

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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CAMPAIGN 2000 & 2001 ...

Roy Innis and Bob Grant consider races in NY, NJ

Roy Innis is "in" and **Bob Grant** is "out" — that's the latest word on two potentially high-profile campaigns in New York and New Jersey.

Innis, head of the Congress Of Racial Equality, has confirmed that he does expect to run for mayor of New York City in 2001, while Grant, a controversial talk show host on WOR, said he won't run for the U.S. Senate in New Jersey as a Libertarian in 2000.

At the New Jersey state convention in late March, Innis told Libertarians, "Yes, I do expect to run" for mayor of New York City in two years, reported *New Jersey Libertarian* newsletter editor Jim Van Blarcom.

Innis, 64, is the African-American president of CORE, the third-

largest civil rights organization in America. He joined the LP in 1997.

Meanwhile, Grant has backed away from a statement that he would run for U.S. Senate as a Libertarian.

In mid-April, Grant told listeners on New York's WOR Radio (AM-710) that he was "very serious" about tossing his hat into the ring.

His declaration brought criticism from New Jersey LP members — who noted that Grant was not a party member, and never talked to anyone in the LP before making his announcement.

Party members also pointed out that Grant supports gun control and is vehemently anti-immigrant.

In response to the criticism, Grant announced in late April that if he runs, he would run as an independent.



Jimmy J.J. Walker: Liberty is "Dynamite!"

The Libertarian Party has won a "Dyn-O-Mite" supporter: Comedian **Jimmy J.J. Walker**.

Missouri Libertarian activist Ken Bush met Walker at the Funny-Bone Comedy Nightclub in St. Louis in late April, and had a chance to grill the comedian about his political beliefs.

Walker — long rumored to have libertarian sympathies — confirmed that he supported the Libertarian Party.

"I've always felt like I've had libertarian leanings but just didn't know the label," said Walker — until, that is, he started doing more reading about politics in the early 1980s. "Simply put, the more I read, the more I liked about libertarians."

Walker said he didn't agree 100% with the LP, said Bush — but did like Libertarians' consistent support of free enterprise and pro-choice policies on "so many issues."

Walker, an award-winning writer and actor, is best known for his role on the CBS show *Good Times* (1972-1980) and for his trademark — and oft-repeated — line: "Dyn-O-Mite!"

Co-sponsors grow for anti-KYC bills

The number of co-sponsors to Congressman Ron Paul's pair of bills to kill the "Know Your Customer" regulation has jumped dramatically over the past month — thanks, apparently, to the LP's DefendYourPrivacy.com website.

Since early April, the number of co-sponsors for **HR 516** (The Know Your Customer Sunset Act) has increased to 63 from 47, and the number of co-sponsors for **HR 518** (The Bank Secrecy Sunset Act) has jumped to 13 from two, reported LP

National Director Steve Dasbach.

During that same time, the DefendYourPrivacy.com site has generated 48,983 e-mail lobbying messages — targeting U.S. House members and asking them to become co-sponsors to Paul's bills.

"House members appear to be feeling the heat from our Defend-YourPrivacy.com lobbying effort," said Dasbach. "The increased number of co-sponsors seems to validate the effectiveness of this Internet-based lobbying."

Free market is cure for gas prices

Politicians should regulate the price of gas? This from people who arrange to get the monopoly vendor \$4.50 for a beer and \$3 for a hot dog at government stadiums. This from people who think paying the highest wage possible to get construction work done is good business. This from people who think we pay too low a rate of tax, because they can't manage to provide basic government services with the massive amount of revenue already flowing into government coffers.

Is Big Oil the culprit? This nonsense about the "controlling" of oil prices by the evil oil companies doesn't make economic sense. If the companies can control the price of gas, why would they make it cheaper in other parts of the country or other parts of the state? Do they just hate Californians, or maybe San Diegans?

And why do they ever drop the gasoline price back down? Is greed something that comes and goes? If the oil companies could control prices and make more money *sometimes*, then they would do it *all* the time! Indeed, lowering prices only makes people mad the next

time the price goes up. It would make better political sense to keep the price at the same high level all the time.



