

"It is the nature of American politics that clarity is considered harsh and uncompromising."
— George L. O'Brien



The Birmingham Libertarian

Volume IV, Issue 11

November 2000

Where Do We Go From Here?

The elections are over. It's four more years to the next election...or is it? With endless streams of legislation, referendums, and special elections, as well as local races for mayor and city council, county officials, and amendments, we will have a lot to do! Our local group could focus on the continuing problem with drug testing in Hoover city schools, the Birmingham Water Works dilemma, or a host of other possibilities. We also may have the opportunity to reshape legislative districts as the census requires. Please join us for complete election results (with the probable exception of the presidential race!) as well as a discussion of our ballot access status.

The Greater Birmingham Libertarians

David Mitchell, Coordinator

2330 Highland Avenue

Birmingham, AL 35205



This is your # of free issues remaining. To renew, please call 328-8683 and leave your name and address! There is no charge! LPA members will automatically renew for 1 year.



*LAST
Please Renew!
D.M.*

Ballot Access Status for LPA in Question

Political Party Defined

"An assemblage or organization of electors which, at the general election for state and county officers then next preceding the primary, casts more than 20 percent of the entire vote cast in any county is hereby declared to be a political party within the meaning of this chapter within such county; and an assemblage or organization of electors which, at the general election for state officers then next preceding the primary, casts more than 20 percent of the entire vote cast in the state is hereby declared to be a political party within the meaning of this chapter for such state."

Alabama Code 17-16-2

After the November 7th election, our Alabama Supreme Court candidate for Place 2, Sydney Albert Smith, received just over 20% of the 1.1 million votes cast for that office. In reading the Code of Alabama, our interpretation if the law would be that at 20% we are officially declared a political party. However, the Secretary of State, Jim Bennett, has reported that we did NOT achieve ballot access. In determining how many votes were needed, his office looked at the Chief Justice race, where Roy Moore and Sharon Yates together received over 1.6 million votes. Calculating 20% of *that* total, he saw that our candidate did not reach that number.

The voters the SOS wants to count include the half million or so who voted straight-ticket Democrat and others that, for whatever reason, did not want to cast a ballot in the Place 2 race. I am uncertain why it would be necessary to add in those people that *could* have voted into the final figure. More than a dirty trick, it adds bizarre twists to the way the law works.

With this interpretation, it is theoretically possible that we could be a political party in every county in

the state, but not have state-wide access. It is also mathematically possible to win a race but not have enough votes to qualify to run again! A PSC or agriculture commissioner race may be way down the list (or on the backside of the ballot.) A candidate may receive a majority of votes in such a race, but not have enough votes to reach 20% of the votes cast, say, in the governor's race, which may have literally millions more cast.

We will do our best to support our claim, but given the mood of those in power, it is unlikely that we will be able to reverse this decision, at least not without a lengthy court fight. It may take months, or even years, to resolve this dispute in this manner.

We want to thank the hundreds of thousands of Alabamians that voted Libertarian in this election. Although they may have been told that this was a "wasted vote," it certainly was not the case. Our challenge of becoming a major party will continue. Our growth, combined with the steady decline in Republican and Democrat parties, will make us an ever growing threat to the status quo.

How to Contact Us

Mailing address: The Greater Birmingham Libertarians
2330 Highland Avenue
Birmingham, Alabama 35205

Web Pages: www.al.lp.org (Alabama)
www.lp.org (National)

State Chairman: Mark Bodenhausen
818 83rd Street South
Birmingham, Alabama 35206
(205) 328-VOTE (8683)
markbodenhausen@yahoo.com

Regional Chair: David Mitchell
dmitchell@melior.org

Local Meetings, 2nd Monday of the month:
Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Q
220 Oxmoor Road
Just off I-65
942-3336

Police arrest more people for marijuana than murder, rape, and robbery combined

WASHINGTON, DC — Police arrested more people last year on marijuana charges than for all violent crimes combined, according to new FBI figures — a policy that endangers public safety by diverting police resources, Libertarians charge.

"The War on Marijuana Smokers is good news for brutal street thugs, but it's bad news for ordinary Americans," said Harry Browne, the Libertarian Party's presidential candidate. "Why? Because police are kept busy arresting non-violent pot smokers — while our families, friends, and neighbors fall prey to murderers, rapists, and robbers."

According to the new FBI Uniform Crime Report, police arrested more people for non-violent marijuana offenses in 1999 than for murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault — combined.

In all, 704,812 Americans were arrested last year on marijuana-related charges, while only 635,990 people were arrested for the crimes of murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

"That means that in 704,812 instances last year, police spent their time and your money arresting and booking marijuana smokers instead of apprehending violent criminals," said Browne.

