

COMMON SENSE

The Newsletter For The libertarians Of Florida.

Vol. 9 No. 2

1981

Florida Welcomes Randolph

By Bob Mihm

Dick Randolph, Alaska's first Libertarian legislator made a triumphant tour of Florida in the first week of November in his quest for the Governorship of Alaska, following Alicia Clark visit in September.

"We are fighting a battle," stated Randolph, "a battle which we can win if each of us makes an effort to further the libertarian cause." Dick has been elected twice to the Alaskan legislature as a Libertarian and was the initiator of a successful drive to repeal the Alaskan state income tax, along with fellow Libertarian State Legislator Ken Fanning.

Fundraising events were held statewide in Jacksonville, Tampa, Orlando and Ft. Lauderdale. Randolph's visit was the most successful fundraising event the LPF has held statewide said Dottie Swanson, Executive Director of the LPF. "Not only did we raise money for Randolph and local affiliates, but also proved that the LPF can stage professional fundraisers that are most necessary if the party is to become a political force in Florida."

Press coverage for the Randolph visit was good in various parts of the state. In Tampa where there is a renewed effort to reestablish a strong party affiliate, Randolph was seen on two local television news broadcasts and was featured in newspaper articles for the Tampa Tribune. Listeners in Orlando and St. Petersburg area were able to hear Randolph on local radio talk shows.

In Ft. Lauderdale Raul Costales gave a rousing introductory speech to over 55 people for an early morning breakfast on November 5th at Pier 66 Hotel in Ft. Lauderdale. Raul in his introductory remarks stated that "Dick is a winner and the Libertarian Party will be thrust into the limelight if he is elected Governor of Alaska." Raul is the LPF coordinator of the Citizens Choice on Government Revenue Constitutional Amendment and a member of the excomm of the LPF. The amendment if passed will place a severe limit on state and local governments revenue (ie taxes).

Raul who came to this country from Cuba, stated that he had lived in a totalitarian country and that he knew just what it was like to have absolutely no freedom. Raul in his introductory speech went on to say that he did not want his children to be slaves and that the Libertarian Party was the only party that stood for freedom.

In remarks to his Ft. Lauderdale audience, Randolph
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The IRS Privacy Issue

By ROBERT BRAKEMAN

As America has been gradually turned from a generally free country into a viciously socialised state over the past several decades, our ability to think sensibly about important issues has decayed about as rapidly as our currency, our productive capacity, and our honor; of course, they are all decayed for exactly the same reason: Demented people in charge. The crushing inability of most media-indoctrinated folks (meaning almost every one) to think straight is perfectly illustrated by the great, ongoing decades-long controversy over the confidentiality of IRS records.

If one judged by the content of your friendly local propaganda outlet, one would think the real issue in that dispute was weather, the IRS is carefully protecting the data it coerces out of us and carefully refraining from sending it all over to the rest of the government or out into the private sector. That is, if one took CBS's word for things (that's such a shocking thought I had to take a two hour break after creating it to recover my equilibrium), one would assume that the really big issue is the apparent fact that the IRS has from time to time let other people/agencies have our most personal/important records.

First, the matter of confidentiality for the sake of confidentiality. Entirely apart from what anyone may do with the most personal information about you, you are absolutely within your rights to be offended by the mere fact that they have that data. Even if through some means you could be 100% positive that no substantive harm would come to you from someone who suddenly knew all about your life, it would be perfectly appropriate for you to be upset that they knew period. That is the very issue of the privacy issue it represents a concern over keeping things to oneself because one chooses to open one's life only to certain carefully. Giving out personal data is giving out a part of yourself, and when one has been coerced

into doing so a terrible thing has already occurred, even if the release of that information leads to no harassment or persecution or slander or whatever. Those who have been upset over IRS breaches of privacy should reflect on this if it is wrong for some flunky at the VA or the SEC or the SSA or in the private sector to be given the highly-personal data on a tax return, why is it more palatable for that data to be given to an IRS flunky. Your personal life and self are breached when the government gets the information; where it goes after that just changes the identities of the peekers.

