

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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JULY 1997

Pennsylvania LP helps kill bad ballot access bill

The Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania played a key role last month in defeating a “sleazy and unfair” ballot access bill that would have hugely increased the number of signatures required to get on the ballot.

The bill, SB-200, was vetoed by Governor Tom Ridge on June 25th after a flurry of phone calls and faxes to his office, numerous newspaper editorials, and a threatened lawsuit by the LP of Pennsylvania.

The bill would have quadrupled the number of signatures required in presidential years to about 99,000, according to Richard Winger, publisher of *Ballot Access News*.

Even worse was the way the bill was passed: It hurtled through the legislature in a near-record 10 hours, with “no hearing, no publicity,” according to Winger.

In all, opponents had only 10 days to fight the bill — but that was enough time for Libertarians to swing into action.

“We sent press releases to the major papers before any paper seemed to be aware the bill had passed,” said State Chair Tim Moir about the party’s lobbying effort. “Our press releases contributed to breaking the story that led to the papers editorializing against it. We appeared on talk radio. We were scheduling a meeting with Ridge [before the veto].”

When the governor did finally veto SB-200, the LP of Pennsylvania publicly thanked him — with reservations.

“We thank Governor Ridge for his veto,” said party Secretary Tony Shepps. “But most people don’t realize that Pennsylvania’s current ballot access laws are *already* among the most restrictive in the nation.”

California radio talk show host becomes registered Libertarian

Another radio talk show host has left the Republican Party and become a Libertarian during a live broadcast.

Rick Minyard, a #1-rated talk show host on KFIV Radio (AM-1360) in Modesto, CA, announced that he had changed his registration to Libertarian during his show on June 17th.

“As far as I can tell, the party that represents my views on the majority of the issues is the Libertarian Party,” he said.

Minyard said he made the switch because of the GOP “cave-in” on the disaster relief aid bill in mid-June, and the response from his listeners was overwhelmingly positive.

“A flood of people gave me the hurrah,” he said. “Dozens of my listeners have congratulated me on registering as a Libertarian and many have joined the party.”

Party sets new all-time record: 200 Libertarians in public office

After 26 years, the LP has achieved a new milestone of success: 200 Libertarians serving in public office.

“Write down the date July 9th, because on that day we reached 200 office-holders for the first time!” said LP National Director Perry Willis. “It’s an important day for us.”

It’s a day that was a long time coming, added Steve Dasbach, the party’s national chairman.

“It took more than two decades — from 1971 to 1994 — to reach a point where we consistently had 100 office-holders,” he said. “The fact that we were able to add another 100 in less than three years is evidence of the party’s growing success.”

The 200th Libertarian in office was Dana Snowman of Maine, who won a spot on the Alton School Board.

Maine LP State Chair Richard Eaton said Snowman’s victory was an example of “average Libertarians doing extraordinary things in their communities” — and proof that the LP “can make a difference” in the political landscape.

“I was excited to learn that Dana Snowman was elected to the Alton School Board,” he said. “What a pleasant surprise for him to be the 200th Libertarian in office.”

LP launches nationwide radio ad blitz

The Libertarian Party launched its largest ever non-presidential year radio advertising campaign last — month with radio spots running from June 24th to July 19th on 195 stations from coast to coast.

The 60-second ads were aired on the 130-station Radio America Network and on the Lowell Ponte show in another 65 markets, in conjunction with a 90-second radio commentary by Harry Browne, the LP’s ’96 presidential candidate.

“What’s the purpose of these ads?” asked Perry Willis, LP National Director. “First, to generate inquiries. And second, to gain experience. We want to learn what we can expect from these kinds of ads during a non-presidential year.”

The two-and-a-half minute commentary/advertisement package is running on most stations four to six times a day, Monday through Friday, with two runs on Saturday.

If the radio ad test is successful, Willis promised more radio advertising in the future.

“We’ll use the information from this effort to make plans for further advertising in the future,” he said. “This testing looks toward the day when we will be big enough to implement Operation Everywhere, which is our plan to make ourselves visible to everyone, everywhere, every day.”

