

LIBERTY PLEDGE

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newsletter

Browne and Gorman make campaigns official

Two of the Libertarian Party's political heavyweights — Harry Browne and Don Gorman — have officially jumped into the race for the party's presidential nomination.

Browne, a former best-selling author, radio talk show host, and the LP's 1996 presidential nominee, formally announced his bid on C-SPAN's *Washington Journal* on February 14. He is the first former LP nominee ever to run for the nomination a second time.

"I am running for president as a Libertarian because it's obvious that no Republican or Democrat is going to stop the relentless growth of government," he said. "[Only a] Libertarian president is going to reduce government. Not slow the growth, but reduce it to its Constitutional functions."

Gorman, who served



■ Russell Means: The Indian rights activist turned Hollywood star will speak at the 2000 LP convention.

two terms in the New Hampshire House of Representatives as a Libertarian, announced his candidacy at the California LP state convention on February 19.

New approach

"Libertarians are ready for a new approach in 2000," said Gorman. "The federal government can't solve our problems. Solutions need to come from our states and localities. That is why we need to elect Libertarians to state and local office."

Browne and Gorman were all-but-announced candidates even before their formal announcements. Gorman launched an exploratory committee in January, while Browne has been planning his campaign since 1997.

Both campaigns got off to fast starts. Browne spent the week on a tour of the Beltway's leading media outlets and appeared on cable news channels MSNBC and Fox News. Gorman embarked on a "retail politicking" tour of California, speaking to grassroots LP activists in San Diego and other cities.

Browne and Gorman — widely seen as the two front-runners for the nomination — vowed to run positive campaigns. The presidential nominee will be chosen by delegates to the Libertarian National Convention in

Anaheim, California, June 29-July 3, 2000.

And as two candidates stepped in, one stepped out: Larry Hines ended his campaign for the LP nomination on February 15, leaving Barry Hess, David Hollist, and Edison McDaniels as the other contenders for the nomination.

NEWS BRIEF

■ Dixie Carter, the actress best known for her long-running role on the hit series, *Designing Women*, has revealed that she is a libertarian.

Carter made the announcement on ABC's *Politically Incorrect* on February 8, as part of a spirited debate about a proposed "safety manual" for Philadelphia prostitutes.

When host Bill Maher said that, as a libertarian, he thought prostitution should be legalized, Carter responded, "I'm a libertarian, too."

Carter went on to say, "We should be talking about, should we legalize prostitution and legalize drugs? I mean, we've lost the drug war. And probably we've lost the war against prostitution."

California Libertarian is jailed for ferret "crime"

A California Libertarian has ended up in jail because of a dispute over an "illegal pet" — a ferret — and the state's demand to search his home for the furry little felonies.

On February 4, LP member Pat Wright — the founder of Ferrets Anonymous, which lobbies to legalize ferrets in California — was convicted in San

Diego Superior Court of the "crime" of owning a pet ferret.

Behind bars

Although offered probation, Wright told the judge he'd "rather spend a year behind bars" than let Animal Control officers make random searches of his home for three years, as the court demanded.

"There is no fairness here," Wright told the court. "I don't have any respect for that law." He was sentenced to 45 days in jail.

The ownership of ferrets — which are common house pets around the USA — is legal in all states but California and Hawaii. Legislation is currently pending in California to legalize the animals.

Oxford woman files for governor as Libertarian

By **REBECCA E. EDEN**
The Herald-Sun

OXFORD — Oxford homemaker Barbara Howe believes a Libertarian's place is in the Governor's Mansion.

And, Howe hopes she is that Libertarian.

Howe, 46, filed Monday as a Libertarian candidate in the governor's race. This is the first time in state history that Libertarian Party candidates will be listed on the primary election ballot, said Howe.

"This is an exciting year for Libertarians and I am looking forward

to being a part of it," she said.

In the past, the Libertarian Party hasn't received enough votes to be recognized as a party and picked its

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election candidates during a convention. To maintain its party status, the Libertarian Party must receive 10 percent of the votes in the gubernatorial or presidential election,

said Sean Haugh, chairman of the state Libertarian Party.

"This shows that we are moving up in the world of North Carolina

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politics," Haugh said.

While Howe is the only Libertarian to sign up for the race, she expects at least two more Libertarian candidates to file before the Feb. 7 deadline.

