



LIBERTY PLEDGE NEWSLETTER

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Skousen Accepts Honorary Chairmanship Of Party's New *Tax Cut Action!* Project

Financial economist Mark Skousen has been named honorary chairman of *Tax Cut Action!*, a project of the Libertarian Party aimed at "making real progress in cutting the tax burden placed on all Americans."

The project was publicly unveiled on April 15th, and Skousen said the project hopes to make "April 15ths of the future a little less frustrating." A letter, signed by Skousen, went out to LP members in late March to solicit support for the new project.

Bill of Rights Plans Center Around Phillip Morris Tour

Libertarians are organizing local activities to coincide with the Phillip Morris Company's Bill of Rights tour visit to their cities.

LP activities are now planned for Albuquerque, Denver, Los Angeles, and Phoenix.

The Phillip Morris Co. is sending an original copy of the Bill of Rights on tour to commemorate the Bill of Rights' 200th anniversary this year. Short films and other displays are also included in the tour.

The display is remarkably libertarian, according to Don Ernsberger, emphasizing the less politically-popular amendments, such as the second, as much as others. The display even points out the court decision upholding flag burning as protected by the First Amendment. A schedule for the Phillip Morris tour is available from the LPHQ.

"We can talk and talk about why taxes are wrong, but now the Libertarian Party is doing something about it," Skousen said.

The project will develop tax reduction initiatives to place on ballots across the country, solicit sponsorship of suitable tax reduction bills in the Congress, and offer support to any bills or initiative efforts that already exist.

One of the project's first efforts will be in opposition to a move in the Texas state legislature to institute a state income tax.

In addition to Skousen, the Tax Cut Action Committee boasts leading Illinois anti-tax activist Jim Tobin as project director; Ron Paul; Roy E. Cordato, a Washington D.C. economist; Nancy Lord, 1990 candidate for D.C. mayor; Sandi Webb, Libertarian city councilwoman from California; and Libertarians Jimmy Blake, Mike Ford, June Genis, Toby Nixon, and Bill Winter—all active in local anti-tax organizations.

Ballot Access Update

Following a lobbying effort from Andre Marrou of 51-92, the **Montana** state legislature has lowered the required number of votes needed to retain ballot status below what the LP candidate received last election. This gives the LP 1992 ballot status.

State officials in **Maryland** are now validating the petition signatures turned in by Libertarians there. Only a 53 percent validity rate is needed for success.

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If we really want to honor our returning veterans in a serious and substantial way, there is one simple step the government could take: It could exempt veterans from all future income taxes.

This seems only a minimal matter of decency and gratitude. After a man has risked his life for his government, that government ought to be contented and should ask nothing more of him, ever. If he were really fighting for freedom, as it alleges, the least it can do is give him his own freedom.

But any such measure is unlikely to pass. The reason is the nature of the modern state.

If you propose bigger state benefits — in such tangible forms as veterans' pensions, for example — the state will take a keen interest in your suggestion. The state is increasingly parasitic, and likes to make as many citizens as possible dependent on itself for their income. Fighting a war, and then making the returning soldiers dependents, is one of the typical ways it expands its powers.

But to release those soldiers from taxation would be for the state to relinquish some of its power. Furthermore, allowing anyone to claim real freedom from taxation would set a dangerous precedent. The idea might catch on. Soon other categories of people would want tax free-

Joseph Sobran, a senior editor of National Review, is a nationally syndicated columnist.

Servants or our masters?

dom. Then everyone might want it. The result might be a real diminution in the state's power.

In theory, the "democratic" state is merely an extension of the people it rules, and the actual rulers are "public servants." But the overwhelming ratio of unelected to elected officials makes this almost meaningless. When your tax return is audited, Milton Friedman asks, do you feel as if you are talking to your servants or your masters? (And what good does your vote do you then?)

The same point was brought home graphically by the notorious videotape of the Los Angeles police clubbing and kicking an unresisting man as he lay on the pavement. In theory, those police were his servants and protectors. In fact, they were anything but. They were engaged in the kind of criminal violence they are, in theory, preventing.

That ugly incident has already been widely denounced as a vivid image of police brutality. It is certainly that, but it's also something else. To my mind the most amazing



and appalling aspect of it is that with a dozen or so colleagues present, the men who tortured Rodney King (ironic name!) were perfectly confident that none of the others would restrain or report them.

