

July 1989

LIBERTY PLEDGE NEWSLETTER

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CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

The National Convention in Philadelphia to be held over the Labor Day weekend will determine major factors that can effect the future of the Party. Whether to or not to accept FED matching funds, ballot access strategies, focus on local and/or the presidential campaigns, as well as the internal Party structure.

This Convention will be the best attended of this decade. Don't miss out, there is still time to register. (Consult your LP News for details.) And if you cannot attend...C-Span will cover the major Convention speeches live...stay tuned.

PAUL JACOB SWINGS!!!

LP Field Coordinator Paul Jacob is party building in the New England and the mid-Atlantic states. This "swing" includes a **NYCLP** picnic, **NY** Laissez Faire Supper Club speech; Boston to meet with **MA** LP activists, supper club speech, interviews with newspapers and will be a guest on Gene Burns' radio program; **DE** LP convention; **PA** to meet with Dave Walter, Don Ernsberger and Jorge Amador to discuss BAC strategies; with stops in **CT, VT, RI, NH, NJ,** and **ME** to meet with state LP activists, helping to plan Party growth and strategy.

FOUR-FRONTED ATTACK

For the first time in Party history, the LP has the continuity between the office operations and revenue to launch four targeted direct mail appeals simultaneously. Committee chair, Sharon Ayres, has developed a strong mail program over the past 6 months and has lined up an impressive agenda for the summer months.

The **RON PAUL 2** membership mailing is targeted to those who contributed to the campaign, but are not LP members. A six-month subscription to Reason magazine is being offered to those who join at the \$25+ level. The Ron Paul 1 membership mailing generated 383 **new** members!

Membership chair, Jim Turney, is appealing to LPers whose membership expired in '86, '87, or '88 asking for their commitment to the LP membership growth.

Dave Walter is encouraging current members and contributors to support the exciting "Young Libertarians" project for the college campuses this Fall.

And a special membership solicitation is being mailed to subscribers of Reason magazine.

Thanks to you, the **Liberty Pledgers**, for helping make this important effort possible!

How Our High Court Came to Be Libertarian

By Virginia I. Postrel

AS THE NATION approaches its 213th birthday, Ronald Reagan's Supreme Court is in full swing. Modern-day liberals may wring their hands, modern-day conservatives may take to the streets in outrage, congressmen may stage marathon talk-ins. But for classical lovers of individual liberty, it's close to a banner Fourth.

Today's liberals are chagrined by the court's restrictions on affirmative action. Conservatives, for their part, are totally dismayed by the court's finding that the Bill of Rights protects even those who burn the American flag or operate "indecent" dial-a-porn services. How could the same court rule so strongly for civil liberties and against civil rights, as conventionally conceived? Did Reagan simply bequeath the country a bunch of idiosyncratic justices?

In fact, the court's decisions should not be surprising. We can expect more such juxtapositions in the future. The key to the apparent paradox lies in understanding the tensions within American conservatism.

The conservative intellectual tradition in America divides, not too neatly, into two strains. The first shares with conservatism world-wide the central values of order and authority and looks to the state to maintain and enforce those values. It holds in high regard tradition and morality, publicly enforced as well as privately practiced.

The other strain is conservative only in the American context, for what it seeks is the classical liberalism that inspired the country's founders. This tradition emphasizes limited government and individual liberty—personal, economic and political.

Both liberals and social conservatives have found it convenient in recent years to ignore this second tradition, tending instead to equate conservatism with the agenda of the Religious Right. For liberal action groups, telling people that Reagan-appointed judges would invade their bedrooms and impose censorship raised a good deal more money than suggesting that they might allow more corporate mergers or weaken zoning laws. Social conservatives, for their part, needed to claim credit for Reagan's electoral triumphs in order to demand, as compensation, that their agenda be given attention.

More thoughtful members of the Reagan coalition understood, however, that their ranks encompassed a strong libertarian component.