In 1998, Howe ran for U.S. Senate but only received about 36,205, or 2 percent, of the votes cast. Democrat John Edward won the election.

The mother of three was born and raised in North Carolina and has lived in Oxford for 11 years. She earned a bachelor's degree in English and psychology from Pfeiffer College in 1975.

Howe decided to run for office because, she said, the Republican and Democratic candidates who dominate political offices aren't solving the state's problems.

"From taxation and drugs to education and health care, there are major problems, and we have to do something different, drastically different in my opinion," she said.

Haugh said he didn't know what to expect in the races this election year, but said Howe is a strong candidate. He said she played a major role in the party's growth over the past years.

"As party chair, I have to remain neutral but I have known Barbara for several years and I think very highly of her," he said. "She is a life-long North Carolinian who understands the issues facing our state, and she has a powerful vision that life with more liberty is better. I think she is a great person to carry this party's message across the state."

Howe, who has been active in the Libertarian Party since the late '70s said the party is the only political party with philosophical principles.

"We stand for limited government with individual rights and freedom and personal responsibility," Howe said. "We do not believe in the initiation of force to achieve social or political goals."

An example of force is taxation, Howe said.

"If you don't pay your taxes, you are put in jail, and that is wrong," she said.

Howe said the key to winning elections is getting the message out and to do that takes big bucks for television advertisements.

"I am not going to spend millions unless it falls out of the sky and lands on the top of my head, but I plan to do very well in the election because I will be everywhere, from street fairs to forums, to meet the voters and spread the word about me and the Libertarian Party."

Screwball pitcher

Major League Baseball may be violating federal law by suspending Atlanta Braves pitcher John Rucker on the assumption his loudmouthed opinions could be caused by "mental illness."

Because if the baseball player does have a screw loose, then he's protected by Uncle Sam under the Americans With Disabilities Act.

"It sounds crazy, but if John Rucker is a crazy bigot, then it's a federal crime to discriminate against him in any way," observes Steve Dasbach, the party's national director.

"Even more amazing, if John Rucker is crazy, then Major League Baseball must make 'reasonable accommodations' for his prejudices — which could include keeping foreigners and homosexuals away from him — so he can continue to pitch."

Last Monday, baseball Commissioner Bud Selig announced the controversial pitcher would be suspended until May 1, fined

\$20,000 and ordered to attend sensitivity training.

Mr. Rucker sparked a firestorm of controversy in December when he was quoted in Sports Illustrated criticizing homosexuals, foreigners who don't speak English, people with "purple hair," Asian female drivers, toll booths, criminals and young mothers bearing countless children.

Although he promptly apologized, Mr. Rucker was ordered to undergo psychological testing — and that's where the league got into trouble, says Mr. Dasbach.

"As long as John Rucker was just an ordinary bigot, then the league can discipline him as it sees fit — within the limits of his contract, of course," he says. "But the federal government doesn't agree. Thanks to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), you can fire a sane bigot, but it's illegal to discriminate against a crazy bigot."

▲ (TOP) *The Herald-Sun*, Durham, North Carolina, January 5, 2000

▲ (CENTER) *The Washington Times*, Washington DC, February 7, 2000



A prune by any other name

California prune growers, understandably concerned about the less-than-hip image of their fine product, wanted permission earlier this year to label them "dried plums."

This seems a harmless enough euphemism. But after mulling the matter for six months, according to a *Libertarian Party* newsletter, the FDA insisted that the growers explain: the results

of consumer research on the name change, the international effects of the change, and its effect on FDA regulations — no doubt the most important consideration. The ponderousness of the bureaucracy in this matter is pretty ridiculous. It sounds like they could use a dose of prunes themselves, or whatever they want to call them. Loosen up, people!

Libertarians honor governor's brother

Tomah — Ed Thompson, the governor's brother who successfully battled Monroe County authorities after being arrested on suspicion of operating video poker machines, has received the 1999 Liberty Award from the *Libertarian Party of Wisconsin*.

Thompson, who owns a tavern in Tomah, was charged with felonies after a raid two years ago, when police said they confiscated four nickel poker machines from his business. He fought the case, which was dropped last December when the district attorney couldn't find enough unbiased residents to serve as jurors.

