

ALASKA LIBERTY

SPRING

Report from the Alaska Libertarian Party

1984

State Convention in Homer — May 4-6

Plan to attend — schedule inside

If you'd like to learn more about Alaska's exciting new political party, plan to attend the Libertarian convention in Homer May 4-6. The convention is open to all (complete convention schedule is inside).

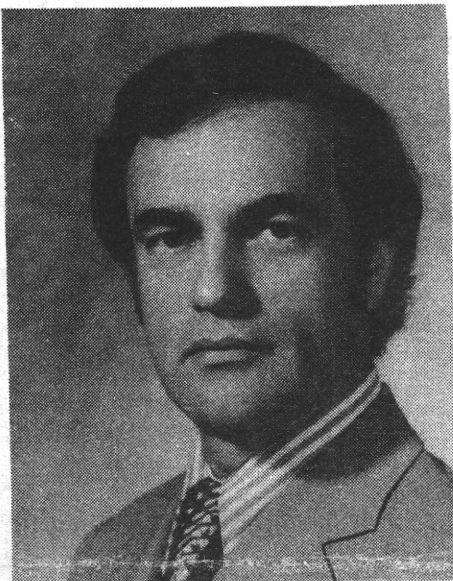
You'll meet Libertarians from around the state. You'll hear refreshing ideas about individual freedom, reducing government interference, a non-interventionist foreign policy, homesteading, and much more. You can also attend seminars on:

- Private education versus government schools
- How to get elected and implement Libertarian ideas
- Future homesteading in Alaska
- Why abolish the Alaska Transportation Commission
- Initiatives: taking our ideas to the people
- American foreign and military policy: cost and dangers
- Freedom of Information Act: help yourself
- And others!

In addition to seminars, you'll have a chance to discuss U.S. foreign policy with America's leading advocate of a non-interventionist foreign policy: Dr. Earl Ravenal. A former Pentagon official, Dr. Ravenal is now a professor of foreign service at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. He has written several books, including *Never Again: Learning from America's Foreign Policy Failures*. His articles have appeared in *Atlantic*, *Harper's*, *New York Time Magazine*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *Inquiry*, *Reason*, and others.

On Saturday afternoon (May 5) Dr. Ravenal will speak on America's foreign and military policy. At the Saturday night banquet he will speak on "What's Wrong with the American Party System." Dr. Ravenal served as foreign policy advisor to both Roger McBride and Ed Clark during their Libertarian presidential bids. As both a Washington insider and respected critic of current policy, Dr. Ravenal is guaranteed to stimulate listeners.

Beyond all this, your attendance allows you to participate in writing the party platform and electing party officers. To vote on the convention floor, you must be a party member.



Dr. Earl Ravenal
Featured Convention Speaker

That requires paying the \$10 annual dues and signing the non-initiation of force statement.

The convention will be held at Land's End Resort at the tip of the Homer spit. It provides a breathtaking view of Kachemak Bay and the surrounding glaciers.

The costs for the convention are as follows:

- Full package (registration, seminars, all meals) — \$125
- Registration/Seminars — \$40
- Registration only — \$20
- Individual meals — at the door (see convention schedule inside)

To register, fill out the form inside and mail it to:

ALP Convention 1984
Box 2020
Homer, AK 99603

For more information, contact convention co-chairs in Homer at:

Jackie Cochinos — 235-7560
Jeanne Calkins — 235-7248

Or, call state headquarters in Anchorage at 561-5413.

See you in Homer!

Initiative makes ballot — battle begins

After more than a year's work, the Libertarian Party qualified its transportation deregulation initiative for the fall ballot. Our success surprised many observers. Two other petition drives on better known issues (legislative pay raise repeal and nuclear freeze) failed to gather sufficient signatures.

The initiative abolishes the Alaska Transportation Commission. That little known agency keeps freight rates high by preventing new carriers from entering the business. A recent study by the state Office of Management and Budget stated, "the current system of regulation discourages healthy competition and protects monopolies in the air and motor transportation industries."

