

# LIBERTY PLEDGE

## newsletter

Libertarian National Committee, Inc. ♦ 2600 Virginia Ave, NW, Suite 100  
Washington DC 20037 ♦ Phone: (202) 333-0008 ♦ Fax: (202) 333-0072

JANUARY 1998

## Roy Innis will run for governor in NY

*Civil rights leader to announce on January 27*

**R**oy Innis, the well-known African-American civil rights leader and head of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), is expected to announce this month that he will seek the Libertarian Party's 1998 nomination for governor of New York, state party leaders say.

Innis, 63, a self-described "life-long Democrat," is scheduled to officially join the Libertarian Party at a public "photo-op" event on January 27 in New York City — and, at the same time, announce his candidacy.

"It's official," said Jim Harris, treasurer of the New York Libertarian Party. "He's going to seek our nomination."

At the state convention on March 14 and 15, Innis will square off against LP member Robert Goodman, who is also seeking the party's gubernatorial nomination.

If he wins the nomination, a high-profile Innis campaign could have a major impact on the state party, activists said.

"If the LP candidate for governor can poll at least 50,000 votes, [we] will become a recognized party in New York," said Jeffrey Russell, the editor of *Free New York* — earning automatic ballot status and the right to register Libertarian.

"With an individual like Roy Innis on our ticket, we are likely to get far more than the 50,000 votes needed," predicted Harris.

### **There is another way**

In addition, said Harris, an Innis candidacy could boost the prestige of the party: "[It shows that] another national figure has found that there is another way, other than Left or Right — it's Libertarian."

Innis, 63, is the president of CORE, the third-largest civil rights organization in America, and has a reputation as a powerful public speaker.

CORE — and Innis himself — have long been out of step with traditional, left-leaning civil rights organizations. The CORE mission statement says that "the most fundamental freedom for all people is the right to govern themselves." Membership in CORE is open to "anyone who believes that all people are created equal."

Personally, Innis has been an outspoken defender of Second Amendment rights, and has also spoken out in favor of California's Proposition 209, which ended government-mandated "affirmative action" programs in that state.

## Ron Paul's ballot access bills get 1st co-sponsor

**A** Republican Congressman from Ohio has become the first official co-sponsor of Ron Paul's pair of ballot access reform bills, according to a report in the January 12, 1998, issue of *Insight* magazine.

U.S. Rep. Steven LaTourette has signed on to HR 2477 and HR 2478, which were filed by Congressman Paul (R-TX).

But *more* co-sponsors will be needed to convince the House Government Reform & Oversight Committee to hold hearings on the bills, said Paul's spokesman, Michael Sullivan.

"The way to ensure a hearing is to have *lots* of co-sponsors," he said, noting that Paul's bills were fighting for attention among 3,000 pieces of proposed legislation.

HR 2477 and HR 2478 apparently picked up their first co-sponsor thanks to lobbying pressure from Libertarians and other third-party supporters, said Sullivan. And several other Congressmen have told Paul's office that their "constituents are asking about it [the bills]," he said.

Both HR 2477 and HR 2478 would "level the playing field" in electoral politics at the federal level.

■ **The Voter Freedom Act** (HR 2477) requires states to establish "fair and uniform ballot-access standards" for candidates seeking federal office, and would reduce presidential ballot access requirements by up to 85%.

■ **The Debate Freedom Act** (HR 2478) prohibits presidential candidates who accept taxpayer-provided matching funds from participating in debates that exclude candidates qualified for the ballot in at least 40 states.

## Everyone's a critic at FlickPicks

**W**ant to share your Libertarian perspective on current movies? You can do so at a new WWW site called FlickPicks, "The Moviegoers' Website," which is owned and operated by LP members.

"We're seeking input from Libertarians," said David Nolan, LP founder and owner of FlickPicks along with Jack Dean, head of the Harry Browne 2000 Committee.

At the FlickPicks site, moviegoers can rate and critique films and see how others rate them, said Nolan.

"Our goal is to become recognized as a leading source of information on current movies," he said. "And we're hoping that those ratings [will help] to assure that pro-liberty movies get the attention they deserve."

Look for FlickPicks at <http://www.flickpicks.com>

# Living in a Libertarian universe

**An interview with Idaho Libertarian Party Chairman Chris Struble and State Media Coordinator Joe Rohner**

Q & A

By Nicole LeFavour

## Inside Politics



Compiled by Greg Pierce

### Hidden taxes

"After you get your paycheck and you see that huge gap between your gross income and your net income, you might think the government is finished with you, but, of course, it isn't," says George Getz, deputy director of communications for the Libertarian Party.