A list of the radio stations running the ads is on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.lp.org/rel/ads-9707.html>

Absence of force what separates Libertarian policy

One of the most common questions Libertarians are asked is "What is a Libertarian?" or "How are Libertarians different from the Republican, Democrat or Reform Parties?" Sometimes we haven't answered these questions well.

There is, of course, the dictionary definition that we believe in the greatest amount of personal freedom practical. We also have the stock answer that we believe in less government interference in our lives or very limited government. These answers don't adequately spell out the uniqueness of the Libertarian party. After all, who could not be for freedom or limited government? Isn't that what all political parties embrace?

All political philosophies advocate the same worthy goals, a better, safer life for all citizens. The differences are in the methods advocated

to achieve these goals. The means to achieve this better life is the difference between political philosophies. What political philosophy would want to create the chaos and poverty that exists in North Korea?

The difference in methods that Libertarians advocate is not simply more freedom or less government. The difference is that almost every Libertarian position involves the absence of force. The Republican, Democrat or Reform Party solutions to every problem involve force with its implicit threat of violence.

Comment



Rich Osness
Herald Columnist

Support this cause with your tax dollars or else. Send your children to this school or else. Don't sell drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, penicillin or flu vaccine or else. Pay your employees this much or else. Give up the means to defend yourself or else. The "or else" is the use of force to compel compliance.

We do need government. We need a government that protects our property and our persons from harm by others. In addition government should provide a court system for peacefully settling civil disputes. To accomplish this the use of force is sometimes necessary but it should be very strictly limited. When government goes beyond these limited roles Libertarians believe government exceeds its moral authority and its practical capabilities. Even if our leaders knew what was best for us

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(they don't), they abandon any pretense of morality when they advocate the use of force to achieve their goals.

Libertarians advocate a free marketplace for services, goods, thought and speech. The other three parties advocate force to restrict or subsidize thought, speech, services and trade in goods. Libertarians believe that if there is a charitable need people will voluntarily serve that need at an appropriate level.

The other three parties believe that people should be forced to serve charitable needs at the level they think appropriate.

The difference is the Libertarian Party does not advocate force to solve every problem. The others do.

Rich Osness, a Libertarian candidate for Minnesota State Senate in 1996, writes a weekly column

▲ *The Austin Daily Herald*
Austin, Minnesota
June 18, 1997

► *The Salt Lake Tribune*
Salt Lake City, Utah
June 1, 1997

Libertarians See an Opening

Party Director Tells Utahns Of Recruitment Campaign

BY NORMA WAGNER

THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

Upper middle-class? A highly educated professional with children? Own your own home and computer?

You may be hearing from the Libertarian Party soon, according to its national director, Perry Willis.

And if you've either contributed to the party or Libertarian-type causes, you may want to check your bank balance because the party is going to hit you up for a donation to fund the \$2 million it will cost to track down Americans who may be Libertarian — but just don't know it.

It's a new tactic to launch the party into what its members are hoping will be Ross Perot/Reform Party-type status by the 2000 elections.

Polls on the political leanings of Americans have consistently shown that 20 percent — or 50 million U.S. citizens — have Libertarian leanings, Willis told a group of three dozen Utah Libertarians on Saturday on the University of Utah campus.

"Are they Libertarians in the sense that you and I are?" Willis asked. "No. They probably haven't thought about it. But they have a basic inclination. What we need to do is discover who those people are."

Polls also have shown that 60 percent of the populace wants a new party — as evidenced in Perot's popularity during the 1992 elections. Heck, he got more votes than Bill Clinton in Utah that year.

"Ross Perot didn't have nearly the support in 1996," Willis pointed out. "So that means there is

still this un-met need for a new political party and potentially millions of [possible] Libertarians who do not have a home."

The plan is to raise the money to fund the search using demographics and other nifty pollster tools to find out which Americans are sympathetic to Libertarian causes. Then, party leaders plan to launch an expensive, nationwide mailing campaign targeted at this subset of Americans to recruit an additional 200,000 members. That should be enough seed to get the party growing for the next round of presidential elections, Willis said.

A possible problem may arise: The Libertarian Party platform is an eclectic mix of economic conservative ideals and social liberal goals. It's unwavering devotion to the advocacy of personal freedom and responsibility often appear contradictory. At the same time Libertarians support abortion rights and legal gay marriages, they oppose gun-control measures, taxes, welfare and government-owned parks and wildlife refuges.