Currently if someone wishes to haul goods or people by plane or truck in Alaska, they must seek permission from the ATC. The applicant must show he is financially able to conduct the proposed operation, and that his business will not have an adverse impact on current carriers. (What if grocery stores had to make the same showing — they couldn't open if they undercut their competitors!)

If our initiative passes, customers — not the ATC — will decide who stays in business. All a potential carrier will need to show is his ability to be financially responsible for his actions (insurance). Safety for planes will continue to be regulated by the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA). Truck safety will be regulated by the Department of Public Safety (state troopers) and the Division of Measurement Standards (weigh stations). The state's ability to protect carriers

and their high rates will be removed.

The initiative also requires the governor to lobby congress for repeal of the federal Jones Act. That federal law requires all goods coming from another American port to Alaska must be carried on American ships staffed with American crews. In its final report, the Statehood Commission estimated the Jones Act costs Alaskan consumers \$41 million each year in higher costs. It also estimated the law reduces the wellhead value of Alaskan oil by about one-half billion dollars. The report argued for repeal of the Jones Act.

It's expected that current protected carriers will mount an aggressive campaign to defeat the initiative. Veteran campaign observers expect these carriers to spend \$250-500,000. Already, they have filed suit to keep the initiative off the ballot. Leaders of the suit are Mark-Air, Alaska Airlines, and the Truckers Association.

To win, Libertarians must spend at least \$100,000. Without that amount, Alaskan voters will not become aware of the pernicious effects of the ATC and the Jones Act. We must show these laws trample upon the rights of individuals to trade freely with each other. We must tell Alaskan pilots it's illegal for them to fly their neighbors into the bush for pay (that's "destructive competition"). We must tell Alaskans that it's illegal for truck owners to work for themselves (that's "cutthroat business"). We must tell consumers the ATC and Jones Act drives up their costs. In short, we must show our initiative is fair and just, and that our opponents want to keep transportation a private club for the privileged.

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— Address Correction Requested —

From the Chair

by Dick Randolph

Our record over the past year shows we've matured into a professional, effective political organization. We helped set the political agenda, control the debate, and create public pressure on a broad range of issues. Let's look at what we've done:

- Save the dividend program. Without our 22,000 signatures and the publicity program we spearheaded last session, the dividend program would have become history. This was a House coalition priority — we won, they lost.

- Stop the House Republican-led coalition from outlawing the Libertarian Party. Their pernicious bill (HB 409) was a blatant attempt by Republicans and their legislative cohorts to steal the ballot access we won in 1982. We responded rapidly and forcefully. They lost another priority in a close vote.

- Play major role in preventing enactment of mandatory insurance. We successfully lobbied last session to kill HB 7, and we continue to work against the current bill.

- Overturn the denial of raffle permits by the Lt. Governor and Attorney General. They tried to cut off a major source of our fundraising by refusing us permits. We fought a successful battle, and have since raised about \$40,000 by raffle.

- Repeal the presidential primary law. We alone led this battle. We publicized the negative aspects of the primary, and withdrew our candidate in protest. I flew to Juneau early this session to lobby for repeal. The bill raced through the legislature in time to save nearly a million dollars budgeted for a useless election this spring.

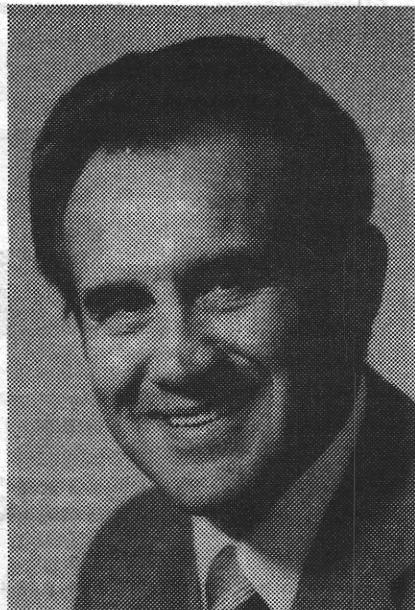
- Place on the ballot an initiative to deregulate Alaska transportation. This was no small feat; sponsors of more well known and popular issues (legislative pay raise repeal and nuclear freeze) failed to qualify.