Sorry...due to the length of this article, "How Our High Court Came to Be Libertarian", space does not permit us to print it in its entirety. To receive Virginia Postrel's complete article as it appeared in the Washington Post, send a SASE to:

Liberty Pledge Clipping
c/o National LP HQ
1528 Pennsylvania Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20003

Shimp to run for Congress

GAZETTE/MARIPOSA, CA

A Merced resident of seventeen years, Roy Shimp, age 40, has declared his candidacy on the Libertarian ticket for the 15th Congressional seat. Shimp graduated from California State University, Chico in 1971, earning his teaching credential in 1973. Since then he has taught English and computer technology on the Atwater High campus in the Merced Union High School District. In addition to teaching he has been selected as a mentor teacher three times, presented workshops county-wide to teachers on the use of computers, and has served as computer consultant to other school districts.

While recognizing that he probably will not be able to match the spending of his Republican and Democratic opponents, Shimp states that he is in the race to win. He feels that the basic Libertarian position of calling for restricted government powers, elimination or substantial reduction of taxes through the "privatization" of government services, and a free-trade market are gaining acceptance. He feels he will have voter support from "people who are tired of having their hard earned money wasted on government programs and services that are incapable of solving problems or not meeting their needs." "Voters who are normally sympathetic to the pleas of compassion from the liberals and supportive of



Roy Shimp

conservatives who claim to be good money managers are discovering that both views are taking more out of their paychecks and that social problems and budget deficits are only growing worse," said Shimp.

In suggesting ways that tax dollars could be saved Shimp points out that Libertarians believe in a strong defense for America and the individual rights of Americans, but we also feel strongly that Europe and Japan should be paying their own defense costs. "The annual U.S. defense budget is over 300 billion dollars, and well over 150 billion of that is spent defending Western Europe and Japan."

A News Analysis

Cynicism Helps Ohio Libertarians

By TOM DIEMER

COLUMBUS (AP) — The Libertarian movement hasn't exactly caught fire in Ohio, but its candidate for the U.S. Senate attracted almost 77,000 votes on Nov. 5 after campaigning on a sort of "laissez your own faire" platform.

Kathleen G. Harroff, 43, was on the ballot as an independent, but she is a member of the new Libertarian Party which assumes a radical anti-government stance that is far out of the major party political mainstream.

The two-year-old party stands for almost absolute individual liberties and a strict government hands-off just about everything policy that would leave a bureaucracy with very little to do.

CONSEQUENTLY, the libertarian philosophy is often labeled as utopian, or even anarchist.

Libertarians are finding their appeal in the growing

cynicism toward government and professional politicians.

In a recent interview, Miss Harroff said her 76,882 vote total was the highest tally nationwide among the handful on Libertarian candidates who ran. Official totals, particularly for minor candidates, are still not final in some states.

Miss Harroff finished a poor third in the Senate race with 2.57 pct. of the votes and was all but lost in news media reports of John Glenn's lopsided victory.

SHE DID, however, stage a mild upset by coming in nearly 15,000 votes ahead of another, far more visible, independent candidate, Richard Kay, a conservative with past ties to the American Independent Party.

Nevertheless, she was "discouraged and depressed" by the results and plans to take a sabbatical from politics. "I thought we could raise more money," lamented Miss Harroff who said she spent only \$6,000 on her campaign.

For the future, her emphasis will be getting the party on the Ohio ballot in the 1976 presidential election, perhaps by capitalizing on renewed sentiment for a third party.

SHE IS disdainful of most mainstream conservatives who have been identified with speculation about a third party.

"I think the conservative movement is nearly dead," she said. "Conservatives are bad on civil rights. We are very civil rights conscious. Not disregarding minorities, the idea is that people should be able to determine their own lifestyles."

While she contends "most people in the party are neither conservative nor liberal," many Libertarians describe themselves as traditional conservatives, harkening back to the small government philosophy of Thomas Jefferson. Ironically, Jefferson was considered a flaming liberal in his day.

THE LIBERTARIAN credo calls for an absolutely free rein for free enterprise, a near isolationist foreign policy, abolition of penalties for victimless crimes and eventual elimination of all taxes.

In the absence of government controls and services, citizens would join forces to provide police and fire protection, sanitation and most of the other necessities offered by a welfare state.

The party claims 5,000 members nationwide.

THE LIBERTARIAN Party in Ohio will have to get along without too much help from Kathleen Harroff for the time being. She plans to return to her job on the free market selling women's accessories.

She was founding chairman of the Ohio party in 1972 and was named regional chairman for Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Kentucky and a member of the national executive committee in 1973. She resigned the posts to run for the Senate and intends to remain inactive "while I put the pieces back together."