This is the attitude of an arrogant elite, not of people who feel morally bound by a public trust. And this attitude isn't confined to police. You encounter it in many public officials who aren't elected and know they

hold a virtually irresponsible power over those they supposedly serve.

In a privately owned store, the clerk who is rude to customers may lose his job, because his employer

may lose business. Hence the adage that the customer is always right.

But when you go to renew your driver's license, say, the rude clerk doesn't have to worry about losing your business. The state has no competitors. You are at its mercy, and claiming your rights, when they are abused, is an awkward, time-consuming, expensive and dicey matter — as the men who tortured King also understood.

Our "servants" know the rules better than we do. What's more, they know the ropes. In some ultimate and technical sense, they may be answerable to us. In everyday life, it's the other way around.

My own impulse has always been to defend the police and to support our government in any war it got into. But at some point you have to recognize that the state has gone far beyond its legitimate functions and is becoming destructive of the very things it's supposed to be guarding — primarily freedom itself.

I had a long, long lunch with a socialist friend recently. I've always liked him, but I couldn't shake the feeling that there must be something perverse in him to wish for a state that is bigger than the one we already have.

It was only after our conversation that I realized that the socialist order he wants, whatever its defects, would probably impose a smaller and less-intrusive government than the one we live under now. That's a sobering thought for a conservative.

Libertarian Party plans local convention

The Libertarian Party has chosen Farmington as the site of the party's 1991 state convention, to be held on the weekend of Thomas Jefferson's birthday.

The convention, which will be April 13 at The Inn, will begin at 9 a.m. and continue through the day and most of the evening.

The convention's agenda lists keynote speakers Larry Dodge of the Fully Informed Jury Association and Vincent Miller of the International Society for Individual Liberty.

According to the agenda, the jury association is a group advocating that judges be required to inform juries of their power and right to judge laws, as well as facts in cases to which the government is a party.

The association says that under the concept of Jury



Dodge

Miller

Nullification, juries could determine a defendant not guilty because of an unjust law, because a law wasn't correctly applied, or because a defendant had good reason to break a law.

The International Society for Individual Liberty, represented at the convention by Miller, is a worldwide Libertarian support organization, according to the convention agenda.

"We don't believe the U.S. military has any business fighting over there to put kings back on their thrones," Nick Dunbar said.

The organization says Libertarian groups have won elections in several countries and notes that a Libertarian Party has been established in the Soviet Union.

Harry Murphy of New Mexicans Against Censorship is scheduled to speak at the convention about censorship in New Mexico. Also scheduled to address the convention is Matthew Symonds of the Four Corners Action Coalition, who will speak about the controversial Animas-La Plata project.

Joseph Knight of Flora Vista, who was the party's

Gulf war, according to the party's national director, Nick Dunbar.

"We don't believe the U.S. military has any business fighting over there to put kings back on their thrones," Dunbar said.

Although the party does not condone drug use, it advocates legalization of marijuana, cocaine and heroin. The party believes the drug problem is worsened by the use of criminal law in attempting to stop drug use.

Libertarians advocate putting a lid on current federal spending, stopping foreign aid expenditures, and ending subsidies to all businesses and to state and local governments. The party believes the U.S. Department of Education is a useless federal agency and wants the department eliminated.

The party believes the United

States should be a neutral country that practices free trade. The party wants to repeal all laws that hamper trade with other countries. All immigration quotas to the United States should be eliminated, according to the party's platform.

Libertarians are against any form of new taxes for whatever reason and are against all impediments to research and testing for an AIDS cure. The party has called for redefining pollution standards and believes people have a right to claim trespassing on the body or property when subjected to any level of pollution.

The Libertarian Party also advocates eliminating government interference in important health care decisions and wants government medical insurance and subsidy programs ended.

Pyrrhic Victory in the War on Pork

Wringing pork out of the appropriations process is a cherished goal of budget reformers, but the time-honored, you-get-yours, I-get-mine tradition has proved tough to crack. Part of the problem is that the practice is self-reinforcing — even the most zealous reformers usually turn out to have made a few special requests of their own. Witness what happened when Jim Slattery, D-Kan., and John R. Kasich, R-Ohio, came to the House floor March 7.

Designating themselves a two-man antipork strike force, Slattery and Kasich said they were serving notice on their colleagues that special-interest provisions could no longer be sneaked into appropriations bills without due process. "Our intent [is] to establish a precedent, a shot across the bow, as it were," Kasich said.