"We pay an average of 42 percent. Every time you buy a product, there is a whole wide array of hidden taxes. For example, the merchant has to pay unemployment taxes and sales taxes and excise taxes, Social Security taxes for workers, property taxes, all sorts of taxes. And combined, those taxes equal about 42 percent," Mr. Getz said on NET television.

"Politicians like to nibble around the edges. They like to talk about reducing the capital-gains tax by about 3 percent. The bigger bite is these hidden taxes that you don't often think about."

He said there are about 30 taxes on a gallon of gasoline, making up 54 percent of the final price. And then there is pizza.

"There are about 18 separate taxes on a pizza. And you pay them all."

▲ *The Washington Times*  
Washington DC, December 24, 1997

► *The Boise Weekly*  
Boise, Idaho, December 23, 1997  
(Continues on next page)

Like other organizations outside the traditional two-party paradigm of American politics, Libertarians remain better known as a group driven by a philosophy than as a distinct political force. Setting out to "free people from their governments" and opposing the draft, public schooling, business subsidies, welfare, taxation, the minimum wage, trade restrictions, licensing and any other form of government regulation — while supporting drug legalization, abortion rights, the right to bear arms, prostitution, unlimited immigration and most other expressions of human behavior — Libertarians have eked out a controversial and often misunderstood niche in the political spectrum.

Conspicuously absent from the party's ideology is any attempt to address the societal ills affecting the country. As National Liber-

ballot in all 50 states. Supported by the Cato Institute, a Libertarian think-tank that has become one of the most respected policy institutes in Washington, Libertarian analysts and ideas have made their way into the mainstream of American political thought, often appearing on such shows as *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer* and on the op-ed pages of major American newspapers.

Though they boast only 22,000 official members nationally, local leaders say the party has run over 800 candidates in major and minor races across the country.

On Nov. 4, Idaho citizens elected their first Libertarian Party member to public office. Ron Wittig beat a write-in candidate for New Meadows City Council by 26 votes, running on a promise that he would try to roll back many of the rules imposed over the past few years by the city's planning and zoning board.

While the Idaho Libertarian Party currently claims only 100 dues-paying members, state party chair Chris Struble and media coordinator Joe Rohner project a note of confidence, discussing their political philosophy and the future of the party with unbridled optimism.



Joe Rohner (left) and Chris Struble (right)

arian Party Press Secretary George Getz says about the party's views on poverty and other related issues, "Utopia is not an option."

Founded during Richard Nixon's presidency in 1971 at the home of Colorado businessman David Nolan, the party — so the story goes — was established in response to Nixon's price controls and what the group saw as socialist trends in government regulation. In 1980, the group's presidential ticket, Ed Clark and David Koch, spent a huge chunk of Koch's money (Koch Industries is one of the largest private companies in the United States) and gained a respectable million votes for the fledgling party.

Twenty-six years after its birth, the Libertarian Party is now at a point financially where officials say they expect to consistently be able to qualify candidates for the

**Joe Rohner:** A lot of political parties are competing for the power to rule. Only the Libertarians recognize the inherent right of the individual to rule or govern himself as long as he's not violating the liberties of other individuals.

**Chris Struble:** Our goal isn't so much to seize power but to prevent other political parties from using that power to violate individual rights.

**Struble:** In a Libertarian society, private property rights would be well-defined. Everyone knows it's wrong to steal, to trespass.

**Rohner:** (These) rights are currently violated by the state. They're clearly defined but the state feels it has the rights to prohibit and/or to compel behaviors such as the use of drugs, the compulsion to pay tax on work... the draft...

**Boise Weekly:** Do you feel the state should prohibit any behaviors?

**Rohner:** Feelings are subjective, and Libertarians think. Liberals feel.

**Struble:** In a nutshell, any behavior that is non-violent, that does not violate the rights of another person, government does not have any business regulating. An example would be the case of somebody who does drugs — (if) they don't go out and hurt anybody and they use in the privacy of their own home... (And) running a business today

Q & A • Continued from page 7

there are so many regulations. If you're running an honest business you're not hurting anybody.

**BW:** What about minimum wage laws?

**Rohner:** Minimum wage laws are a violation of two parties' right to contract — the buyer of the labor and the seller of that labor. These are essentially price control laws which are recognized by all credible economists as harmful to economic activity.



conomic activity.

