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February 2006

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PA Libertarian named Citizen of the Year

Russ Diamond, the Libertarian Party's 2004 candidate for both Congress (15th Congressional District) and Pennsylvania House (101st District), was recently named one of the *Philadelphia Inquirer's* three Citizens of the Year.

He and the other honorees — Timothy Potts and Eugene Stilp — received the award for their work with PACleanSweep, through which they "shook democracy to its core in Pennsylvania in 2005," the paper said in a Jan. 1 editorial.

"More than any other citizen-activists, these three orchestrated the grassroots revolt that forced state lawmakers to repeal their sleazy pay raise and toppled a Supreme Court justice. In so doing, they gave hope to those who dream of smarter, cleaner government."

(The December 2005 issue of *LP News* included an account of the state Supreme Court justice who was voted out of office. It was the first time in Pennsylvania history that an appellate court justice was not retained by voters. Newspapers noted that people voted against the judge because of his support for the recent pay increases — and that PACleanSweep was the primary group drawing attention to the pay raises.)

On July 7, legislators voted at 2 a.m. at the very end of their legislative session to increase their own pay by between 16 percent and 54 percent.

They apparently "forgot" that legislators aren't allowed to increase their salary in mid-term. Public pressure led by Diamond and the others at PACleanSweep forced the legislators to repeal the pay increase in November.

"Politicians in Harrisburg had been doing business this way for a long time, without consequences," the *Inquirer* editorial continued. "Nothing seemed to raise voters' ire to job-threatening levels, not a spate of felony convictions for sitting members, not news stories about ghost voting or fancy car leases, not

See **DIAMOND** Page 4

Rex Bell: Elected Libertarian looking at Indiana House seat

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

Four years ago there wasn't an established Libertarian Party affiliate in Wayne County, Indiana, which is near the state's border with Ohio.

But once area Libertarians got organized, they went into action quickly, rapidly gaining distinction as one of the more successful local party affiliates.

A significant part of the credit for this county party's success is due to Rex Bell, the county chair, who currently is vice president of the Hagerstown Plan Commission, a member of the Hagerstown Board of Zoning Appeals, and a member of the New Castle Area Vocational School Advisory Board.

In addition, he is married to Susan Bell — a Libertarian elected as town court judge in Hagerstown in 2003. Voters selected her over a seated Republican who had been judge in Hagerstown for six years.

Rex Bell was appointed to the plan commission three years ago for a two-year term.

"I was reappointed when my term

was up, and unless I do something that makes somebody really mad, I'll probably continue to be appointed as long as I want the job," he said.

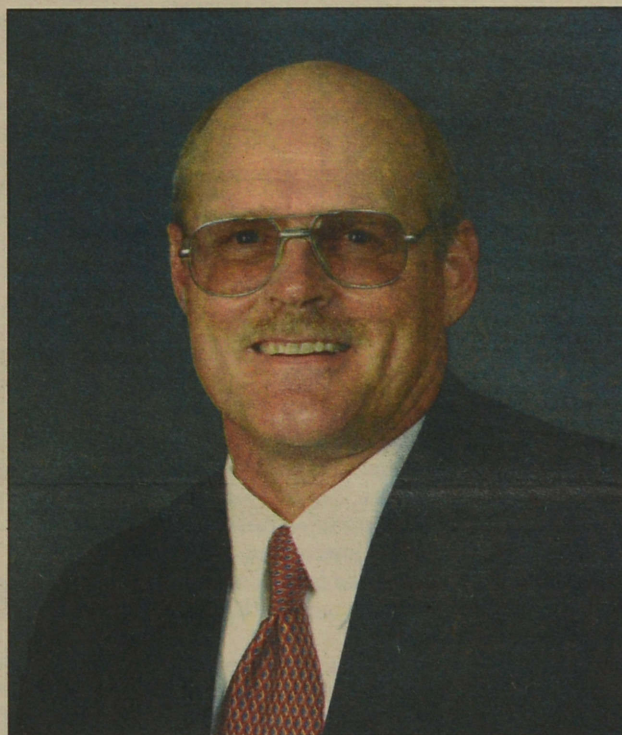
Generally speaking, the plan commission's job is to look at land-use proposals in the town and decide whether the plans are in line with the development master plan.

Bell makes no secret of his dislike for zoning, planning and other encroachments on private property use.

"The plan commission is something I wish didn't exist," he said. "I don't think government should be telling people how they can or can't use their land.

"But the commission does exist and I think we as Libertarians can use that position to the property owners' advantage."

(The word "we" in that last sen-



plish much more on the board than either could independently.)

"Some Libertarians think we shouldn't take part in that kind of thing, taking an appointment to a group we don't think should exist," Bell said. "I figure I can use that position to help protect people's property rights — and we've been pretty successful. For example, we are currently rewriting the county's master plan, and we're doing everything we can to make it more property-owner friendly."

As noted, Bell is also a member of the town's board of zoning appeals. He was appointed to that board soon after his appointment to the

plan commission. In this position, he is able to do potentially even more good for the property owners.

"If somebody wants to do some-

See **Rex Bell** Page 2

Libertarian Leadership School's first semester of online classes has begun

The first season of classes in the Libertarian Leadership School (LLS) kicked off on Jan. 31, with almost 100 students signed up for the 11 available classes.

The idea for the school came after the Libertarian National Committee decided in August of last year that the LP should have a program through which candidates and other party members could receive training.

Each class is scheduled to last for six weeks, and students can expect to invest a significant amount of time in their training, said LP Chief of Staff Shane Cory, who created the school in compliance with the LNC's directions.

By far the most popular of the classes currently being offered is

in campaign management, led by Stephen Gordon of the Alabama LP, with 15 students signed up as of mid-January. Gordon has worked with a number of political campaigns — including the Michael Badnarik for President campaign in 2004, for which he was communications director.

Other high-ranking classes (by number of students) are candidate training, media communications and member recruitment (with nine students each); campus organizing, led by LNC representative Dr. Jim Lark, with eight students; and campaign fundraising and "personal health and appearance," with seven students each.

The current plan is to offer seven semesters in the LLS, and each class can hold up to 25 students, Cory

said — meaning that through the school, at least 2,100 Libertarians could be trained this year in various aspects of running political campaigns, operating a local or state affiliate of the Libertarian Party, or becoming a more effective activist.

While specific plans for future course offerings have not been solidified, likely topics for upcoming classes include fundraising issues, such as formulating a direct mail strategy and managing mailing lists.

Participation in each class costs \$50, most of which goes to the instructors.

However, an endowment has been created so that students who are unable to pay the fee can obtain sponsorships — allowing them to attend the online classes for free or

at a reduced cost.

"We are currently accepting sponsorship requests from full-time students, military personnel, and those with financial hardships," said Sam New, who coordinates special projects at LP headquarters and who is leading a class in candidate recruitment.

"Those wishing to obtain a sponsorship must contact me and complete the proper paperwork," New added.

All classes were designed with one intent: to help Libertarian Party members gain the tools they need to help the party accomplish its mission of changing public policy by getting Libertarians elected to office, Cory said.

For more information on the school, go to www.lp.org/lls.

NEWS BRIEFS

Clinton campaign fundraising scandal

The fundraising committee for Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's 2000 election campaign has been fined \$35,000 by the Federal Election Commission for under-reporting donations. Specifically, the fine is a result of under-reporting more than \$700,000 in campaign donations raised at a Hollywood celebrity concert fundraiser.

The major financial backer of the fundraiser, Peter Paul, had three felony and fraud convictions in the 1970s and 1980s. Shortly after the celebrity fundraiser, the FBI launched an investigation into Paul's claims that he paid nearly \$2 million in expenses for the event, which was far more than the amount reported by Clinton's fundraising committee, according to a report in the *New York Sun*.

Clinton has tried to distance herself from the fundraising scandal, saying she was not involved with the inaccurate reporting.

Marc Elias, a lawyer for Hillary Clinton, said the agreement with the FEC "makes clear that there was no violation of federal election law by the Hillary Rodham Clinton for Senate Committee in connection with the August 13, 2000 event."

But the conciliation agreement states the FEC conducted an investigation and found "probable cause to believe New York Senate 2000 and Andrew Grossman, in his official capacity as treasurer," violated campaign election law.

Paul himself disputes Clinton's claims that she was not involved in the inaccurate reporting, saying, "For Hillary to say she had nothing to do with this ... is disingenuous. This [was] the biggest contribution to her campaign."

Paul claimed letters and legal papers he sent to Clinton's attorney included canceled checks showing Paul's expenses for the fundraising concert, yet the campaign continued to reaffirm the reports that omitted those expenses.

"Not only did they ignore them, they hid them," Paul claimed.

Bush defends domestic spying practice

In late December, President George W. Bush defended his recently uncovered domestic spying program, claiming it was not an abuse of Americans' civil liberties. Rather, it was "an effective tool in disrupting terrorists," he said, according to an Associated Press report.

The program, which Bush instigated, involved intercepting telephone calls and e-mail originating with and received by U.S. residents. White House officials said the spying targeted only those with known ties to al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations.

Accused in a press conference of assuming powers that are outside his purview as president, Bush rejected such claims, saying that "unchecked power" basically is ascribing some kind of dictatorial position to the president, which I strongly reject."

Given that Bush has made several public comments about wishing this was a dictatorship, because it would be easier to rule, it's hard to believe he "strongly rejects" the idea that the president may be taking dictatorial powers.

Since the spying program came to light, Bush has faced criticism from Congress, with Sen. Carl Levin (D-Michigan) asking where in the Constitution Bush found "the authority to tap the wires and the phones of American citizens without any court oversight."

DeLay won't seek to regain House position

After discussions with senior Republican Party leaders, Rep. Tom DeLay has decided not to seek his previously held position as House majority leader, just weeks after declaring he hoped soon to return to that position in the House.

DeLay is facing money-laundering charges stemming from his fundraising efforts on behalf of Republican candidates for the Texas House of Representatives. Following his indictment on Dec. 5, DeLay was forced to step down as House majority leader. He was temporarily replaced by Rep. Roy Blunt of Missouri.

An election for DeLay's replacement will take place the week of Jan. 30. Blunt is seeking the post. Other candidates that appear likely to run for the position (as *LP News* goes to press) include House Education and Workforce Committee Chairman John A. Boehner (R-Ohio), Rep. Mike Pence (R-Indiana), and House Appropriations Committee Chairman Jerry Lewis (R-California).

Republican leaders including representatives Dennis Hastert and David Dreier pressured DeLay not to seek re-election to the post.

In addition to his alleged involvement in the Texas money laundering scandal, DeLay has come under fire concerning his office's apparent links to Republican lobbyist Jack Abramoff, who recently pleaded guilty to fraud and tax evasion.

Many believe the deciding factor in DeLay's decision was Abramoff's plea agreement with prosecutors. Political strategist Rich Galen commented, "DeLay is the first political casualty of the Abramoff affair. I don't think there's any question about that."

Rex Bell for Indiana House

Continued from Page 1

thing with their land that is in violation of Hagerstown's master plan, they have to come to the board of zoning appeals for a variance that will allow them to do what they want," he said.

That doesn't mean that Bell simply signs off on every plan that violates the master plan.

He is, after all, only one member of a board.

However, he points out, "As long as there is a Libertarian on that board, the property owners certainly have a better chance of doing what they want with their property than they would if the board was populated entirely with Republicans and Democrats."

Now that Bell and others have shown residents of Hagerstown — and, more broadly, Wayne County — that Libertarians can be trusted with public office, he is planning to run for higher office: He recently announced he is going to seek the LP's nomination for the state House of Representatives for District 54, which includes portions of three counties.

Indiana Libertarians will select their candidates for state offices at the state convention, scheduled for April 28-30 in Indianapolis.

This is the first time Bell has run for state office, although he has run

twice for county office. In 2002 he ran for Wayne County Council, earning 30 percent of the vote, and he drew 25 percent as the LP's 2004 candidate for Wayne County Commissioner.

"Wayne County has been a Re-

**'THE CURRENT
administration's
answer to property
tax relief
is to add more taxes
at the local level.'**

— REX BELL

publican County for many years, and the Libertarian Party has replaced the Democrats as the Republican Party's primary opposition," Bell said. "There have been more Libertarians on the ballot for the last two elections than there were Democrats. And we just organized the county LP in 2002."

Bell doesn't have to give up his current positions in town government in order to run for state office: "There are members of the plan commission right now who also

serve on the town council, so that's not a problem," he said. "Of course, if I'm elected, I'll have to see whether I can do both."

Bell said his primary mission in running for state House is "to give people that want lower taxes and smaller government a chance to vote for lower taxes and smaller government. The current administration's answer to property tax relief is to add more taxes at the local level."

Rather than shifting the tax burden around, leading to ever-higher taxes of some kind, the state needs to "address the real problem, which is overspending," he said.

"As more and more people get fed up with the tax-and-spend policies of the two major parties, our chances keep getting better. And in the three-way race that I hope to be in, 34 percent of the vote could send me to Indianapolis."

"I'm running to give people who want a limited government a chance to vote for it. Not just the Libertarians that want limited government, but the Republicans and Independents and, yes, even the Democrats out there that want limited government."

"I know there are a lot of those people out there. I've seen them and I've talked to them. They just haven't had a way to vote for it."

"I'm hoping to change that."

Free State Project 'First 1000' launched

The Free State Project in January announced the launch of The First 1000 program, a program designed to speed the migration of liberty lovers to the state of New Hampshire.

As most Libertarians know, the Free State Project — begun in 2001 as the brainchild of Dr. Jason Sorens — is committed to getting 20,000 individuals move to New Hampshire, where they will work to bring about a society in which government's maximum role is protecting life, liberty and property.

There are almost 7,000 signers to that commitment so far. When the number hits 20,000, the signers have agreed to move to New Hampshire. More than 100 have already

made the move.

Now, FSP leaders are encouraging project participants to move to the state sooner than they've already agreed to.

"We want to create a beacon for liberty in New Hampshire," said Varin Swearingen, FSP vice president and director.

"Those of us who have already moved have seen what a difference just a few people can make. We want to see for ourselves, and show the rest of the world, what 1,000 can do."

Long-time FSP supporter Ian Bernard, host of the radio show "Free Talk Live," is promoting the challenge, saying he plans to move to New Hampshire by the end of 2008,

and challenging 999 other freedom-oriented individuals to commit to a move to the Free State by the end of 2008.

The First 1000 challenge terminates at the end of 2006.

While the Free State Project has no official agenda other than encouraging libertarian activists to move to New Hampshire, participants are expected to work toward reducing government in the areas they care most about.