- Purchase an inhouse computer to provide our candidates invaluable services. We were the first political party in Alaska to buy one.

- Identify favorable election districts and recruit candidates who can win in 1984.

- Produce a first-class brochure for introducing Alaskans to our position on significant issues.

- Produce a monthly newsletter regularly for all contributors and



party members.

- Staff booths at the Tanana and Palmer fairs and Fur Rondy. Raffle tickets were sold, petition signatures were gathered, and thousands of pieces of libertarian literature were distributed. Neither Republicans nor Democrats appeared at all these functions.

- Require the election office to print voter forms that include Libertarian. Despite our ballot status in 1982, the election office refused to include us on forms. We successfully challenged their illegal stance.

I could continue, but it suffices to say we've had a busy and productive year. These accomplishments have been possible largely because of our crucial decision over a year ago to hire a fulltime executive director. On February 1, 1983 Duncan Scott became the first fulltime director of any political party in Alaska. Since then, he has provided indispensable service. In addition, Susan Schultze was hired as office manager. I want to acknowledge and thank Duncan and Susan for their marvelous performance in the cause of Liberty!

While we can be proud of our record to date, it is only a beginning. Much remains to be done. For instance, we must:

- Elect Libertarians in 1984. Representation in the legislature is crucial to our goal of transferring state wealth to individuals and protecting the rights of Alaskans.

- Expand our outreach efforts. We simply aren't reaching many receptive Alaskans. All of us should make this educational and recruitment process a major priority.

- Assure that the transportation deregulation initiative is approved

by voters this fall.

- Increase participation in the monthly pledge program. This program finances day-to-day operations, but has not been adequate to date. Some raffle income that could have been used for education or direct candidate support has paid daily expenses. If you haven't pledged already, please do. You will receive a personal monthly reminder and newsletter.

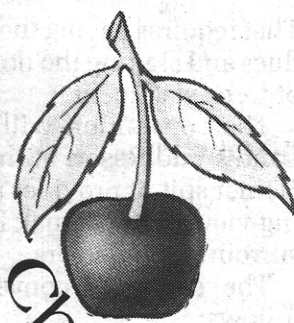
- Register more Alaskans as Libertarians. Ballot status is a two-edged sword. It can begin to work against us if we don't work to expand our registered ranks.

As I've said many times, we are at battle with powerful groups who want to control our lives, property, and families. Those of us who want to be free must also be prepared to perform those deeds necessary to gain freedom.

This year promises to be a year of profound and far-reaching success. The degree to which that promise is realized will be determined by your commitment. I ask that you once again reach beyond your comfort zone, and together we will be free!

Available from H.Q.

ALP brochure\$.10 each
Transportation initiative brochure free
Party Platform (after 6/1/84)\$.25
Bumperstickers\$2.00
Social Insecurity Cards\$2/hundred
TIP cards\$2/hundred
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CUTTING BACK CITY HALL (Poole)\$6.95
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FREEDOM FOR ALASKANS (Randolph)\$3.95
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Party moves to bigger location

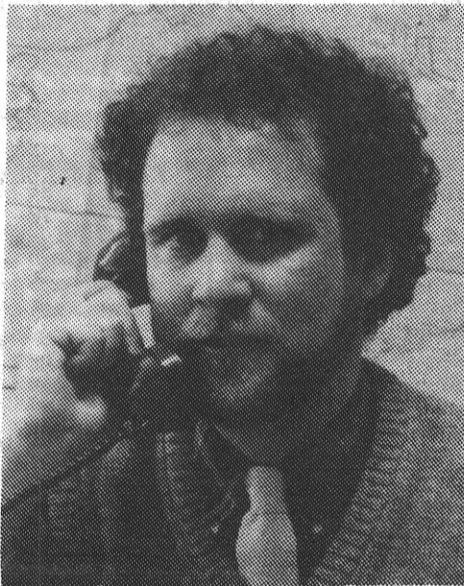
After three years at one location, the Libertarian Party moved its headquarters earlier this year. With increased activities more space was required. The Anchorage and state parties now share an Anchorage office on the corner of Arctic and 36th.

