call (202) 466-3800 for information.

August 20, 2005

Ohio LP Small Business Conference, Crown Plaza Hotel, Dayton, Ohio. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Speakers to include William Peirce, retired chair of economics of Case Western University, and a representative of the National Federation of Independent Business. Goal: to begin coordinating cooperation between the LPs of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Kentucky. For additional info, e-mail hq@lpo.org or call (800) 669-6542.

September 9-11, 2005

Louisiana LP Convention, at Chicot State Park near Ville Platte, La. Speakers to be announced. For more information, go to www.la.lp.org.

September 16-18, 2005

Regional Campaign Training Weekend, sponsored by the Texas LP, at the Radison Town Lake, in Austin. Campaign school conducted by the Leadership Institute. Other speakers to include Peggy Venable, Texas director of Americans for Prosperity; Penny Langford-Freeman, district political director for Rep. Ron Paul; and 2004 LP presidential candidate Michael Badnarik. For information, contact Nancy Neale at torchess@austin.rr.com or go to www.LPTexas.org.

September 29-October 1, 2005

State Policy Network 13th Annual Meeting, at the Mills House Hotel, Charleston, S.C. Focusing on current policy issues including health care policy reform, education reform and a fiscal policy forum, as well as on "the nuts and bolts of running a think tank," such as fundraising, marketing and leadership development. For information, go to www.spn.org; e-mail info@spn.org; or call (510) 965-9700.

October 14-16, 2005

The Advocates for Self-Government's 20th Anniversary Celebration, at the Renaissance Atlanta Airport Hotel, Atlanta, Ga. Speakers to include Hugh Downs, Robert Ringer, Harry Browne, David Bergland, Dr. Mary Ruwart, Michael Cloud, Sharon Harris and Bill Winter. For more information, call (800) 932-1776 or e-mail anniversary@TheAdvocates.org; or write to 213 South Erwin St., Cartersville GA 30120.



■ Downs

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■ **PAGE 10-11** The LP's Exit Plan for Iraq — complete text

■ **PAGE 13** 'Food codes' penalize the old-fashioned farmer's market

■ **PAGE 15** An alternate look at flag burning



FIRST WORD

"This week, the LP ... stepped forward as the only American political party with a real proposal on the table and unveiled its Exit Strategy for Iraq.

"I can't stress one point enough: Nobody else is doing this. A solid majority of the American people now understand that the war was, and continues to be, a Very Bad Idea ... and only one political party is offering them a way to correct the mistake.

"Let me say it again: Right now, the Libertarian Party is the only American political institution which can rightfully claim to represent the American people with respect to the war on Iraq.

"Ladies and gentlemen, they're doing politics!

"The Libertarian Party has established itself as representative of the American mainstream while the 'major' parties remain on the political fringe. And don't look now or you might miss it ... but the LP managed this feat without straying from principle, by simply being right and waiting for the mainstream to get right. "Good job, LP!"

—THOMAS KNAPP, *Free-Market News Network*, May 31, 2005