Some examples of issues being championed by individual activists include fighting the exploitation of eminent domain by private interests, decriminalizing marijuana possession, and increasing educational freedom.

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The Mission Statement of the Libertarian Party: "To move public policy in a libertarian direction by building a political party that elects Libertarians to public office."

Changes to LP Bylaws proposed

[Editor's note: This is the fifth in a series of articles detailing the activities of the national LP's 2006 Bylaws Committee. The committee is considering alterations to the LP bylaws — proposed changes that will be voted on at the 2006 national LP convention in Portland, Ore. Previous proposals were printed in the September 2005-January 2006 issues of LP News.]

To recap, the 2006 Bylaws Committee has decided to use sentiment polling to rank and filter all proposals for change that come before the committee. Each member indicates his sentiments for each proposal.

By Dan Karlan

The possible sentiments are strongly opposed, somewhat opposed, neutral, somewhat in favor or strongly in favor. By assigning a numerical value from 1 to 5 for these sentiments, we are able to gauge the degree to which the proposal is supported.

We actively welcome proposals from LP members. While there are 10 people on this committee, it is possible that we will not see every advantage or pitfall the various proposals may present.

■ Proposal 16: Region formation to include only membership in affiliates

The 2004 convention exposed an ambiguity in the Bylaws that we propose to rectify.

When considering whether or not an affiliate or group of affiliates meets the 10 percent threshold specified in the Bylaws for region formation, it has been assumed that the numerator in that fraction is national membership within affiliated parties.

(Thus, as an extreme, if all the af-

filiates grouped into a single region-of-the-whole, this region would be entitled to 10 regional representatives and 10 regional alternates.)

However, the Bylaws are not as clear as we would like on this point, and admit of the alternate possibility that the denominator is instead all national members worldwide, including those outside affiliates (Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.). With this interpretation, a region-of-the-whole would be entitled to only nine regional representatives and alternates.)

This proposal would make the calculation completely unambiguous, specifying the denominator as only the national membership within affiliates.

■ Proposal 17: Region formation must conclude one month before convention

Referring to the previous proposal, formation of LNC regions is specified by the Bylaws to begin 90 days before the beginning of the corresponding convention and to conclude during the convention itself.

This has usually been handled in a rush of caucuses during the convention itself, and the participation of affiliates with no delegates present is sometimes handled by emergency telephone calls to the chairs of such affiliates.

This proposal would require, rather than just encourage, formation of the regions prior to the convention, leaving only selection of the regional representative(s) and alternate(s) at the convention itself. It is even possible that the selection of representatives and alternates could be handled before the convention, depending on the geography of the region.

The result should be improved conduct of business at the convention. The information on which the

region formation is based is specified in the Bylaws to be as of the delegate allocation deadline (6 months prior to the start of the Convention), so there is plenty of time for the affiliates to discuss this among themselves and come to suitable arrangements.

■ Proposal 18: Drop all weakest finishers whose total is less than margin

In many races for LP offices and nomination, there are a few "also-rans" who earn a miniscule percentage of the total vote.

Without settling on a specific figure for this margin, the proposal would mandate that any candidate with less than this percentage would be automatically removed from subsequent ballots, even though another provision specifies that the "weakest" finisher is dropped after each ballot (see the proposal to eliminate the difference between first and second ballot regarding this whittling process).

This proposal complements the existing process, "cleaning up" the subsequent ballot by removing more than just the weakest finisher — but both processes can work: If the "weakest" finisher polls more than this margin, the existing rule would mandate dropping that candidate.

■ Proposal 19: Require roll call votes in LNC meetings

This proposal would mandate roll call votes for all except the most trivial procedural decisions (adjournment, recess, approval of agenda, approval of minutes, division of a question, etc.), staff issues, and populating of convention committees, prohibiting not only ballot (paper, unsigned) votes but show-of-hands and general voice votes.

The list of excluded decisions would be explicit, allowing no ambiguity in the determination of which questions would require roll call votes. Currently, the LNC's governing rules stipulate that the request of three members is enough to require a roll call vote.

■ Proposal 20: Require LNC keep books by GAAP

The LNC's own set of governing rules, the Policy Manual, already mandates that all financial records of the LP are to be maintained "consistent with GAAP" (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) unless applicable law conflicts with this stipulation. This proposal would take the matter out of the capacity of the LNC to alter, mandating GAAP in the Bylaws instead.

(In coming months, we'll present other proposals. To review the proposals that have already been presented in LP News, and to comment, go to: lp.org/bylaws/index.php.)

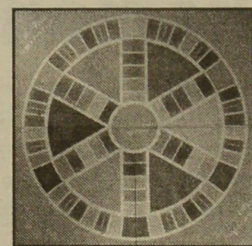
■ About the author: LNC member Dan Karlan is secretary of the 2006 Bylaws Committee.

POLITICS 2006

Torture, Mao and confidence in the IRS

■ A court in Milan, Italy, recently issued a European arrest warrant for 22 CIA agents suspected of kidnapping Egyptian imam Hassan Mustafa Osama Nasr in Milan and taking him to Egypt for interrogation and torture, according to a late December report by Reuters. The warrant is valid throughout the 25-nation EU. The Italian Justice Ministry was asked to seek the extradition of the suspects from the United States, but the request for extradition was not immediately made to U.S. officials. Nasr has been accused of having ties to al Qaeda, and there is also an EU warrant out for his arrest.

■ "What metal did Montana Libertarian Stan Jones consume to ward off the ill effects of Y2K, permanently tinting his skin a bluish color?" asks a question in the recently released Trivial Pursuit DVD Pop Culture 2 board game. The answer: silver. More specifically, he ingested a solution of colloidal silver. In 2004 Jones was the Montana LP's gubernatorial candidate — but the game doesn't say anything about that.

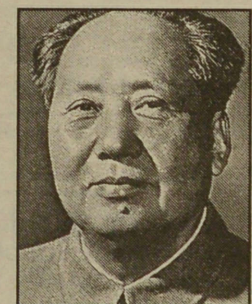


■ In an editorial published in early January, the *Houston Chronicle* endorsed easier ballot-status laws. The author said Texas' restrictive ballot-access laws render the ballot inaccessible to smaller political parties, weakening "the creativity and inclusivity of Texas politics." The opinion piece also cited Richard Winger of *Ballot Access News*.

■ The IRS said in early January that it has told a contractor to stop sending it information about taxpayers' political party affiliation in databases used to track down delinquent payers. The IRS is prohibited from using political party affiliation when enforcing tax laws. The president of the National Treasury Employees Union told the IRS in December that the inclusion of the information "raises an appearance of possible impropriety that could erode taxpayer confidence in the independence of our voluntary compliance system." Wait a second: We have a "voluntary compliance system"? And we have confidence in the IRS?

■ David Addington, chief-of-staff to Vice President Dick Cheney, recently said that "Congress may no more regulate the president's ability to detain and interrogate enemy combatants than it may regulate his ability to direct troop movements on the battlefield." He did not, however, define the terms "detain," "interrogate," and "enemy combatants." It's probably safe to assume that the Bush administration believes the president can do pretty much as he damn well pleases — and nobody can do anything about it.

■ A student at the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth recently claimed to have been visited by Homeland Security agents after requesting Chairman Mao Zedong's "Little Red Book" via inter-library loan at his university library. Only after the story was picked up by a local newspaper (then a host of Internet sites, and then the international media) did the 22-year-old admit he made the whole thing up.



■ Starting this year, Britain will reportedly become the first country in the world to record the movements of every vehicle on the road. A new surveillance system using existing cameras will automatically read license plates on all primary roads, in many towns, at ports and at gas stations and certain other businesses. The plan is to keep these records for at least two years, and there's a plan in the works to increase that to five years. A central database in London will store the details of an estimated 35 million plate reads per day — including time, date and precise location, thanks to GPS technology.

■ Dr. Hwang Woo-suk, the South Korean scientist who claimed in early 2004 that he and his team had managed to clone 30 human embryos, from which they extracted stem cells, apologized to his nation on Jan. 12 after his research was discovered to be fake. The team also claimed to have successfully created stem cell lines from the skin cells of 11 people. Hwang took responsibility for the faked data — but he insists that he really does have the ability to clone embryos from which "patient-specific" stem cells can be harvested. The question many are asking now: What about the \$29 million in government funding Hwang received for his research? Hwang and his co-researchers may be charged with crimes including fraud and embezzlement.

Report on frozen tax refunds

The Taxpayer Advocate Service, an agency the Internal Revenue Service established to handle taxpayer complaints, recently issued a report stating that the IRS had improperly frozen thousands of tax refunds.

The majority of the refunds were intended for the working poor, according to Nina E. Olson, head of the Taxpayer Advocate Service.

The report criticizes the IRS for freezing taxpayer refunds and having the returns deemed fraudulent.

The agency examined a sample of such cases brought to its attention last year and found 80 percent of the "fraudulent" cases studies had the IRS paying full or partial refunds, the *Los Angeles Times* reported.

After the IRS freezes a refund, the affected taxpayer often experiences a lengthy delay. In many instances, the affected taxpayers do

not know that their refunds have been frozen.

The Taxpayer Advocate Service's report noted the lack of notification by the IRS's Criminal Investigation (CI) division when they have frozen taxpayer refunds, stating, "Even in cases where CI has made 'conclusive' determinations of fraud and characterized the taxpayers as 'criminals,' it has not provided the affected taxpayers with any notice or opportunity to present documentation to rebut CI's suspicion before a final 'determination' is made."

The report raised some serious concerns among a few congressmen. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa) commented on the findings of the report, saying, "Refunds have been a source of abuse recently, but we need to make sure taxpayers have proper due process when the IRS decides to freeze a refund."

Canadian judge rules Steve Kubby cannot remain in country

Canadian Border Services on Dec. 9 denied Steve and Michele Kubby's request for legal sanctuary, ordering them to leave the country by Jan. 12.

Steve Kubby, the Libertarian Party's candidate for governor of California in 1998, has become one of the world's best-known medical marijuana activists.

In 1996, he was one of the authors of California's Prop. 215, the act through which California voters

approved "compassionate use" of marijuana.

Kubby went to Canada to avoid jail after he was convicted in 2000 of possession of mescaline and psilocybin. The drugs were reportedly discovered in his home by Placer County, Calif., law enforcement responding to an anonymous tip. 265 marijuana plants were also seized in the raid.

He was allowed to leave the country before his incarceration,

with the understanding that he would return to Placer County for his surrender date.

Kubby, who has a rare form of cancer, has a prescription for marijuana as a treatment for his illness. Without the medication — which would be halted if he is put in prison — his life would be in jeopardy, the Kubbys say.

Thus, if he is forced to return to the United States, it will be tantamount to receiving a death sen-

tence.

The Kubbys appealed the expulsion before Canadian Federal Justice Yvon Pinard in Vancouver, asking for a stay of deportation. The judge had not ruled on the motion when the Jan. 12 deadline arrived, leaving Michele Kubby hopeful.

"If the judge takes a month, as he has suggested he might, then that's effectively a temporary stay, which is what we were seeking," she said in a press release during the in-

terim. "We will be using this time to appeal to both the Canadian people and the Canadian Supreme Court, if necessary."

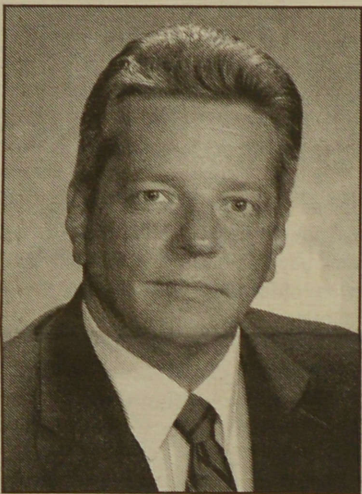
The Canadian government could not remove Kubby until the court ruled.

On Jan. 20, Pinard ruled that Canadian immigration forces could proceed with the deportation. As of *LP News* press time, immigration officials had not issued a new removal date for the Kubby family.

Diamond pressured to run for office again in 2006

Continued from Page 1

endless stalemate on major issues. In 2004, for example, 193 House members ran for reelection; only two lost. About half had no opposition."



■ Russ Diamond

Not this time, though. Thanks to people who want to see true accountability in government, the Pennsylvania legislature didn't get away with their chicanery.

Since the pay increases were repealed, PACleanSweep has been putting pressure on legislators to return the money they had already received because of the increase.

Diamond has sent invoices to each of them, asking for repayment of the money they received through the illegal pay hike — and he's asking for proof that the money has been returned.

Newspapers across the state have begun reporting which of their local legislators are returning the money — and they point at those who haven't, saying they're liable to lose their jobs next time they're up for re-election.

And that's not an empty threat: Diamond has already recruited more

than 100 people to run against incumbents in the statehouse in 2007, and in so doing has drawn an outpouring of public support for his own potential candidacy.

A reporter for the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* noted in a Jan. 19 story about a Diamond-led public meeting that "Russ Diamond has the kind of high-octane personality that earns salesmen houses in the Hamptons. But the 42-year-old founder of Pennsylvania Clean Sweep doesn't want to get rich. He wants only to replace the entire Pennsylvania Legislature, incumbent by incumbent."

The question now is whether Diamond will run for office again.

The headline of an Associated Press story on Jan. 6 about Diamond: "Some hope pay raise critic will run for office — any office."

"Diamond's political star has soared in his role as the head of a group seeking to oust incumbent

legislators amid seething voter anger over the handling of last year's legislative pay raises," the report continued.

"Now, he's authorized a Draft Russ Diamond political committee, even though he insists he has no immediate plans to run for [office] in 2006."

The "Draft Russ Diamond" com-

mittee has begun raising money, hoping to talk him into running for office. What they haven't specified is what party they want him to run under, or even what office they want him to seek.

And what if he chooses not to run?

The PAC has promised to donate the money to charity.

Missouri Libertarian elected chairman of city committee

Mike Ferguson, a member of the Missouri LP, was appointed in mid-2004 to a position on the Grandview, Mo., Transportation Committee. In January, the other five members voted unanimously to make Ferguson chairman of the committee.

"While this is very low-level government and politics, I think this confirms what I've been saying: If we get involved in government, at any level, with the intent of actually making things better for our respective communities, we will put ourselves in a position to gain respect and influence," Ferguson said. "If we want to make government better by making it smaller, then we have to be involved in a positive way."

In 2004 Ferguson ran for lieutenant governor of Missouri on the Libertarian Party ticket. The city alderman who was most supportive of his appointment to the committee said part of his reason for supporting Ferguson was that he liked what he saw in that campaign.

