



ILLINOIS LIBERTARIAN

Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of Illinois

vol. 16 no.1

January 1990

Campaign Strategy – Part 2

by Chris Barker

Chair, Libertarian Club of Springfield

In the December issue of the Illinois Libertarian, Sue Walton and Ken Prazak raised the question of whether the Libertarian Party of Illinois (LPI) should run a slate of statewide candidates in 1990. I want to respond to their inquiry, but first let me state some facts.

It will take approximately 30,000 signatures to qualify a statewide Libertarian ticket next year. In 1988, in order to place Ron Paul and Andre Marrou on the ballot in Illinois, volunteers gathered about 5,000 signatures and the LPI obtained another 30,000 signatures by raising \$31,000 in contributions. As a result of the hard work and sacrifices of many people through the years, the LPI has had a statewide slate of state and/or national candidates in each election every two years starting with 1976.

I had the privilege of attending the LPI State Central Committee meeting held on Sunday, December 3. Among several other items of business, the SCC discussed the controversial issue of whether or not there should be a statewide slate, pro and con being equally divided.

Some Libertarians honestly believe that efforts should be focused on the state and local levels rather than on presidential races. This "decentralist" approach holds that local candidates are more likely to win and ballot initiatives are far more likely to be approved. I agree. After all, I was once a decentralist in a manner of speaking. I had believed that we should place a priority on a few "winnable" races. I had thought that resources could be concentrated on those contests in order to maximize our chances of victory. A few victories would raise the morale of the members and the credibility of the Party. What has changed my mind?

First, in almost all areas, Libertarians are presently far too few in number locally to succeed by themselves. If anyone really wants to guarantee the election of a libertarian government, then they must contemplate congregating in selected geographic locations. Ft. Collins, Colorado, and Big Water, Utah, come to mind. Second, in the cases where the candidate has been successful locally, his or her effectiveness has been almost nil. After

total isolation, he or she has often resigned in frustration or refused to run for re-election. Ask Scott Tillman or Gerry Walsh. Third, even when the Libertarian has decided to run for re-election, the Government parties have concentrated their resources to insure defeat. Think about Andre Marrou. Fourth, and last, the resignation, refusal to run, or defeat of the previously victorious Libertarian has had as devastating an impact on morale as the earlier triumph had on raising it.

But what about ballot initiatives? Libertarian philosophy is far broader than any single specialized amendment or initiative. If we only want to float these, we don't need the Libertarian Party. More importantly, the flaw in the plans of our conservative friends who want to erect Constitutional barriers is really quite simple. Do you think that any outside group can play the game better than the insiders? If you change the rules, so will they and far faster and easier.

It all sounds pretty negative, doesn't it? Well, it's not. At this stage in our development, the electoral process can only be used for one thing by us. And that is education. Yes, EDUCATION! We get our best bang for the buck on the national and statewide ballots. As Steve Nelson said, "Let's not underestimate the value of having every voter see the word Libertarian on the ballot on election day."

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But there is so much more. If we have candidates, we can present ideas through ads on television and radio, and in magazines and newspapers. The American people are only really open for political discussion during the period of the election campaign. We are invited to schools, colleges and universities to give our point of view. Our veterans become fired up with the contest once again. But most important of all, this is when we find new friends who start the process of learning what the magnificent philosophy of libertarianism is all about.

So now it is all up to you, the stalwarts in the fight for freedom. Let Sue Walton know how you feel. But if you want to run a statewide slate next year, back your words with deeds. Simple arithmetic will tell you that each and every member of the LPI will need to obtain 100 signatures, contribute \$100 or some combination of the two. And there is just one more little thing. We need to have candidates to run.

DEA Raids a Washington State Activist's Business

reprinted (edited version) from the Northwest Libertarian, December 1989

by Tom Isenberg

Look at the last page of [the Washington party] newsletter. There's no more Hydro Tech ad. That perennial little business card, which represented a fellow human being's attempt to make his living honestly and diligently, is gone. The latest manifestation of the government's drug war, however, has arrived.

