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# LIBERTY PLEDGE NEWSLETTER

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## LP Invited to Testify About Presidential Debates

The Libertarian Party has been invited to provide testimony before the House Subcommittee on Elections on June 17th to discuss Presidential debates and third-party inclusion.

The hearings will specifically address HR 1753, the "Democracy in Presidential Debates Act of 1993" introduced by Congressman Penny of Minnesota that would require candidates who take federal campaign funds to debate all viable candidates. At last count, HR1753 had 9 cosponsors in the House in addition to Congressman Penny.

The panel we have been invited to participate in will address what happened in 1992 (i.e., why was Perot included and Marrou excluded) and what we think are appropriate objective criteria. National Director Stuart Reges is scheduled to represent the LP at the hearing.

## National Committee Rescinds Controversial Goals

At its April 24-25 meeting in Boston, the Libertarian National Committee rescinded its previous endorsement of two controversial goals adopted in December, 1992.

The goals were to "eliminate the oath" and to "change platform criteria" to be a more short-term document of limited length rewritten at each convention.

The intent of the vote was to recognize that "goals adopted by the Committee should represent a consensus" and that it "should respect the decisions of previous national conventions."

These goals will be considered by the delegates to the 1993 Libertarian Convention in Salt Lake City (to be held September 2-5).

## LP to Hire Communications Director

National Chair Mary Gingell has posted an announcement for a new staff member to work at the national office in Washington, DC as our Director of Communications. This individual will work both on external communications (mostly with the media and affinity groups) and on internal communications (mostly working with affiliate parties).

The Libertarian National Committee had voted funding for the position in its December, 1992 meeting, but made the funding contingent upon successful fundraising in the first part of 1993. National Committee members were sufficiently satisfied with 1993 fundraising to approve moving forward with the position.

If all goes well, we might have a new Director of Communications working at the national headquarters by sometime in June.

## Elsmere Libertarians File Suit

Libertarian John Reda who ran for Mayor of the town of Elsmere in Delaware lost the election by just 36 votes. But election judge K. Kay Shearin alleges that the voting process was flawed. She filed a class action suit in federal court on May 13th asking that the election be invalidated.

Shearin alleges that voting officials were not verifying that people who cast votes were actually registered voters. She further alleges a discrepancy between a tally of voters taken as they entered the voting facility and the total votes recorded by voting machines.

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LIBERTARIAN PARTY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

1528 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E. • Washington, D.C. 20003 • (202) 543-1988

# Libertarians recognized on new ballots

By HUGH BRONSTEIN  
Of The Morning Call

Pennsylvania Libertarians say they're bound for the big time, now that their candidates won't be the *other* ones on the ballot.

When new voter registration forms are distributed in July, they will for the first time in state history include the Libertarian Party as an option.

"When you register to vote, you will no longer have the choice of Republican, Democrat or other. You now have the choice of Republican, Democrat or Libertarian," said Don Ernsberger, a high school philosophy teacher from Warminster and member of the National Libertari-

gressional elections of 1930.

Ernsberger said there are about 70 party veterans at the convention and 75 to 100 newcomers. "We needed to give people who were interested in the party an opportunity to be educated on our ideas," Ernsberger said.

To help with this education was Jonathan Adler, environmental policy analyst for the Washington-based Competitive Enterprise Institute. Adler spoke yesterday morning about the threat of government "micromanagement" of the auto industry.

He said government-mandated fuel efficiency standards will result in less steel used in cars, which in turn will hurt the economies of cities like Bethlehem.

The Morning Call, Allentown, PA - Mar 28, 1993

## Wakefield Lauded by Libertarians

The State Libertarian Party chairman has given a party award to the town of Wakefield for refusing to accept federal aid for the blizzard of 1993.

Douglas Harrigan, Libertarian chairman, said the party's Principles of Liberty in Action Award is given in honor of actions taken by a person or group "that exemplify a meritorious application of the principles of liberty to everyday problems."

Wakefield selectmen voted not to accept federal disaster funds for snow plowing and removal costs.

Harrigan said in a letter to Wakefield selectmen that "New Hampshire accepting federal money to plow out a couple feet of snow is like people in Southern California expecting the American taxpayer to pay for their suntan lotion."

Libertarians advocate greater personal liberty and responsibility and much smaller government.

The Union Leader, Manchester, NH - Apr 2, 1993

an Committee.

The Libertarians are holding their state convention in Bethlehem this weekend to revel in their new status and win the hearts of disaffected members of the two *other* parties. As Republicans grope for a coalition to win back Congress and the White House, Libertarians across the nation are wooing those who agree with their creed of low government influence over the private sector and even lower taxes.

The Libertarians needed 2 percent of the vote in 10 of the state's 67 counties to qualify as an official party. Ernsberger said last year the party garnered over 2 percent in more than 20 counties.