"Being on this committee puts me in a better position to win a seat on Grandview's board of aldermen in the future because of the experience I am gaining in city government," Ferguson said. "This is not a powerful position in city government, but I am actually voting on things that have an effect on my community. To me, that's being more effective than ranting about conspiracy theories or wasting time at protest rallies."

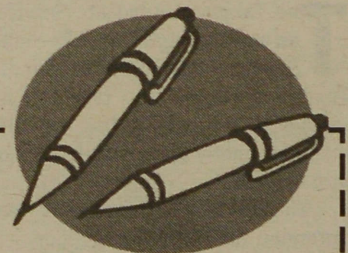
In addition to his position on the transportation committee, Ferguson serves on the advisory boards of three small colleges, where he helps

evaluate proposed changes in business curriculum. He is a frequent speaker at the schools.

Ferguson also works closely with nonprofit groups in the Kansas City area that help prepare people for the workforce, helping to keep them off of public assistance.

His first political activity was as an appointee to the Missouri State Plan Committee by then-Missouri Secretary of State Matt Blunt in 2003.

In that position he worked with representatives of political parties, special-interest groups and governmental organizations to develop the state's plan for improving the election process. The committee was created in response to the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002.



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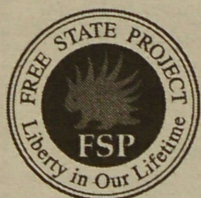
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ROBERT RINGER: "ACTION! HOW YOU CAN MAKE LIBERTY HAPPEN! AUDIENCE Q&A" At the conclusion of his "Action!" talk, Ringer held a freewheeling Q&A session with the audience that many said was just as interesting as the speech. (Worth getting just for Ringer's story about his strange visit to a wildly enthusiastic fan's underground house near Las Vegas!) CD-518

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TALKING POINTS

Vouchers, more smoking bans, and Bush spying on Americans

■ Spying

Accused of acting above the law, President Bush forcefully defended a domestic spying program yesterday as an effective tool in disrupting terrorists and insisted it was not an abuse of Americans' civil liberties.

Bush said it was "a shameful act" for someone to have leaked details to the media. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said it was "probably the most classified program that exists in the United States government" — involving electronic intercepts of telephone calls and e-mails in the United States of people with known ties to al Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

At a news conference, Bush bristled at the suggestion he was

assuming unlimited powers.

"To say 'unchecked power' basically is ascribing some kind of dictatorial position to the president, which I strongly reject," he said angrily in a finger-pointing answer. "I am doing what you expect me to do, and at the same time, safeguarding the civil liberties of the country."

Despite Bush's defense, there was a growing storm of criticism from Congress and calls for investigations, from Democrats and Republicans alike.

"Where does he find in the Constitution the authority to tap the wires and the phones of American citizens without any court oversight?" asked Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich.

Bush said the electronic-eavesdropping program, conducted by the National Security Agency, lets the government move faster than the standard practice of seeking a court-authorized warrant under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

—The Associated Press
December 20, 2005

■ Defrauding Indians

It turns out, Abramoff got a lot of money from the Indian gaming people and then he defrauded them. He defrauded Indian tribes and took their money. I just hope this one incident doesn't poison the normally good trust that existed between the white man and the Indian."

—JAY LENO
The Tonight Show
January 5, 2006

■ Assassination

Cuba's secret service was behind the assassination of President Kennedy, according to a German filmmaker who claims to have eyewitness evidence solving one of the greatest mysteries of the 20th Century.

Wolfgang Huismann, director of a documentary to be screened on German public television tonight, said he has witnesses saying Lee Harvey Oswald was acting on behalf of G2, Cuban President Fidel Castro's foreign intelligence service.

Mr. Castro, said Mr. Huismann, had found out that Mr. Kennedy wanted to have him assassinated and decided to pre-empt him. Cuba's involvement was covered up by Mr. Kennedy's successor, President Lyndon B. Johnson, because that revelation could have led to war, according to Mr. Huismann's documentary.

"We found direct witnesses, former officers of the Cuban state security, who knew about the contacts with Lee Harvey Oswald," Mr. Huismann said.

mann said.

Mr. Huismann said Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Castro were locked in a "kind of duel to the death" after the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961. ...

"[Mr. Castro] bested us," says retired CIA officer Sam Hephern at the end of Mr. Huismann's film. "He came out on top. And we lost."

—DAVID CROSSLAND
The Washington Times
January 6, 2006

■ School vouchers

The Florida Supreme Court yesterday struck down a statewide education voucher system that uses taxpayer money to fund children attending private schools, energizing the national debate once more.

The ruling will have no direct impact on programs nationwide, but proponents and opponents acknowledged that states will probably look closely at their systems to ensure they are in sync with state laws.

In a 5 to 2 ruling, the court said that Florida Opportunity Scholarship Program — the nation's first statewide program, serving about 700 kids — is illegal under Florida's constitution because it sets up an "alternative system" not accountable to the state.

"The diversion of money not only reduces public funds for a public education but also uses public funds to provide an alternative education in private schools that are not subject to the 'uniformity' requirements for public schools," the ruling stated.

In a 2002 landmark case, the U.S. Supreme Court endorsed Cleveland's voucher system, rejecting the argument that the program violated the First Amendment's requirement of the separation of church and state.

Florida voucher opponents had also argued that the program illegally gave public money for parochial education, but the state Supreme Court did not address that issue.

Voucher proponents said they will examine options for continuing the program, such as amending Florida's constitution or appealing to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Clark Neily, a lawyer at the Institute for Justice, which represented voucher proponents in the suit, predicted the ruling will have limited impact.

"It's embarrassingly shallow," he said. "This is just one battle in a

bigger war. . . . Every parent should be able to choose where their kids go to school, regardless of the money they have. We will continue to fight for that principle."

—LOIS ROMANO
The Washington Post
January 6, 2006

■ Global warming

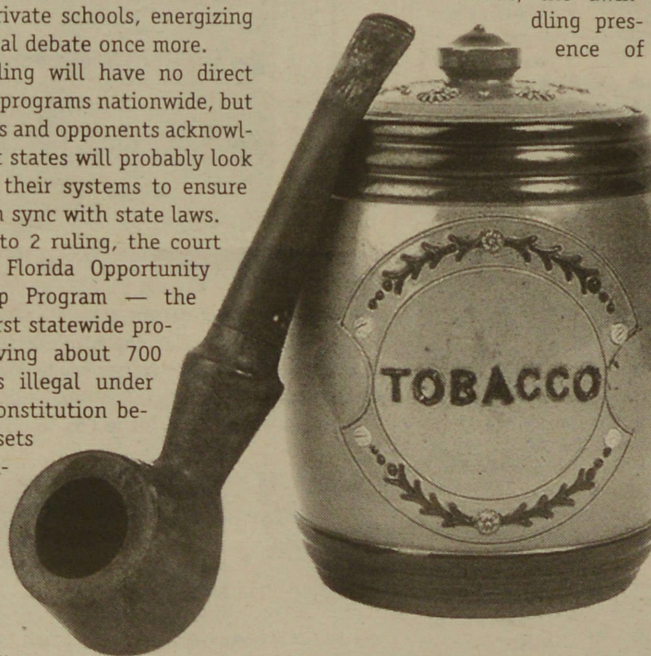
New measurements of tiny particles in Earth's atmosphere contain a sobering message: All those hard-won efforts to cut air pollution may unwittingly accelerate global warming.

The result: The planet is likely to warm more and faster than current projections suggest, according to a team of British and American scientists.

The group has produced the most precise estimates yet of how tiny particles, known as aerosols, could affect the world's climate.

Aerosols, which include pollutants, have a cooling effect on the atmosphere, and the team's work suggests that the cooling effect is strong . . .

Thus, the dwindling presence of



aerosols means that global average temperatures could rise faster than previously estimated and reach toward the high end of projections for the end of the century.

Those estimates currently range from 2.7 to 7.9 degrees F., depending on how emissions of greenhouse gases and other factors play out in coming years.

The results, published in the current edition of *Nature*, imply "future atmospheric warming greater than is presently predicted, as aerosol emissions continue to decline," suggests the team.

Aerosols occur naturally as dust blown from deserts, wind-whipped sea salt, and emissions from volcanoes. They also come from burning fossil fuels. But scientists have had a tough time discerning aerosols' precise role in affecting climate.

This latest research, showing aerosols' large cooling effect and a narrow range of uncertainty, represents "a shot across the bow. The paper will be controversial."

—PETER N. SPOTTS
The Christian Science Monitor
December 27, 2005

■ Rethinking Bush

How fast political stars fall.

A year ago George W. Bush towered over the U.S. political scene, the clear victor of a hard-fought presidential election who had carried his party to increased majorities in both houses of Congress. Twelve months later, he is widely branded a lame-duck president, reduced from grand strategy to crisis management abroad and unable to pass big domestic reforms or set the political agenda at home.

In retrospect, of course, the President Bush of January 2005 was not as invincible as he appeared then, and the President Bush of January 2006 is not as helpless as he looks now. It is still possible for him to bounce back.

With three years of his second term to go, events could simply turn in his favour — above all in Iraq, the defining issue of his presidency.

—EDITORIAL STAFF
Financial Times
January 4, 2006

■ 'Chicken Gitmo'

The former chef of the White House has written a tell-all book. For example, he says that Vice President Dick Cheney's favorite dish is a dish called Chicken Gitmo. It's chicken bound and gagged on a bed of rice.

—DAVID LETTERMAN
The Late Show
January 5, 2006

■ D.C. smoking ban

The D.C. Council gave final approval yesterday to a broad ban on smoking in bars, restaurants and other public places, voting 11-to-1 to add the nation's capital to a growing list of smoke-free cities and states.

Although Mayor Anthony A. Williams continued to voice concerns about the measure's effect on small businesses and the city's hospitality industry, overwhelming support on the council suggested that the ban's proponents have enough votes to override a mayoral veto.

The District's smoking ban, modeled closely on New York City's, would apply immediately to all restaurant dining rooms and would be extended to bars, nightclubs, taverns and the bar areas of restaurants in January 2007.

Williams has 10 days to decide whether to veto the bill. He said yesterday that he is considering a veto, despite the likelihood that the council would override it.

"You're talking about a lot of people's livelihoods, and I don't think we should take that for granted," he said.

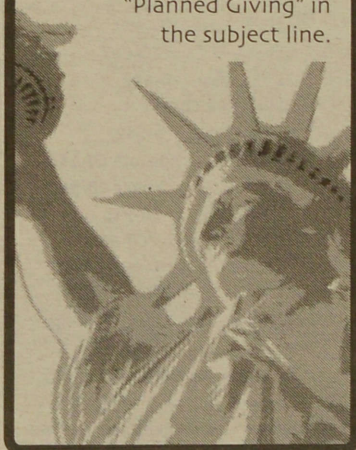
Bans are in place in at least 10 states.

The District bill would include exemptions for outdoor areas, hotel rooms, retail tobacco outlets and cigar bars. The measure also would provide an economic-hardship waiver for businesses that demonstrate a "significant negative impact."

**"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.



Council member Carol Schwartz (R-At Large) cast the dissenting vote. Council member Sharon Ambrose (D-Ward 6) was absent.

Schwartz said the issue was personal choice and freedom.

"Don't make me out that I like smoking, because I don't," said Schwartz, an ex-smoker.

"Bar and restaurant workers have a choice of where to work, and patrons have a choice of where to patronize."

—ERIC M. WEISS

The Washington Post
January 5, 2006

■ Pension reform

The [New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority] leadership deserves the public's support for insisting that pension reform be part of a settlement with the transit workers. The case for redesigning retirement benefits is based on two basic points:

■ Generous retirement benefits are no longer required to attract public-sector workers because most have higher wages than their private-sector counterparts.

■ Money could be better used to contain fare and tax increases or improve services.

For decades the popular image of government employment included job security, wages that lag those of the private sector and relatively generous retirement benefits.

But conditions have changed. Most local public employees now receive wages higher than those paid for similar work in the private sector. The hourly earnings of state and local government employees exceed those of private-sector employees in the New York region by an average of 15 percent — \$28.26 to \$24.62.

Blue-collar workers in the region are paid 30 percent more in the public sector than in the private sector. This pattern holds for the majority of jobs at the MTA.

Generous pay and retirement benefits are no longer necessary to secure a qualified workforce. In the case of MTA car cleaners, for example, the MTA hires about 200 people per year; more than 28,000 individuals passed the exam — yielding about 140 qualified candidates for each opening.

And the generous retirement benefits are expensive.

Health insurance premiums have grown at double-digit rates in recent years, and the MTA's pension fund contributions are projected to grow from \$480 million in 2004 to \$770 million in 2008.

The state Constitution locks in the pension benefits of current workers and permits changes only for newly hired workers, and they should be the focus of attention. The savings from modernized pension benefits would come slowly as new workers are hired.

The savings in the next few years may be tens of millions, but in the longer run, recurring savings can be in the hundreds of millions annually.

The MTA leadership is right to fight for that change, and New York-

ers who are concerned about future fare increases should support them.

—CHARLES BRECHER

New York Daily News

December 22, 2005

■ Higher education

"[L]awmakers are on the verge of passing legislation they say will eventually kill the [interest rate] subsidy [on student loans] that refused to die," the *Washington Post* reports.

"Twelve years ago, Congress passed a law meant to phase out an obscure interest rate subsidy for

providers of student loans. But the lenders exploited legal loopholes and falling rates to enlarge their take from the federal government — aided recently, critics charge, by an acquiescent Bush administration."

In the Cato Policy Analysis "Making College More Expensive: The Unintended Consequences of Federal Tuition Aid," professor Gary Wolfram argues that instead of making college more affordable, federal aid programs are actually driving up the cost of tuition.

Wolfram shows that financial aid programs, including the Federal

Work Study Program and the Perkins Loan Program, are increasing the cost of tuition. Additional federal support increases the demand for college tuition; this is followed by even more federal support, which again boosts the demand for college aid.

The author urges Congress to "consider a phase-out of federal assistance to higher education over a 12-year time frame" instead of expanding the government's present system.

—GREG GARNER, EDITOR

Cato Daily Dispatch

December 30, 2005

■ Strange medicine

Christopher Nielsen had a seizure while driving and drove his car off the road into a landscaping company.

When officers from the Boulder County Sheriff's Office and Longmont, Colo., police arrived, they found Nielsen still disoriented. When they asked his name, they could barely hear his response. He did not respond to their commands. So they Tased him. Six times.