**BW:** Harmful to economic activity in general or harmful to the welfare of businesses?

**Rohner:** Economic activity is simply the free exchange of goods and services between buyers and sellers.

**BW:** What about inequalities of power in people's ability to work out these contracts? Some people have lawyers and others might not.

**Rohner:** Inequalities, those are socialist concepts that died in the Soviet Republic of Russia... The seller of the labor always has the freedom to take his labor to another buyer.

**Struble:** Individuals are not helpless — unless we're talking about someone who's handicapped. A person can start his own business. If you... get rid of these licensing barriers... people can start a business in a cart.

**BW:** Could everyone own their own business? Who would work in the factories? Who would the employees be?

**Struble:** There are some entering the job market whose labor might not be worth \$4.25 an hour. What's going to happen? The employer is going to hire somebody else who has more skills. So you knock the lowest rungs off the job ladder and you prevent people from entering the job market — low-skilled workers, minorities, criminals maybe.

**Rohner:** Teenagers.

**Struble:** The people who get hurt the most by (minimum wage laws) are young black males in the inner city.

**BW:** Are most low-skilled workers minorities?

**Struble:** No ... I don't want to give the impression that we're stereotyping. Our educational system is set up so the people living in the best neighborhoods get the best education. So those coming out (of poor neighborhoods) don't have the best opportunities.

**BW:** How do you address these inequalities in schools?

**Rohner:** First we must clarify our education goals. First you must separate education from the state.

**Struble:** One thing you do is you implement school choice. You allow parents to send their kids to the school of their choice or allow them to home school. The other thing is you have a tax credit to any individual or institution that educates any child.

**BW:** So the schools are still supported by taxes?

**Struble:** No, we want to eventually do away with the public school system.

**Rohner:** We want to replace it with its free market alternative.

**BW:** It seems this might only make the problem worse. Those with money would have good schools and others would go to the K-Mart alternative.

**Rohner:** That's the way life is. Life is not equal. In this life we have the right to seek but not to receive.

**Struble:** Poor parents who greatly care about the education of their children could choose to spend a higher portion of their income to educate their children. Right now they don't have the choice.

**Rohner:** The government has ways of relieving people of responsibilities. The way quality control occurs in a free market system is the free market insures practitioners of technical skills. So your responsibility is to find out if your practitioner has insurance, that somebody is willing to underwrite his screw-ups.

**BW:** What's to prevent rackets where companies are paid to insure crackpots?

**Rohner:** Well, someone can sue them.

**BW:** That might make for a lot of suing.

**Rohner:** Yeah.

**Struble:** Probably.

**Rohner:** Even with licensing by the state there are fraudulent people practicing. These things only provide minimum standards.

**Struble:** In the free market you can always take your business elsewhere.

**BW:** What's to prevent pollution or stop companies from using up the last of our natural resources?

**Struble:** If someone pollutes right now our legal system does not treat pollution as what it is. It's a trespass. If someone dumps garbage on your lawn or pollutes the air you breathe or the water you drink they're essentially trespassing. They're effectively putting something onto your property or person without your permission and that's a violation of your rights... You can sue.

Right now if a company is in compliance (with the law) and they're polluting there's nothing you can do. Instead of paying fines to the state they should pay property owners.

**Rohner:** Another one of government's false promises, they don't protect private property rights.

**BW:** What if a person doesn't have the money to sue?

**Struble:** You can have class action.

**Rohner:** If you don't have money, you just aren't going to get what money can buy.

**BW:** So if you are poor you don't have the right to clean air?

**Rohner:** If there's an 800-pound gorilla out there, sometimes you can protect yourself, sometimes you can't. Right now little people get the worst of it because the government protects the rich.

**BW:** You don't think they also protect the poor?

**Rohner:** No. Government doesn't protect the poor.

**BW:** I understand you're not exactly pro big business.

**Rohner:** Absolutely not. Were pro individual business.

**BW:** You don't believe the big ones will gobble up all the small ones?

**Rohner:** Big business got big because of laws restricting competition.

**Struble:** Under the free market anyone can enter the market at any time.

**BW:** If they have money.

**Struble:** Of course. But they can start small. If big companies continue to produce inferior quality they'll lose market share.

**BW:** Don't you think a lot of sales depends on marketing and advertising? Aren't those with big budgets at a large advantage?

**Struble:** Sure. They have an advantage. They do. But it's not enough to prevent anyone from getting sales. (And) if (a business) continues to produce superior products they'll gain market share.