RICHARD RIDER

Much of the difference for which we pay the premium price in California is taxes and special fuel configuration. We pay sales tax (7.75 percent); many states don't. Proposition 111 imposed an additional 9 cents per gallon in California, on which we pay sales tax (as we do on all fuel taxes). Gas configuration for cleaner air

(which is causing big environmental problems because of new toxic products it is releasing into our ground water) is as much as 8 cents a gallon.

Regulatory pressure has steadily reduced refinery capacity in California. With the MTBE additive requirement, other states' refineries cannot sell their product in California. Thus when there is a glitch in California refinery output, such as the recent pair of fires, there is no relief from other state refineries shifting their distribution to California.

Higher price is the most efficient allocation system of a resource growing scarcer. Otherwise the government gets into the rationing and allocation

business, without giving producers an incentive to increase output to make more money.

Remember that in San Diego we have been opposing the building of new gas stations for more than a decade. When there is less competition, businesses charge higher prices.

I charge higher prices when I can, and I imagine most of you do the same in your business. Is that wrong? Are we gouging anyone? No, we are charging as much as we can while we sell as much as we can, adjusting our prices to meet market conditions and consumer demand. That is the free market at work.

When I sell long-distance phone service in smaller cities, I sometimes charge the clients more for the service because there are fewer competitors and less pricing pressure. I want to increase my profit margin, but pesky competition keeps cutting back the price I can charge. Any other business operates the same way, including the oil companies.

What we need is lower taxes, elimination of harmful regulation and greater ease of entry to competition. More government regulation is not the answer.

Richard Rider of San Diego is a spokesman for the Libertarian Party of San Diego County.
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Libertarian candidate pushes for principles

FINDLAY, Ohio — The Libertarian Party can attract more independent voters if members stand by conservative principles, the party's 2000 presidential candidate told state conventioneers.

"Your weapon is your principles," Jacob Hornberger said Saturday. "Without principles, you become just like the Democrats and Republicans."

The former Texas lawyer accused Democrats and Republicans of conspiring to keep Libertarians out of the political process through ballot access laws.

Mr. Hornberger, who runs a Libertarian think tank near Washington, told the group of about 85 people they should guard against an erosion of freedoms outlined in the Declaration of Independence.

"You should be able to do whatever you like, as long as you don't murder, steal, rape, burglarize, or defraud," he said. "It is the role of government to protect these freedoms."

◀ *The North County Times*
Escondido, California, April 6, 1999

▲ *The Cincinnati Enquirer*
Cincinnati, Ohio, May 17, 1999

▼ *Newsday*
New York, NY, April 27, 1999

Libertarians Begin to Put Reality Over Theory

IN POLITICS, as in baseball, a home run can be thrilling. The Ronald Reagans and Mario Cuomo could drive a campaign out of the park. But, as in baseball, not practicing fundamentals can ruin any political team.

This was the theme on Saturday at the Best Western hotel in Holtsville, where the Libertarian Party of New York, a perennial Bad News Bears outfit, was running its state convention. And chairman Jim Harris was preaching fundamental baseball.

The Libertarians, with only 1,000 members, don't even have a ballot line. They won't until their gubernatorial candidate gets 50,000 votes. In 1994, they tried a short cut by nominating Howard Stern. Without saying anything remotely libertarian, Stern could have gotten them their 50,000, but he backed out.

"That's the messiah complex," Harris, a Long Islander, growls, pacing in front of party members. "We have to practice, practice, practice," cultivate candidates and collect signatures. "Or else, after four years, what we're left with is just us." It's base hits, sacrifices, scoring runs one at a time, local office by local office.

He even has a gimmick: a business card with a

mini-quiz on it to tell the reader if he or she leans libertarian.

Of course, nearly everybody "leans" libertarian on something. Republicans are low-octane libertarians on economics, and advocating less government. Many share the libertarian view that government should stay out of sexual behavior, drugs and abortion.

But are people ready for libertarianism? "We're very at ease talking to each other," says Bill McMillen, who ran for Senate against Al D'Amato and Chuck Schumer. "But it takes a real effort to talk to people who aren't as politically astute or of different views."