Still, the party has been operating in the shadows of American politics for a quarter of a century. And their numbers have nearly doubled in Utah (215) as well as nationally (22,000) in recent years.

One of its newest recruits are a group of University of Utah students who founded a chapter this year.

"Our goal is to dispel a lot of the misconceptions people have about the Libertarian Party — that if you vote Libertarian, your daughter will become a gun-toting, pot-smoking prostitute . . . or that you're joining some kind of strange cult," said Christopher Winstead, campus chapter co-founder and electrical-engineering student.

"What's really important is to get the message out that to be Libertarian means to agree on the main issues of human liberty and minimization of government."

COMMENT

Budget shows Republicans are big spenders

By Steve Dasbach

The so-called balanced budget agreement – which just sailed through Congress on a cloud of bipartisan harmony – is the final nail in the coffin of Republican claims that they support smaller government.

With this budget, Republicans have embraced new federal spending, higher taxes, and a larger national debt – while pretending it's a victory for smaller government.

The agreement, which has the support of most GOP leaders and President Clinton, would allegedly balance the budget by 2002, cut taxes by \$85 billion, and cut federal spending by \$1 trillion.

In reality it will raise spending, increase tax revenue, and jack up the national debt.

The proposed budget:

- ◆ Increases federal spending by \$70 billion next year – the biggest one-year spending jump of the Clinton presidency. It's even larger than Clinton's budget increases when the Democrats controlled Congress.

- ◆ Boosts federal spending by a total of \$270 billion over five years.

In other words, Clinton gets more money to spend for his entire second term as president. After he leaves office, future politicians are supposed to worry about cutting spending.

- ◆ Includes billions in new and expanded government programs. Republican leaders, canny negotiators that they are, forced Clinton to agree to spend \$5 billion more than he asked for in February!

Specifically, the plan calls for \$22 billion for health insurance for

children; \$37 billion for low-income housing; \$800 million in increased foreign aid; and billions more for welfare, Head Start and child literacy programs. It even contains the largest increase for the Education Department in 30 years – just three years after Republicans vowed to abolish it.

Despite these spending hikes, the GOP claims this budget will lead to a smaller federal government. In their Alice-In-Wonderland universe, apparently the government gets smaller by growing by \$270 billion – and spending billions on new federal programs.

Even worse, the budget pact fails to accomplish its one major objective – eliminating the deficit. In fact, the agreement:

- ◆ Actually increases the deficit for the next two years – from about

\$67 billion this year to \$90 billion in 1998 and 1999.

- ◆ Adds an additional \$300 billion to the national debt over five years.

- ◆ Uses accounting tricks to hide the deficit. By 2002, the deficit will still be \$80 billion to \$100 billion – but will be masked by surpluses generated by the Social Security Trust Fund. But those "surpluses" are immediately spent on day-to-day government operations, and replaced with government IOUs.

- ◆ Does nothing to pay off the current \$5.5 trillion national debt.

Finally, even the savings and tax cuts in the budget are fake. Republicans point to \$85 billion in tax cuts – but those "cuts" come not from Americans paying substantially less taxes, but from plans to reduce future tax collections by about 1 per-

cent.

Under the old baseline projections, the government planned to collect \$9 trillion of our money in taxes over the next five years. Under the new plan, the government will collect only \$8.915 trillion. Republicans are going to take slightly less money than they threatened to earlier – and call it a tax cut.

And remember, tax cuts are always temporary – but government programs last forever, and always cost more than anticipated. In exchange for paltry penny-on-the-dollar pseudo tax cuts, the Republicans agreed to more than \$32 billion in new or expanded, but permanent, government programs.

Republicans point to \$950 billion in savings – but those "savings" come not from cutting programs, but from increasing spending less than previously anticipated.

Under the old baseline projections, the government planned to spend about \$20 trillion of our money over the next decade. Under the new plan, the government will spend only \$19 trillion. Even worse: The so-called savings don't kick in until 2000 or later.

The motto of this budget should be: "Let's worry about it later." Politicians will worry about the national debt later, about real tax cuts later and about increased federal spending later. In the meantime, taxpayers will pick up the tab for their irresponsibility.

