



# Sandhills Libertarian Gazette

A NEWSLETTER FOR LIBERTARIANS IN THE SOUTH CAROLINA MIDLANDS

---

## What do Libertarians believe?

Libertarians believe in *PEOPLE!* We believe that individuals and their families know best how to run their own lives. All persons have the natural right to control their own lives and property. The government should not interfere with the efforts of individuals to co-operate voluntarily in order to solve their own problems. The only role of government should be to protect each individual's right to life, liberty, and honestly-acquired property.

Libertarians believe in *PEACE.* Individuals should be free to live their lives peacefully without interference from other individuals or from the government. It is wrong to use any kind of force or fraud against another person, unless that person has used (or threatened to use) force or fraud to violate someone's rights. Reasonable force is justified if it is used for defensive purposes. On a national scale, the government's defense policy should be designed to protect the United States against attack from another nation - *not* to intervene in the affairs of other nations or to give international handouts.

Libertarians believe in *PROSPERITY.* Prosperity depends on the free market. Government interference in the economy results in poverty and unemployment. Government regulations and high taxes destroy productivity and make it difficult for small businesses to offer new jobs. The best way to fight poverty is to cut taxes, deregulate the economy, and allow private charities to operate without interference from the government. Inflation, which is caused by the government, also damages the economy and results in poverty and unemployment. Libertarians call for an end to inflation and a return to a stable system of sound currency.

Libertarians believe in *FREEDOM.* All persons should have the freedom to control their own lives, bodies, and property. Everyone should have the right to speak and write freely, the right to produce and to keep the fruits of one's labor, the right to trade freely, the right to choose the best education for one's children, and the right to maintain privacy in matters of personal behavior. Morality cannot be legislated. The government should not try to force people to be moral or wise, and the government should not stop people from being immoral or foolish, as long as nobody violates anyone else's rights. All peaceful and honest persons should be left alone.

In summary, Libertarians believe in *LIBERTY.* We realize that Liberty is essential to human happiness, progress, survival, and creativity. We firmly believe that the best society is one in which our rights to life, liberty, and property are protected both from criminals and from the government. People should not be forced by any individual or government to sacrifice their lives or property for the benefit of others.

Freedom requires responsibility. Each person has the obligation to respect the rights of others, to accept the consequences of his or her own actions, and to accept the ultimate responsibility for maintaining his or her own life. Persons who violate the rights of others should be held fully accountable for their actions and should be required to pay restitution to their victims.

If you are interested in helping us fight for *YOUR* freedom, please send a contribution using the form on page 3, or contact one of the persons listed on page 4 for more information.

## Libertarians Oppose Unreasonable Laws

Even though this is not an election year, Libertarians in South Carolina are engaged in a number of activities. The most visible activity is the anti-zoning drive in Aiken County.

The Aiken County Libertarian Party is the only group opposing efforts by various persons to persuade the Aiken County Council to pass a county-wide zoning ordinance. A.C.L.P. Chairman Ron Heaton (who is also S.C.L.P. Chairman), John Heaton (who was a delegate to the 1985 Libertarian National Convention), and Mary Lou Seymour (who ran for the County Council in 1984) have spearheaded this anti-zoning effort by holding meetings, sending out news releases, and distributing pamphlets. Attendance at some meetings has exceeded expectations, and *THE AUGUSTA CHRONICLE* has given the movement publicity with articles containing headlines such as "Libertarians blast zoning..."

According to Ron Heaton, "Zoning raises taxes, rents, and construction costs. It adds another layer of bureaucrats between you and your individual rights." Heaton explains that deed restrictions and covenants are better than zoning laws, because deed restrictions and covenants are private contracts whose terms are voluntarily accepted by the individuals involved.

So far, the Libertarians' efforts seem to be causing some Aiken County Council members to back down from their avid support of zoning.