That's because libertarians, as humorist P.J. O'Rourke observed, believe passionately "in nothing." Nothing, meaning the absence of government, as advocated by unfamiliar figures like John Locke and Milton Friedman, and culminating in outrage at things like the International Monetary Fund. Today, however, New York Libertarians are talking about improving village government. A panel of seasoned former candidates advocates tailoring issues to the concerns of each audience. It sounds, well, political.



Carolan & Keating

As Steve Dasbach, a National Libertarian Party operative, notes, there are now about 170 Libertarians elected to office in the United States, employing such techniques.

Still, success makes some old-school libertarians, like Len Rubin of New York City, nervous. Politics is for "the wicked," he chuckles over lunch. His instinct is that it can turn even nice people into slicksters. "But don't talk to me," he laughs. "I'm here to see old friends."

Later, Roy Innis, national chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality, speaks to the group about possibly running for mayor of New York. Innis urges they put aside ideological spats to support a "libertarian personality." He's for school choice, and a member of the NRA. But later, he speaks warily about eliminating rent control or taxpayer subsidies for the New York Yankees.

Innis models his political prudence on Abraham Lincoln — which would disturb some libertarians who strangely detest Lincoln. One convention speaker hyperbolically declared that Lincoln "freed the slaves, but enslaved everybody else" with expanded federal power. Still, Innis reveres the "libertarian" ethos of early America.

That's good enough for Jim Harris. Outside the hotel, he speaks admiringly about Innis as "a heavy hitter" for liberty. "Forget theology," says Harris about party ideas.

At night, there will be a gathering between the party and the Ayn Rand cult of "Objectivists," at which somebody's going to win Rand memorabilia. But daytime is for smart politics, and something sounding like high-octane Republicanism.

Matthew Carolan is executive editor at *National Review*. Raymond J. Keating is chief economist for the *Small Business Survival Committee*.

Libertarian Policies Presented

By JOHN PHILLIPS
The Intelligencer Staff

The Ohio chairman of the Libertarian Party, Jim Babka of AKRON, reviewed the party policies during a presentation at Jefferson Community College Monday.

Babka, 31, addressed a group of approximately 25 students and staff members at the college. He had been invited to give his views to the students by Richard Givens, history and political science professor at JCC.

"The students deserve an opportunity to get another view," said Givens, who added he was disappointed only a small number turned out.

Babka, employed by Richard Hughes Realty of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, has been a member of the Libertarian Party since 1996. He is seeking re-election to his chairmanship in May and the state convention will be held in Findlay, May 14-16.

He touched briefly on the history of the party, which was founded in 1971 in Colorado Springs, Colo., by David Nolan, a business executive. "In 1993, we had 10,000 members nationwide and now, we have 31,000. The number is expected to double by the year 2000.

"There are approximately 1,100 members in Ohio and 300 in West Virginia," said Babka. "West Virginia is the fastest growing state for membership for 1996 to 1998."

Babka explained the Libertarian Party is on all the state ballots for the 2000 election just as it was in 1992 and 1996. "We became the first minor political party this century to do that for two consecutive elections."

The philosophy of the Libertarians favors dramatically shrinking the size and cost of government. Babka said, "It's too big, not compassionate and not very effective."

One point was made by Babka as he passed enlarged \$1 million bills out to the audience and explained, "The government spends \$1 million every five seconds."

A fact sheet details the party favors eliminating laws that stifle the economy and control people's personal choices. The platform calls for vigorous defense of the Bill of Rights, free enterprise, civil liberties, free trade, no meddling overseas and private charity.

The Libertarian National Committee has headquarters in Washington, D.C. in the Watergate office Building. There are hundreds of state, county, college and local Libertarian groups.

"Libertarians are big on personal

responsibility," added Babka, "and we're big defenders of the freedom of speech."

CAPITOL REPORT

Gov. Ventura, hecklers trade jibes at luncheon

JIM CAPLE STAFF WRITER

On his hundredth day in office, the governor met a tough crowd.

Gov. Jesse Ventura, who is usually greeted enthusiastically when he speaks, received grumbling and dissent Tuesday at a luncheon sponsored by the Cato Institute. The libertarian think-tank based in Washington, D.C., would like to significantly shrink the size and role of government, including privatizing Social Security.