Steve Dasbach, of Fort Wayne, is national chairman of the Libertarian Party. He wrote this for *The Journal Gazette*.

Become an extremist

A few weeks ago I was at a business luncheon with 12 or so persons in attendance. In the course of the conversation some political matter came up with four or five people expressing thoughts and views on the subject.

I finally spoke up with my own philosophy about the situation, only to have a fellow immediately chime in with a friendly but pointed comment: "Remember, Rowland is an extremist," implying that no one should give my thought much credence.

My retort was swift and to the point: "Indeed, I am an extremist, in the same way that Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, James Madison and all the other Founding Fathers of our nation were extremists."

Here are two more extremist views: "I regret that I have but one life to give for my country" and "Give me liberty or give me death."

And so were these views from the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these Rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving

Island Voices

RICHARD O. ROWLAND

their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

Extreme? If so, I plead guilty and I do so with pride, as well as humility.

Our governments, state and national, are, to an advanced degree, out of control of the people they supposedly serve. The majority of our citizens know this but have chosen to suffer in "mainstream" silence. To quote again from the Declaration of Independence: "... Experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed."

And later, discussing the evils the king had visited on the colonies: "He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat

out their substance."

Well, we are all in the process of having our "substance" eaten out with 40 to 50 percent of our earnings being taken as taxes that we "voluntarily" pay.

Shucks, I think I'll get even more "extreme."

Want to join me?

By the way, my remarks were received by all at the luncheon with startled looks, followed by thoughtful, accepting expressions of agreement.

All is not lost, folks. Not yet anyway.

All we need to do is get active in the next election and back candidates who sincerely wish to limit government to core functions only and thereby cut taxes.

And we must "just say no" to the offers that the government manipulators make to transfer wealth or benefits to us at the expense of unseen others. That's how they've been able to corrupt us in the past. If we "just say no," they lose their power.

Become an extremist. It's kind of fun as well as a little scary, sometimes because these power brokers really get angry and vicious when you cross them.

Richard O. Rowland is chairman of the Libertarian Party of Hawaii.

▲ *The Journal Gazette*
Fort Wayne, Indiana
June 8, 1997

◀ *The Honolulu Advertiser*
Honolulu, Hawaii
June 27, 1997

Libertarian for governor: 'Return to common sense'

By MURRAY SABRIN

I'M RUNNING for governor because we are at a crucial time in history. We have to decide how we want to arrange our affairs in New Jersey and the rest of the nation. Why? America's social welfare system is a financial mess and an infringement upon the constitutional rights of the citizenry. It's time to return to common sense government.

In all the issues facing the people of New Jersey and the rest of the nation, a common theme is obvious: government mismanagement is everywhere. Whether the issue is education, automobile insurance, land use, health care, crime prevention, or any of dozens of other issues, government ineptitude continues. In many instances it is getting worse and reaching crisis proportions. Although many students graduate from high school with both the skills and knowledge expected of them, far too many students enter college needing assistance in "basic skills." With all the money that is already being spent on public K-12 schools, why are colleges — both public and private — spending so many resources preparing students for college-level work?

The answer is obvious. Accountability and high standards in education are things of the past. Instead of maintaining rigorous academic standards, government schools have been "dumbing down" the curriculum for years. The evidence is everywhere. Students lack adequate knowledge of history, geography, English, mathematics, and science.

No mere tinkering with the expensive, public school system can correct its failures. It is time to scrap the public school system and replace it with an independent system, placing parents and teachers in charge rather than bureaucrats, politicians, and administrators.

New Jersey's regulation of the automobile insurance industry is a case study in government mismanagement. Instead of allowing competitive market forces to operate, government micro-management of prices, profits, and coverage as well as burdensome regulations have driven many companies out of the state.

Less competition always increases prices and limits choices. Government regulation must be overhauled to give consumers more choices and lower premiums.

Taxes and spending

Although Governor Whitman delivered on her promise to cut state income tax rates 30 percent, she refused to cut spending to balance the budget. Instead, the governor deferred payments to the public employee pension plan.

With the Legislature passing and the governor signing a \$2.7 billion increase in the state's debt load to shore up the pension plan, Mrs. Whitman is, in effect, borrowing from future generations to maintain the current level of government spending... a shameful legacy for our children to inherit.