The office is staffed with two full-time people. Duncan Scott is executive director, and Susan Schultze is office manager. In addition to them, a steady flow of volunteers stop by to help with various projects. If you have time to help, please add your name to the volunteers list by calling 561-5413.

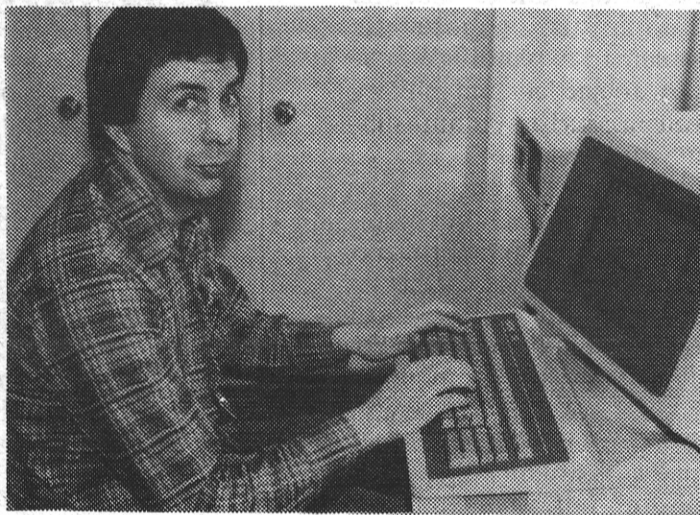
Recently a new computer was

purchased for headquarter use. It will prove invaluable for storing our expanding mailing list, as well as providing candidates with computer services. Applying computers to campaigns is an exciting development. We expect to be leaders in Alaska in this area.

If you have any office equipment or supplies that you think a political office can use, please contact Duncan Scott. Especially needed are a postage meter, stamps, extra computer terminals, computer supplies (sticky labels/paper), plants, and anything else that makes the office attractive.



Duncan Scott
Executive Director



Volunteer Carl Whitson programming new computer.

Executive Committee

STATE CHAIR

Dick Randolph
1105 Cushman
Fairbanks, AK 99701
452-2206

VICE CHAIR

Steve DeLisio
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279-9574

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SECRETARY

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KACHEMAK BAY CHAIR

Mark Stout
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KENAI CHAIR

Alice Johnson
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747-5339

STATE HEADQUARTERS

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Executive Director
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How to cut the Pentagon budget

by Earl C. Ravenal

Defense is not obscenely expensive, just prohibitively expensive. The defense budget is the price of our foreign policy, but the connection is not always clear. The cost would matter little if the nation could easily afford its defense program, but this is far from the case. We are faced with a crisis of national solvency, and defense must take its share of large cuts in spending. This means scaling down our ambitious defense program. The central question is: What can America do without?

Critiques of Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger's presentation take aim at his proposed 18 percent rise in budgetary authority (the spending initiated in a given year), to \$305 billion in fiscal 1985. They pay little attention to the crucial consideration: Where is the money going? To answer that question, you must allocate all defense costs to combat forces and assign those forces to some military mission. Unless that is done, the budget is unintelligible. Critics who are unwilling or unable to do this homework are reduced to explaining large expenditures by devil theories and to prescribing arbitrary percentage cuts or "hit lists" of individual weapons.

One prevalent — fallacious — explanation is "waste." We are treated to the spectacle of politicians displaying wing nuts, claw hammers and stool caps, for which contractors have charged the Pentagon outlandish sums. Of course such procurement practices are ridiculous — but it takes a heap of hardware to add up to \$305 billion. Another illusion is called "military reform." Typically, military reformers want "weapons that are workable, reliable and (relatively) cheap instead of overcomplicated, breakable and wildly expensive." But a few horror stories don't make a conclusive critique,

and a handful of therapeutic adjectives is not an effective remedy.