"We now are legally on the ballot, and

President Clinton wants to increase the average standard, now at 27½ miles per gallon. Adler's Competitive Enterprise Institute is suing the government to lower the average to 26 mpg.

"It's a bad idea for the government to tell us how much steel to use," Adler said. "Setting aside what this does to the steel industry, there is a more pernicious impact. To make cars lighter, you make them smaller, and there are inherent limitations to how safe those cars can be."

Adler cited reports saying fuel efficiency standards indirectly cause between 2,200 and 3,800 additional road fatalities per year.

"When you make cars smaller and lighter, people die," he said.

people can expect to see us all the time," Ernsberger said. "It will give us more credibility."

He said the state party expects to run 20 to 30 candidates in local elections in the May primary. The Libertarians also plan to put up a candidate in the July special election for state senator for northern Bucks County, the seat vacated by James Greenwood, the Republican elected to Congress last year.

Weekend convention business includes election of new officers and delegates to this summer's national convention in Salt Lake City. Ernsberger said 2.5 million people voted for Libertarian candidates last year, the largest showing for a third party since the Socialists in the con-



JIM REED/Tribune photo

## Tax protest

"Lady Godiva" rides her horse past the federal courthouse in Tampa Thursday to protest federal taxes. The woman, who de-

clined to be identified, is led by Tom Hoffman of the Libertarian Party of Hillsborough County, the protest's sponsor.

Tampa Tribune, Tampa, FL - Apr 16, 1993

# High school students find politics overshadows substance at forum

Assessments of the Irvine High School forum on President Bill Clinton's economic plan were straightforward: The speakers too often relied on emotional rhetoric. Responses lacked sophistication, logic and hard facts.

No one came right out and called the speakers sophomoric.

Which is a good thing, because these speakers were not sophomores. The Democratic candidate for state Assembly, Jim Toledano, touted a program that would not cut spending by favoring special interests or rich people.

The press secretary for Republican state Sen. John Lewis, Matt Cunningham, claimed Clinton's plan would not work—"never has and never will."

The Libertarian candidate for U.S.

Senate, Richard Boddie, said, several times, that government should "stay the hell out of our pockets."

And the representative for Ross Perot's United We Stand America, Jeff Bishop, urged campaign reform.

Between 150 and 200 students from civics and international economics classes turned out for the forum sponsored by Irvine High's Activists for Political Awareness.

Top applause-getters were Boddie and Cunningham, but no hearts and minds were swayed by politicians spouting the same old party line. In a survey after the forum, 54 percent supported Clinton's plan, said Kenneth Lee, a member of Activists for Political Awareness and forum organizer.

## IRVINE HIGH

Of the 46 percent who did not support the president's plan, Lee said, 44 percent think the Republicans have a better plan, 36 percent endorse the Libertarians' approach and 20 percent gave their vote to Perot's grass roots party.

Jackie Rubin, a senior in advanced placement government, said she already had listened to the plan on television.

"I felt I learned more there", she said.

Instead of saying, "This is what we're doing, and this is why you should support us," she said, the pols turned the

forum into a knocking session of each other.

Senior Jenny Hamilton suggested the format was the problem.

"The problems with the economy are too much to cover in 50 minutes," she said. "I didn't think any speakers said anything very concrete. I'd hoped for a better understanding of how each party felt."

The pols' performances were summed up by international economics student Brian Jordan: "The Democrats knocked the Republicans' plan; the Republicans knocked the Democrats' plan, but nobody talked about their own plan. Well, the Libertarians talked about their own plan, but they didn't say what it was."

Irvine World News, Irvine, CA - Mar 11, 1993

# Libertarians begin signature drive for 'Tax Brake'

## Two-decade-old party hopes dissatisfaction among voters will spur effort to take control of taxes

By John Ripley  
Of the NEWS Staff

The faint sounds of Ross Perot's twangy voice could be heard Tuesday as the Libertarian Party of Maine announced plans to take its no-tax platform to the people.

Since the party's inception two decades ago, the Libertarians have made smaller government and little or no taxes the pillars of their movement, which has witnessed an increase in ranks in recent years. The Libertarians' latest proposal would force a popular vote for nearly every tax or fee increase.

And this, party members said, includes other forms of taxation, such as state mandates passed on to towns.

The basic plan would work like this: Whenever a state entity proposes a tax increase, passage

would hinge upon a sort of referendum vote to be held during the next election. The same would hold for municipal and county governments, although town meetings could count as elections, and government activities paid by retail sales or user fees would also be exempt, the Libertarians said during a Bangor press conference.

In addition, towns would have the right to vote not to enact the measure.

"The Libertarian Party supports the principle of local control and believes that the people are the best judges of the form of their local governments," the party said in a press release.