The *Libertarian Party*, which believes in repealing all laws that regulate or prohibit gambling, gives the award annually to a person "who improves the quality of all our lives by moving Wisconsin toward a more libertarian society," the party said.

Reform, Libertarian parties may be kept out of debates

WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — The Reform Party's presidential candidate and anyone else other than Republican and Democratic nominees might be excluded from televised debates this fall under rules set Thursday by a special debate commission.

Pat Buchanan, former Republican seeking the Reform Party nomination, called the rules "a Beltway conspiracy by the two parties" and said he would fight them with the Federal Election Commission and, if necessary, in court.

The Commission on Presidential Debates, a nonpartisan group set up in 1987 as sponsor of the debates, said the stage for the nationally televised debates would be limited to candidates showing at least 15 percent support in national polls.

Donald Trump, the developer who is considering a run for the Reform Party nomination, said, "I am not surprised that the two-party political establishment wants to keep the American people from having a third choice."

The *Libertarian Party* also criticized the commission's rules.

▲ (TOP) *The News-Press*, Fort Myers, Florida, December 26, 1000

▲ (CENTER) *The Dayton Daily News*, Dayton, Ohio, January 7, 2000

▼ *The Washington Times*, Washington DC, February 15, 2000

▲ *The Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, December 29, 1999

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The Washington Times

Anti-government Libertarian making second run at White House

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Harry Browne thinks government has been a flop and he wants to do away with most of it. So he's running for president.

The Libertarian presidential candidate yesterday announced his second bid for the White House.

The 66-year-old investment adviser from Nashville, Tenn., thinks government has failed. His solution: a 12-step program that eliminates income taxes, Social Security, the war on drugs, federal welfare and a lot of other things Washington does.

Although, he got less than 1 percent of the vote in the 1996 elec-

tion, Mr. Browne contends the climate is ripe for his insurgent message.

Mr. Browne snubbed politics for 30 years, not even voting. But in 1992, watching Democrat Al Gore on TV, he found himself yelling at the tube and his wife suggested he get involved. Two years later, he decided to run for the Libertarian Party's nomination.

"When I dropped out [of politics] in the 1960s, you were hard pressed to ever find anybody who didn't think government could do anything it set out to do," Mr. Browne said in an interview. "If they said we are going to provide health care for the elderly, then

most people said, 'Well, we're going to have health care for the elderly!'"

Today, a candidate who doesn't talk about reforming Social Security and other social programs is "doomed," he said.

Mr. Browne finished fifth in 1996, behind Reform Party candidate Ross Perot and Green Party candidate Ralph Nader. This time, his campaign has about \$1 million and he won't take the federal matching funds for which he now qualifies.

"I don't believe in government welfare for individuals, and I certainly don't believe in it for politicians," said Mr. Browne.

He sees the Reform Party's infighting as a boost for Libertarians. The Libertarian Party, he said, at least has a set of core principles all members believe in.

"The Reform Party is just an organization with a vague principle, a vague objective, and the result is that it lends itself to anyone who can get hold of the microphone," Mr. Browne said, referring to last weekend's contentious Reform meeting and its leadership battle.

Libertarians meet in Anaheim, Calif., on the July 4 weekend to nominate their candidate.

Mr. Browne is so confident that

he will be able to rally the party, which includes about 30,000 dues-paying members, that he has produced a 30-minute television show about his candidacy to debut on a small national cable network. If his campaign has the money this fall, he wants to buy time on one of the major networks.

Mr. Browne is not unrealistic about his prospects in November's general election. He said that his goal is to achieve 5 percent of the vote.

"It would lay the groundwork for somebody to run for president in 2004, and maybe win the presidency," Mr. Browne said.

What the students taught the professor

As a student at the University of Oklahoma, most of my social science professors could only be described as liberal. This was understandable, as most had been students during the New Deal.

They were people of good will and knew their subjects well. However, their comments regarding court decisions, historical episodes and social conditions had a decidedly leftward bent.

They certainly had a right to their opinions. And for most of my early student and teaching life I, too, held to their beliefs. However, slowly but surely I began to change my political and social perspectives. And this change came directly through the influence of my students.

A university should be a great community. It is not a one-way street running from teacher to student. A classroom should be a place of debate and controversy where students can exercise their ideas and shape opinions.