To save, you have to know where the money is. For fiscal 1985, strategic nuclear forces would take about \$70 billion, or 23 percent, of the requested budget authority. The rest, \$235 billion, or 77 percent, is for general purpose forces — that is, conventional arms. For example, an average Army division would cost \$4.8 billion, and we would have 17. A wing of tactical aircraft would cost \$2.1 billion, and we would have the equivalent of 44. The Marine Corps would cost \$21 billion. The full cost of deploying one aircraft carrier battle group in forward waters would be \$13 billion, and our strategy requires four or five forward. As for regions, Europe would account for \$129 billion, Asia \$47 billion and the new United States Central Command, or Rapid Deployment Forces, \$59 billion, of which about \$47 billion is for the Persian Gulf.

Partisan critics allege that the Reagan Administration created its fiscal problem by expanding America's security objectives and military establishment. But this Administration is just the latest, Democratic or Republican, from the beginning of the cold war to promote the "paradigm" of large-scale deterrence and extensive forward defense — that is, containment of Communist power and influence. All it is trying to do is spend enough to implement that paradigm. Can America face the necessity of going beyond minor and superficial adjustments and challenge our entire national strategy?

The resolution of our dilemma would require a cut in defense spending on the order of \$120 billion to \$150 billion a year. But the only way to save significant sums is to remove large units from our military forces. This would make it necessary to reduce our defense commitments

throughout the world.

We could defend our essential security and our central values with eight land divisions (six Army and two Marine), the equivalent of 20 tactical air wings (11 Air Force, four Marine and five Navy), and six carrier battle groups. With strategic nuclear forces of submarines and bombers, this would put manpower at 1.185 million. The defense budget, at the end of a decade of adjustment, would be about \$154 billion in 1985 dollars.

By contrast, the Administration is requesting 17 Army and three Marine divisions, the equivalent of 44 tactical air wings, and overall 13 carrier battle groups; this requires 2.166 million men and \$305 billion. By fiscal 1994, the defense budget would be close to \$700 billion, and cumulative defense spending be-

tween 1985 and 1994 would be \$4.8 trillion. With a policy of strategic disengagement, the 1994 defense budget would be 45 percent less, and the cumulative cost over the decade would be \$2.6 trillion.

A strategy of disengagement might become more plausible in the light of this comparison.

Earl Ravenal, professor of international relations at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, was director of the Asian Division in the department of systems analysis, of the Secretary of Defense, from 1967 to 1969. This article originally appeared in the New York Times on February 16, 1984. Professor Ravenal will speak at the Alaska Libertarian Party convention May 4-6 in Homer.

Wanted: Candidates!

If you or someone you know wants to run for a political office as a Libertarian, please call Dick Randolph (452-2206).

The party has begun an intensive recruitment program for Libertarians who are serious about winning. The legislature — in fact the entire political process — has never been held in lower esteem by voters. Polls show that nearly every legislator is vulnerable.

This year we will have the organization and money to provide our candidates with the resources to win. Please help us identify serious, principled Libertarians who will carry the banner this year. Filing deadline is June 1.



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Free markets vs. politicians

by Dick Randolph

Recent discussions on the permanent fund between Tom Fink (1982 Republican gubernatorial candidate) and Steve Cowper (1983 Democratic primary candidate for governor) illustrate not the differences between them, or their parties, or their respective conservative and liberal philosophies, but rather their similarities.

Both men, while supposedly "debating," have been in fact championing the same side. Neither questions whether the state should own the resources now producing the wealth accumulating in the permanent fund. Neither argues that royalty income derived from property ownership should flow to individuals, not the state.

No, quite the contrary. Both enthusiastically embrace the premise that government ought to own and control the means of production, a notion they share with a well-known 19th century political writer. They differ only on which political group

should decide how to spend ("invest") the money, and whose friends reap the benefits.

Of course, there is an alternative ignored by both men. It's called free enterprise.

This view rests on the notion that people, not government, should own land and means of production. It requires that transactions among people be regulated by natural market forces, not artificial political manipulation. It requires that people be free to use their minds and property as they choose.

The proper role for government, under this view, is to protect people's rights. It does not become the all-powerful landlord and banker!

Unfortunately, Alaska does not enjoy a private economy today. If the flow of government stopped tomorrow, the economy would collapse. But, if we choose, we can move away from a politically directed economy, and toward free enterprise.