Libertarians in Lexington County are involved in several projects, including the Libertarian booth at the State Fair in October. Bill Griffin is coordinating this project, and volunteers are needed. This year, the booth will be in the Moore Building.

Lexington County Libertarians are also actively opposing the mandatory motorcycle helmet bill which has been pre-filed by State Senator David Thomas (R-Greenville). In August, L.C.L.P. Chairman David Morris sent a news release to Columbia-area radio and TV stations and newspapers, but the media, as usual, ignored it.

In the news release, Morris said, "It seems that politicians will never quit trying to tell individuals how to lead their lives. Wearing a helmet may be a good idea, but decisions about personal safety should be made by individuals - not the government. Senator Thomas claims that the law would result in lower insurance rates. However, the best way to lower insurance rates would be to change the insurance laws to allow insurance companies to assign more financial responsibility to persons who endanger their own lives or the lives of others."

Morris added that "Violent crime is a serious problem in South Carolina, and so is drunk driving. Law enforcement officials should put all their time and effort into solving these problems. They should not waste their time harassing persons who do not pose

a danger to anyone else. If the mandatory helmet law passes, violent criminals will be the real beneficiaries, for law enforcement officials will have less time to spend solving violent crimes."

Another organization opposed to the helmet law is ABATE (A Brotherhood Against Totalitarian Enactments). Several Libertarian Party members are also members of ABATE and support its efforts to fight against unreasonable laws. On October 13, ABATE will hold a helmetless motorcycle rally at the State Capital in Columbia.

In Florence, John Harlee (who put many hours of effort into planning the S.C.L.P. Tenth Anniversary Celebration) is busy exposing the fallacies of Citizens Against Pornography, whose members, according to Harlee, are "serious opponents of religious and political freedom." This group is calling for strict enforcement of the state's obscenity laws. Harlee has pointed out that this would ban "suggestive" underwear ads (such as those in the Sears catalog), crucifixes and other religious art showing torture, and many other common religious practices.

There are many unreasonable laws on the books. South Carolina took a big step last spring when the legislature finally modified the state's 303-year-old Blue Laws, but these laws were not totally repealed. There will probably be efforts next year to pass some form of gun registration law, and there is even some mention of possible tax increases to fund the money-hungry "Education Improvement Act." Libertarians will be in the forefront of the opposition to these and other laws that allow the government to violate the rights of individuals.

## Chicago Gun Control Law a Failure

According to a report in the September issue of *AMERICAN RIFLEMAN*, Chicago Police Superintendent Fred Rice recently announced that the city's three-year-old gun registration law has been a dismal failure. The law, passed in 1982, requires all guns to be registered with the police department *every two years*. No handguns purchased after 1982 are permitted in the city, and newcomers to Chicago must surrender their handguns without compensation. Violators face a \$500 fine and a 90-day jail term.

The law was supposed to decrease the rate of violent crime, but the exact opposite occurred - armed robberies increased 50%, and assaults with guns are up 400% since the law took effect. There are now 500,000 more *unregistered* handguns in Chicago than before the law took effect!

Anyone who favors gun registration laws can ponder these facts and wonder why violent crime usually gets worse in areas that restrict the freedom of peaceful citizens to own handguns.

### POND BRANCH RIFLE & PISTOL RANGE, INC.

Gilbert, S.C.

(1 mi. East off I-20, Exit 44)

Sat., Sun. 12 Noon; \$5.00/day



Closed July & August

Call (803) 359-5295

## JEFFERS McGILL

WE SERVICE WHAT WE SELL

Panasonic



Quasar™

776-4466

6400 DEVINE ST., CEDAR TERRACE SHOPPING CENTER

Professor Shannon teaches in the Economics Department, Clemson University.