—CHARLES OLIVER

Reason Online

January 9, 2006

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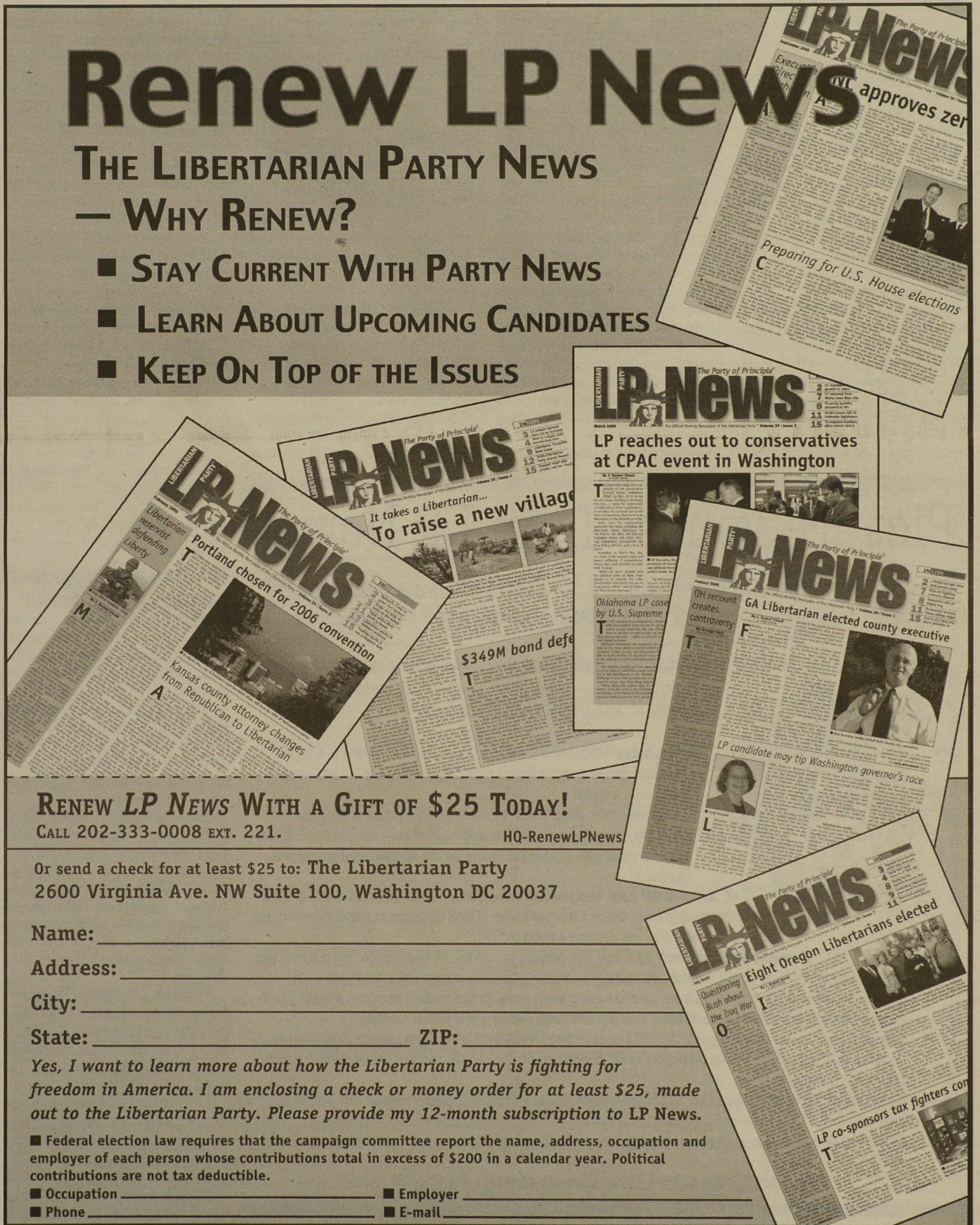
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AFFILIATE NEWS

Running for office and trying to keep politicians honest

■ CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara LP files suit naming parks board

Early last year, a California judge ordered the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District (IVRPD) to pay more than \$40,000 in fines stemming from a lawsuit filed by the Santa Barbara Libertarian Party in November 2001. According to IVRPD officials, the suit cost the district close to \$300,000 in fines and fees.

On Dec. 15, the Santa Barbara LP filed another lawsuit almost just like the first one — claiming that the IVRPD board violated the Brown Act, a state law that requires meetings of such government bodies to be open to the public. Local LP Vice Chair Michael Lamboley is named as plaintiff in the suit.

According to the suit, the board broke the law by holding three closed meetings in August and September.

The board says the meetings were used to interview law firms to become the IVRPD's new legal counsel. Meetings about employment issues are exempt from the Brown Act, so board members insist they did nothing wrong.

But attorneys aren't employees: They are independent contractors, and contractors aren't covered by the "employment issues" exception, the LP argues.

In the suit, the LP asks that the judge issue an injunction against the IVRPD, condemning the board's actions and prohibiting further violations of the Brown Act.

According to press reports, the board "could potentially avoid a legal battle over the alleged violation if it admits that the lawsuit's accusations are correct and changes its procedures accordingly."

"The district can either say to the judge that [the Libertarian Party is] right and this is how they're going to fix it, or they can fight it and it could cost them money," Lamboley was quoted as saying.

By meeting in closed session, members of the IVRPD board deliberately tried to "deprive the people of their right to know and to remain informed of the actions taken by the public body," the suit's supporting documents claim.

Lamboley has made it clear that

the party's sole motivation is to force the board to follow state laws for governing bodies.

"The state of California has some of the best good government laws in the nation, but there are no provisions in the budget for enforcing those laws," Lamboley said. "They're on the books, but it's up to individuals or organizations to enforce these rules."

■ GEORGIA

Southerland hired as executive director

Libertarian National Committee member Trevor Southerland (alternate representative, Region 4) was recently hired as the new executive director of the Libertarian Party of Georgia.

Southerland was previously on the state LP executive committee before moving to Tennessee two years ago. While in Tennessee (for college) he served as an officer of the Tennessee LP.

Southerland said his primary focus will be on getting the Georgia LP's office in Atlanta "in working

order."

"We have a new office that will fit our needs nicely," he said. "It'll just take a little time to get things organized and we'll start rolling."

He expressed pleasure at being back in Georgia and working for the state LP.

Along with other responsibilities, Southerland said he hopes to encourage LP members to step forward and run for office in 2006.

"I don't think there's very much debate over what the party should be doing," he said. "The mission of the Libertarian Party is to move public policy in a libertarian direction by electing candidates of the Libertarian Party to public office. What more needs to be said?"

■ SOUTH CAROLINA

Libertarian teacher seeks education head seat

Tim Moultrie, a Libertarian who teaches world history at a Columbia, S.C., public high school, has announced he plans to run for state education superintendent.

Moultrie is media liaison for South Carolina's StopTax.org, which is trying to eliminate property taxes on homes in the state.

As reported in the media, Moultrie said he opposes forcing students to attend school beyond middle school.

"The things we have been doing for the last 50 years in South Carolina have not worked," he told reporters.

Two-term incumbent education superintendent Inez Tenenbaum is not seeking a third term. Five Republicans and one Democrat have also announced for the race.

■ TEXAS

Meeting absences lead to election confusion

There's apparently been a mix-up in the Libertarian Party of Jefferson County: According to newspaper reports, two individuals claim to be chairman of the county LP.

Allen Lee was elected chairman at the county convention in March 2004, but the county's executive committee appointed Dean Tucker for the post after Lee missed two consecutive meetings.

The confusion might not matter much, except that potential candidates have to file their application for nomination with the county chair, and both Tucker and Lee have accepted applications from people wanting to run for Jefferson County judge. Helen Sue Sherbaf filed with Tucker, while Samuel Jackson filed with Lee.

The state LP officially recognizes Tucker as county chair — but state chair Pat Dixon told a local newspaper early in January that he wasn't sure how the party will resolve the issue.

Kevin Tunstall, a member of the state LP executive committee, told the newspaper he intends to bring the matter to the attention of the executive committee at the March meeting, but by that time the county will have elected a new chairman

and will have chosen the LP candidate for judge in Jefferson County.

The moral of the story: If you're elected to office in the Libertarian Party, you'd do well to show up for meetings.

■ TEXAS

Libertarian candidate praised for his honesty

Austin-area Libertarian Ben Easton won a rare note of praise from the *Austin Chronicle* on Jan. 13, in an article about the state's House of Representatives special election in District 48.

Easton is running against one Republican and two Democrats for the seat.

According to the *Chronicle* story, the Republican is running "as a moderate determined simply to 'improve the schools,' and has 'declared his support for private school vouchers 'in certain circumstances' — a position indistinguishable from that of the stealth voucher promoters at the Capitol."

Meanwhile, the two Democratic candidates for the seat have both served as school board members "and are acutely aware of the issues facing the public schools and the necessity for the state not just to reform school finance but to fund more of it," the paper said.

And then there's Easton, who "acknowledges that he is running primarily for Libertarian visibility, and he believes public schools should be privatized altogether — a position at least more straightforward than that of the current state leaders, who loudly proclaim their support for public education while they persist in bleeding the schools dry."

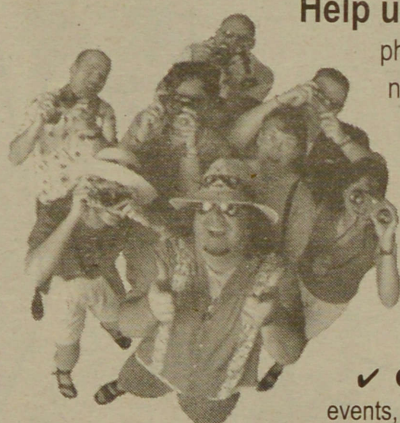
The paper decided to give one of the Democrats its backing, saying, "we strongly believe supporters of public education should unite behind a single candidate" if they are to have any hope of winning.

The paper's editorial staff apparently believes giving more money to the public school system will actually be of some help.

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✓ **CLOSE-UP AND PERSONAL:** When taking pictures of speakers or other events, always remember: Closer is better. Don't be afraid to stand in front of the crowd for a minute or two and get a good picture.

✓ **ACTION SHOTS:** Even if it's only one person, get photos of that person doing something — even laughing. If you've got a group, show them interacting, working on a project, talking to each other — anything other than lining them up and having them smile for the camera or sitting around a half-cleared dining table looking at each other over the scattered remains of a dinner meeting.

✓ **Focus:** If you have an activity with 10 or 15 people, don't try to work all of them into the photo unless it's absolutely necessary. Focus on people doing things and on the people who are important to the story you're trying to tell.

✓ **SEND IN A VARIETY:** If you take 12 photos and don't know which one is appropriate, feel free to send them all.

✓ **SEND IN AS MANY AS YOU CAN:** We can always use pictures!

Questions? Contact Editor J. Daniel Cloud by e-mail at editor@lp.org.

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The Volunteer: Meet Norm 'Firecracker' Westwell

By Mark Selzer

CALIFORNIA LP SOUTHERN VICE CHAIR

How did a Libertarian in Huntington Beach, Calif., become an influential political force in his community without getting elected?

Let me introduce you to a Libertarian named Norm Westwell. Norm ran for office so many times that he has become somewhat of a political power in his city.

For example, when he recently spoke at a city council meeting regarding a proposed ordinance regulating RVs, Norm said he would like to see the statistics on the situation. The next week the police chief had the relevant data for him to analyze. The local newspapers often seek his opinion on various issues and proposals.

He is known to be "the Libertarian guy" in Huntington Beach.

How did he do this? He ran for

office each election cycle, sometimes running for more than one office so he would appear on the ballot more than once — making him hard to miss.

It also allowed him to participate in many candidate forums and afforded a great deal of press opportunities, helping to raise his overall vote total.

Another thing Norm did was to associate himself with an issue that was popular locally — the re-legal-

ization of safe and sane fireworks. Norm's official ballot listing was allowed to be "Norm 'Firecracker' Westwell." This was done to make his name the longest on the ballot, unique and unforgettable, all good things for a candidate.

I am not saying that all Libertarians should get silly nicknames, but that you should be creative and use your personality if you happen to have one.

Norm does have a colorful and

friendly personality and uses it when appearing before his local city council.

His city council speeches are often rebroadcast multiple times on the local city channel, giving him even more exposure. Many times the audience can be heard roaring with laughter and applauding loudly in approval of his comments about the foibles of government.

Another tactic he used in the last election was to recruit many other Libertarians to run for city council with him. One Libertarian candidate in a field of 16 is only a whisper. But six libertarians in a field of 16 can sing a harmonized chorus that is aptly noted by the voters and the press.

Multiple candidates articulating common solutions can run as a powerful cost-saving slate, with a much smaller risk of being marginalized by the single right wing candidate. It also builds the party for future elections: After these virgin candidates have gotten their feet wet, they can be groomed for future races.

Norm is also quite visible in the letters sections of his local papers. The letters sections are among the most-read parts of any paper and Norm frequently gets his colorful and eloquent prose published — always making sure the word "Libertarian" appears at least once in each letter.

Another way Norm gets the word out is by picking up all abandoned political signs after each election cycle. He paints over them, stenciling and stencil his name on them and post them around town during the next election. Eventually he had over 800 signs around town saying "Vote Firecracker."

More than 100 of these signs are 10 feet long and four feet tall, and his collection just gets larger each year.

This costs him an astounding \$60 in paint per election, allowing him to spend less per vote than any other candidate in each election.

He has also delivered 50,000 voter registration forms to the front doorsteps of his local citizens, with a flyer attached urging them to change their registration to Libertarian, and listing reasons why they should.

He hand-delivered the forms while getting his nightly exercise rollerblading around the city, and voter registration has gone up as a result.

Now, I am not saying all of these techniques are for everyone or that they would even be appropriate for some of our candidates — but they are some ideas to consider. Norm has created styles and methods that work well for him.

Norm's activism illustrates that you can achieve positive gains for the Libertarian Party, even if you don't manage to win an election.

More importantly, you can gain political influence locally without looking for large sums of money from special interest groups.

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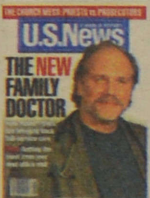
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Are Libertarians anarchists? It's time to decide

By Dr. Carl S. Milsted, Jr.
MEMBER, 2006 LP BYLAWS COMMITTEE

For the sake of argument, let us assume that the initiation of force is the highest evil, that no social cause, be it feeding the poor or protecting an endangered species, can justify the initiation of force.

Does this assumption lead to a moral requirement for anarchy? Is all taxation forbidden?

The answer is no! Abolish a government and the most likely scenario is war. Someone will try to fill in the power vacuum. Either it will be another government or warlords within the region of anarchy.