Second, apart from the fact that IRSers are people like any-other-people-whose-eyes-you-do-not-want-seeing-your-personal-life, they in fact are, if one had to choose among obnoxious alternatives, the very last people among honorable men and women would choose to like, admire, become friendly with, and talk about personal matters with. For what are these people? They are people who spend all of their time terrorizing people at gun point to support the violently illegitimate socialist state with which we are now cursed. They are people who spend their weekdays doing and (presumably) their nights and weekends (and holidays?) planning how-to-do, a terrible thing to millions of innocent men and women; seizing their hard-earned assets for distribution to people the government believes can not take care of themselves. Irrespective of where the money of taxpayers winds up, a repulsive event has occurred for theft is theft regardless of whom the beneficiaries are, whether they are refugees or the citizens of this country, or for that matter any other country.

In the next issue I shall conclude this article with how the average citizen has his or her rights violated by the very institution that was set up to protect them, namely the government of the *United States of America*.

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dolph spoke of the problems that Libertarian candidates face. "I think Libertarians forget something when they preach Freedom and Liberty; we must advocate personal responsibility. We do not necessarily endorse the behavior that the elimination of victimless crime laws will no longer make illegal. Remember freedom is the prize, responsibility the

price."

After the breakfast Randolph left for the airport to continue his trip around the country to raise money for his race for governor. Donations to Randolph can continue to be made, please send all donations to: "Floridians for Randolph", 210 Park Avenue N. Suite 10, Winter Park, Florida 32789.

CLARK VISITS FLORIDA

Delivering her promise support for local organizations the National LP's first woman national chair, Alicia Clark visited north and central Florida on her first official trip in late September. Alicia originally planned to attend Dr. William Marina's announcement of his try to unseat Commissioner of Education Ralph Turlington, but due to the very persuasive powers of our state Executive Director, Dottie Swanson, Alicia expanded her tour so that she would be able to make one more meeting.



Alicia Clark

Alicia is a native of Mexico where she was a founder, organizer and officer of one of the largest business associations, the Mexican Fashion Institute.

from 1966 through 1969. In 1972 she helped her husband, Ed Clark, found the Free Libertarian party in New York state. Since then Alicia has attended



Libertarian meetings and conventions and played an important role in Ed's campaigns for Governor of California and for President of the United States in 1980.

In 1981 Alicia entered the race for National Chair of the LP and won a close election contest over John Mason on the third ballot of the national convention. In her campaign literature, she pledged to emphasize grass roots organization, public relations and volunteer work as a full-time National Chair.

Alicia's visit while short did receive the warm wishes of many Florida Libertarians. It is hoped that her next trip to Florida will begin in South Florida where most of the Florida Libertarians live.

Ed. Note: The Dade County LP will have its annual elections in January, all registered Libertarians in Dade County are eligible to vote and run for office in the Dade LP.

Viewpoint

The Democrats: A Party Without A Future?

by David Boaz

The first thing to be remembered about the Democratic Party today is that, to paraphrase Mark Twain, reports of its demise are greatly exaggerated.

Political commentators have a tendency to swing wildly from one extreme to another. Early in 1980 many of them said that the Republican Party would be demonstrating its "death wish" if it nominated the "extremist" Ronald Reagan. Reagan is clearly unelectable, they would intone, but the Republican right-wingers would rather go down in flames than compromise and win.

Then came the Reagan "landslide"—a landslide that gathered a bare 51% of the popular vote and only 26% of the eligible voters. The election was a landslide rejection of Jimmy Carter, but it was hardly a landslide for Ronald Reagan.

Now, the same pundits tell us, the Democrats are on the ropes. We may be entering a period of Republican domination. Well, we may be, but

for right now the Democrats still have a majority of the House of Representatives, 46 senators, 27 governors, and about 60% of all the seats in state legislatures. Twice as many people call themselves Democrats as Republicans.