# Trade Barriers

Russell Shannon

WHEN he wrote *Wealth of Nations* in 1776, Adam Smith referred to "a certain propensity in human nature . . . to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another."<sup>1</sup> Even children are known to be prone to swap such items as stamps, bubblegum cards, marbles, and other items of mutual desire. But enjoyable and beneficial though trade may be, there is also a propensity to stifle it. Even the Reagan Administration, with a strong and outspoken penchant for free markets, has succumbed to pressures to curb imports of cars, steel, textiles, motorcycles, and other products from foreign lands.

About 50 years after Adam Smith wrote, John Stuart Mill in 1829 clearly explained and soundly denounced such restrictive policies in an admirable essay entitled "Of the Laws of Interchange Between Nations." Mill was following in the footsteps of Smith, who openly opposed the mercantilistic policies whereby European nations had interfered with trade. As the basis for his arguments, Mill expounded the ideas of his more recent predecessor,

David Ricardo, who had demonstrated that there is mutual benefit for countries which specialize and trade on the basis of "comparative advantage."

This simple and fundamental principle can be readily illustrated by the examples of the businessman who hires a secretary, the doctor who employs an accountant, or the working mother who turns her child over to a baby sitter. The businessman may be a better typist, the doctor may have superior calculating abilities, and the mother may excel in providing affection and entertainment for her child. But by directing their time and energy to their professional duties, these three people will earn more than enough to pay their employees. The businessman and doctor will have even more time for leisure, and the working mother will be better able to provide her child with needed food and clothing.

Yet, what we all implicitly accept and practice in our daily lives, we are pathetically apt to forget when we read or hear news about how some American industry is "hurt" by for-

eign competition. Nonetheless, the same principle applies. If the Japanese can produce cars and motorcycles more efficiently relative to other products such as beef, then we should buy our cars from them in exchange for our beef. If the Chinese can produce textiles by giving up less of other products than we must forgo here, then we should buy from them. Not only will we enable our consumers—especially the poorer ones—to improve their living standards; we will also provide jobs for our producers of wheat and soybeans, items in which we have a comparative advantage. If some people criticize the Chinese for "underselling" our producers, they should take note of Mill's words: "the world at large, buyers and sellers taken together, is always a gainer by underselling."<sup>2</sup>

Yet, despite the common sense of the free-trade argument, we continue to erect barriers to impede trade. Just as Ricardo and Mill advocated free trade, they reviled restrictions. In 1817, Ricardo had written that "the sole effect of high duties on the importation either of manufactures or corn . . . is to divert a portion of capital to an employment which it would not naturally seek."<sup>3</sup> Mill similarly deplored barriers which have "the effect of encouraging some particular branch of domestic industry," for, he said, they are "purely mischievous."<sup>4</sup>

### We Hurt Ourselves

Sometimes it is argued that since foreign governments impose barriers and provide subsidies of their own, they have rendered laissez faire unfair. Certainly, such policies abound and they surely hurt our exporters. Shouldn't we engage in "tit for tat"? If we do, we are sure to suffer for it; as Mill put it, trade barriers are "chiefly injurious to the countries imposing them."<sup>5</sup>

The loss to American consumers when our government restricts imports outweighs the gain to the protected industry. Trade barriers such as quotas and tariffs raise the price on *all* the protected products, whether their origin is domestic or foreign. That is the clear impact, for example, in the case of the agreement by Japan to limit the export of cars to the U.S. Both American and Japanese producers can hike their prices; both Chrysler and Toyota gain. The costs to our consumers exceed our producers' benefits.

Moreover, by setting up trade barriers, we abdicate the opportunity for

setting a good example. As Mill wrote in his essay, "A country cannot be expected to renounce the power of taxing foreigners unless foreigners will in return practice towards itself the same forbearance."<sup>6</sup> We should expect foreign countries to do as we do, not as we say. Until we renounce our own protectionist sins, how can we justify throwing stones?