For years I would argue my liberal beliefs at appropriate moments, never attempting to coerce anyone to join my side. Then, in the early 1980s, a small group of students began to challenge me. Occasionally I found myself beginning to stutter in the face of their strong arguments and evidence.

These students were mostly libertarian, a belief system I had rarely encountered. I would argue my liberal position in favor of helping the poor. They would counter by telling me that if I really liked the poor so much, why didn't I help them myself?

I had never thought of welfare-poverty programs quite that way. Libertarian principles make you think and rethink your orientations. Did I really like poor people? Did I really wish to help them? Or did I simply want to shirk personal responsibility by asking some government agency to do my charity work?

As a student, I was really jealous of and often angry at the rich. I believed that most wealth was derived from ill-gotten gains. I was in favor of a steep progressive income tax. My libertarian students countered with strong arguments about the importance of private property and allowing people to do whatever they wish with their own money.

Libertarians believe in individual freedom. As long as there is no violence

to property or person, one should be left alone. I may be jealous of the rich, upset at how people use their wealth, but how people use their wealth is their business and responsibility.

I did not become a Republican. Many Republicans, though not all, have libertarian economic principles. But when it comes to morals and personal issues, they often drag government into the picture.

Libertarian thought pivots on leaving the individual alone economically and morally as well. It places more responsibility on the individual than any other political philosophy. It is your body,

your money, your life. And if you mess it up, you must take responsibility for your decisions.

What could be more honest and straightforward? Arguments like these had a great impact on me.

In my opinion, libertarian thinking is best suited by far for the coming years. Leave people alone as much as possible, and you will be amazed at what they produce.

There is a place for government. Libertarians are not anarchists, after all. But they believe that the best government is one that is reduced to performing basic tasks.

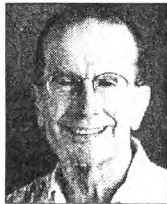
It is not just the state that concerns libertarians. Many are also wary of any large institution that wishes to control our minds and bodies.

Most libertarians believe in the basic goodness of people. I don't, of course; but it does not matter. If people are good, there is less need for control. If we are basically evil, then why should we trust ourselves to other evil people?

Libertarians may not win many elections, of course. People basically fear more freedom, especially more freedom for someone else, and we all have so many vested interests that we want government to handle for us.

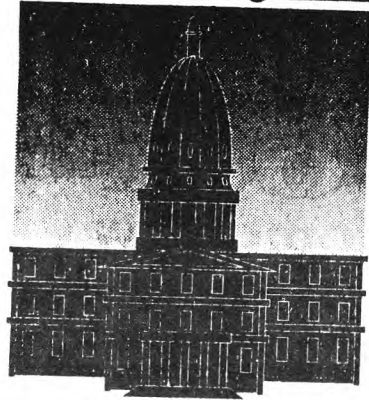
It was a few of my students who first presented free ideas to me in a different way. They challenged my long-cherished ideas. They gave me books read and evidence to ponder. The students were some of the best teachers I ever had.

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ALLAN SAXE

CAPITOL QUIPS



And being fat is a RIGHT!

In light of all the talk about our lousy eating habits, the Libertarian Party is warning folks to guard their hamburgers and ice cream.

"If we don't stop them, the grease Gestapo will do to fatty foods what they've already done to cigarettes," the party's national director, Steve Dasbach, said in a recent press release.

The Libertarians fear a "fat tax" would be levied on high-calorie and high-fat foods as a way to tackle a national "obesity epidemic."

The party says recent statements by public-health advocates, including the American Medical Association, indicate they want fatty foods to be treated as a health hazard like tobacco.

"Bureaucrats shouldn't be allowed to micromanage our menus or tax our Twinkies in the name of so-called public health," moaned Dasbach.

- ◀ *Ft. Worth Star-Telegram*, Ft. Worth, TX, January 10, 2000
- ▲ *The Grand Rapids Press*, Grand Rapids, MI, January 10, 2000
- ▼ *USA Today*, Arlington, Virginia, February 16, 2000

ELECTIONLINE

LIBERTARIAN PARTY: Libertarian Party candidate Harry Browne, who launched his second presidential bid Monday, said his campaign has about \$1 million and won't take federal matching funds, although he qualifies. Browne, 66, is a former investment adviser from Franklin, Tenn. He got less than 1% of the vote in the 1996 presidential race.