To make their point, they picked a much-derided \$500,000 appropriation to establish a German-Russian interpretive center at the North Dakota birthplace of band leader Lawrence Welk. Slattery said the money was added last year to the fiscal 1991 agriculture appropriations bill by the Senate and never considered separately by the House. Slattery and Kasich won the vote to repeal the appropriation on a rare 71-11 "division" (in which members stand to be counted) but not before they ran into another two-man strike force — House Appropriations Committee Chairman Jamie L. Whitten, D-Miss., and Byron L. Dorgan, D-N.D.



Slattery



Whitten

Dorgan hotly defended the project, insisting it was designed to help boost the economy in an area of his state devastated by drought. And, because turnabout is fair play, he proposed that the House repeal five appropriations for special projects in Kansas and Ohio worth \$5.1 million that he suggested were no more worthy than the North Dakota project.

"This notion that what's in your district is waste and what's in my district is fine is a notion we ought to explore in more depth," Dorgan said. Slattery staved off Dorgan's amendment by invoking a point of order against legislating on an appropriations bill — the same point of order Slattery and Kasich had persuaded the Rules Committee to waive so that they could offer the Lawrence Welk amendment.

An annoyed Whitten defended the principle of targeted projects as buoys for a sinking economy. "I'm for looking after the states — they're part of the country," he said. And he noted, Slattery did not come to the debate with clean hands: He had requested \$5 million for the National Agricultural Hall of Fame at Bonner Springs, Kan.

Slattery stood his ground, saying he would continue to seek money for Kansas projects as long as the requests went through the proper procedures, including full House consideration. But he conceded that angering the chairman might not have helped. "I expect . . . that I'll have difficulty getting some of my requests listened to," he said.

—George Hager

Sun., March 24, 1991 Rocky Mountain News

Libertarians gear up for 1992

State party convenes to meet presidential hopefuls, weigh races

By J.R. Moehringer

Rocky Mountain News Staff Writer

Looking to 1992 with a giddy sense that their time has come to finish second, Libertarians convened in Evergreen yesterday to meet and hear from their two presidential candidates.

The annual convention of the Colorado Libertarian Party attracted nearly 40 people to the Evergreen Convention Center, a breezy aerie above Bear Creek.

A mixture of crew-neckish and sandal-clad people wiled away the afternoon arguing politics on back porches, strumming guitars, sipping coffee and citing favorite passages from Ayn Rand — a Libertarian icon. They also had the chance to chat with their hopeful flag-bearers, Andre Marrou and Richard Boddie.

Because some Colorado conventioners will be delegates to the party's national

convention in Chicago this September, Marrou and Boddie were on the stump throughout the afternoon, trying to behave in presidential — though individually free — fashion.

At least one driving issue is the same for both men: abolish the Internal Revenue Service, a proposal that gets about as big a round of applause from Libertarians as it does from everyone else, including Republicans and Democrats. Boddie put a fine point on the subject bluntly. "Taxation is theft," he said.

In an afternoon talk, Marrou said the government should cease tobacco subsidies, pare down the president's cabinet, abolish the Strategic Air Command and begin paying off the national debt.

"We should also stop paying farmers to do nothing," he said, "or else we should pay all real estate brokers not to sell real estate."

Marrou was elected in 1984 as a Libertarian to the Alaska legislature, where he served two years.

In 1988, he ran as the Libertarian vice presidential candidate under Ron Paul. The ticket won less than 1% of the vote, under half a million voters.

But Libertarians quickly point out that in November 1990, when Congress was at a zenith of unpopularity, 1.8 million voters pulled the lever for Libertarian candidates.

Marrou yesterday described how, as president of the United States, he will abrade the federal government. He made it sound as if bureaucrats in Washington would be scarcer than skyscrapers in Evergreen. Any government worker listening would have run a finger under his shirt collar.

Though the men agree on much, they are opponents. Boddie said Marrou is doomed to fail because he is like every Libertarian candidate in the past: white. As a black candidate, Boddie said he would be able to achieve the party's real goal in 1992, by enlisting more people into the party.

With a pleased look, Boddie also noted the absence of any strong Democratic candidate so far. It will be a delicious treat, he said, to see the Democrats dogged by the question that always follows the Libertarians: "Why are you running when you know you're going to lose?"