Before yielding further to the temptation to plunge deeper into the web of trade restraints, it helps to remember that basic fact of all economics: our resources are scarce. We simply cannot produce all the goods and services people want and need. Thus we must bend all our efforts toward employing our resources to their utmost efficiency. Mill said it well: it is "the common interest of all nations that each of them should abstain from every measure by which the aggregate wealth of the commercial world would be diminished."<sup>7</sup> On these grounds we should oppose all laws requiring our cars to be manufactured on the basis of "local content" and others forcing us to "buy American." Suggesting that they simply emulate the practice of others is to argue that two wrongs make a right.

Of course, it may be sadly true that if the Reagan Administration had not acted, Congress would "beat it to the punch" with even more punitive legislation. In that sense, the Administration's policies may well be a lesser evil. But there is another option. The Administration could, instead, devote some time and effort to explaining to the American public the folly of such policies. Then, just like the businessman, the doctor, and the working mother mentioned before, President Reagan and his staff would be making the best use of their resources. And if they need any assistance articulating their ideas, they will find ample help in an essay more than 150 years old written by John Stuart Mill.

### —FOOTNOTES—

<sup>1</sup>Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (New York: Modern Library, 1937), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>John Stuart Mill, *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy* (2nd ed., 1874; New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1968), p. 36n.

<sup>3</sup>David Ricardo, *The Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (first published in 1817; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1911), p. 210.

<sup>4</sup>Mill, p. 28.

<sup>5</sup>Mill, p. 38.

<sup>6</sup>Mill, p. 29.

<sup>7</sup>Mill, p. 31.

*No undertaking is more futile than that of trying to base the prosperity of the parts on the ruination of the whole. And yet this is what the policy of protectionism seeks to do.*

-- Frederic Bastiat, 1844

YES! I would like to help the fight for MY freedom. Enclosed is my contribution of:

\$25    \$10    \$5    Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please send more information.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

home work

Send to:

Lexington County Libertarian Party  
P.O. Box 2297, West Columbia, S.C. 29171

The above article is reprinted with permission from the February 1985 issue of *The Freeman*.



the  
**Freeman**

FOUNDATION FOR ECONOMIC EDUCATION  
Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y. 10533      Tel: (914) 591-7230



# LIBERTY!

HOW BEAUTIFUL IT IS

### ANTI-TAX POST CARDS

Eight different kinds for \$1.

Order from John Harllee, Rt. 10,  
Box 52-A, Florence, S.C. 29501.

### LOCAL CONTACTS

- COLUMBIA:  
Steve Vandervelde (779-3985)
- WEST COLUMBIA:  
Bill Griffin (755-9304)
- AIKEN:  
Ron Heaton (663-7927)
- CHARLESTON:  
Joan DiGiovanni (795-6048)
- FLORENCE:  
John Harllee (669-8345)
- GREENVILLE:  
Bill McCuen (232-7476)
- ROCK HILL:  
Cliff Ross (327-3337)

The Sandhills Libertarian Gazette is published by the Lexington County Libertarian Party. Ad rates available on request. Please address all correspondence to the Editor.

EDITOR: David Morris

Have Your Insurance Agent  
Call Us For Quotes On:  
TERM, UNIVERSAL, CURRENT  
ASSUMPTION, ANNUITY AND  
IMPAIRED-RISK  
LIFE INSURANCE



Brokerage Services of Carolina, Inc.

Bill Brooks, Jr.                      P.O. Drawer 5697  
President                              Columbia, S.C. 29250  
Phone: (803) 254-2215  
S.C. WATS 1-800-223-2762

\* \* \* \* \*

*To control the biggest threat to  
liberty in our country - government -  
we must reduce taxes. I do my part,  
and maybe I can help you do yours.*

Richard Winchell  
Bookkeeping and Tax Service  
781-5427

## Happy Tenth Anniversary, S.C.L.P.!

LEXINGTON COUNTY LIBERTARIAN PARTY  
Post Office Box 2297  
West Columbia, S.C. 29171

Address correction requested



BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
West Columbia, S.C.  
Permit No. 188