Nevertheless, at the presidential level at least the Democrats do face a bleak picture. Only two Democratic nominees since Truman have received a majority of the popular vote—Johnson in 1964 and Carter in 1976. Carter got 51% in 1976, but the percentages for other recent Democratic nominees have been decidedly anemic—43% in 1968, 39% in 1972, and 41% in 1980.

Added to this low popular vote is the impact of the electoral college and population shifts. Political consultant Horace Busby, a close associate of Lyndon Johnson, argues that the Republicans have nearly achieved a "lock" on the electoral college, that is, that only in extraor-

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Special Report

The Gold Standard an Update By Chip Thiele

Continued from the last issue

We do not live in a static world; all normal economies tend to grow as more goods are brought to the market. More gold too is brought to the market, produced through mining efforts, but this is a small percentage compared to the already existing supply. Thus, the gold supply grows at a normally slower rate than the rest of the economy. This is a desirable effect, for as more goods are brought to the market, competing for a relatively fixed amount of gold currency, the purchasing power of that currency rises; this is reflected in a drop in prices. That is what happened prior to 1900. After several decades the purchasing power of gold currency rose to about 130% of its previous level. The result was a gradual overall decline in prices as the capital of the nation increased. This rise in gold purchasing power was sufficient to make its mining feasible in more remote areas, such as the Klondike area of Alaska. As this new gold reached the market between 1903 and 1913 the purchasing power of gold declined (the memo's comment concerning a two percent "inflation" rate) but I would suggest that they try not to quote history out of context. Compared to today's double

digit "inflation" a two percent rate is not all that bad.

When discussing the doubling of prices from 1916 to mid-1920, the authors have completely ignored the creation of the Federal Reserve Bank in 1913 and the First World War. Could it be that they are ignorant of these events and their effect on the



economy? Wars are always financed through paper money or credit expansion. A central bank, such as the Federal Reserve, simply makes things more convenient for the government in its expansionary desires. Paper money is intrinsically worthless compared to gold; its value is derived only through government fiat. Since greater quantities are printed during wartime, the value of this paper must drop in comparison to other goods. During a war the economy is directed to producing war material which is consumed through the destruction of lives and property, while production of consumer goods is brought to a virtual standstill. Thus, there is a vastly increased money supply in relation to available goods. Is it any wonder that prices doubled during this period?

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Libertarian Activist Network Formed

The *Libertarian Movement* has grown from a handful of dreamers in the late 1960's to a dynamic, growing movement of thousands in the 1980's. Many prominent authors, economists, teachers and others are publicly identified with the libertarian thinking; the Libertarian Party for President in 1980 polled nearly a million votes; and judging from the attacks on it from both left and right, the libertarian political philosophy is being taken quite seriously by many political commentators.

Meanwhile at the grass root level, most of us are not functioning very effectively in defending our



individual rights and promoting the growth of the libertarian ideal. Rules and regulations are constantly being imposed upon us by legislatures, city councils, school boards, bureaucrats, and other authoritarian figures while we stand there in bewilderment, watching our freedom slip away.

One of the primary reasons for our lack of success in rolling back the state is that many of us do not have the foggiest idea how to begin fighting back. There is a serious lack of basic communication among grass root libertarians which forces all of us to start from scratch in our local activities. If we do not know about the tactics, projects, successes and failures of other libertarians across the country, then each of us

has to individually invent his or her own approach to these problems.

In order to improve upon the situation which I have just described, the *LIBERTARIAN ACTIVIST NETWORK* has been formed to increase communication and cooperation among libertarian activist everywhere. To make this network function effectively, we need to know who you are, where you are, and what you are doing. If you belong to an activist group or put out a publication, we want to know about it. If you have an occupation offering a product or service that other libertarians might need, such as a libertarian law practice, anti-tax advisory service, survival food business, etc., we would like to have this information so we can make it available to other libertarians. If you are being victimized by the government, we want to know your situation so that we can offer some help.