Many of us were horrified to tune into the KIRO evening news on October 27 and watch as federal agents confiscated the inventory of Kevin Bjornson's Hydro Tech store here in Seattle and in Portland. Bjornson, a long-time Libertarian activist, was not arrested, but he faces a civil case and possible criminal conspiracy charges.

Armed with 38 warrants, DEA agents, assisted by U.S Marshals, raided indoor growing supply businesses in 42 states arresting 11 store owners during the day-long operation dubbed, "Operation Green Merchant." The raids, covered by local and national media, were ostensibly an attempt to discourage those businesses which sell indoor grow lights and hydroponics supplies, often used to cultivate marijuana. Of course, those same supplies are used to propagate fuchsias, orchids, and vegetables, and many are sold in neighborhood gardening and hardware stores.

According to P-I reporter Steve Miletich, Seattle U.S. Attorney Mike McKay, said that his office would prosecute these suppliers [in his jurisdiction] "if it can be shown that they knowingly served as consultants to marijuana growers." A prosecutor stated in a public interview that he'd like to see Bjornson in jail for ten years.

Bjornson said that his conspiracy charges stem from an affidavit (signed by 30 arrested marijuana growers) to the effect that he knew they were going to use the equipment to grow marijuana. Bjornson said that he has never heard of most of the people who signed the affidavit. In addition, the prosecution will apparently be building the case against him with the fact that he has advertised in drug culture magazines like *Sensemilla Tips* and *High Times*. So much for free speech.

Bjornson estimates that it will cost at least \$50,000 to defend himself in the event that criminal charges are filed in addition to the civil case against him. If the state then brings additional tax charges against him, resulting from difficulties in meeting back-payments, his defense may run well into the six-figures. Unfortunately, Bjornson's bank assets are frozen, as is standard in "RICO" prosecutions.

According to Yael Dragwila, who lives above Bjornson's store, eight to ten DEA agents and two U.S. Marshals worked from 10 AM to midnight to confiscate the inventory of grow lights and hydroponics equipment, in addition to mailing lists, business files and Libertarian materials. Dragwila said the agents, while perusing the literature, referred to it as "subversive." In spite of assurances that they would not search her living quarters because the warrant only covered the store itself, Dragwila says that she later returned to find that her room had been searched.

Bjornson was reportedly asked whether he had a firearm on the premises, and that the agents escorted him to get the registered weapon. Dragwila says they let him wait alone in a room with the gun, presumably to offer him the opportunity to do himself harm or to attempt a punishable offense.

[A] local backlash soon followed [the reported raid] as it did throughout the country. In a letter to the Seattle Times (11/3/89), Nora Kelly of Seattle wrote that the raids amazed her "because there is nothing illegal in selling such items. Just because there may be the potential for an illegal use for a product...does not make the selling of it illegal. If that were so, shops that sell handguns and assault weapons would be raided constantly." Brian Bohman of Seattle echoed that sentiment in his letter to the Journal American (11/13/89) and added, "It appears that President Bush's crackdown on drugs has brought us to a witch hunt that hints of Nazi Germany. I am outraged that in a country as free and as progressive as America, that this could happen."

Kathleen Taylor of the Seattle ACLU office maintains that the best course of action is to write to elected officials to protest police harassment of legitimate businesses. "They have to know that ordinary citizens are against this," Taylor said. When asked whether it was ACLU policy to defend these kinds of cases, Taylor said that the ACLU, contrary to popular opinion, does not defend drug cases. They focus on lobbying against drug laws themselves. Taylor also noted the irony that Westinghouse (the manufacturer of the grow lights) was not raided.

Bjornson himself feels "like it's *Alice in Wonderland*. I've been punished before I've been charged." Bjornson needs our moral and financial support. A defense fund has been set up and is headed by Californian Libertarian activist Eric Garris, a close friend of Bjornson's. You can contact Garris at 415-965-1506 for more information.

