

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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LNC supports U.S. military strikes against terrorists

The Libertarian National Committee has approved a statement supporting American military strikes against terrorists — a sentiment echoed by a significant majority of LP members in a new poll.

At its meeting in Atlanta, Georgia on October 14, the LNC unanimously approved (with one abstention) a statement that supported “appropriate and measured” military “action against the perpetrators responsible for the terrorist attacks [of September 11]. Such horrific crimes cannot go unpunished.”

However, the LNC statement took a “more cautious stance” about the military attacks on Afghanistan’s Taliban government, saying that such action requires a formal declaration of war by Congress.

“If military action against the government of Afghanistan is indeed appropriate, then the U.S. Congress should establish this by debating and passing an official declaration of war,” the statement said.

The LNC also called on the U.S. government to “announce clear, measurable, and finite goals for this War on Terrorism” and take “action that targets the guilty, spares the innocent, and ends as quickly as possible.”

And finally, the statement called on the U.S. to consider a “new, positive approach to foreign policy in line with Thomas Jefferson’s call for “peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none.”

Such a foreign policy, the statement said, “would reduce the chance that terrorists will ever again want to strike a bloody blow at America.”

The LNC statement paralleled the thinking of most LP members, as indicated by an unscientific online poll of more than 5,000 party members and subscribers to the “LP.announce” e-mail list, taken October 9-12.

In the poll, 94.8% said they agree the U.S. government “has an obligation to bring the terrorists who are responsible for the September 11 attacks to justice.”

Of that number, 83.7% supported bomb and missile attacks on bin Laden, while 18% opposed such action.

When asked if a Libertarian-style policy of foreign non-interventionism would make future terrorist attacks less likely, 69.3% agreed, while 21.6% disagreed.

Supreme Court rejects Ohio LP ballot appeal

The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear a case that would allow LP candidates to be listed on state ballots with their “Libertarian” affiliation, instead of as independents.

On October 1, the high court rejected an appeal filed by the Ohio LP, and let stand a prior court ruling that denied candidates a partisan ballot designation unless their party is recognized by the state.

“We are very disappointed that the court refused to hear this important case,” said Ohio LP State Director Dena Bruedigam. “Ohio voters will suffer the most because they will continue to be denied the

right to know a candidate’s party affiliation.”

The Supreme Court’s refusal is important, she said, because the state LP is presently fighting to retain the recognized party status it had earned in 1999.

In September, the party filed a separate lawsuit in the 8th District Court of Appeals, arguing that the LP deserves to retain its party status and ballot access until the 2002 election cycle.

“Our party status is up in the air,” said Bruedigam. “Had the Supreme Court ruled in our favor, Libertarian candidates would be properly identified in every election as a matter of law.”

Members: More awareness

Making Americans more familiar with Libertarian ideas: That’s the strategic goal deemed most important by Libertarians.

According to a mail survey of LP members, increasing public awareness is the most popular of six possible strategic goals adopted by the Libertarian National Committee (LNC).

When asked to rank the six goals by preference, the public awareness goal gener-

ated an average score of 2.6 (on a one-six scale, with one most popular.) More than 1,100 people responded to the survey, as of October 12.

Three goals tied for second place (score: 3.5): Increasing the number of elected Libertarians; boosting LP membership; and remaining the “Party of Principle.”

In fourth place (3.8) was growing the LP’s market share among youth; in fifth (4.1) was strengthening LP affiliates.

politically homeless

Turned off by politics as usual, young people search for a third way

All of those anarchists don't want anarchy. They just want something better. They're fired of the same old politics," said my friend. "I talked with a guy at the Beaches on the Forth of July. He's never read Tolstoy. He's never studied William Godwin. He just wants people to get off his back, and status quo won't get him there."

My friend was right. In that noisy Orange Park restaurant, he opened my eyes to the people Republicans and Democrats have neglected for too long. The parties have made cheap attempts at luring young people to their political philosophies with WWF wrestlers and glitzy concerts. They try to reach out to young people as if a political party was next season's cool fashion trend. Where are discussions about Social Security, education and the war on drugs? Instead, we get Ricky Martin singing, "Livin' La Vida Loca," while the bureaucrats smile and clap. Where are the issues?

These dog-and-pony shows have fallen on deaf ears. My generation is well informed and cynical about being marketed to on such a shallow level. In the end, the youth of America are left politically homeless. They will take up any movement that shows glimpses of changing a corrupt system. John McCain got support from many young people, as did Ralph Nader, Harry Browne, and other third party leaders.