The initiative, dubbed the "Tax Brake," will be inaugurated with a signature-gathering drive, so that the proposal will appear as a state-wide referendum in 1994. To get there, though, they need to collect

30,000 signatures, an admittedly daunting task for the 2,000-member party.

The party will raise money for the venture by accepting donations for TAXATIONLAND stickers to go over the VACATIONLAND part of the license plate. The party could sell the stickers, but it would have to pay taxes on the money earned. "That's sort of contrary to what we want to do," said Libertarian Dick Eaton.

Another obstacle is a 59-page document called the Maine Constitution, which gives the Legislature the right to raise revenue. But, said Libertarian Jeff Ellis, the constitution also allows lawmakers to put any bill to a public vote.

"Our legal staff believes if it can be done for a particular statute, it could be done for a class of statutes, in this case tax increases," Ellis said.

Although the constitution might allow the Legislature to put a bill to a public vote, it currently does not mandate a delegation of power

such as the Libertarians have proposed. In fact, Article 9, Section 9 states clearly, "The Legislature shall never, in any manner, suspend or surrender the power of taxation."

The impetus for the proposal, they said, is to return governmental accountability to the people.

"The record of our Legislature over the past few years is saying one thing during a campaign ... and then doing exactly the opposite," said treasurer Ken Lindell. "Really what we've got is a situation where democracy is not working."

The Libertarian Party's 2-year-old status as an officially recognized party in Maine is currently under review following the party's failure to obtain at least 5 percent of the vote in last November's election, according to the Associated Press. The party is also asking a federal appeals court to declare unconstitutional portions of Maine election law cited by elections officials last year in ruling 18 party candidates ineligible for inclusion on general election ballots.

Bangor Daily News, Bangor, ME - Apr 14, 1993



— Carrie Rosema/staff

Doug Price of Ponte Vedra Beach tosses "tea" (fish food, actually) into the St. Johns River during a Libertarian Party tax protest.

## Check's in the mail — or should be

By June D. Bell  
Staff writer

The deadline to pay 1992 federal income taxes came and went yesterday, and tax protester Stephanie Waggner watched it go without filing a return.

She doesn't have to. She's only 10.

But her status as a tax exemption didn't stop her from joining a Libertarian Party tax protest yesterday on the Southbank Riverwalk. About 25 people gathered by Friendship Fountain to rail against government's reckless spending.

The Southside fifth-grader, who was visiting the Museum of Science and History nearby, said she joined the protest "because my mom

doesn't have enough money left over when the government takes all her taxes. There's never enough money for special foods and extra things like sunglasses."

Meanwhile, around Jacksonville — and the country — last-minute taxpayers hustled to post offices to mail their income tax forms to the Internal Revenue Service. Forms had to be postmarked by midnight last night to be considered on time.

Traffic at the Mandarin branch post office was "super heavy," said a weary Chuck Spitzer, supervisor of customer service.

Taxpayers exhausted stamp supplies in the vending machines and dropped off returns destined for Atlanta's IRS office at a rate of

100 an hour, he said. Those seeking Tax Form 4868, a request for a four-month extension, were out of luck because the post office was out of forms.

Holger Euringer, the IRS public affairs officer for Central and North Florida, said his office was flooded with 3,000 calls an hour from befuddled taxpayers.

The 400 IRS employees in the Jacksonville office expected to handle about 30,000 calls by 6:30 p.m. yesterday, he said.

The federal government wasn't the only one profiting from income tax time. The American Diabetes Association of Northeast Florida

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## Many unhappy returns filed

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will receive nearly \$1,000 from a promotion yesterday at Coggin Nissan on Atlantic Boulevard.

For a \$1 donation, fuming taxpayers could swing a sledgehammer at a junked car decorated in anti-IRS motif. The car received 189 blows, and Coggin donated \$500, plus \$50 for each of the cars sold yesterday, said Alan Dulberger, new car sales manager.

The Libertarians took less dramatic action. Their lunch-hour protest demanded drastic cuts in federal, state and local government spending.

Income taxes could be pared by cutting military spending, foreign aid and business subsidies, eliminating the Federal Reserve and pri-

vating nearly all government functions, said Bill Bragg, executive committeeman of the Libertarian Party of Duval County.

Supporters waved signs reading: "It's April 15 — do you know where your money is?" and "Taxes steal from everyone."

Then, in an act of rebellion modeled after the 1773 Boston Tea Party, they reached into a wooden tea chest to fling handfuls of its contents into the St. Johns River.

Boston's enraged colonists heaved imported tea into Boston Harbor, but these ecologically correct folks tossed fish food. Two mallard ducks bobbing in the river gobbled up the handout.

Staff writer Morgen Crawford contributed to this report.

The Florida Times-Union  
Jacksonville, FL - Apr 16, 1993