Natcom Reaffirms LP Support for Dissident Chinese

Whereas, the Libertarian Party deplores the brutal massacre of Chinese students and others by the Chinese government and is outraged by the ongoing persecution throughout China of intellectuals, workers, students, and other critics of government oppression, and

Whereas, the Libertarian Party is aware that Chinese nationals resident in the United States will in all likelihood face severe reprisals if they are forced to return to their country of origin, and Whereas, recognizing this fact the Libertarian Party at its convention in September endorsed HIR 2712 (introduced by Hon. Nancy Pelosi), which would waive the requirement on J-1 visas that requires Chinese students to return to China for two years after completing their studies in the United States, and

Whereas, despite its nearly unanimous approval by both houses of Congress, President George Bush has vetoed HIR 2712 — thereby revealing not only a deplorable lack of compassion and indifference towards the suppression of individual rights,

Therefore be it resolved by the National Committee, that the Libertarian Party reaffirm our endorsement of HIR 2712 and condemn the veto by President George Bush; we call on all members of Congress to join together to override it as soon as that body reconvenes in January, 1990; and

Be it further resolved that we commend the Hon. Nancy Pelosi for her efforts on behalf of the Chinese students.

passed unanimously, December 5, 1989

chairman *Dave Walter*, Presiding

ANNOUNCEMENT

Winter Political Picnic Complete with Beer and Champagne

- When: January 20, 1990
- Where: The home of Maggie Kohls, 9350 Maple Lane, Des Plaines, IL 60016
- Time: The Champagne begins to flow at 6 PM
- Cost: \$8 for one person, \$12 for two, if you RSVP to Sue Walton at 708-475-0391, or by sending your reservation to: Apt. 405, 1111 Church St., Evanston, IL 60201, by January 17th; cost at the door (without a reservation): \$10 for one, \$15 for two
- Menu: champagne, beer, chicken, munchies, salads, desserts and lots and lots of good conversation!
- Profits: Benefit the 1990 State Campaign

A Constitutional Hubbub

by Steve Nelson

Once again, LPI has a Constitution and By-Laws committee meeting. The air is filled with cries that the documents are too long, too short, unduly restrictive, not restrictive enough, contradictory, improperly divided, badly worded and generally responsible for our 'sad' condition.

These cries are nothing new. There have been five major attempts at writing a satisfactory constitution and by-laws. Each of these attempts involved at least half-a-dozen top activists in an average of six meetings each—counting meeting time only (that is, disregarding time spent thinking, writing and listening to tapes) this has got to be something on the order of seven hundred hours expended by party activists over the years. When you think about it, rewriting these rules has been one of the party's major activities over the years, very much in a class with the newsletter and the campaigns and the convention/conferences. What is there about this subject to warrant such attention?

The C&B-L represent at most a shared dream; they are a description of the organization that we would like to have and have very little relevance to the organization that actually exists. The Libertarian Party described by these documents is an umbrella organization of many active local clubs, each more-or-less powerful in its own bailiwick and somewhat jealously contending with the others for state-wide nominations and influence. DONT we wish!

At a more practical level, there is an enumeration of the officers and their duties, a set of convention rules and a number of more-or-less quirky rules for guiding the State Central Committee. Some of these rules have been amended over the years. The end result often seems contradictory and restrictive to those who haven't 'grown up with them'. But do they?

The answer is that the rules could be but they aren't; the rules are quietly ignored when they depart too far from contemporary realities. We will use our political judgement to judge which rules are important to the present membership and which may be safely reserved for some halcyon bye-and-bye when we need them.

Why is it, then, that the activists often feel restricted or constrained by these rules? In part, because the rules call for a good deal of dull routine, particularly when compared to whatever is the activist's spasm-of-the-moment. There are books of account to be kept and minutes to be written. Two or three activists at least are kept busy full-spacetime by these activities. The fact that these activities are a necessity of any long-term organization doesn't necessarily stop the activist from bemoaning them or getting burnt out doing them.