This is a net increase in the amount of force used.

Recorded history has shown this time after time. When a government collapses, either the people resort to tribalism, with every able-bodied male a soldier; the rich use their personal bodyguards to become feudal lords; neighboring peoples send in raiders to pillage, loot, and capture slaves; other governments conquer the region; and/or warlords within the region fight civil wars until a new government is established. None of these outcomes are pleasant.

All of them are less libertarian than a modern welfare state.

Yes, there are some rare cases in recorded civilized history where people have prospered without government as we know it. But these were the aberrations, not the norm. And they happened in isolated areas and/or among peoples who had shared traditions and religion.

These conditions do not apply to the United States of the 21st Century. The idea that well-behaved private protection services will peacefully fill the power vacuum is highly speculative, unsupported by experiment. Modern experimentation with zero government is best tried with a small isolated country — not a huge superpower.

To abolish government in the U.S. would be an incredibly dangerous experiment, likely leading to more tyranny, not liberty.

Most freedom lovers favor some government, even though that means supporting some taxation and regulation. For this reason, most freedom lovers reject the Libertarian Party as it currently stands.

The current LP membership pledge does not allow for limited government. Some initiation of force is required for a government to do its job. Some taxation is necessary. To obey the LP membership

pledge requires calling for the effective abolition of government. And many of the provisions in our current platform reflect this mandate, especially our call for the "repeal of all taxation."

There is a moral libertarian case for some government. The initiation of force will always be with us. The option of no such force is not available; advocating such is equivalent to advocating free energy or time travel.

The best we can do is minimize the initiation of force, and the overwhelming historical evidence indicates that this minimum requires some government — with some war, police and taxation authority.

Should we succeed in implementing the current LP platform, our nation will be at great risk of conquest and civil war.

But we won't succeed, because most libertarians — and virtually all Americans — refuse to support

such a risky experiment. Most libertarians understand the need for some government, for some taxation. This is a major reason why our vote totals are so small. At present, we are not a libertarian party, we are an anarchist party.

It is time to decide: If we want to continue being an anarchist party, we should practice truth in advertising, and change the name to Anarchist Party. Or, if we want to be a truly libertarian party, we

need to either change or eliminate the membership pledge.

We also need to update the platform to allow for that minimal state that maximizes liberty.

Which will it be?

■ **About the author:** Dr. Carl S. Milsted, Jr., of Asheville, N.C., is a member of the LP's 2006 Bylaws Committee, a former LNC alternate representative, and Webmaster for the Libertarian Reform Caucus.

Unless the people, through united action, arise and take charge of their government, they will find that their government has taken charge of them. Independence and liberty will be gone, and the general public will find itself in a condition of servitude to an aggregation of organized and selfish ambitions.

-former President Calvin Coolidge, Oct 1932



Seventy-three years later, we discover that Coolidge was right. Independence and liberty ARE gone.

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Libertarians make their presence known in eminent domain fight

By J. Daniel Cloud
LP NEWS EDITOR

It's not enough for local government officials to promise they'll never use eminent domain powers to seize a private residence and use the land for "economic development," Libertarians in Farmington, N.M., told members of the city council recently.

If they can make that promise, they should be willing to go the extra distance and ensure that eminent domain is not even an alternative for the city, the Libertarians argued.

In mid-January, city council members approved a 700-acre Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) in the city of 43,000, at a meeting attended by several active Libertarians and other local residents who opposed the move.

The designation of this site as a redevelopment area will enable the city council to give tax breaks and other incentives to businesses that will help in the "revitalization" of the downtown area.

But by state law, along with an MRA comes additional powers of eminent domain.

Bob Ziesmer, chairman of the LP of San Juan County, asked the council if they could pass a resolution "renouncing the use of eminent domain in the MRA, and make it binding on future elected officials."

They said they couldn't.

The possibility that future members of the council won't be similarly anti-eminent domain is what scares the Libertarians in Farmington.

"While the current city council may have in effect 'bound' itself by many public statements, there [is] no guarantee about a future council removing that clause," Ziesmer said. "Furthermore, three seats on the council are up for election in the first week of March, less than 60 days away."

Council members said they were "forced" to accept the increased powers of eminent domain as part of the state laws concerning MRAs. They said they hope the state legislature will remove the eminent domain clause from MRA legislation during the 2007 session, but they weren't willing to wait until that time to establish the redevelopment area.

Gary Wood, one of the several Libertarians who attended the meeting, said the council's approval of the MRA came as no surprise "due to the fact that the implementation of the MRA has been underway for over a year, and that many of the city's bureaucrats are very enamored with it."

"We are finding a number of people who support the idea of the MRA as a means to simplify the process of private entrepreneurs being successful in revitalizing an aging downtown, but who absolutely oppose the use of eminent domain to

achieve that revitalization," Wood noted.

Only one city council member — Mary Fischer, who plans to run against the incumbent for the mayor's chair in the March 7 election — voted against the MRA, Ziesmer said, noting that she "is to be commended for standing up to extreme pressure in defense of the property rights of city residents." The vote was 3-1 in favor of the measure.

After the meeting, current mayor Bill Stanley reportedly complimented the Libertarian Party for running radio ads announcing the main topic of the meeting and letting city residents know their private property rights were in danger.

Donations from party members allowed 39 radio spots to air on five different stations on the day of the meeting, Ziesmer said.

One positive note: Council members tentatively agreed to pass a resolution indicating to the state legislature that the city wants to see the eminent domain provision stripped from the MRA law.

"We now occupy a strong position as a local group that will stand against eminent domain — and that fact should both be 'good press' and attract new members," Wood said.

"The fact that several libertarian-minded individuals were present and that several folks spoke out against the eminent domain aspect of the MRA really shows that we are a force to be reckoned with."

THE REVIEW

Individualist socialism?

■ *Why Bother? Getting a Life in a Locked-down Land*, by Sam Smith. Published 2001 by Feral House. 150 pages, softcover.

Reviewed by J. Daniel Cloud
LP NEWS EDITOR

Every so often a book title just jumps out at me, screaming something like, "You should read me." So it was when I encountered *Why Bother? Getting a Life in a Locked-Down Land*, by Sam Smith. I simply enjoyed the title.

I couldn't find a copy in stores, so I ordered the book and waited a week for it to arrive. Only then did I see the front cover, with the Ralph Nader plug printed above the title.

When I read Nader's opinion that the book "addresses the great question confronting democracy — and that is civic motivation," I started having doubts about my choice of reading material.

This had rapidly become one of the few times in my life when I wished I had taken the time to judge a book by its cover.

In brief, *Why Bother?* is a paean to collectivism that supposedly espouses individualism. Smith believes in individual freedom and responsibility — but only so long as the individuals use their freedom to take responsibility for everyone else.

For a long-time journalist — mostly for the "alternative press," including *The Progressive Review*, which he founded — Smith doesn't exhibit much of a grasp on logic. I kept falling into the gaps between irreconcilable thoughts he didn't even bother trying to bridge.

For example, he believes that business and government walk hand-in-hand, inseparable, and that anyone who stands up for free-market economics must be a big-government cheerleader. But Smith doesn't differentiate between mega-corporations and small businesses trying to make it big. He ignores the fact that when a company provides a service or a product the public wants, that company will grow.

Apparently, in his mind, there is no hope for a businessman: At a certain rung in the ladder of success, all capitalists have to decide whether to sell their souls to the devil of big government, or to become good little socialists and eschew competition.

"You need look no further than the free marketers themselves to see how false the notion of a free market is," Smith continues, in a chapter called "False Profits." "Would a truly free market, for example, tolerate government officials with as much arbitrary power as the members of the Federal Reserve?"

His implication, made explicit in subsequent paragraphs, is that champions of the free market also support the Federal Reserve and other trappings of big government. Smith even feels obligated to point out that "the form of capitalism known as 'free trade' doesn't even come close" to a free market, "else one wouldn't need 2,000-page agreements and the World Trade Organization."

Libertarians and other people who actually believe in capitalism have been saying this for years. We know that the travesty currently referred to as "free trade" by the U.S. government has little to do with a real free market — but that's because the government doesn't really believe in free markets.

Smith's also wrongly contends that capitalists believe solely in the "unfettered, rapacious flow of money and goods."

"We prove again and again the limits and liabilities of promiscuous capitalism by personal actions that mitigate its evils and compensate for its failures," he says. "Every act of charity, every anti-sweatshop group, every barter, every voluntary activity for the good of the community ... is a revolt against the Church of False Profits."

Smith fails to note that many of the activities he considers anti-capitalistic are specifically driven by capitalist motives. As clearer minds have noted, "doing good" is generally good for business. Many thriving corporations avoid selling products produced with sweatshop labor. Barter is, of course, wholly capitalistic — free exchange of goods and services, anyone? Even charitable giving is a capitalist act: People often give because they like the way it makes them feel, as much as for the benefit of the recipient.

Smith doesn't get it all wrong. He correctly points to the incestuous relationship between some big businesses and the government. Corporations are given tax incentives and other benefits denied to the average taxpayer, while the business world buys such favors with gifts to politicians.

But that's a political issue, not an economic one.

The equitable distribution of wealth and power Smith advocates isn't going to save America — and the fact that he simultaneously supports the individualist and denigrates the capitalist certainly doesn't help his case. Rewarding independence and individualism is what actual free-market capitalism does best.

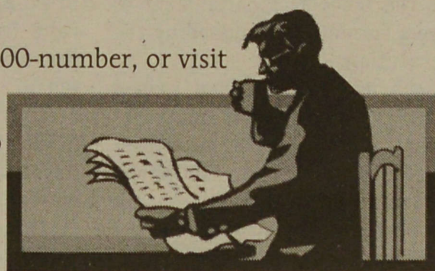
Smith, along with other socialists, just doesn't grasp that concept.

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THE FORUM

It's time to bring back the draft — Libertarian style

Now that I have your attention, relax. I am not talking about a military draft.

However, what I am talking about may be almost as controversial: drafting Libertarian candidates to run for key offices.

We need effective candidates to advance several objectives. Of course we would like to see Libertarians elected, but we must also use campaigns to promulgate the libertarian philosophy.

Campaigns can also be used to force non-Libertarian candidates to recognize and address libertarian issues.

By working from the top down we can make some big advances, but we need immediate concerted action!

We have had some truly gifted and committed candidates over the years, but they have not been able to break into the national consciousness.

We need a slate of top national candidates with all or most of the following attributes:

- High name recognition
- A record of success, preferably outside politics and preferably in a turn-around situation
- Well-funded or capable of generating significant contributions
- Great presentation skills

I propose that the Libertarian Party actively identify and solicit people that meet these criteria to run for national offices, particularly high visibility ones such as president and Congress.

The idea would not be to select the candidates per se, but rather to identify and approach potential

ones to encourage them to run.

This in no way means we should exclude those who choose to run on their own. And, as always, the dele-

THE DELEGATES
will make the final selection.

But we need candidates now.

We can't wait until '07 to start running.

gates will make the final selection.

But we need candidates NOW; we can't wait until 2007 to start running.

We should begin by focusing on the presidential candidate, formulating a list of personalities with the above attributes.

It's better to have a large list to start from so we should not initially be too concerned about their political views and whether or not we think they would want to run. Nor should we be dissuaded if they are currently aligned with some other party.

That last point may be very important: There are clearly many in the major parties who are fed up with the policies of those parties today.

Once we have a list, we can begin evaluating political views; many will probably lean our way already, but others might be brought into the fold if they were visited by an effective representative of the party, such as Harry Browne, Michael Cloud, Mary Ruwart, etc.

Clearly the final choices would have to be truly committed to liberty, free markets and non-aggression, but as an ex-Republican, I can attest to the fact that true conversion is possible.

How do we do get started with a big list of those that meet the criteria?

Let's set up a poll on the LP Web page where members can nominate candidates and we can vote for ones

we like. The list can regularly be updated to show the leaders.

Then, we should appoint a screening committee to select several and then appoint a contact committee to approach them. If we start the Web poll immediately, we can begin screening the leaders in parallel and can begin approaching some in early 2006.

Once the major candidates are on board, announced and begin campaigning, we will both attract more candidates and support for them by having the top candidates emphasize that they can't do it by themselves — so voters should elect Libertarian candidates whenever and wherever they can.

There may never again be as good an opportunity as the 2008 elections.

We need to support our candidates with top advisors and grass roots workers.

Candidates with the characteristics I listed earlier will attract this support in ways that none of our past candidates have.

I believe we can find candidates that will step up to the challenge and I know most Libertarians stand ready to provide support.

■ **About the authors:** Tim Mahar is vice chairman of the Libertarian Party of Brevard County, Fla.

The U.S. Constitution vs. the Libertarian Party Platform

The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights are not perfect guides to the final goal that the libertarian movement desires — a truly free society.

The ultimate free society can exist only while the vast majority of citizens have a high sense of responsibility and self-reliance, and that is certainly not the case in today's America.

The Constitution is, however, nominally still the Supreme Law of the Nation. If it were rigorously enforced based upon an Originalist method of interpretation, the United States would be a vastly freer country than it is today. Our posterity would then have a better chance to extend freedom to a still higher level.

The Libertarian Party Platform should seek to bring our government back into full compliance with the Constitution, and embrace the strict enforcement of enumerated federal powers as an intermediate goal on the path to instituting Libertarian principles.

That goal is difficult to attain when our platform proposes policy that prohibits even the reasonably limited role of government that is, in fact, authorized by the Constitution.

With that in mind, we recommend the platform be aligned with existing enumerated powers.

A number of planks in the 2004 LP Platform advocate the repeal or abolishment of federal powers that have been granted to the federal government by the U.S. citizenry.

Each plank listed below has at least one clause that should be revised to remedy the inconsistency:

- I.17: Conscription & the Military (Transition section) — Revise to allow military discipline. Conflicts with U.S. Const. I:8:16 (Rules of Military Discipline).
- I.18: Immigration (Transition section) — Revise per minimal congressional authority. Conflicts with U.S. Const. I:8:10 (Law of Nations).
- II.2: Taxation (Solution section) — Delete "Repeal all Taxation." Conflicts with U.S. Const. I:8:1.
- II.3: Inflation and Depression (Solutions section) — Delete "eliminate all government minted coins." Conflicts with U.S. Const. I:8:5 (Coin Money).
- II.5: Government Debt (Principle section) — Delete "not incur debt." Conflicts with U.S. Const. I:8:2 (Debt).
- II.5: Government Debt (Principle section) — Delete "not hold assets." Conflicts with U.S. Const. I:8:1,2; IV:3:2 (Assets).
- II.8: Trade Barriers (Solutions section) — Delete "abolish all trade barriers." Conflicts with U.S. Const. I:8:1,3.
- III.6: Transportation (Solutions section) — Delete "privatize national highway system." Conflicts with U.S. Const. I:8:7 (Post Roads).