-SUBMITTED BY W. VIRGINIA LP CHAIR, CHRIS FIELDER

THE OREGONIAN/PORTLAND

Blind may not be civil over rights

By STEPHEN CHAPMAN

The story Jim Gashel tells is obviously meant to evoke memories of the day Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Ala., setting off a historic fight for the civil rights of black Americans.

At Chicago's O'Hare Airport, Gashel got on a United Airlines flight for Denver, found his assigned seat next to an emergency exit and sat down. Then, after all the other passengers had boarded, a member of the crew approached and asked him to switch seats with another passenger.



CHAPMAN

Gashel refused. He persisted after being told that if he didn't change seats, the flight would be canceled. He didn't budge when he was warned that he would be arrested. He remained in his seat while 226 passengers collected their bags and coats and filed angrily off the plane. He didn't leave until Chicago police officers removed him.

Why make such a big issue out of an airplane seat? Because Gashel firmly believed himself to be the victim of ugly discrimination. There was only one reason he was asked to move: He's blind.

Just as Rosa Parks thought she shouldn't have to move to the back of the bus just because of her color, Gashel didn't see any reason he should have to vacate a seat just because of his disability. And the group he works for, the National Federation of the Blind, wants to make it illegal for an airline

to refuse to put blind passengers by emergency exits.

Here is one of those complicated and emotional issues that raises the question: Are these people serious?

The alarming fact is that they are. The principle of equality is being taken to a nonsensical extreme.

The federation's campaign, however, is not the worst of it. A group representing blind people may be forgiven for taking too expansive a view of their rights. But how do we excuse the Senate committee that has approved a bill banning the discrimination that the blind suffer in being refused seats next to exits?

The bill defies the judgment of the Federal Aviation Administration, whose expertise is in airline safety. The airlines do generally refuse to seat blind passengers by emergency exits. The reason is obvious: Not being able to see makes it much harder to locate the exit door, find the mechanisms to release it, get it open, look for hazards outside (say, fire or jagged metal), and quickly get out of the airplane.

Says the National Federation of the Blind: Oh, yeah? Airlines, it notes, routinely seat people by exits without making sure that they have the strength, dexterity and temperament needed to handle an exit door in a crisis. They also routinely serve alcohol to people sitting by exits, even though inebriation could slow their getaway from a downed plane.

Gashel explains his refusal to trade seats with a passenger who could see: "I don't know that that individual is more competent than I am to sit there." Besides, being close to an exit improves a passenger's chances of surviving a crash. When an airline bars the blind from exit-row seats, he insists, "a state-

ment is being made about the value of my life compared to the value of other lives, which is unfair."

Or maybe a statement is being made about the value of all lives? If a blind passenger can't open the exit door, it's no comfort to know that if he had, he would have been the first passenger to escape. As it is, neither he nor anyone else is likely to survive. Reserving exit-row seats for people who can see increases every passenger's odds of survival — including passengers who are blind.

The fact that air carriers don't rigorously screen every exit-row passenger is no argument against the screening they do. It would be nice if they could put all travelers through a battery of weight-lifting exercises, agility drills and psychological exams to ensure that only the best qualified people would be entrusted with exit doors. But that would be time-consuming and enormously expensive. Ruling out a few obviously unsuited people is quick and cheap.

The blind, in any case, aren't singled out for this discrimination. Airlines refuse exit seats to the elderly, the obese, those traveling with small children and those with serious physical handicaps. But you don't see paraplegics or parents besieging Congress with complaints about this violation of their civil rights. As for drinking in exit rows, few people are impaired by a beer or two, and the airlines won't serve liquor to anyone who appears drunk, no matter where he's sitting.

The National Federation of the Blind and its congressional allies see this as a "classic civil rights struggle." Rosa Parks never thought she had a civil right to block the exit on a burning bus.

The principle of equality is being taken to a nonsensical extreme.

Syndicated columnist Stephen Chapman is a libertarian who writes for the Chicago Tribune.

Court refuses to hear appeal on minor parties

By Lyle Denniston

Washington Bureau of The Sun

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court turned aside yesterday a constitutional challenge to the Maryland law limiting the right of candidates of minor political parties to run in the state's general elections.

Without comment, the court refused to hear an appeal by Imad A. Ahmad of Bethesda, who was the Libertarian Party's candidate for a U.S. Senate seat last year.