But the great reason the activists go through this process is simple frustration; there aren't enough activists and there isn't enough money. Nothing LIKE enough. No way. In this situation, there's a great and understandable tendency to try to change our world rather than the real world. It seems to be partly a consequence of the unified ideological attitudes of Libertarian theology, and therefore we will quarrel over tactics and structure. Here in Illinois, these quarrels (in recent times) have taken place in a very refined and genteel way, but they still waste plenty of time and that, in great part, is the point; the time is wasted in a far more pleasant fashion than it would be, say, by circulating anti-tax petitions in Glenview or staging a twenty-person demonstration in the Daley center. The jeers, these days, are far less stinging in the Libertarian creche and nobody's likely to call the cops..., but it's still navel-gazing.

The LP activists should take stock—and the interested non-activist should encourage this stock-taking by refusing to entertain any major change to the constitution and by-laws until such time as we clearly are in trouble from them. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

from the Chair – One Lady's Opinion

The race for Governor of Illinois has two Republican candidates, who almost seem to be Libertarian. One is anti-tax; the other is anti-tax, anti-big government, doesn't like government schools etc.—yeah, a "Big L". But wait, both still choose to be known as REPUBLICANS. A REPUBLICAN IS NOT A LIBERTARIAN. As a member of the Libertarian Party, and especially as a State Officer, I can not legally and morally support candidates for public office to which my party will also be running a candidate. I urge all members of the LPI to remember that fact and vote with your dollars to fund the LPI's 1990 State Campaign and maybe even vote for the defeat of Libertarian Republicans in the primary so that OUR CANDIDATE CAN HAVE A REAL CHANCE IN 1990.

Why don't the "Libertarian Republicans" come out of the closet? Are they afraid? They need guts! Maybe they should talk to Ron Paul to gather courage.

Sue Walton

State Chair

A Prison a Week

by Glen Riddle

Each week we have 900 more people locked up in our nation's prisons than the week before. So we build a prison a week to hold them. We are doubling our penal inmate numbers every eight and a half years. At year-end 1988, we had a record 627,402 in our state and federal prisons. At year-end 1987, we had 294,092 in our nation's jails. That projects to 315,713 in jail at year-end 1988. So our total penal inmate number at year end 1988, was 943,115—and still exploding upward. The 943,115 figure translates to 367 people locked up per 100,000 population.

South Africa runs a stable 340 penal inmates per 100,000 about every year. From all available information, the USA is now #1 and SA is #2 in relative numbers locked up. So far, no hard numbers from the USSR yet.

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Letters to the Editor

Season's Greetings from Club Fed on-the-Wabash

Just a cheery word and a friendly smile
 To let you know I'm still around:
 Neither age, malaise, nor durance vile
 Impedes. Good spirits still abound.

It has been a momentous year. While I was immobilized by the minions of orthodox collectivism (in this, the most law-ridden country on earth), thousands or millions in other lands have challenged the doctrine that the individual just be sacrificed to "society" by the all-powerful state.

While abroad, communism crumbles in the dust of its inherent contradictions, in the U.S. the reigning collectivists continue their self-righteous crusade to rid the world of sin. The "War on Drugs" is responsible for 60% of the population of this institution, which is 90% overcrowded.

Education here is informal and diverse. The institution attempts to instill a semblance of a high school degree in those who need it; and requires users of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and gambling to attend an array of "Anonymous" groups. Unofficial seminars include marijuana growing, credit card usage, cock fighting, silencer design, cocaine smuggling, liquor retailing, secondary ID, foreign havens, investments, and tax reduction.

My health has progressed from feeble to nearly robust. I can't yet lift a sack of cement, but I'm working on it.

My appeal to the parole board yielded a reduction of four and a half months in my sentence, so I should be out of here by the middle of September, or earlier, if they give me some "halfway house." I look forward to seeing you again.