■ III.13: Postal Service (Solutions section) — Change "abolish" to "privatize", and provide details. Conflicts with U.S. Const. I:8:7.

Upon election, our victorious candidates take an oath to comply



with and defend the U.S. and/or state constitutions, which prescribe binding contracts between those elected and the citizens they would serve. We damage our candidate's credibility by asking them to advocate the immediate curtailment of powers currently authorized by the Constitution.

Such advocacy directed toward citizens who do not yet grasp Libertarian theories makes us appear naive, incompetent in the affairs of government, and therefore not trustworthy to be handed the responsibilities of public office.

By consistently pointing out the unlawful basis of government action, our candidates will be perceived as more knowledgeable in

the affairs of government.

A public office is granted by the electorate, and the power of elected Libertarians to effect change should be limited. Being elected to an office does not give one license to impose one's will with reckless abandon.

Before the people will grant the LP broad powers to reshape American society, we as Libertarians must earn their trust. We must demonstrate good sense and demonstrate competence in areas relevant to the offices we seek.

We must also recognize that large segments of society have come to rely on departures from U.S. and state constitutions. These "reliance interests" have to be accorded some regard until Libertarian reforms are in place.

When such reforms are proven to work, they will pave the way for more far-reaching reforms as compared to what's politically possible today.

Libertarians elected as public officials should be willing and eager to comply with strict limits on their powers.

This novel approach could become our competitive advantage as our fellow citizens grow weary of politicians who have abandoned the rule of law. Eloquent Libertarian candidates, expressing mature opin-

ions about the Constitution, will build credibility when demonstrating knowledge in areas relevant to the offices they seek.

Such credibility, together with sensible plans to reinstate limits on the power of public officials, will build the voters' trust in our candidates. As we begin to implement real, positive change, they will learn to further entrust us with elected office.

We have an opportunity in 2006 and 2008 to become something more than a minor political party. We must develop a migration path based upon current laws, and use modern marketing techniques to sell that plan to our customer, the American electorate.

Principles without an effective method to apply them are impotent, but political principles, practically applied, can save our nation.

Now is the time for the Libertarian Party to use our principles to save this proud nation, the United States of America.

(The Platform Committee seeks your feedback on this draft proposal, so your input can be considered prior to the start of the convention. Please email feedback about this article, with subject line "LP Platform Feedback", to guy@mclendon.net, or join the review at our Web site: www.lpconvention.org/platform/.)

■ **About the authors:** This column was written by members of the 2006 Platform Committee, namely Guy McLendon, Tim West and Brian Holtz.

Robed sharks prey on jury pool

On Jan. 11, Charleston County, S.C., resident Mark Hocamp, responding to a court summons, appeared for jury duty in a Charleston County courtroom, along with approximately 50 other potential jurors. They were sworn in before a circuit court judge.

The trial for which a jury was being selected was for one Kendrick Meeks, who was facing charges of possession with the intent to distribute crack cocaine. Meeks was absent from the courtroom and was therefore represented by his attorney, Sharon Cummings.

After being sworn in, blanket questions were asked of the entire jury pool present. If a potential juror believed that his or her circumstances provided a "yes" answer to the court's questions, he or she was instructed to stand up.

The jurors were asked the usual questions such as if they had any relations with the judge, prosecutor, defense attorney or the defendant. This process of screening potential jurors is referred to in legal terms as *voir dire*, which is an Anglo-French term meaning "to speak the truth."

As the judge continued to ask questions of the jury pool, no juror stood up and identified his or her self as a person who represented a probable "yes" answer to the court's question.

What happened next happens every single day in courthouses across America. It is such an infectious blob of creeping judicial obstruction of justice and a violation of the principles governing why the United States has jury trials in the first place that it should be considered nothing less than a treasonous act — committed in this instance by three members of the South Carolina Bar Association.

A side bar was called. The judge, the prosecutor and the defense huddled around the bench, whispered, called their play, broke the huddle, and seized control of the last power the people have against an overzealous government by agreeing the judge should ask the potential jurors:

"Do any of you believe in the decriminalization or legalization of any illegal substances?"

Being more honorable than any other person in the courtroom at that moment, Hocamp rose and said, "I do, your honor."

The judge asked, "name and juror number?"

"119, Mark Hocamp."

"Explain your situation, Mr. Hocamp."

"I believe in the decriminalization of drugs, sir."

"In total?"

"Yes sir."

"Because you hold this belief, would your verdict be subject to partiality?"

"Possibly, yes sir," Hocamp responded.

"Well then, Mr. Hocamp, I excuse you from this jury."

The judge's use of the word "partiality" to excuse Hocamp from the jury pool is nothing short of trickery. In the legal sense, partiality is an undue bias. Undue, again in the legal sense, means not lawful — not legal.

There is nothing unlawful or illegal about a juror holding that a law is a bad law. In fact, it is the duty of each juror to judge every law in which a defendant is charged with violating, as well as the punishment

fense that the minority voice has against mob rule in America. The fact that one out of 12 (or 8.3 percent of the jury) has the power to save a citizen from what that one juror perceives as bad laws and bad government, is a fluttering beacon of hope — a beacon the courts, the bar and the government are doing everything in their power to extinguish.

Hocamp should not have been excused from jury duty because he thinks that all current criminalized substances should be decriminalized. After all, Hocamp's viewpoint on the topic is not isolated. More than 8.3 percent of Americans believe, as he does, that all currently criminalized substances should be de-criminalized. To purposely squash this public opinion from being heard in a court of law is treason.

The truth is that the judges and lawyers have been made rich by the drug laws and at the expense of the drug addicted. They know damn well that if every drug possession charge or "possession with the intent to distribute" charge was heard by 12 jurors, the money supply would dry up.

Justice would be truly available for every single American who is arrested for any drug-related charge if the accused demanded a trial by jury — if they were not intimidated by the prosecution's threats of harsher penalties if they don't roll over and plead guilty.

Maybe it's time for patriots to pool some money and harpoon the sharks through public service announcements that tell the people the truth: Over 97 percent of criminal cases are disposed of without a jury trial. Nearly half of all criminal proceedings are related to drug laws. If every drug law victim would unwaveringly demand a jury trial, the criminal justice system would collapse and could not recover until it stopped prosecuting victimless-crime laws.

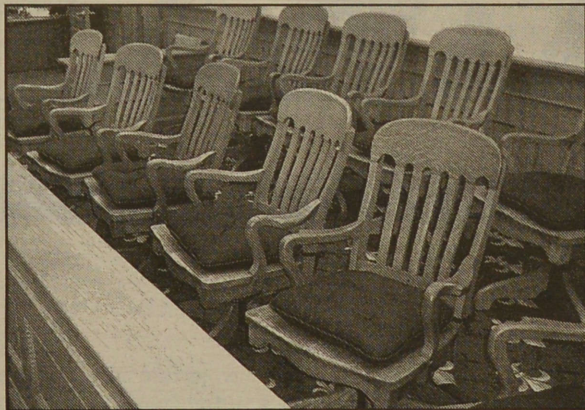
Until then, the latitude granted to attorneys and the courts to conduct *voir dire* must be restrained — if not revoked — by the people.

Like any other power given to corruptible men, this one has fallen victim to much misuse and abuse.

This story is yet another case of individual liberty and freedom being stolen from the people by governments operating in the United States. To remain silent in this regard is to encourage further tyranny in South Carolina and the rest of the nation.

■ **About the author:** Ed Haas is a freelance writer who currently resides in Mt. Pleasant, S.C. This article is reprinted with permission from *The Muckraker Report*, which can be seen at www.teamliberty.net/id2.html.

By Ed Haas



THE PROFILE

Author Lauren Royal

By Bill Winter

THE ADVOCATES FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

Historical romance author Lauren Royal sets her novels, including the popular "Jewel" and "Flower" trilogies, amidst the castles and pageantry of 17th century England.

But she says she was most inspired by an author who wrote about rocket ships and time travel, not romance. That would be Robert A. Heinlein, whose novels *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress* and *Stranger in a Strange Land* are considered modern science fiction classics.

"I think Robert A. Heinlein was probably most influential," Royal said in an interview with the *Advocates for Self-Government*. "I devoured his books during my elementary school years, and I suspect the ideals espoused in them formed the foundation for my later beliefs."

She also lists the writings of Ayn Rand and "our country's Founding Fathers" as prime influences. What's the common theme? A love of liberty. So it's no surprise that Royal says, "I am very much a libertarian."

She elaborates, "I believe we have the right to do whatever we wish with ourselves and our belongings, so long as the decisions we make don't affect other people and their property against their will. I want to see government confined to its proper role, to protect and serve us and stay out of our personal lives."

Royal's Web site hints at her libertarian beliefs. Among her favorite books she lists *Time Enough for Love* by Robert A. Heinlein and *Anthem* by Ayn Rand. In a newsletter to fans, she shares one of her favorite quotes: "Liberty is the only thing you cannot have unless you are willing to give it to others" (William Allen White).

Royal traces her libertarian beliefs to "a very politically aware family. We walked precincts for various candidates. We all read the newspapers — especially the op-ed pages — and discussed issues around the dinner table. ... We were all encouraged to come to our own conclusions and share our views."

Although her novels focus more on forbidden love, broken hearts, and romantic escapades than on politics, Royal says her libertarian beliefs do influence her writing.

"Although I write fiction, my characters — the good ones, at least — share my values," she says. "In romance fiction especially, the protagonists are referred to as heroes and heroines — and I wouldn't consider a character 'heroic' if his or her thoughts and actions didn't reflect the beliefs I admire and think right."

Royal decided to become a writer after winning a "Why My Mother is the Greatest" essay contest in third grade. She learned about the appeal of romance novels at age 14 when she sneaked a copy of *Forever Amber* from a great-uncle's library.

She attended the University of California-Irvine and UCLA, majoring in TV and film production. After college, she opened a jewelry shop, and built it up to a chain of five stores. Royal eventually sold the stores to a national chain, and decided to try her hand at writing.

Her first novel, *Amethyst*, was published in 2000. It was nominated by *Romantic Times* for "Best First Historical Romance," and was followed by two more novels in the "Jewel" trilogy: *Emerald* (2000), and *Amber* (2001). Another series followed, the "Flower" trilogy: *Violet* (2002), *Lily* (2003), and *Rose* (2003). Both trilogies were set in Restoration-era England (1660-1700).

Royal also contributed to *In Praise of Younger Men* (2001). In 2005, she published *Lost in Temptation*, the first novel of the projected "Sweet Temptations" trilogy.

Royal's books have earned considerable acclaim. *Amber* was named a Booklist "Top Ten Romance" of 2001, while *Rose* won the "Golden Quill Award for Best Historical Romance." The Castle Historical Romance Society called her novels "witty and sensual," and John Charles in the American Library Association's Booklist lauded "her gift for understated humor."

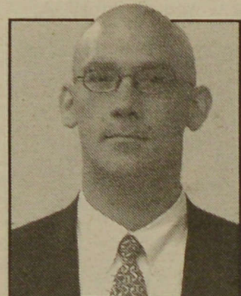
■ Each month, LP News features a column about celebrities who call themselves libertarian. This article reprinted with permission from the *Advocates for Self-Government*. To read profiles of dozens of libertarian celebrities, visit: www.TheAdvocates.org/celebrities.html.



THE EDITOR

Hemingway had it right

"I cannot be a communist ... because I believe in only one thing: liberty," Ernest Hemingway wrote in response to a letter from a young communist in the late 1930s. "First I would look after myself and do my work. Then I would care for my family. Then I would help my neighbor. But the state I care nothing for. All the state has ever meant to me is unjust taxation. ... I believe in the absolute minimum of government."



By J. Daniel Cloud

LP NEWS EDITOR

Hemingway famously opposed fascism, both at home and abroad, and many communists between the world wars assumed his opposition to fascism meant he was, in fact, a communist.

But as any libertarian knows, both fascism and communism fall under a broader name: statism. And statism is what Hemingway was writing about when he said, "The state I care nothing for."

The young communist with whom Hemingway was corresponding tried to convert the American writer — who by then was a well-known figure — to communism. He thought if communists had the support of someone so famous as Hemingway, their effort would be more likely to succeed.

Of course his assumption is questionable: Hemingway had been opposing (and continued to vociferously oppose) statism. Since that time, many other freedom-minded individuals of considerable cultural stature have also opposed the growth of government, but the opponents of Big Government have still not succeeded. Apparently the support of famous writers and entertainers is not the final solution.

What strikes me most about this scenario is the arrogance of the presumptuous young communist, who obviously felt he had the right to attempt a conversion of a famous individual whose political ideas were hard and fast.

His failure to get Hemingway to switch sides is revelatory: It's usually a waste of time to strive to convert someone from one side of the political spectrum to the other.

It's been said often, but bears repeating, that if you can easily sway someone to abandon his or her political beliefs, that person can likely be convinced just as easily to return to his or her original beliefs. That's not conversion, but a symptom of waffle-headedness.

But the attempt to get a person of fame to buy into a particular political philosophy is even more revelatory when you consider this fact: When the communists failed to get Hemingway's support, they attacked him as a traitor to their cause, even though he'd never been a proponent of communism.

Communists in America and in Europe accused the writer of selling out to the fascist regimes in Spain and America. They failed to recognize that he was no more a fascist than he was a communist.

Yes, Hemingway fought in the Spanish Civil War that fell between World War I and II. And he refused to enter Italy as long as Mussolini was in power, along with his fascists. But that didn't make the writer a communist, any more than opposing neo-conservatives in modern-day America makes one a liberal by the current definition.

Too often Americans assume that there are only two sides to the political coin. Further, they fail to see that both apparent sides continually advocate the growth of government.

In the American system of government it's the Nanny State (the Democrats, who say the citizens need someone to take care of them) and the Daddy State (the Republicans, who think government is a father figure whose sole duty is to force Americans to follow rules).

One side says, "You can't take care of yourself, so we're here to help," while the other side says, "As long as you're living under my roof, you'll do things my way."

As for me, I look back at the words of Ernest Hemingway, and can't help but echo his sentiment: "I believe in the absolute minimum of government."

He didn't say he believed in a conservative or liberal government. Rather, he called for a minimum of government.