"So the next time you hear about a vicious murder in your community, ask yourself: Could the police have prevented this crime if they hadn't devoted uncounted millions of dollars and man-hours arresting those 704,812 people on marijuana charges over the past year?"

Of those arrested for marijuana offenses, 88% were charged with mere possession, noted Browne, and approximately 60,000 Americans are languishing in prison today on marijuana charges, according to the Marijuana Policy Project.

"Make no mistake: People do get sent to jail in America for simple marijuana possession," he said. "This is more proof that the War on Drugs has created a revolving door prison system. In goes the pot smoker; out comes the psychopathic killer, the kidnapper, or the child molester released on early parole."

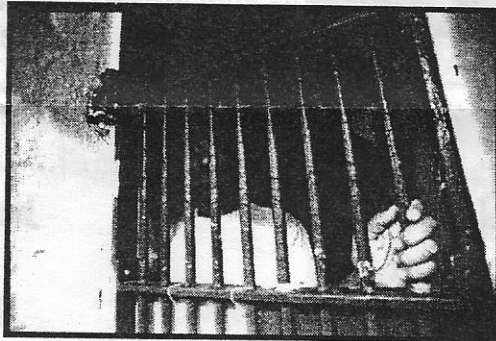
Federal figures also show that a total of 4,175,357 people have been arrested on marijuana charges during the Clinton-Gore administration, even though President Clinton admitted he smoked marijuana "but didn't inhale" and Vice President Gore admits he smoked marijuana in his twenties.

"Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore, would you be better men today if you had been thrown in jail for your youthful indiscretions?" asked Browne. "If not, how can you possibly justify throwing your fellow Americans in jail today for the same youthful indiscretions?"

Interestingly, the number of marijuana arrests is rising at the same time public support for the Drug War is falling, said Browne.

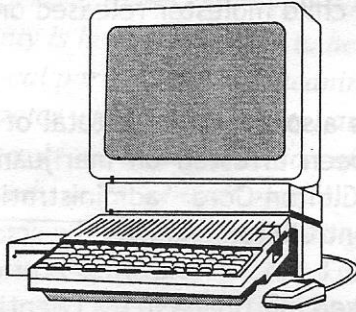
"FBI statistics show that 22,000 more people were arrested on marijuana charges in 1999 than in 1998," he said. "Yet marijuana-related initiatives are approved nearly every time they're put to a popular vote, and California's Proposition 36 — which would eliminate prison terms for all non-violent drug offenses — appears headed to victory as well.

"So while ordinary Americans see the futility of our current drug policies, politicians remain addicted to the War on Drugs and determined to arrest non-violent pot-smokers. That's why people who are victimized by murderers, rapists, and robbers are actually victimized twice: Once by street thugs, and once by the politicians who force police to waste their time arresting harmless pot-smokers as real criminals go free."



Birmingham Computer Consultants

**Wide-Area Networks
ADSL
Remote Access
Industrial Electronics
Intrusion Detection/Security**



Are you vulnerable to a web attack?

**2809 Crescent Avenue
Homewood, AL 35209
(205) 871-9998**

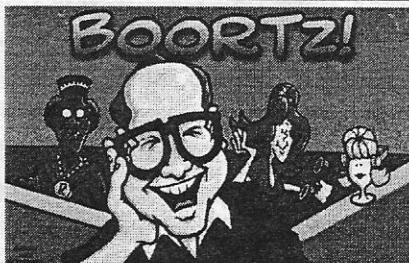
LIB – ART

**As We Approach Singularity...
Mike Rster – artist
595-1679**

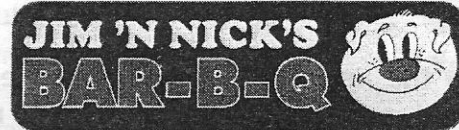
Call for a private viewing of fine art at your home.

Tune in to hear Neal Boortz on WAPI — 1070 on your AM dial. Neal's show runs Monday through Friday from 11:00am—1pm. Hear a diehard Libertarian's perspective on the day's news and events along with not so subtle commentary. Then, tune in to Re-Boortz from midnight to 2am! Get your daily (and nightly) dose of America's Rude Awakening...." and remember to get Neal's Nuze at:

www.boortz.com



The Greater Birmingham Libertarian Supper Club is open to everyone. We discuss issues of the day, politics, taxes, and personal freedom. Meetings are held the second Monday of the month unless there is a holiday, when meetings are moved to the third Monday. We begin at 6:30 (dinner 6:45) unless otherwise noted. There is no charge to attend and contributions are gladly accepted. And of course, bring a friend. This month's meeting is being held at::



Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Q

220 Oxmoor Road

Just off I-65

942-3336

December's meeting on the 11th!

					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						