We could start by using state-claimed wealth-producing resources and royalty income to reduce dependence on government. The permanent fund dividend program is a small step in that direction. The concept should be expanded into a royalty trust program, where all royalty income (roughly one-third the state's total income) would flow to current Alaskans. This would place the money, and hence the power, in its proper jurisdiction — the people! Then a Mr. Fink, or a Mr. Cowper, would have to appeal to each of us to gain approval for their respective schemes.

In addition to creating this trust, the land, the wealth-producing capacity of Alaska, must be privatized.

An aggressive "open to entry" policy should be pursued, making available acreage across Alaska through homesteading, lotteries and sales.

It would be desirable if someone discussed these real alternatives to the status quo. But the discussion between Mr. Fink and Mr. Cowper is so narrow as to become almost meaningless. It should not remain a "love-in" between two collectivists, each arguing he knows what's best for us.

Someone should stand up in favor of free markets. Then the discussion could be expanded into a meaningful debate!

(This article originally appeared in the Anchorage Daily News — ed.)

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FORM 1984 1040-EZ INDIVIDUAL TAX FORM

Use IRS label. Otherwise, please print or type.	Your first name and initial (if joint return, also give spouse's name and initial)	Last name	Your Social Security No.
	Present home address (Number and street, including apartment number, or rural route)		Spouse's Social Security No.
	City, town or post office, State and ZIP code		Your occupation ▶

STEP 1 ENTER TOTAL INCOME FOR YEAR \$ _____

STEP 2 SEND IT IN

1984 ALASKA LIBERTARIAN PARTY CONVENTION: MAY 4-6
Land's End Lodge, Homer, Alaska

FRIDAY, MAY 4

- 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Registration, Land's End Lobby
- 1-5 p.m. General Membership Meeting
 — call to order
 — reports
 — constitution and bylaws debate
 — platform debate (time permitting)
- 1:30 p.m. Seminar: Private Education versus Government Schools
 — Jerry Anderson, branch president of LDS Church of Homer
 — Donnis Thompson, 1982 Libertarian candidate for Lt. Governor
 — Chuck Crapuchettes, educator and founder of Cook Inlet Academy
- 3:00 p.m. Seminar: How To Get Elected and Implement Libertarian Ideas
 — Stan Thompson, Mayor, Kenai Borough
 — Ruth Reed, Wasilla City Council
 — Bill Synder, Homer City Council
- 4:30 p.m. Seminar: Alternatives to Limited Entry
 — Ted Carson, Kenai attorney and former commercial fisherman
- 6:30 p.m. No Host Cocktail Party, Homer Elks Lodge
- 7:30 p.m. Banquet, Homer Elks Lodge (\$25)
 — Master of Ceremony: Donnis Thompson
 — Speaker: Dick Randolph, "Reflections: Past, Present, and Future." Dick is currently state chair. He was the party's 1982 gubernatorial candidate, and the first elected Libertarian in the United States
 — Entertainment: Homer Hoedowners

SATURDAY, MAY 5

- 9:00 a.m.-noon General Membership Meeting
 — platform debate (continues)
- 9:00 a.m. Seminar: Future Homesteading in Alaska
 — John Maloney, author of "Alaska's Homesteading Handbook"
 — Marsha Corpi, Homer
- 10:30 a.m. Seminar: Why Abolish the Alaska Transportation Commission
 — Sen. Vic Fisher (D-Anchorage), co-sponsor of bill to abolish ATC and outspoken critic of ATC
 — Andre Marrou, one of three sponsors of initiative to abolish ATC
 — Fred James, initiative activist
- Noon Luncheon, Land's End (\$15)
 — Speaker: Andre Marrou, "In 1984, Vote for Liberty, Not for Government"
- 1:30-5:00 p.m. General Membership Meeting
 — platform debate (continued)