**BW:** Again on the topic of wages. What if they are not high enough that someone can feed their family?

**Struble:** If someone's in that situation they have difficult choices. Both (parents) can work for a time. Another thing is if you're really desperate, when we have lower taxes

people who do have money will be more inclined to give it to charities. Another important thing is family. The key is government is not the only option. There are other options.

**BW:** I understand Libertarians advocate eliminating most functions of government. What would be left under a Libertarian system?

**Struble:** In a Libertarian society you'll still have prisons.

**Rohner:** The rights-protection industry.

**Struble:** There might be fewer laws. Only those who violate individual rights will be in prison. That's one of the essential functions of government that would still exist... Three things would be left. You'll need national defense to defend the rights of our citizens against foreign governments who would violate (our) rights. Second, you need police on the local level to protect against individuals who would violate the rights of others. Third is the court system as a last resort for resolving disputes. The prisons would come under a court system. It might be important to mention compensation. Criminals must be made to pay restitution to their victims.

**BW:** And again, if they don't have the money?

**Rohner:** Then you lose.

**Struble:** You go to prison.

**Rohner:** Sometimes life is cruel. Libertarians always have the problem of rich versus poor. Life is not equal. It's not fair always.

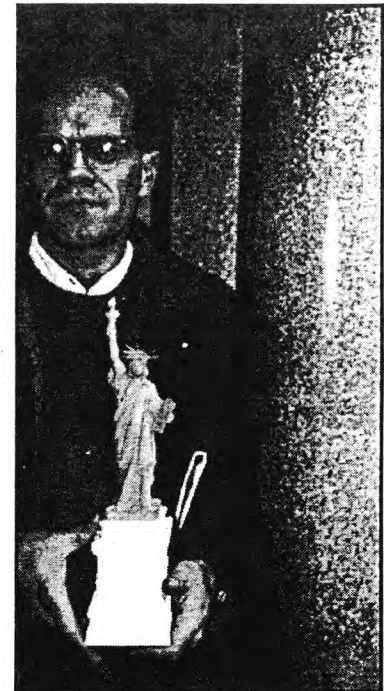
**Struble:** There would be some circumstances where you could pay restitution, others where you couldn't... By eliminating government functions that violate individual rights — that's basically everything except police, courts, prisons and national defense — society will be much better off. There'll be more prosperity, less crime and violence. Really more people will be happier and more able to achieve their goals.

**Rohner:** In a Libertarian society the greatest good will be achieved for the greatest number — which was an objective that communism could never deliver.

**Struble:** Collectivism is contrary to human nature.

**BW:** Your party has grown since 1971. As you say, Libertarian thinkers can be found all over the mainstream.

**Struble:** It's a growing trend. People are turning to us for



new ideas.

**Rohner:** This is probably the biggest political philosophy movement in the history of mankind.

**BW:** I do see parts of a Libertarian trend in both the Democratic and Republican parties — the emphasis on deregulation in industry for example.

**Rohner:** They're both stealing our ideas as fast as they can.



# System is beyond repair, Fritz will tell conference

By Pablo Lopez  
Bee Washington bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. — Marshall Fritz paced the floor of his Arlington hotel suite and jokingly offered a title for this article: "Mr. Fritz goes to Washington."

It's close. Just a stone's throw away from the capital in suburban Virginia, the Fresno man has masterminded a conference beginning today that explores his favorite topic: "Is public schooling beyond repair?"

Fritz, 54, who believes the U.S. government should get out of the business of running public schools, founded the Separation of School & State Alliance in Janu-

ary 1994, a year after he disbanded his Pioneer Christian Academy in Fresno. Since then, his group has signed up more than 3,500 members from all over the world and all denominations.

About 150 people are expected to attend the conference, which has attracted leaders in the separatist movement, including John Taylor Gatto, 1991 New York state teacher of the year, and author Cathy Duffy.

Among the topics are "How Sex-ed is Leading to 'Animal Farm,'" and "The Neglected Genius of American Spirituality as a Compass to Navigate the School Mess."

A former IBM salesman and congression-

al candidate, Fritz espouses the freedom and free-market messages of the Libertarian Party.

"Traditional public and private schooling stifles creativity in its lockstep, grade-by-grade approach to learning," he said.

By eliminating these methods, Fritz said, students will take responsibility for their learning and move as fast or as slow as skills and comprehension warrant.