This leads me back to the anarchists, who are like many youth-led political movements. Many of them just want change. "My favorite band sings about anarchy, so yeah, I'm an anarchist," says one. They're waiting for the ticket out of politics as usual. I asked some self-described anarchists what they really want.

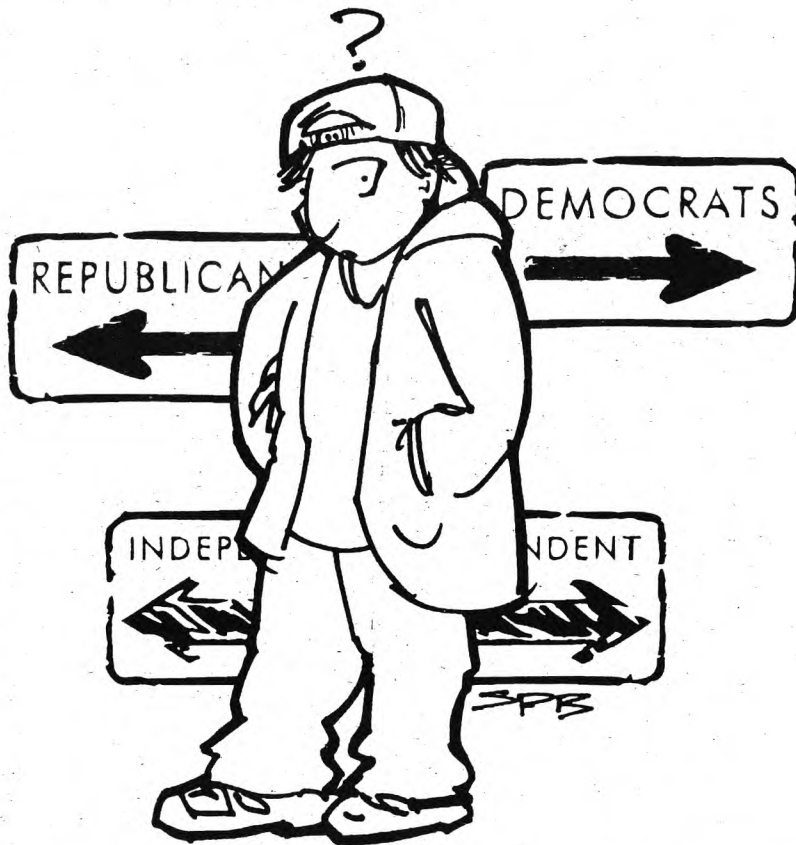
- "I want the government off of my back. I want politicians to stop taking so much of my money."
- "Politicians have no business censoring artists, musicians, or the Internet."
- "Cops should be arresting murderers and rapists instead of chasing down potheads. Why not lock up pedophiles and let scum like that rot in jail?"

Anarchy? It sounds like what many people believe.

by **randy wilbourn jr.**

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Students who live their lives in government schools have seen the failure of bureaucracy. They see teachers struggle to teach in dilapidated schools, where drugs are easy to get, and violence is a part of life. Teachers try their best, but the magic bullets promised in political campaigns never seem as effective as the politicians promised. Too often, we see our educators spending their own money to supplement the inadequate support provided by education officials. Like children left abandoned at bus stops, kids are being left behind in the educational world. While school boards deliberate, students are neglected by people who simply can't do the job. How can a politician possibly know the best way to get a child to school, teach him, and get him home safely? The abandoned children crying on the side of the road speak loud and clear:



Politicians are terrible handlers of education. Government doesn't work.

Sadly, young America has also given up on Social Security. A recent Wirthlin Report concluded that only 32 percent of Americans who haven't yet retired believe that they will collect Social Security benefits. More young people (under age 30) believe in flying saucers than in the survival of Social Security. In the end, the politicians will try to "save" Social Security: They'll change the rules, tax more and raise the retirement age. There is no end in sight. Where are the explanations? Where are the solutions?

My ears still are ringing from the punk rock show that I went to the other night. Northeast Florida has been blessed with talented and ambitious youth. It breaks my heart to see codes, ordinances and zoning controls hinder Northeast Florida from becoming a vibrant cultural center. I've seen those regulations kill clubs, bars, restaurants and other places that the creative kids flock to. Why should Five Points, San Marco and the Beaches have all of the nightlife? Perhaps we could adopt a friendlier zoning system. One-size-fits-all zoning and government handouts bring nothing but chain stores.