Once a substantial network is established, anyone who is in need of this type of information may write or call us and get an immediate reply. If you have a particular project or issue in mind but do not know how to approach it, we can put you in touch with others who have similar interests or experience in that area. Or if you want to find a source for a particular libertarian product or services, L.A.N. may be able to help.

All of this depends on you. We can answer the phone, write letters and collect information, but unless you contact us, we will not be able to establish a fully functioning communication network. Please write us at the *LIBERTARIAN ACTIVIST NETWORK*, PO BOX 25188, Richmond, VA 23260 or call us at 804/358-0294.

Facts on Defense

By Richard Van Treuren

From the levies enacted by the Athenians for maintenance of their fleets, through the medieval homage required for the support of nobles in armor, to taxation in modern nations for standing armies, defense has constituted a significant public cost. Judgements about how to spend and in which areas have determined the fate of societies.

The question "How much defense spending is enough, and how shall we fund this spending," poses the greatest difficulty for libertarians. A decision about the level of our defense expenditures demands consideration of diverse factors and complex trade-offs.

The *Reagan White House* has stressed the need for greater defense spending to offset our "declining military forces." To this end the Reagan Administration has asked Congress for a huge increase in defense spending. The United States is in reality spending less than 25¢, not 70¢, out of each tax dollar on matters military. Twenty-five cents will not provide enough for a planetary force, but it is hundreds of economy-wreaking billions too much for an adequate defense for this country.

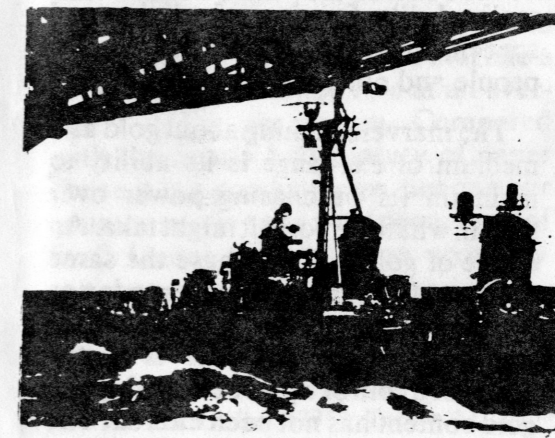
Libertarians are often accused of offering simplistic solutions to defense problems. An example of this is the statement "We have enough nuclear bombs to destroy the world several times over." This, while being true in one sense, is upon closer examination true only if all systems work. but as anyone who has been there will tell you, many of our weapons systems would not make it to the enemy's defenses. More arguments however legitimate are ineffective against "The Russians Are Coming" scare tactics used by many conservatives.

When discussing conscription, more dangerous mistakes are made. If a typical militarist were asked about the draft he would more than likely respond: "Russia has two and a half million soldiers and

10,000 tanks. A draft is needed to built up our military." LPers say: "Conscription is nothing less than



slavery." While this is most certainly true, it might better be said that the Soviet Union has stationed most of its troops on the border with the People's Republic of China for fear of a massive invasion by the Chinese any day. Further, the Soviet Union's greatest threat lies within, from the formerly independent nations — 130 million non-Russians spread across eight time zones — who in recent years have become increasingly resistant to domination by Russians, hence the need for a large standing army. The United States has long borders with Canada and Mexico and is not faced with a hostile population at this time, so does



not need a large standing army.

In this day of lasers, neutron bombs, and ballistic
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GOLD continued from page 5

It is the fallacy of these gentlemen to blame both recessions and the Great Depression on the gold standard; rather, it is their policy of credit expansion followed by credit contraction that is the cause. If, as the memorandum suggests, gold was the cause of these troubles, then one could assume that after the Banking Act of 1933 was passed there should have been a quick recovery from the depression and an end to any future recessions. This simply has not happened, nor will it as long as the government continues its paper policy.