During a discussion of his budget priorities, for example, Ventura asked rhetorically whether transportation was a proper role for government. A chorus of audience members surprised him by answering with a loud "No!"

Who built "the roads you drive on?" the governor asked, and heard more grumbling from the ballroom at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Minneapolis.

"Let me finish while you yell your 'no's.' You're a libertarian aren't you?" Ventura answered. "You're the guys with the candidates who get about 1,800 votes. You don't really want to win, do you? You just want to complain."

When audience members answered that they do want to win, Ventura replied, "You do not. Because you could have been on board with me."

Ventura expressed irritation that audience members wanted to eliminate programs that don't directly pertain to their interests. When someone asked about the possibility of eliminating a tax on medical providers that funds a state health care program for low-income Minnesotans, Ventura said. "If you do that, then you have to find a way to fund MinnCare or scrap MinnCare."

The words "scrap MinnCare" drew loud applause, and Ventura responded, "Well, it's easy to say scrap it. It probably doesn't affect you."

Ventura, a popular governor who has made personal responsibility a central issue, has been criticized by constituents who want more government aid for groups like college students and single parents. The complaints Tuesday came from the opposite end of the political spectrum.

Ventura called himself a realist and said there is a governmental bureaucracy "that can't be changed by yelling and heckling from the crowd."

Cutting short his speech to take questions from the audience, Ventura said, "I've got a schedule like a bureaucrat. I'm not a libertarian. I've got to go out and earn a living."

While the audience groaned at that, it laughed and applauded when Ventura chided loudly, "C'mon, have a sense of humor." And Ventura was applauded when he finished his speech.

"I hope we weren't rude but he challenged us and we take challenges seriously," said Charles Test, chairman of the state Libertarian Party. Test said he was upset that Ventura thought libertarians should have joined his campaign last year.

"He's no libertarian. He's a Democrat," Test said of Ventura. "The Reform Party is made up of Democrats who believe in more government, and you just have to get the right people there (into government) ... We were hoping and praying he would do what he said he would do and he hasn't."

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Libertarian: Tourism can be promoted without taxation

By ROY PITCHFORD
City Editor

Arkansas Libertarian Party vice chairman Rodney Wimberly said Monday he believes El Dorado can fund tourism promotion through voluntary methods, rather than taxation.

Wimberly also said he was bothered by recent comments from downtown developer Richard Mason who suggested that those who oppose the so-called "hamburger tax" are against small business in El Dorado.

Wimberly said he felt frustrated by his inability to get his position articulated before the same groups as Mason without a delay of two months.

"I admire Richard Mason," Wimberly said. "We've got a beautiful downtown because of him and he's put his money where his mouth is."

But Wimberly said he was irked by the suggestion that opposition to a tax on prepared food to help fund the Advertising and Promotion Commission is opposition to small business.

"I spend more than 90 percent of my

disposable income with small businesses in El Dorado," Wimberly said. "When we have company, the first thing my wife does is to take people down to the square."

Wimberly said he believes there are two ways to increase funding for the advertising and promotion without taxes.

He said one way would be a voluntary association of businesses, including, but not limited to, restaurants and motels which want to promote tourism. He said such an association could assess a voluntary fee on goods and services, dedicated to promotion.

He compared the plan to agricultural groups like the Beef Council, which use a small part of sales receipts to finance advertising, or the four competing automobile dealers in North Louisiana who buy joint television advertising.

The restaurants who have joined together to promote the hamburger tax could be a good starting point for an association, he said.

Wimberly also said such businesses

could use a "round up" method in which diners or persons at other businesses could be offered the opportunity to "round up" their bill to the next highest dollar with the difference going to advertising and promotion.

Creating a 2-cent hamburger tax would produce an additional 27 cents on a restaurant bill of \$13.40, Wimberly said. Allowing a customer to "round up" would produce 60 cents.

Reminded that some people would choose not to add the money, Wimberly responded that was the point - "allowing freedom of choice." "When you have a tax, no one has a choice," Wimberly said. "The customer doesn't have a choice about paying it; the business doesn't have a choice about charging it."

Wimberly said he would like to see a council of business owners replace the governmental A&P council. Noting that the seven-member council must include two aldermen, he asked, "who would be better to plan advertising budgets and promotions - Richard Mason or most aldermen?"