Even with all these problems, I believe that Democracy and freedom have a chance. The partisan treachery I saw in Florida last November convinced me of the need to bring young people into politics. Political neglect has been too strong for too long. Slick political promotions driven at young people have turned off many possible voters. It's time the politicians look at the hard facts and start listening to the concerns of adolescent America. Until then, I'll bring the facts and be the one people can talk to.

Eighteen-year-old Randy Wilbourn Jr. is active in the Libertarian Party of Duval County.

Libertarian Targets Va. System

Redpath Would End Senate Districts, Ballot Initiative Rules

By MICHAEL LARIS
Washington Post Staff Writer

William Redpath's political epiphany came one November night eight years ago after getting pummeled.

Redpath, the first Libertarian Party candidate to run for governor of Virginia, was at the time vying for a seat in the House of Delegates held by a powerful Republican, Del. Vincent F. Callahan Jr. (Fairfax).

"Somebody asked me, 'How bad do you think Vince will beat you?' I said, 'I hope he doesn't beat me by more than 2 to 1.' He ended up beating me by 6½ to 1," recalled Redpath. "Even more discouraging to me was I only beat the [Lyndon] LaRouche candidate by 2 percentage points. I got home and said 25 times if I said it once: 'I don't know what to do. I don't know what to do!'"

Then Redpath came up with a plan that he continues to follow today in his higher-stakes but equally unlikely campaign to vanquish Republican Mark L. Earley and Democrat Mark R. Warner in Virginia's Nov. 6 election: to try to turn such long-shot contests into referendums on politics as usual.

His mantra: "Virginia has a democracy that is uncompetitive and boring."

As proof, Redpath cites his exclusion from gubernatorial debates and the high percentage of House of Delegates elections that have no challengers or that end in landslides.

Redpath has proposed electoral changes that would, for example, allow Virginians to place citizen initiatives and referendums directly on statewide ballots using petition campaigns. That would replace the current system, which requires approval of the General Assembly before items go on the ballot.

He also envisions a radical re-making of the Virginia Senate that would eliminate all Senate districts and have voters elect senators at large. Under his scheme, the 40 top vote-getters would represent the entire state and "have different voting power based on the number of votes they received," according to his campaign materials.

"Libertarians are a political minority in a winner-take-all system," Redpath said. "I know a lot of people are dissatisfied with the Republicans and Democrats. What I'm trying to do is say, with our voting system, there isn't going to be a third major party. . . . We've got to change our voting system."

Steve Calos, a Virginia political activist who is co-chair of the Virginia Network for Campaign Finance Reform, said Redpath's



COURTESY OF WILLIAM REDPATH

William Redpath

Age: 44

Residence: Herndon

Occupation: Business appraiser, specializing in media companies

Family: Divorced, no children

Education: BA in economics and political science, Indiana University; MBA, University of Chicago

Last book read: "Virginia Government and Politics: Readings and Commentary," fourth edition, by Larry J. Sabato and Thomas R. Morris

radical prescriptions have little statewide backing, primarily because such measures would concentrate power in populous areas such as Fairfax County and threaten the interests of voters from remote regions.

Any changes in the electoral system would be much more likely to come in the form of targeted measures, like changes in how campaigns are funded, said Calos.

But Calos agreed that Redpath, the standard bearer for the state's increasingly active Libertarian Party, should not be excluded from the gubernatorial candidates' debates. The reality that Redpath has "no chance" to win in November is irrelevant, he said.

"If you are ballot eligible, you should be able to participate in the debates," Calos said. Republicans and Democrats "don't want anybody else muscling their way in," Calos said.

Redpath has spent his political career trying to muscle his way in. The former college disc jockey and sports commentator

makes his living as an expert witness specializing in appraising media companies. But Redpath, 44, made a name for himself doing the signature-gathering drudgery that has put Libertarian candidates on ballots nationwide.

Redpath's biggest victory came in North Carolina on Election Day 1996: In a single day, he gathered 1,179 signatures to put a Libertarian candidate on a subsequent ballot, a rare feat.

To get on Virginia's November ballot, Redpath and the Libertarian candidate for lieutenant governor, Gary Reams, each needed 10,000 signatures. Reams has dubbed his campaign the "Reams Reeferendum," a push to legalize marijuana.