In Fritz's view, students, even first-graders, should pick what they want to study, select their own classmates, choose their

Please see **Schools**, Page B2

▲ *The Fresno Bee*

Fresno, California, November 21, 1997

▼ *The Five Cities Times-Press*

Arroyo Grande, California,  
January 7, 1998

own teachers and receive wages for their successes.

Most of all, he believes parents — not the government — must determine what's best for their children's education.

"My critics are people on the left and the right who believe that government schools can work if their group gets to be in charge," he said.

The self-reliance theme is not

new for Fritz, who in 1984 founded Advocates for Self-Government Inc., which communicates the concepts of the Libertarian Party.

Fritz started his political life as a liberal in the 1960s but discovered libertarianism around 1977 and never looked back. He was an unsuccessful candidate for Congress on the Libertarian Party ticket in 1982.

# Treaty means bigger government, bigger costs

WASHINGTON D.C. — The U.S. government should refuse to confirm the new global warming treaty because it represents a massive increase in government power and a huge cost to American consumers — all based on questionable science.

There is a strong case to be made that global warming is science fiction masquerading as science fact. And the global warming treaty is crisis management at its worst — where politicians declare a crisis, and then use it as an excuse to further micro-manage our lives and the nation's economy.

The treaty, drafted in Kyoto, Japan, by 159 nations, would bind the United States to reduce so-called greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide by 7 percent below their 1990 levels by 2010.

If the U.S. government confirms the treaty, it could enforce the agreement by imposing heavy taxes on energy or by mandating increased energy efficiency for automobiles and industry.

Such actions could result in a 50 cent a gallon hike in gasoline prices and a doubling of electricity bills for most Americans — and could cost the economy upwards of \$3.3 trillion and throw hundreds of thousands of Americans out of work, critics charge.

Because of the potential threat posed by global warming tomorrow,

politicians are willing to do real, measurable damage to our economy and standard of living today. That's not an acceptable response.

It's the theoretical nature of the dangers of global warming that has Libertarians — and numerous other scientists, economists, and climate experts — so worried about the treaty.

Global warming is a theory based, at this point, on speculative science, imprecise computer models, and a lot of doom-and-gloom rhetoric. Despite what the politicians would have you believe, the scientific case for global warming is tenuous, at best.

In fact,

- The scientific evidence doesn't support the theory that the earth is warming because of human activities. Since 1979, satellites and weather balloons have recorded a slight cooling trend, with global temperatures falling by .04 degrees. That decrease coincides with a dramatic increase in greenhouse gases.

- There is no scientific consensus that global warming is a fact. Earlier this year, Science magazine noted: "Many climate experts caution that it is not at all clear yet that human activities have begun to warm the planet."

- Despite a worldwide increase in industrial activity, human beings still have only a minor impact on the atmosphere. In fact, only 3 percent

## Guest Commentary By Steve Dasback

of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere comes from human activities, while 97 percent comes from natural causes like plants, volcanoes, and oceans. While human beings produce about 10 billion metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions every year, Mother Nature produces almost 200 billion metric tons annually.

- Global temperatures normally fluctuate by wide margins over the centuries. Over the past 3,000 years, there have been at least five extended warmer periods and two significantly cooler periods — including the so-called Little Ice Age that started in 1450. Temperatures today are still lower than the 3,000-year average, according to scientists at the Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine.

- The slight increase in global temperatures that has occurred over the last 100 years may very well be caused by other factors besides human activities — such as fluctuations in solar activity, according to the London-based Institute for Economic Affairs.

However, the lack of conclusive scientific evidence hasn't stopped

the Clinton administration from calling global warming skeptics "un-American" — a statement that should raise a red flag of caution.

In fact, it is very American behavior to question what our leaders tell us — especially when their so-called solutions would cost us trillions of dollars and dramatically increase the power of government. We're talking about questions of science here — not blind patriotism or unquestioning obedience to environmental dogma.

Whatever the facts, the good news is that individuals who worry about global warming — and especially the 57 percent of Americans who say they are willing to make "economic sacrifices" to protect the environment — can take action immediately to address the issue.

If you are concerned about the environment, you don't need bureaucrats from 159 nations to force you to do something about it. Every American can make a personal commitment to reduce energy consumption, to drive more fuel-efficient cars, and to boycott businesses that pollute. We don't need a global treaty to put the environmental concerns of 263 million American to work to help build a better, cleaner future for our children.

*Steve Dasback, is the Libertarian party's national chairman.*