Wimberly said he became concerned about the tax talk when the newspaper quoted Mason at a civic club meeting as saying those who oppose the tax oppose small business.

"I care about small business, and I resent that remark," Wimberly said.

Wimberly said he tried to get on the program of the same club, but was told the program agenda was filled for at least two months. He said he was also told that Mason's comments occurred at the end of a talk by El Dorado city services coordinator Elizabeth Eggleston, who was the invited guest speaker.

Wimberly said he asked to have five or 10 minutes at the end of a program, but was told that wasn't possible.

Club officials did offer to get back with him, Wimberly said.

"I didn't want to wait two months for a rebuttal," he added.

Wimberly admitted that his round-up plan could create bookkeeping problems, and that some restaurants and motels would likely opt to not join a voluntary association. But he said he preferred volunteerism to coercion, and said he believed the ultimate work-product would be better.

Wimberly said he supports coordinated advertising and promotion of El Dorado, and said he feels the A&P Commission has done good work. But he said he feels it can be done better without taxes and governmental involvement.

"Just because the state of Arkansas sets it up doesn't mean we have to do it," he said.

Wimberly acknowledged the accuracy of those who say most other large Arkansas cities and towns have adopted such taxes, and that El Dorado residents who go to such places pay to support their promotion.

"When I was a teen-ager and used the 'everybody's doing it' excuse my Daddy would ask me if everyone jumped off the Red River Bridge, would I do the same," Wimberly said. "There's lots of people who don't want to be saved, but I do."

▲ *The El Dorado News-Times*
El Dorado, Arkansas
March 25, 1999

► [Center] *The Fargo Forum*
Fargo, North Dakota
April 20, 1999

► *The Washington Times*
Washington, DC
April 26, 1999

Groups organizing big e-mail campaign against bank transaction law

Washington (AP)

Flush with their success in forcing regulators to drop proposed rules on tracking bank customers' habits, civil libertarians and other groups are organizing a big e-mail campaign to end reporting requirements for cash transactions.

Law enforcement authorities, in response, are warning against any weakening of the Bank Secrecy Act.

Officials of the Justice and Treasury departments and the U.S. Customs Service are expected to tell Congress today that the 1974 law is an essential tool for detecting and prosecuting money launderers and drug traffickers. They are scheduled to testify at a hearing of the House Banking subcommittees on oversight and financial institutions.

Far-reaching legislation pushed by Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, would repeal the Bank Secrecy Act, which requires banks to report customers' cash transactions of \$10,000 or more, as well as suspicious activities, to law enforcement authorities.

The law is designed to combat money laundering techniques used by drug traffickers and other criminals to hide illegal profits.

But Paul maintains it violates the Fourth Amendment prohibition against unreasonable

search and seizure and that at any rate, it has failed to help catch drug dealers, who he says "are smarter than most bankers."

The Libertarian Party, the American Civil Liberties Union, privacy advocacy associations and other groups are mobilizing to generate support for Paul's bill.

"We will try to inundate Congress with another torrent of e-mails," Libertarian Party spokesman George Getz said Monday.

Getz was referring to the earlier blitz of some 225,000 e-mail messages and letters, nearly all in opposition, received by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. on proposed anti-money laundering rules that would have tracked the transaction patterns of bank customers.

Bowing to the public outcry over privacy, the FDIC and three other federal banking agencies scrapped the proposal last month.

This time, Getz said, the Libertarians want people to contact their member of Congress, since the Bank Secrecy Act already is law and there is no request for public comment from the banking regulators.

"We've got a bigger gun this time," he said, explaining that the group can draw on the people who earlier protested the so-called "Know Your Customer" rules.

Worth quoting

"U.S. intervention hasn't brought us a single unqualified success in decades — not in Somalia, Rwanda, Libya, Nicaragua, Panama, Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, the Philippines, South Africa, Vietnam, Korea, Cuba or anywhere else. In every case, the original reason for the intervention still exists, as with Saddam Hussein, or the enemy has been replaced by one that's equally bad, as in the case of Afghanistan or South Africa."

— Harry Browne, former Libertarian Party candidate for president.