"He's running a single-issue campaign," Redpath said. "Obviously, I'm not."

That doesn't mean he disagrees. Redpath also supports legalizing drugs, saying a long list of banned substances should instead be regulated like alcohol.

"My slogan is, 'Anything that's peaceful—meaning that anything that's peaceful is legal,' he said. "I'd repeal all consensual crime laws." That includes striking Virginia's statute outlawing sodomy, he said.

Redpath also said he would cut government by, among other things, slashing state spending on universities.

"I don't think society as a whole should be subsidizing the higher education of people who tend to come from more affluent families and are likely to be more affluent in the future," he said.

Redpath's Libertarian politics were forged after an early flirtation with the major parties. He joined the Young Democrats as a teenager—a reaction to Watergate that, in reality, was an excuse to hang out with friends at Dunkin' Donuts, he said.

"It wasn't cool to be a Republican in high school," he said. He came to think of himself as a Republican in college. He became disgruntled that President Ronald Reagan did not cut government enough and thought Republicans violated civil liberties during the 1980s war on drugs.

About that time, he began to subscribe to the opinion magazine Reason and realized that his inclination to be fiscally conservative and socially liberal "was not a mixed-up jumble," but rather a "coherent political philosophy."

"I'd like to someday live in at least a highly libertarian society," Redpath said. "If I don't go out there and work with others toward that goal, I don't know who will."

Identity crisis

Forget the idea of a national identity card, some say. "Even in a time of turmoil, there are three words that no American should ever hear: 'Your papers, please,'" said Steve Dasbach, director of the Libertarian Party. "Our victory over terrorism will be cheapened if we make America less of a free country."

After the Sept. 11 attacks, some House and Senate lawmakers hinted they were amenable to a mandatory national ID card. A Pew Research Center poll recently found that 70 percent of Americans agreed with the idea.

The card would not battle terrorism, Mr. Dasbach argues, because terrorists would simply forge their own card using digital technology, or bribe "a public official" to get one. Of the 19 hijackers in the Sept. 11 attacks, all but two were in the country legally, he added.

"In the end, the only people who will be inconvenienced by such cards are law-abiding Americans," Mr. Dasbach said. "Terrorists will blithely circumvent the law, just as they do every other law."

▲ *The Washington Times*,
Washington, DC,
October 12, 2001

◀ *The Washington Post*,
Washington, DC,
October 10, 2001

Libertarians: Public shouldn't fund arena

News-Sentinel Blount County bureau

MARYVILLE – The Blount County Libertarian Party opposes any public financing of an arena in Alcoa, said the party's chairman.

"We're not opposed to the arena, but we don't want to see taxpayers' dollars going to fund it," said Kevin Rowland.

The city of Alcoa is discussing the proposed arena that would

become the new home of the Knoxville Speed minor league ice hockey team for the 2003-04 season.

Speed owner Andrew Wilhelm has said he is optimistic the building will be constructed, ensuring the stability of his franchise.

The team drew 111,225 fans last season, ranking seventh among the 14 United Hockey League teams.

The proposed \$25 million facility, which would be off Pellissippi Parkway between Alcoa Highway and Topside Road, calls for at least 6,500 seats, including 20 luxury suites.

Wilhelm has said if Alcoa does not build the arena, it does not mean he will leave the area.

Rowland said that tax dollars should be used only to operate the necessary functions of our govern-

ment.

"I don't see how our local officials would be able to justify taking money from struggling families or people on fixed incomes so they can build a hockey arena," he said.

Rowland said battles against increased taxation must be successful on the local level, and "fighting against taxes for this arena is a good place to start."

The trouble with traditional Republicans and Democrats

Following is a response to William Rusher's Sept. 11, Auburn Journal article titled "The trouble with Libertarians."

The Libertarian Party is happy to see the attention that one of the Auburn Journal's contributors has given to it through Mr. William Rusher's article.

This beats the usual tactic of keeping the Libertarian viewpoint hidden and making it impossible for its representatives to attend state and national debates, which they would in my estimation, surely win.

First, Rusher tells the reader that Libertarians are basically hostile to government, when in fact we are quite the opposite.

We are against governments that are hostile to the people they serve and we are supporters of the principles laid forth by the founding fathers, and henceforth we call ourselves the Party of Principle.

Something that Republicans and Democrats have lost a long time ago.