In short, Republicans want tax cuts, more debt, and the welfare state, i.e., "big government conservatism." The Democrats also want a welfare state and usually finance programs with tax increases, i.e., "big government liberalism."

Murray Sabrin of Leonia is the Libertarian Party candidate for governor. He teaches finance at Ramapo College, is the host of a radio show called "On the Money," and is the author of a book, "Tax Free 2000."

Taxes beyond the amount needed to fund the legitimate functions of government reduce the standard of living of all our citizens. To collect these taxes we employ an army of workers who do not contribute to the growth of the economy. These workers are paid out of the earnings of workers who produce valuable goods and services, thus limiting the growth of the economy.

Taxes, tax collection, tax compliance costs, and all the goods, services, and savings workers give up to pay for the welfare state drain their income and wealth.

If you want to know why your standard of living has been stagnant, look at your paycheck. Your payroll and income taxes, sales taxes, property taxes, excise taxes, and all the other hidden taxes you pay have reduced your standard of living at least 40 percent.

Arbitrary regulations

Property owners throughout the state are frustrated by the arbitrary and capricious land-use regulations state agencies impose on them. Rather than working with people to relieve their anxiety, government bureaucrats treat them with contempt and scorn.

There is a growing concern here and around the nation that government officials are marching to their own drummers — power and coercion. Anti-government sentiment has never been higher, because the people's rights are being systematically violated.

Citizens, however, are catching on to both Democrats and Republicans who espouse "painless big government." Big government is painless for politicians and their cushy salaries. After all, they do have enormous power, sometimes exercising life-and-death decisions, over the public.

Abolish income tax

In my administration, business as usual will end. I will reduce state government to the functions outlined in the New Jersey Constitution, abolishing the state income and inheritance tax, and rescinding senseless state regulations. I will return to parents the control of their children's education, create a competitive and reliable auto insurance market, reinstate private property rights, and impose tough law enforcement on real criminals. In essence, I will restore constitutional government to the state of New Jersey.

The 1947 New Jersey Constitution recognizes that "all persons are free and independent, and have certain unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness."

State government in New Jersey has an important but limited role to play in the lives of its citizens — keep the peace, protect the people's property and liberties. Their happiness will logically follow. Freedom is a prerequisite for the people's happiness. Secure property rights is a *natural right* that gives people the opportunity to obtain the greatest happiness.

Government cannot "create" happiness for the people but is obligated to provide a social framework within which the people can *pursue* their happiness. Government should therefore leave the people alone. Unfortunately, other sections of the Constitution are in direct contradiction with the natural rights of the people, and as governor I will ask the people of New Jersey to amend it to protect these natural rights.

In November the people must choose wisely. Their freedom, income, wealth, and happiness depend upon a wise choice.

► *The Record*
Hackensack, New Jersey
June 15, 1997

▼ *Syracuse New Times*
Syracuse, New York,
June 16-25, 1997

Are You a Sex Criminal?

Like recently retired Air Force pilot Kelly Flinn, you could be a sex criminal—and not even know it!

That's because in New York state, the crime that First Lieutenant Flinn was charged with—adultery—is illegal according to the state's criminal statutes, as it is in 26 other states in "the land of the free."

"You don't have to be in the military to face prosecution by the Sex Police," said Libertarian Party chairman Steve Dasbach. "In fact, tens of millions of otherwise law-abiding Americans are guilty of love crimes, thanks to perverted laws passed by politicians."

Dasbach's Libertarian Party often rails against the absurdity of consensual crimes in a free society, but such complaints seem to fall on deaf ears. A state-by-state study reveals that adult Americans can be arrested for such "crimes" as cohabitation, premarital sex or cheating on a spouse. In some states, the sentence for adultery range as high as a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

Few Americans are punished anymore by these laws, the Libertarian chairman said. "But the fact that such laws exist gives police the power to arbitrarily threaten, harass and arrest individuals. It's time for Americans to demand a separation of sex and state and kick the politicians out of our bedrooms," Dasbach said.

Flinn, the nation's first female bomber pilot, escaped prosecution and a likely prison term for the military crime of adultery by resigning from the Air Force late last month.

—Russ Tarby