State officials refused to put his name on the general election ballot because he had not satisfied a state law requiring minor party candidates to have petitions with signatures of at least 3 percent of the state's registered voters. For Mr. Ahmad, that meant 62,000 signatures.

He complained in a federal court lawsuit that, since candidates chosen by major political parties at primary elections get on the general election ballot automatically, it was unconstitutional to exclude the candidate of a minor party that has been certified officially by the state — as is the Libertarian Party.

The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld that differing treatment in a ruling last October. It said that the 3 percent requirement for access to the general election ballot for minor party candidates was not too high and that it properly stood as a measure of popular support for a candidacy.

The Circuit Court noted that major parties — the Democrats and Republicans — can stage a primary election only if they have at least 10 percent of the state's registered voters as members.

Maryland's elections supervisor, Gene M. Raynor, declined to reply to Mr. Ahmad's appeal. The Supreme Court threw out the appeal in a one-sentence order, apparently supported unanimously by the justices.

Explains alternative to 'RepubliCrats'

Editor, *The Chronicle*:

An April 24 editorial referred to the North Augusta City Council election and candidate Timothy Moultrie who was "offered up by the zany Libertarian Party." My dictionary defines "zany" as "silly" and "irrationally ludicrous." Alas, since you gave no substantive facts to support your opinion, what follows is a capsule summary of libertarianism.

Libertarians comprise a party for small government and individual liberty, due to a belief that individuals know better than anonymous bureaucrats how to run their lives and that people should be free to do with their lives and their property whatever they desire so long as those actions cause no harm to others by reason of fraud, negligence or violence. "That government is best, which governs least," said the zany Thomas Jefferson. ...

The Libertarian Party is the third largest political party in America, a position it attained in 1976 and has held since; it has not been a one-shot, personality driven party, nor has it withered away as have the likes of the Citizens Party and the American Independent Party. Despite a national broadcast media blackout, former U.S. Rep. Ron Paul received over 440,000 votes in his 1988 Libertarian presidential campaign — without any "federal matching funds." Over 90 Libertarian Party members hold elected or appointed local government positions nationally.

If your readership hasn't heard much about the Libertarian Party

until now, numerous reasons abound, such as state legislatures which create costly, anti-competitive ballot-access hurdles, "RepubliCrat" candidates who dodge debate over meaningful issues with candidates who take ideas seriously, and media with *The Chronicle* attitude that if one is not a Democrat or Republican, one doesn't deserve substantive coverage because one will not win — an exercise in circular reasoning if ever there was one.

To dispel the "zany" tag for good, I urge those so inclined to read popular or academic works by Nobel-prize winning economists as Milton Friedman or Friedrich Hayek ... and to demand that future Libertarian campaigns be covered professionally. ...

Daniel F. Walker
Atlanta

Heavy hand of Uncle Sam?

In China, the sacred principle not to use the military against the citizenry has been breached horrifyingly. The Goddess of Democracy was raped by the Chinese government.

In the United States, drug czar William Bennett and the other hard-liners who seem to dominate our government similarly advocate the use of the military against our own people.

Tens of millions of peaceful Americans face pre-trial confiscation of assets, career destruction and incarceration simply because their private drug of choice — marijuana — happens to be different from what the majority prefers.

Drug use is essentially a health issue that should be addressed by education and persuasion — as for nicotine or cholesterol. To initiate force to solve social problems is not only immoral, but is impractical because it generates a violent response.

Lady Liberty is in danger of being raped here too. Or rather, she is already in the process.

To their eternal shame, neither major political party dares to stand against the madness. But Lady Liberty is our logo, and we, the leaders and supporters of the Libertarian Party of California, do *not* consent to her rape.

Bennett will have to roll over us with tanks to stop us from protesting. As our own American patriots cried two centuries ago. "Live free or die."

JOHN VERNON
Chair
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Libertarian Party of California
Los Angeles

AUGUSTA CHRONICLE/AUGUSTA, GA

HERALD EXAMINER/LOS ANGELES



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Several state parties have organized a "letter writing campaign"; regularly sending op-ed pieces to local and state-wide publications. This is an excellent way to get our message of freedom before the people. To get involved, contact your state LP chair, media or outreach committee chairman.