Paul Stout, 84836-024, Terre Haute, IN.

Liberty License Plates

You can use the State to promote the idea of LIBERTY! Personalized license plates, on which one number follows six letters, are available for only \$11. LIBERTY 1, LIBERTY 2, and LIBERTY 3 are taken, (all by LPI members!) and last we heard, numbers 4 through 9 are still open. Another option may be FREEDOM 1, or even LIBRTN 1. Vanity plates with seven letters are \$75. I think LIBERTY and FREEDOM are already taken, but LIBRTRN might be open.

Foreign versions offer more possibilities: LIBERTE or LIBRTE 1; LIBRTAD or LBRTAD 1; LIBRTAS or LIBRTS 1; and so forth.

It's too bad the state forces us to buy their license plates, and too bad the funds for these plates go to the government, but the \$11 personalized plates seem to be a reasonably cheap way to promote liberty. Contact the Office of the Secretary of State, Vehicle Services Department, Personalized Plate Section, Springfield, Il. 62756, 217-785-0005. The process is fairly simple and straightforward.

Eric C. Banfield, Liberty 2, Northern vice-chair, LPI

Drug Law Honor Roll

In your last Illinois Libertarian, I noticed you had, on the back page, an "Honor Roll" of those "...leaders who have shown the courage to speak out for decriminalization of drugs." This is a great idea—and provides those of us who talk to others about this from time to time much-needed ammunition.

Accordingly, I am enclosing a short article from the Dec. 14th Daily Herald which has Czar Bennett (or should we say "Bizarre Bennett"?) ranting and raving about a U.S. District Judge (Mr. Robert W. Sweet) who now agrees with us that the war on drugs is "lost" and that all drugs, including cocaine and heroin should be legalized. Its unfortunate that he wants state control (and taxation, etc.) of them, but probably most of the other people on your list do too.

A U.S. District Judge? What's next—a Congress critter? Keep up the great work.

Ted Semon, Glendale Heights

Keep those Letters Coming

Keep up the great work in the letters to the editor ala Dave Hoscheidt's and Bernard Irving Sommer's in the Nov. issue.

Marshall Fritz, Fresno, Ca.

U.S. — #1 in Prison Population

I have received two Illinois Libertarian newsletters so far. My compliments. You're doing a good job. I think your coverage on the issue of jury nullification and the Fully Informed Jury Amendment has been great.

I have done some research in another area I believe to be deserving of more attention by Libertarians—penal inmate populations here and in other countries. I'm on the mailing list for new reports issued by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Also I have sent to embassies and foreign governments for numbers locked up in other countries. Clearly, of all countries reporting numbers locked up, the U.S. is now in first place in relative numbers behind bars.

Ominously, this fact is not being told the American people by the mainstream media. Even alternative press publications seem to be all too silent about this one issue.

In the cause of freedom,
Glen Riddle, Ashley Il.

Take the Initiative

In regard to your "campaign strategy" outlined in vol. 15, no 9, I heartily support your proposal to back a tax-cutting initiative rather than to run candidates for state-wide offices. Also I urge you to support the Fully Informed Jury Amendment. The group advocating this amendment is based here Montana and is trying to put their initiative on the state ballot. I am pleased to learn the FIJA is proposed in Illinois also.

I believe the Libertarian Party can achieve much more significant effects by supporting these initiatives, than by throwing its limited resources into election campaigns that receive 1% of the vote at most. The jury amendment, if implemented, would fundamentally alter the balance of power between the people and the legal elite. Electing candidates to office (if possible) probably would accomplish much less.

thank you,
W. John Nelson
 Butte, Montana

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 Will County: Anne McCracken708-739-6240
 Il. Valley: Scott Tillman309-353-1500

Illinois Libertarian Calendar

January 8

- **DuPage Libertarian Club**, Monday, 6:30 P.M. at the Minuette Restaurant, Ogden and Main St., Lisle, Il. Meets first Monday of every month (different this month), same place and time. For more info: Steve Nelson, 708-969-1088.