If something isn't right, fair or just, we don't go along with it for political expedi-

ency or because some special interest group is funding our campaign.

Rusher seems to support big government military spending and chides us because one leading Libertarian (unnamed) joined the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, whatever that is.

To understand the word "sanity" we would have to dismiss the expensive and ineffective programs of the United States government over the last 225 years. Let's not talk about slavery, the plight of the American Indians, the Spanish-American War and other older debacles that were done in the name of divine expansionism.

Instead, let's talk about the more recent installations and support of Ho Chi Minh prior to the Vietnam War, the Shah of Iran, Saddam Hussein and Gen. Manuel Noriega in Panama.

These catastrophes and sellouts of our principles have lost us worldwide respect and caused the growth of Muslim extremism, which led to our current problems



Michael Murphy

with worldwide terrorism.

I would like to thank Rusher for supporting the Cato Institute's domestic views but beg to differ that the institute is "wildly unreliable when it comes to foreign policy."

He cites the institute's desire to scuttle the "Helms-Burton Act," which isolated Cuba from the rest of the world.

This isolation was an attempt to economically devastate Cuba as if to prove that communism can't work. Instead, it actually gave Cubans the incentive to

press on against the evil Americans' blockade.

They can't understand the laissez faire market place because we haven't allowed it to exist in Cuba. After 30 years of American Democrat and Republican policies towards Cuba, has Cuba become free? Did they get rid of Castro?

I guess Rusher is a proponent of the "Keep voting the same parties into office and expect different results" group.

Well, I for one would prefer to get off the losing teams and join the fresh American viewpoint shared by more of us each year in the Libertarian Party.

Lastly, Mr. Rusher seems to be a little hypocritical and yet typical of his peers in supporting free trade with China (also a Libertarian cornerstone) despite its human rights abuses, while advocating a boycott of Cuba for its abuses.

His desire for the Americans to become involved between any armed struggle between Taiwan and China shows his lack

of historical knowledge of the abuses of Chiang Kai Shek and the Chinese Nationalists themselves. They are certainly not lily white and pure.

He concludes by raising my own emotional tolerance for his "America as Big Brother to the world" philosophy. He who talks about Libertarians as betraying human liberty and enemies of principled conservatism has obviously sold his own principles down the river because I think he knows better.

There is no party on the planet that supports individual freedom, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness more than the Libertarians do.

I cordially invite Mr. Rusher and your readers to find out more about the real Libertarian Party platform, by visiting the Placer County Libertarian Party's homepage at www.americanliberty.org

Michael P. Murphy is chairman of the Placer County Libertarian Party.

- ▲ (TOP) *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, Knoxville, Tennessee, September 13, 2001
- ▲ *The Auburn Journal*, Auburn, California, September 18, 2001
- ▼ *The Antelope Valley Press*, Palmdale, California, September 6, 2001

Libertarian Party observes Jury Rights Day



RON SIDDLE/Valley Press

JURORS' RIGHTS — Jason Gonella and Deanna Peugeot hand out information about jurors' rights and the history of jury nullification in front of the Antelope Valley Courthouse on Wednesday afternoon.

Following the city of Palmdale's recognition of Sept. 5 as Jury Rights Day, the Antelope Valley Libertarian Party put their own stamp on observation of the day by handing out jury rights informational pamphlets at the Lancaster courthouse.

The proclamation was signed by Palmdale Mayor Jim Ledford, bringing Palmdale into a group of local and state governments that have recognized Jury Rights Day by proclamations or other documents. The list includes the city of Philadelphia, the commonwealths of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, and the states of Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, Texas, Wisconsin and Vermont.

Jury Rights Day memorializes a 300-year-old event. On Sept. 5, 1670, jurors in the trial of William Penn, (after whom Pennsylvania is named) refused to convict him

for preaching an illegal religion, Quakerism, to an illegal assembly — his congregation. For voting their conscience, some of Penn's jurors were jailed for several weeks. Their subsequent release and exoneration established the English and American legal doctrine that juries can decide on both the facts and the law.

The Penn jury's action provided a basis for the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment rights of freedom of speech, religion and assembly. Moreover, the Sixth and Seventh Amendments explicitly preserve the right of trial by jury.

The constitutions of Maryland, Indiana, Oregon and Georgia contain provisions guaranteeing the right of jurors to "judge" or "determine" the law in "all criminal cases," and 20 other states include provisions recognizing jurors' rights under more narrowly defined circumstances.