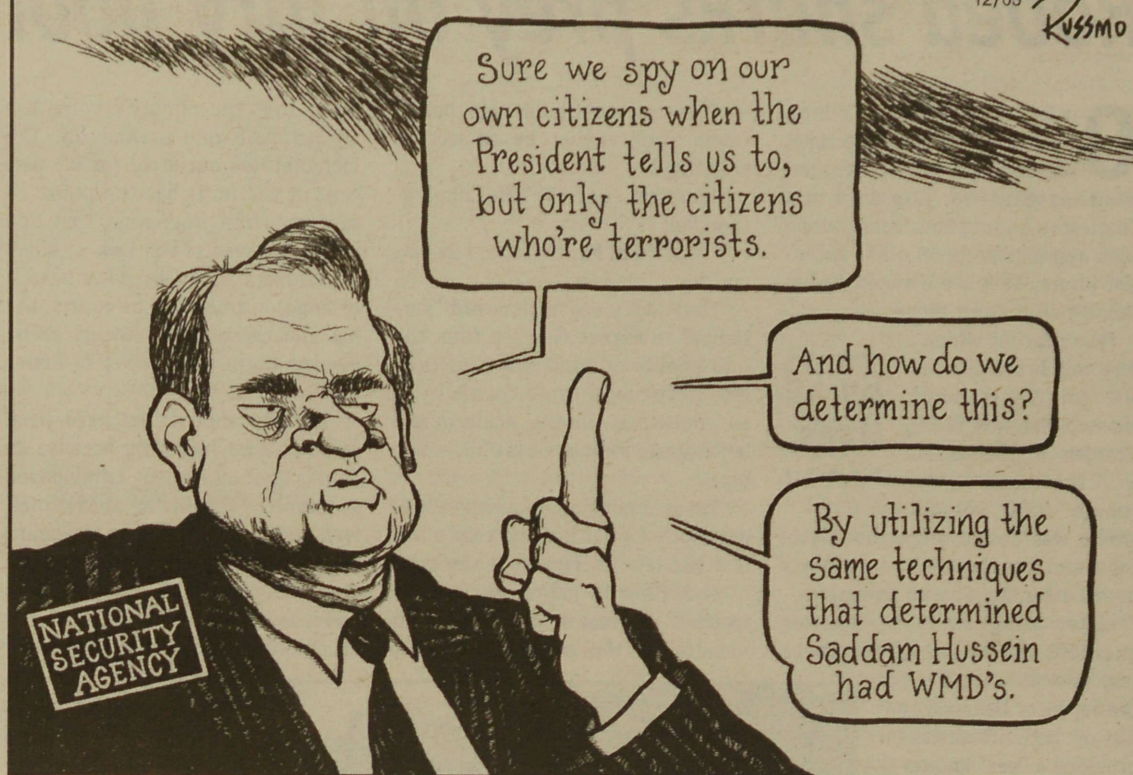
Americans would be wise to follow Hemingway's example, calling for minimal government rather than calling for a more conservative or more liberal establishment.

Was Ernest Hemingway a libertarian? I wouldn't go that far. But in this letter to a communist missionary, he certainly presented libertarian themes: Mind your own business and take care of your family first, and oppose Big Government, no matter what name the government claims for itself.

www.russmo.com

12/05

Russmo



THE MAILBOX



Freedom defined

I have one issue with Alex Pugliese's otherwise excellent article in *LP News*, December 2005, "Defining Freedom — and teaching Americans not to fear it." Mr. Pugliese writes that we should have "freedom to worship ... in the public square."

The term "public square" should raise a red flag for any libertarian, since the foundation of libertarianism is private property. If, for utilitarian reasons, we do allow some government ownership of property, then we must be very careful about how this property is used.

In particular, use of government-owned property should certainly be restricted as follows:

1) The government itself should never initiate or sanction any political or religious statement, action, or expression, and,

2) If such a statement, action or expression is allowed on government property, then this opportunity must be made available to any ideology or creed.

—MARK ZACHARIAS
Langhorne, Pennsylvania

Religious freedom

It is obvious that Mr. Alex Pugliese's religion is important to him (December 2005 *LP News*, "Defining freedom..."). I want him and other people like him to enjoy all the religions they want, confined to the proper places.

However, I must insist that Mr. Pugliese and other people like him keep all religions out of the "public square" (and public schools and courthouses).

Non-believers like me need to be assured of unencumbered access to public squares and courthouses to

conduct our business.

In his magnanimous gesture of inviting all religions to the "public square," Mr. Pugliese makes no allowance for non-believers who also need to conduct business there.

Does he think that, if he ignores us long enough, we will go away? We won't. And more and more of us will be demanding our civil rights.

Please spare me the typical, hysterical response to my comments as if keeping religions out of the public square is tantamount to a ban on or prohibition of religion.

—ELKE M. MIKAELIAN
Roswell, New Mexico

[Editor's Note: I think there's been a misunderstanding. The term "public square" doesn't necessarily mean "public property," including only courthouses and the like.

Generally, the term refers to society as a whole — "in public," in other words.

I think Pugliese meant only that people shouldn't have to exercise their religious freedom in private, that they should be allowed to make their religious beliefs public.

For what it's worth, those who deny the existence of God are also making their religious beliefs known. Yes, atheists (and agnostics) have religious freedom — and they freely exercise it in public.]

Left v. Right v. ...

(RE: MailBox, December 2005 *LP News*) Walt Thiesen points with alarm to a growing conservative bias he detects among the Libertarian leadership. At the same time, Bret Clevenger (in *First Word*, same issue) writes that many Republicans are turning to the Libertarian Party.

Meanwhile, our editor points out the many articles the *LP News* carries about issues dear to the hearts of liberal Democrats. So who's right? I can't say for sure, but I can tell you it's nothing new.

In 2000 Senator Slade Gorton (R-Wash.) was defeated for re-election by just a few votes, despite his stellar record on the Right to Keep and Bear Arms.

Libertarian pundits were quick to point out that his Libertarian challenger drew about 50,000 votes, which "gave" the seat to Maria Cantwell, a staunch supporter of the Gun Control agenda.

But that math only makes sense if most of those 50,000 Libertarian votes would have gone to Gorton if there hadn't been a Libertarian candidate.

If we appeal to dissatisfied voters in equal numbers from both sides, then our influence on the election would have been zero.

It's clear that some Libertarians, even then, felt that most Libertarians lean toward the conservative side.

—RICHARD CRAWFORD
Roy, Washington

Proposed LP slogan

Proposed new Libertarian Party slogan:

"Why move right or left when you can move forward? Vote Libertarian!"

—JAMES R. ZINGELMAN
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Downsizing DC

We have a problem: Legislators are passing laws without reading them, which is one reason we have

See **THE MAILBOX** Page 18

THE BEST OF THE BLOG

Osama bin Laden, New Orleans and the TSA

■ History Repeating in Afghanistan?

—By Matthew Dailey
—January 3, 2006

This summer, the United States will begin to scale back its operations in Afghanistan. The U.S. military will officially turn control of Afghanistan's southern region over to a NATO-led international force, according to Washingtontoppost.com.

American troops will be reduced by 2,500, as more of the country is turned over to the Afghan government.

A major concern among the Afghans is the United States will withdraw too soon and leave the country vulnerable to a return of the Taliban.

The U.S. abruptly left Afghanistan in the 1990s shortly after the Soviet Union withdrew its troops. The resulting power vacuum led to a civil war that paved the way for the Taliban to seize control of the government.

Unlike the American troops, NATO troops that will be deployed in southern Afghanistan will not be aggressively engaging terrorists. Instead, they will focus on peacekeeping duties.

Reader Comments:

I am upset that NATO troops will not engage al Qaeda or the Taliban, that they would be only there to be a peacekeeping force. I find that very upsetting.

The decrease in troops, I believe, will give the United States more mobility in Afghanistan to go after al Qaeda, the Taliban, and Osama bin Laden. Only time will tell.

Posted by: Alex Pugliese

How about we take all of our troops from throughout the world and bring them to the states? It would be the best solution.

At least it will result in the U.S. military having all the necessary resources to defend the states instead of serving as the world's policeman.

Posted by: Tommy

If we really wanted bin Laden, we would have had him years ago. The CIA trained, financed and equipped bin Laden in the 80's to fight the Soviets.

We have deliberately passed up opportunities to capture him since the early 90's.

Why does he still elude capture? Saddam didn't. If we really wanted him we would have captured him long ago.

Posted by: Chuck

There was a \$25 million bounty on bin Laden's head shortly after 9-11.

Posted by: Tommy

\$25 MILLION??? That settles it, Tommy, I'm going to grab my Berlitz instant translator book, rent a camel, and find the S.O.B. myself!!

I can't do much worse than all the combined intelligence services of the world from the CIA, MI6, NATO and the Mission: Impossible guys who have stumbled all over themselves for the last four years.

Wonder if "Dog the Bounty Hunter" is up for a little trip?

Posted by: Chuck

■ Federal Government May Become Biggest Landowner in New Orleans

—By Matthew Dailey
—January 6, 2006

Republican Congressman Richard H. Baker has proposed the federal government create a nonprofit, federally owned corporation, dubbed the Louisiana Recovery Corporation, that would be authorized to buy out homeowners in the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina, and to negotiate with lenders to pay off the balance of those mortgages.

If passed, this House bill would make the federal government the largest landowner in New Orleans for at least a few years.

Some members of Congress are concerned with the potential cost to taxpayers from Baker's plan. The government corporation could end up spending up to \$80 billion, according to current estimates.

Baker admitted he could not promise that the corporation would break even financially. He added, "We'll pay back as much as possible."

The proposed non-profit corporation would offer to buy out houses from homeowners, at no less than 60 percent of their equity before Hurricane Katrina, while lenders would be offered up to 60 percent of what they are owed, according to the *New York Times*. The properties would then be sold to developers.

A group of congressmen were unsuccessful in mandating that the corporation break even financially.

The White House has shown some signs of support for the bill, with the president's Gulf Coast recovery czar, Donald E. Powell, stating he was comfortable with the proposal.

Reader Comments:

Why don't the feds just use eminent domain to snatch up all the houses without paying anything?

Posted by: nick

I wouldn't be surprised if that happened.

Posted by: Tommy

If a homeowner wants to sell his or her property to a private charity, contractor or developer, he or she

should be allowed to do so freely and with no duress from anyone. If he or she wants to rebuild his or her home or property, that should be allowed as well.

Homeowners, property owners, and private organizations can do more wonders than government can do. In the rebuilding of New Orleans, history can repeat itself again provided that government gets out of the way.

Posted by: Alex Pugliese

If I filled my garage with explosives and one day my house blew up due to a forest fire in the area, would anyone be proposing to buy my now-demolished house and bail me out? Of course not! Because that would be stupid.

These people knew the risks and they choose to build there anyway. It's high time that we as a society stop shielding stupid people who do stupid things from life's hard knocks.

Posted by: Keith

One of the biggest reasons why the LP can't connect with voters is that we think high-minded appeals to "reason" and "logic" will sway voters.

It has been proven over and over again that the exact opposite is true — voters connect with political parties based mostly on loose associations and value judgments, things which don't mesh with what we think.

Being compassionate on a personal level doesn't make one less a libertarian. Reserve your hate for something that deserves it.

Posted by: Timothy West

They should have received money to cover the majority of their loss from their homeowners and flood insurance. We shouldn't be paying twice for this.

If we start a trend of the government paying people for what they should have had covered with insurance, then why should anyone take out insurance?

Can you tell me why a developer would want to buy ground that sits below sea level with no guarantees that this disaster won't happen again next year?

They probably wouldn't unless the government is throwing money at them to do so.

Posted by: Terry

■ TSA's Lavish Spending

—By Matthew Dailey
—January 12, 2006

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) spent lavishly on recruiting new employees after the Sept. 11 attacks, according to a report recently re-

leased by the Department of Homeland Security's Inspector General.

Shortly after TSA received the order from Congress to replace the private airport screeners with government employees by Nov. 19, 2002, the federal agency contracted with a private firm, NCS Pearson, to recruit new screeners.

The TSA allowed NCS Pearson to set up 150 temporary assessment centers across the country rather than use the agency's own facilities without determining the cost, MSNBC reported.

The total cost estimate of recruiting employees went from \$104 million to \$741 million, mostly due to the temporary assessment centers, the inspector general stated in his report. The total cost of setting up and using the assessment centers was \$435 million.

Reader Comments:

The biggest mistake that the U.S. government made was replacing private airport screeners with government employees after 9-11.

Many members of Congress felt that this would increase and streamline airport security. It has done no such thing.

Private security companies can do a way better job than the TSA can without getting a cent from the taxpayers. ...

It is time that the Congress and the rest of the U.S. government eliminate the TSA and let the private sector handle airport security. Not only will this increase and improve security services at airports, but it will save lives and money.

Posted by: Alex Pugliese

■ Author Critical of Bush Administration Placed on No-Fly List

—By Matthew Dailey
—January 10, 2006

Last January, Texas reporter James Moore attempted to board a plane as part of a scheduled trip to Ohio and was declined entry by the computer system. The agent at the reservation desk informed Moore he was on the No-Fly List.

Moore was shocked, and the woman explained that she could not give him any explanation why he was on the list.

Moore claims he has never been arrested and is "more uninteresting than a Tupperware party."

What Moore has done is write a book that is critical of the Bush administration.

The book, titled *Bush's Brain: How Karl Rove Made George W. Bush Presidential*, portrays Rove as underhanded, devious, and a win-at-all-costs campaigner.

Moore has been on the No-Fly List for a year and has yet to be told

the official reason for being on it.

Reader Comments:

Wonder how many libertarians are on a similar list?

They can tap my phone, read my overseas mail, and hack my computer at will. I guess they can put anyone on a no-fly list too.

Posted by: Timothy West

Why is there even a no-fly list in the first place, especially with no reasonable mechanism to correct errors or determine reasons for inclusion?

Posted by: Haven't flown in years

One primary step in the road to totalitarianism is being able to track the movements of the citizens.

How long do you think it will be before these Draconian measures will be introduced to travel by bus, train or ship?

How long after that before you need some sort of visa before you can visit Aunt Martha in a neighboring state?

Posted by: Chuck

The most important thing Libertarians can do is challenge the belief that terrorism creates an imminent threat.

During the Cold War era, libertarians challenged the popular belief that the USSR was dangerous to the United States.

That's what we have to do now. Make the case that withdrawal from Iraq and from the whole Middle East region will make us more secure in the long-run.

Posted by: JGdisciple

It takes a long time for freedoms to erode with little or no opposition. So, shouldn't it work the other way too?

The American people won't tolerate a jump to individual liberty as proposed by a hard-core LP platform. But they may tolerate gradual steps towards liberty.