January 11

- **North Cook County Libertarian Club, and North Shore Individualist** meeting Thursday, 7:00 P.M., Jim Tobin and the NTUI will speak on the Tax Accountability Amendment, at the Henry George School, 4536 N. Ravenswood, Chicago. Location: just south of Wilson on Ravenswood on the west side of the tracks. One and a half blocks north of the CTA Ravenswood line Montrose Station, one and a half blocks south of the CNW north line, Ravenswood. More info: Greg Bezdek, 708-251-2870 or Sue Walton, 708-475-0391.

January 22

- **NCCLP Supper Club** resumes at a new location: Monday, Angelo's Restaurant & Lounge, 1418 West Morse, Chicago, one-half block west of the Morse EL. Angelo's serves alcohol; it's the Rogers Park equivalent to LCD's Minuette. 7 PM.

February 5

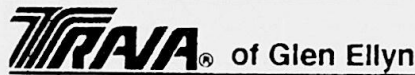
- **DuPage Libertarian Club**, Monday, 6:30 P.M. at the Minuette Restaurant, Ogden and Main St., Lisle, Il. Meets first Monday of every month, same place and time. For more info: Steve Nelson, 708-969-1088.

February 8

- **North Cook County Libertarian Club, and North Shore Individualist** meeting Thursday, 7:00 P.M., tape of the 1989 National Convention Speech by Frances Kendall on South Africa & Bill Wendt's commentary on South Africa, at the Henry George School, 4536 N. Ravenswood, Chicago. Location: just south of Wilson on Ravenswood on the west side of the tracks. One and a half blocks north of the CTA Ravenswood line Montrose Station, one and a half blocks south of the CNW north line, Ravenswood. More info: Greg Bezdek, 708-251-2870 or Sue Walton, 708-475-0391.
- **Northwest Libertarian Club**, Call Dan Coit for more info, (708-803-8855)

Tax Accountability Amendment

Paul Jacob, coordinator, 708-253-5555



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Honor Roll

The Illinois Libertarian Party salutes those leaders who have shown the courage to speak out for decriminalization of drugs.

- Milton Friedman ... Nobel Laureate
William F. Buckley Jr ... Publisher National Review
Mike Royko ... Chicago Tribune Columnist
Kurt Schmoke ... Mayor of Baltimore, Md., former prosecutor
Alan Dershowitz ... Law Professor
Randy Barnett ... Law Professor
Frank Zappa ... Musician
George Carlin ... Comedian
Steve Dahl ... Radio Personality WLUP
Stephan Chapman ... Chicago Tribune columnist
Louie Nizer ... Defense Attorney
Joseph Sobran ... conservative columnist
George Shultz ... Former Secretary of State
Jefferson Morely ... journalist for the Nation
Stacy Taylor ... radio personality, WLS
Bob Lassiter ... radio personality, WLS
Tom Braden ... liberal journalist
Judge Robert W. Sweet ... U.S. District Judge, New York
Cong. George Crockett ... Detroit, MI.
Richard Cohen ... syndicated columnist
The Economist Magazine

On the Fence

- Patrick Buchanan ... conservative journalist
William Raspberry ... syndicated columnist
Ann Landers ... syndicated columnist

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Contributors: Articles, letters, book reviews, photos, and activities reports (local or national) are welcomed. Please send contributions, to the editor's address.

INCLUDE ME!

- Regular member of LPI ... \$20.00
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Student member of LPI ... \$10.00
Life member of LPI ... \$200.00
National Libertarian Party member ... \$15.00
National, Illinois, and local member ... \$40.00
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Well-wishing contributor ... \$
Please send me a copy of David Bergland's book Libertarianism in One Lesson (paperbound) ... \$5.00

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(For members only) "I hereby certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals."

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