- 1:30 p.m. Seminar: Initiatives — Bringing Our Ideas to the People
 — Dick Randolph, Alaska's most experienced initiative leader: in 1980 he led the initiative to repeal the state income tax, in 1982 he led the Tundra Rebellion, in 1983 he led the petition to save the dividend program, and in 1984 he is primary sponsor of the transportation deregulation initiative
 — Duncan Scott, party executive director, has managed five ballot drives and several initiative campaigns in western states.
- 3:00 p.m. Seminar: American Foreign and Military Policy — Costs and Dangers
 — Earl Ravenal, Professor of International Relations at Georgetown University. Dr. Ravenal is America's leading advocate of a non-interventionist foreign policy. His writings have appeared in *Atlantic*, *Harpers*, *New York Times Magazine*, *Foreign Affairs*, and other publications.
- 4:00 p.m. Seminar: Freedom of Information Act: To Help Yourself
 — Bob Folsie, individual rights consultant
 — Rocky Strebel, Anchor Point paralegal
- 5:00 p.m. Seminar: Are We Using Paper for Money
 — Ken Smith, Anchorage financial consultant
 — Patrick Church, Homer surveyor
- 6:00 p.m. No Host Cocktail Party, Land's End
 — The bartender has created a drink just for the occasion. Called the Liberty Cocktail, it's red, white and blue!
- 7:30 p.m. Banquet, Land's End (\$30)
 — Master of Ceremony: Fred James, Mat-Su Valley radio talk show host
 — Speaker: Dr. Earl Ravenal, "What's Wrong with America's Party System." Dr. Ravenal is a well-known author and critic of American foreign and military policy. He served as an advisor to Ed Clark's 1980 Libertarian campaign for president.
 — Meal: prime rib or fresh seafood
 — Entertainment following speech

SUNDAY, MAY 6

- 9:00 a.m. Galation Fellowship meeting (Christian Libertarians)
- 10:00 a.m. Brunch, Land's End
 — features their famous brunch, including whole suckling pig, roast beef, omelets, sausage, fresh fruit salads, breads and champagne
- 11:30 a.m. General Membership Meeting
 — platform (continued if necessary)
 — other business
 — election of state officers
- 2:00 p.m. Adjournment
- 3:00 p.m. State Executive Committee meeting
 — joint meeting of old and new officers

REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____
 Address _____
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PAYMENT IS ENCLOSED FOR FOLLOWING PACKAGE:

- COMPLETE PACKAGE — \$125 for registration, seminar, meals (discount price of \$110 until 4/15/84)
- REGISTRATION/SEMINARS — \$40
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Reaching the hard to reach

by Steve DeLisio

Frequently we find ourselves intimidated about approaching individuals with backgrounds different from our own to win them over to our cause. I have tried a few approaches which have at least broken the ice, and thought I would share them with you.

1. **The Deeply Religious.** Many of these folks agree with us on most matters except victimless crime. On that subject, remind your prospect of the central precept of the Judeo-Christian religion of Free Will. God set forth basic rules of conduct, but left Man with free will to choose. If one chooses to break the rules, he must account for his behavior to the Almighty and take the consequences.

Libertarians merely want to apply this philosophy to daily living. Each person must be allowed to make choices and must live with the consequences of those choices, good or bad. Why should Man's law intervene between an individual and the Almighty on any conduct that does not infringe on the freedom of others to make their own choices? Since those who engage in "victimless crimes" must account to a higher authority than government, what need is there for government to interfere?

2. **Blacks.** Of all Americans, Blacks have the most recent experience of life without freedom. Not so many generations ago, their ances-

tors were slaves. Because most slave owners valued their "property," they concerned themselves with what amount of food, type and extent of housing and clothing, extent of education, opportunities for advancement, extent of influence on their children and so on.

In modern times, all of us, Blacks and others alike, have voluntarily abducted our freedom to Government which now determines the amount of food, type and extent of housing and clothing, extent of education, opportunities for advancement, extent of influence on our children, etc. And we are rapidly allowing an increase in the power of government over all of us. Hence, by

demanding more and more of Government, Blacks and the rest of us are rushing headlong back into slavery — without even realizing it.

3. **The Poor.** Many believe that, in a Libertarian world, the poor and disadvantaged will be abandoned. But we must remind them that historically and at the present, Americans are the most generous people in the world — when left to their own devices. Now decisions regarding charitable contributions have become increasingly influenced by government — tax deductions, who received the benefit of government redistribution of wealth, etc. Frequently we decline to contribute to meet an obvious need out of the conviction we already gave through the taxes confiscated from us.