Central governments have a long history of favoring paper or debased money over gold currency, dating back to feudalism. This is due to the power the state enjoys when it can control money supply by fiat rather than by production. When our country was formed in 1789 gold and silver were the currency rather than paper. Economic freedom, the Founding Fathers realized, like freedom of religion and speech, must lie in the hands of the people and not a central authority.

The marvelous thing about gold as a medium of exchange is its ability to maintain its purchasing power over time in whatever form it might take. An ounce of gold will purchase the same amount of goods and services today as it could a century ago. It does not matter whether the ounce is in the shape of a coin or a piece of jewelry; the gold content has not been altered. The paper these words are written on for all intents and purposes is no different

intrinsically from the paper Federal Reserve notes are printed on, yet the purchasing power between them is vastly different. A paper dollar has a given value only by the fiat of the government. To believe that any government has this mystical property is to believe in a new form of alchemy.

It is foolish to assume that the price of gold could be set too high or low. Under a gold standard, gold itself is the medium of exchange; it would be the currency. Any note in circulation would only be a receipt for a specific amount of the metal held by the issuer. Since the two would be in balance (the amount of gold specified on the total number of notes equal to the amount of metal held) there could be no fluctuation in the so-called "price" of gold. Gold's purchasing power would be set not by the government, but in the market place; a far superior indicator of value. Nor would other countries rush to redeem our currency once it is as "good as gold" and deplete our gold stock. In fact, exactly the opposite will happen; people will want to hold our currency for its strength and stability.

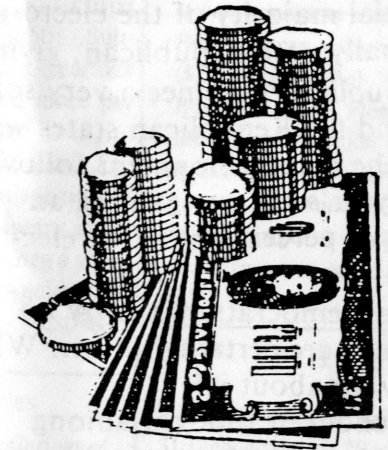
It is the shame of our age that no major currency is based on a gold standard. That people hold gold, art objects, real estate, and other items that have intrinsic value is proof of the widespread distrust in the fiat money system. They hold these things because unlike paper, they will not lose valuable overtime. The sad part is that not everyone is able to take advantage of a paper expansion. (Only a small elite

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group of paper aristocrats (the government, bankers, and large debtors, i.e.: large corporations) who benefit directly from paper money expansion are able to increase their real capital wealth. The rest of us must suffer the travesty of declining purchasing power based on a continuing expansion of paper money. There is a redistribution of wealth, a channeling of real capital from those who produce it to those who have no other claim than their desire for it. Further, I simply cannot fathom what kind of data Mintz and Weintraub used to conclude that there are or can be rapid movements in the supply of gold. Do they envision people suddenly throwing away their gold? Have they discovered a method of turning base metals into gold? It could easily be argued that recycling began with gold; part of the gold in a modern bracelet could have been mined by King Solomon. Perhaps these gentlemen are concerned with the possible end to all gold production in the world. What of it? The actual amount of gold produced in one year is an extremely small percentage of gold already in existence. Thus, any disruption in gold production would have an equally minor effect on the existing supply, a supply that does not diminish. As mentioned previously, it took several decades to bring gold's purchasing power sufficiently high enough to make Alaska's gold fields profitable. It then took at least another decade to correct itself. This is hardly a rapid fluctuation when compared to a paper system limited only by the number of printing presses capable of churning out new notes.