We can argue over how big the steps should be (the proof will be in the electoral results) but can't we all agree that it should be in steps and not in one fell swoop?

It gripes me as an old time anarcho-capitalist to say such things, but if one wants to be in a political party that expects to achieve its views through political action, then one has to be realistic.

Posted by: Creech

The only way to stop those from taking away our liberty is by gaining power.

To do that, we must gain support from a greater segment of the populace, gain power and influence, and get elected.

Posted by: Mike R.

THE MAILBOX

Continued from Page 16
too many laws. Naturally, the solution is to pass yet another law.

I have a suggestion for DownsizeDC. Why don't we really downsize the place by adjourning both houses of Congress and sending everybody home?

If anything comes up that really needs their attention we can always contact them by e-mail or conference call.

This would keep them much closer to their constituents and help them more truly be representatives.

While we're at it, we could move each of the government agencies out of the district. All the monuments and public buildings could remain, as well as the cherry trees. We could convert all the big office buildings into hotels, to serve the tourist trade, and the White House and such buildings could become museums.

—DICK CRAWFORD
Roy, Washington

Signature issue

Regarding Mark Nelson's forum, "Get back to our signature issue: Ending the War on Drugs", as a victim of America's War on (politically selected) Drugs, I have learned what may be a necessary strategy to begin to turn things around.

I was growing marijuana, and the police had been watching me for more than a year. Apparently, my activities were not of much interest for them, because they never did anything in all of that time.

Then last year, I received an inheritance of more than \$100,000 from my parents' deaths the previous year, and I deposited it into my bank. Five days later, police showed up at my house with a search warrant, and they held me in jail just long enough to implement seizure proceedings against my home and bank account.

My lawyer told me to get the documentation that all of the money was from an inheritance. The prosecutor then released my bank account and we negotiated a settlement on the equity of my house.

The prosecutor communicated to my lawyer that the police were complaining to him about the settlement, because they swore that my deceased mother, on whose account the check for my inheritance was written, was a new drug connection and that the money was for drugs — even though they knew very well that I could never grow that much money's worth of marijuana in my home.

The allowance of seizures in drug cases to go directly into enriching the police causes nothing but corruption and dishonesty among police departments.

Mr. Nelson mentions the movement for medical marijuana as a natural place to begin, but it is essential to work for reform of forfeiture laws. It is natural to only allow seizures upon conviction of a crime.

Also any such seizures must go to general funds removed from police funding to help eliminate police corruption.

Then we would probably see a vast growth in LEAP (Law Enforcement Against Prohibition).

—DUANE GRINDSTAFF
Kent, Washington

Immigration

I was flattered that Mr. Blumel felt my essay on immigration reform, published in the Nov. 2005 *LP News*, was worth his comment. (December 2005 *LP News*) I must agree with some of his assertions: that the War on Drugs is itself corrosive and unenforceable, and that "increased border enforcement" is unworkable.

I am familiar with the Cato Institute discussion "Backfire at the Border" and many other writings on the subject. I have found that no social or political ideology has a corner on genius and consider them all.

But finally, I depend on my 30 years in border enforcement in the customs as a troop and as a manager, as an instructor in INS and customs cross training, and as an instructor in the Overseas Training Program providing guidance to foreign border officials.

To establish Mr. Blumel's assertion that border enforcement alone is unworkable, we only need to look at the Iron Curtain. Folks crossed those heavily guarded borders even though those border guards were willing to shoot.

I assert that the administration since the early 1990's has intentionally avoided enforcing the immigration laws (at the work place) inside the United States.

In fact, there is evidence that INS shut down internal enforcement in response to Census Bureau concerns.

The conclusion drawn that "Enforcement without legalization cannot stop illegal immigration" is not adequately supported in the argument; as there has never been an attempt at real enforcement.

A serious revision of the entire concept of migration, conducted by people who really understand the issues, is what is really needed! Effective, fair and equal enforcement of the law must first be demonstrated so that is clear when a new law is passed that it will be observed.

This would then be followed by clear and concise policies and laws.

—FRED DREW
Brownsville, Texas

Dyslexic mailman

I have my own USPS horror story: I had a dyslexic postman!

My first hint was when I began getting letters addressed to "36 Freeman Court." My address was 36 Crawford Court. Same number, and also a court, but different name.

At first we just marked them "Delivered to wrong address" and put them back in the mailbox. I

thought someone would notice and fix the problem, but it just kept getting worse.

Then we saved them until we had a batch, took them to the other address, and picked up what they'd saved for us.

But that got to be a hassle, so I called the Postmaster and reported the problem.

The response was an eye-opener. His voice suddenly got very quiet, as if he didn't want to be overheard. He told me that they already knew about the problem, but there was nothing they could do about it.

Can you imagine a private business that couldn't fire (or at least transfer to some other job) an employee who didn't fulfill the minimum qualifications for his position?

—RICHARD CRAWFORD
Roy, Washington

Principles

"We stood for the principles the American people believe in."

So said John Shadegg in announcing his candidacy for the position of Majority Leader on Jan. 13.

What are those principles, according to John Shadegg? "A smaller federal government, returning power to the states, lower taxes, greater individual freedom, and — above all — reform."

Above all of the principles that the American people believe in is ... reform? The principle of reform?

This is the language and the composition of deceit. The words are selected for the emotional response they elicit, not because they have meaning.

The reader — or most especially the listener — is not expected to think, translate, interpret or internalize the meaning of the words. No, just hum along with the melody. Pick up a flag and wave it.

Did the Republican-dominated House, Senate, and Presidency carry us any closer to the principles the American people believe in, "smaller federal government, returning power to the states, lower taxes, greater individual freedom, and — above all — reform"? The short answer is a resounding "no!"

Instead, government spending has soared, federal control of the states has grown unceasingly, taxes, inflation and the cost of regulation have soared, individual freedom has been sacrificed to a lawless, nationwide police state, and reform — oh, we've had all the slave-making reform we can stand.

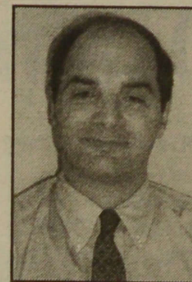
Those who go to Washington need to remember one principle — one simple principle: The purpose of government is to protect the rights (not wants) of individuals. The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights were adopted to do just that, yet only one man in Washington keeps that in the forefront of his mind at all times, and his name is not John Shadegg.

—MARK YANNONE
Peoria, Arizona

UPCOMING

April 22, 2006

Virginia LP Convention, to be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Charlottesville. Speakers to include John Berthoud of the National Taxpayers Union and Steve Anderson of the Institute for Justice. For details, call Jim Lark at (434) 973-5958 or e-mail jwlark@dellmail.com.



■ Berthoud

April 28-30, 2006

Indiana LP Convention, to be held at the Clarion Waterfront Resort in Indianapolis. Convention on Saturday will include workshops on proper land use, opposing eminent domain, and Indiana's Small Business Initiative. For details, call (317) 920-1994, e-mail lpinhq@lpin.org, or visit www.lpin.org.

April 28-30, 2006

South Carolina LP Convention, to be held at the Avista Resort in North Myrtle Beach. Convention on Saturday, April 29, followed by South Carolina's State Leadership Conference on Sunday, April 30. For details, call (843) 267-0045, e-mail chairman@sclibertarians.org, or visit www.sclibertarians.org.

April 29, 2006

Kansas LP Convention, to be held in Topeka. Location details and other information is not currently available. For updates, go to www.lpks.org.

April 29, 2006

New York LP Convention, to be held at the Best Western in Albany, not far from the airport on Wolf Road. There will likely be an event on Friday night before the convention. Other details to be announced. For information, go to <http://ny.lp.org/official/convention>.

May 5-7, 2006

North Carolina LP Convention, to be held at the Best Western Hotel in Burlington. The convention theme is "Independence Day: Every Day," emphasizing the actions people can take both in the LP and in their daily lives to grow individual liberties. For details, call Susan Hogarth at (919) 906-2106, e-mail convention@lpnc.org, or visit www.lpnc.org.

June 10, 2006

Texas LP Convention, location and specific schedule not yet determined. For more information when it becomes available, visit www.tx.lp.org.

June 30-July 3, 2006

2006 National Libertarian Party Convention, to be held at the Portland Hilton and Executive Tower in Portland, Ore. Details to come. Visit www.LP.org often to keep up with plans for the 2006 convention.

— ATTENTION —

Any Libertarian Party leaders or members who have information about conventions or other LP-related events are encouraged to send details to LP News Editor J. Daniel Cloud at Daniel.Cloud@LP.org

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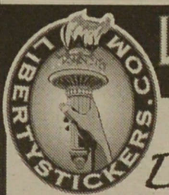
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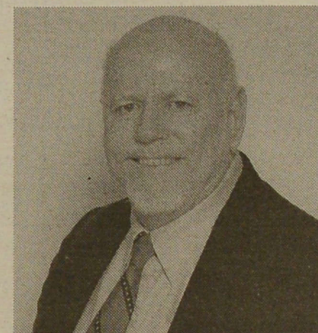
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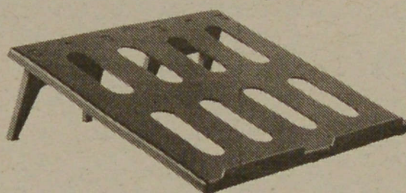
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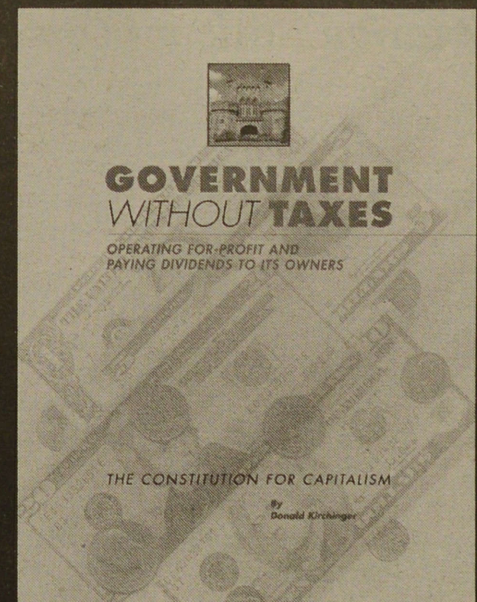
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UPCOMING

January 28-29, 2006

Libertarian State Leadership Conference, at the Phoenix Airport Hilton in Phoenix, Arizona. Conference to focus on governing as Libertarians, and will feature a panel discussion about eminent domain. Speakers to include Adrian Moore of the Reason Foundation, Arizona House Rep. Russell Pierce, and Libertarian judge John Buttrick.



■ Moore

February 24-27, 2006

Liberty at Sea '06, a four-day, three-night cruise hosted by the California LP, aboard Royal Caribbean's Monarch of the Seas. The California LP's annual convention will be held during the cruise. For details, go to www.CA.LP.org/convention.

February 25, 2006

New Jersey LP Convention, to be held at Rutgers University Inn in New Brunswick. Speakers to include Bradley Smith, former FEC chair and election finance law expert. Entertainment by freedom-oriented rock band Poker Face. For details, e-mail Jay Edgar at convention@njlp.org or go to www.njlp.org.

March 3-5, 2006

Missouri LP Convention, to be held at the Lamplighter Inn Convention Center, in Springfield. The event will feature a "Liberty Film Festival." Speakers to include Joyce Riley and Dave vonKleist from The Power Hour, Heather Talley of Bureaucrash, and Debbie Hopper of Mothers Against the Draft. For details, go to www.lpmo.org/events/convention/.

March 3-5, 2006

Pennsylvania LP Convention, to be held at the Atherton Hotel in State College, Pennsylvania. For more information, go to www.lppa.org.

March 11-12, 2006

New Mexico LP Convention, to be held in Rio Rancho. Specific venue to be determined. Speakers to (tentatively) include Michael Badnarik and Gary Johnson, former governor of New Mexico. For details when available, go to www.lpnm.org.



■ Johnson

March 24-26, 2006

Florida LP Convention, at the Boca Raton Embassy Suites Hotel. Speakers to include Jim Babka of DownsizeDC; Philip Blumel, elected Libertarian and Florida LP activist; author Bob Burg; and David Wood, president of the Second Amendment Coalition of Florida. For details, call (800) 478-0555, or go to <http://lpf2006.org>.

April 8-9, 2006

Washington LP Convention, "Building Tomorrow Together," at the Kitsap Conference Center in Bremerton. Presentations focusing on five subjects: education, the environment, healthcare, property rights and transportation. Speakers to be announced. For details when available, call (425) 641-8247, e-mail officemanager@lpwa.org, or visit www.lpwa.org.

[For more Upcoming Events, see page 18]

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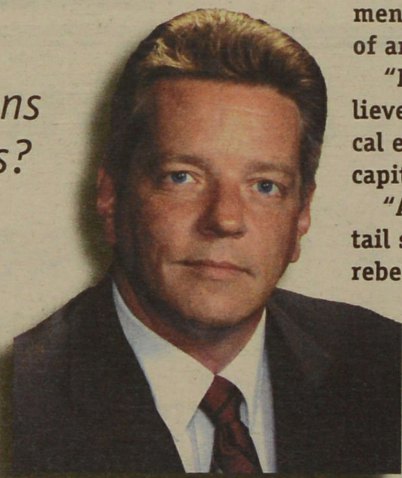
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FIRST WORD

"In his new book, *Rebel in Chief: Inside the Bold and Controversial Presidency of George W. Bush*, [Fred Barnes of Fox News] puts forth a thesis which would occur to few Americans. He regards our current President as a maverick who stands outside and above the establishment, and one who, in the spirit of the Starship Enterprise, has boldly gone where no scion of an incredibly fashionable family has gone before.

"My first reaction upon completing the opening pages was, 'Surely he doesn't really believe this?' Ah, but Barnes does believe it or at least he appears to for the purposes of political expediency. We find that despite our President's family spending decades in the nation's capital, Bush the Younger is 'an alien in the realm of the governing class.'

"A rebel would not mistake socialism for compassion; a rebel would veto budgets and curtail spending; a rebel would stand for his convictions, but in George W. Bush we have not a rebel but a politician.

"If big government is not Bush's answer then why did spending grow by 33 percent during his first term? Does anyone know of a large scale program that Bush slashed?

"George W. Bush is the greatest boon that the Libertarian Party has ever had. His fiscal profligacy has made conservatives like myself alter our self-descriptions from conservative or conservative-libertarian to libertarian alone.

— BERNARD CHAPIN, *Men's News Daily*, January 16, 2006