The poor suffer in even more despicable ways from government intervention. The minimum wage law precludes many of the young or poor from obtaining meaningful employment, since many potential employers cannot afford to pay unskilled labor at the minimum wage. And, due to stringent regulation of many businesses, including the transportation industry, no one without substantial financial backing can enter a large number of enterprises they might otherwise be qualified to compete successfully in.

4. **Asians.** Here we have a large number of people, of great energy, ingenuity and determination, who are taking full benefit of our relatively free enterprise system. Many of their enterprises are part of the underground economy, as a result of the considerable experience many of these people had in more repressive societies in making a living despite government intervention. Unfortunately, few of these good people are politically involved in Alaska. But they are truly our kind of people and, if we can involve them, we will tap into a tremendously effective group of people.

These are but a few of the sub groups of people we should have success with. For that matter, every individual is a potential Libertarian. We simply must be imaginative and persistent enough to find the right combination to unlock their interest and support.

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Zoning versus freedom

by Stan Thompson

An American visitor to Russia was recently discussing with a Russian man, while visiting his home, the difference between their totalitarian state and the free democracy of the United States.

It came to a question of home ownership which seemed to be the big difference in the two, and the American stated, "In our country we can own our own homes. It is one of the advantages of our free country, while you must live in a home that is assigned to you by the government."

"Do you mean," said the Russian, "that in your country nobody can take you off of your home or remove you from it? The government no longer has any authority over it?"

"Not exactly," said the American. "In our country, if we don't pay our taxes, then we would lose our home and would have to move elsewhere."

"Well," said the Russian, "that's very similar to here, except we pay our taxes through our work and it is considered part of our earnings."

"But you," the Russian said, "can do whatever you want to with your own home, I guess. We have to get permission from the government to make any changes, put in an addition or even to fix it up."

"No," said the American, "that's not quite true. In our country, due to what we call zoning, in most places we have to get permission from the government also to fix up our home, or to build a new home, and they tell us where to put it on our property and what we can or can't do on our property. They can even tell us the cost of the home that we may put on our property."

"But," said the Russian, "they can't tell you how many people you can have in your home, while here they do."

"No," said the American, "they don't always do it, but yes they have the authority and often do say how many people can inhabit a certain size house. That's to protect us all, you know."

"Yes," said the Russian, "it sounds very similar to here, but your land around your home you can do whatever you want to with that can't you?"

"No," said the American, "where the land is zoned, we really can't. The government tells us how far our house has to set back from the road and what size of side lots and back lots we must have and they have the authority to, and in many cases do, tell us whether we can put in a lawn, or if we wanted to put in a garden in our front lawn, they could tell us that we couldn't, and they often tell us what size trees we can have on our property."

"Well," said the Russian, "I really don't see the difference. Your zoning sounds about like it is here and the taxing of your homes sounds about like it is here. What is the difference between your free country and our so-called totalitarian state?"

The American thought awhile. "You know, I really don't know. In our country we can be taxed for our property and if we don't pay our tax, we lose it; while in your country, it is much the same situation if you don't do the work that you are assigned, because you are sick or tired, you may lose your home. Also, you can't add onto your home or build a new home without permission from the government, and you would have to meet certain government regulations that are decided by governmental people. I guess really it is just exactly the same here under our zoning."

Of course, thought the American, all of our country isn't zoned yet, but most of the cities are and even a good deal of the countryside. In fact, in some cases they even tell farmers how many pigs and cows they can raise on their farm. I don't know, there must be a difference. I'll have to think about it.

Yes, folks, let's think about it. What is the difference between what it used to be, when we owned our property and we were free to do as we wished on it and nobody thought

of interfering with our right to do so vs. what it has become today when, with government zoning rules, bureaucrats that are appointed have the right to tell us just exactly what we can do on our own property. Is this democracy? Is this freedom? Do we really wish to extend our zoning regulations? I wonder.

Stan Thompson is mayor of the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

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