Naturally, there is every reason to suspect a paper standard cannot be managed to control "inflation" and



promote stability. There is every reason to believe that a paper standard itself is the root cause of instability and increasing prices by a policy of fiat currency expansion. The paper apology the memo presents is as firm as the currency they defend. The authors point out an eight year period between 1955 and 1963 as an example of sound paper management; a period that had a currency depreciation rate at an average 1 2/3% per annum. Compared with the nearly half century of paper abuse it is a good attempt, but can our country survive one good decade out of five? Under today's paper economy can our country survive even one more decade?

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Continued in the next issue

dinary circumstances can a Democrat win an electoral majority. He points out that states with a substantial majority of the electoral vote usually vote Republican, giving any Republican nominee a very solid base. And the Republican states will gain in the reapportionment following last year's census, gaining an even larger percentage of the electoral college.

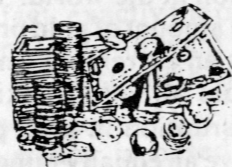
So the Democrats, while by no means out, are certainly down. What will they do about it?

One school of thought among Democrats holds that their loss was due primarily to the Republicans' technical advantages—better fundraising, better organization, grassroots efforts, and so on. They think that if the party can just find "a Democratic Bill Brock," their problems will be over. Organizational proficiency is indeed vital to political success, and no party—Democratic, Libertarian, or any other—can afford to be without it. Nevertheless, campaign skills are not a sufficient answer to the Democrats' troubles.

The election was no real landslide, and one can hardly argue that the voters have affirmed the "enduring principles" that *National Review* has proclaimed for the last 25 years. But it is true that the Republicans hammered at several themes for many years and that this year the voters

were ready to listen. One memo now being circulated among Capitol Hill Democrats traces the Democratic decline to 1964, when Johnson decisively defeated Goldwater. The memo states, "The magnitude of Goldwater's defeat masked the extent to which they (the Republicans) had begun to create a philosophical unity which started their march into the Democratic vacuum."

Conservatives took control of the Republican Party that year. What seemed like the death of political conservatism at the time was in fact its rebirth. Against their better judgements, conservatives nominated Nixon in 1968, and they paid the price for that mistake. But during the 1970s a more activist, vocal group of conservatives entered Congress and the national media. "Supply-side" economics became



the vogue. Conservatives became the party of tax cuts and economic revitalization. In 1980, with "liberal" redistributionist economics thoroughly discredited, voters were ready at least to try the conservative prescription.

To be continued in Vol. 9 No. 3

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Facts About Defense

missiles, a large standing army is as obsolete as the forts and barricades of olden days.

Argument against the draft usually brings up the question of quality vs. quantity and the cost of an all-volunteer army vs. a slave army. Money is only part of the problem of an adequate defense force, as the Navy is finding out. Matching pay to desirable skills, and less duty, would help, but improving the quality of service life is the key to attraction and retention. This requires re-thinking, such as somehow making military functions more meaningful, not just spending more money.

One of the many arguments for the draft is that the draft is supposed to save money and get "sharp people." This in reality is a false argument; there is a high cost involved in training and paying many conscripts in hopes of getting a few useful troops. Progressive military men such as retired Admiral Zumwalt are opposed to the draft. Admiral Zumwalt in an article in the *American Legion Magazine* stated:

COMMON SENSE

Common Sense is the newsletter for the libertarians of Florida and other friends of liberty and is published by the Libertarian Party of Dade County. *Common Sense* is published six times a year at annual subscription rate of Seven Dollars per year. Please send all subscriptions and correspondence to: *Common Sense*, P.O. Box 557253, Miami, Florida 33155.

"Although the draft appears to be cheaper in the short run than an all-volunteer force it is however in reality much more expensive and ineffective than an all-volunteer force would be."

With this in mind, the argument for a slave army does not hold water. Today's military needs sharp minds and dedicated skills; you cannot enslave either.

In the next issue of *Common Sense* I will discuss the ways the D.O.D. has reached its present state of high-budgets and low state of readiness.

COMMON SENSE

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